

FILE NAME: Colonial Sugar Refinery (CSR)

DATE: 1958 Feb 3

DOC#: CSR133

DOCUMENT DESCRIPTION: Letter to District Mines Inspector from
Workers' Unions RE Concerns about Working Conditions at Wittenoom
Gorge

COPY.

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Wittenoom Gorge,
Box 15,
2/3/58.

The District Mines Inspector,

Dear Sir,

The unions concerned that is the AEU, AMU, ETU and Boiler makers desire to bring before your notice our dissatisfaction in regard to the dust condition prevailing in the Mill.

This request, after you have given your decision, if you think the condition warrants, we the unions concerned would like you to place before the chief mines inspector your opinion of the conditions under which we work.

Prior to the installation of the Roto Clone system the Company paid each individual who worked in the Mill 1/6 a day. This inadequate amount prompted all unions to approach the Management in view to having the amount increased to an amount proportionate to the disability we were working under. The Management used stalling tactics over such a long period that the AEU and the AMU approached their respective union officials to have a Board of Reference decide the issue.

After considerable delay the Board visited the mine. The unions claim was for 2/- an hour. The Board after its deliberations granted 6d an hour. We realise at this amount was inadequate for the disability under which we worked, but accepted it in good faith, after having the promise that the Company had come to the decision to install a Roto Clone System.

A period of some months elapsed, before the first stage of a three stage installation plan was completed. On completion of the first stage after a trial period the Management approached the Shop Stewart of the AEU and the AMU in an endeavour to get the unions to agree that the dust condition had improved to such an extent that it only warranted 3d an hour. In an honest and unbiassed opinion we could not admit to any lessening of the dust nuisance.

The three stages comprise the treating section, the crushing section and the section to collect the dust exhausted through the roof.

The Company continued to pay the 6d an hour until the completion of the final stage of the system. When it instigated its own Board of Reference, with out any delay. The Board's decision was that the highest disability through the dust was in the enclosed section this section 4d an hour was allowed. In the crushing section only these men actually working the plant they considered 3d an hour was all that was warranted. The men working in close proximity to these machines it considered no disability was suffered.

We again accepted this decision in good faith for we had to admit the dust condition had improved with the three stages in operation.

Our satisfaction with the system lasted a very short time. The Company's endeavour to increase production at the expense of maintenance on this system has led to increased dissatisfaction with the dust condition as bad as when the Company was paying the 6d an hour.

PLAINTIFF'S
EXHIBIT

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