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Mr Thomas

AUSTRALIAN BLUE ASBESTOS LTD

19 OCT 1961

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CHB:JAF

P.No. 678

13th October, 1961.

The Manager,
Australian Blue Asbestos Pty. Ltd.,
WITTENOOM

Dear Sir,

DUST COLLECTION AND VENTILATION. Comments written by Mr Thomas following his meeting with the representatives of various Government Departments in Perth last Tuesday are attached.

You must consider the dust collection and mine ventilation as being of extreme importance and take whatever steps are necessary to establish maximum efficiency throughout mill and mine and to co-operate fully with the Government ventilation officer while he is at Wittenoom.

Following on Mr Thomas' comments:-

"Grave concern for the future of some of our employees was expressed today by both Dr McMulty and Dr Latham at a meeting convened with members of the Mines Department and Australian Blue Asbestos Pty Ltd to discuss ways and means of effecting some immediate improvement in working conditions generally.

Statistics were tabled listing some 34 names of persons suffering from asbestosis or silicosis believed to be contracted whilst in the employ of Australian Blue Asbestos Pty Ltd over the past 15 years. Constant reference was made by Dr McMulty to the dust count readings of 1,000 plus particles recently recorded by Inspector Simmonds of the Department of Mines and it was stressed that whilst readings such as these prevailed no improvement in the general health of the employees could be anticipated in the foreseeable future.

The circumstances leading up to the source of these high readings was put to the members of the Health Department and whilst they accepted the explanations they were adamant that a planned and practical approach to the problem must be instituted.

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To meet the situation it was suggested and agreed upon that
(a) The help of S W Hart and H P Gregory Ltd be sought to overcome the high dust counts in the primary crushing station and to substantially reduce the dust now being discharged to atmosphere and ultimately finding its way into the underground intake.

(b) To inaugurate a system of regularly carrying out a dust sampling programme covering the entire working area of the mine and taking immediate action where high counts are noted.

To assist with the introduction of item (b) the Senior Inspector of Mines is prepared to send the Ventilation Officer from his Department to carry out the initial survey and set up the system to be adopted in reading and recording the results of the Klonimeter slide examinations. It is felt that should these surveys be carried out on a two weekly cycle the weak points in the ventilation circuit will be eliminated and the underground workings accepted as satisfactory by current standards.

A second meeting has tentatively been set down for the 11th January (3 months later) to review the progress achieved with the scheduled proposals.

As a starting point for an immediate improvement we would appreciate the readings listed in Inspector Simmond's latest report being studied and dealt with without delay.

Yours faithfully,

pro Managing Director.

P.S. We are in touch with H P Gregory and Co regarding a more efficient method of trapping the dust collected from the mill and we expect some action on this shortly. If you cannot rectify the position in the No 1 Crusher Station with your own facilities you must engage S W Hart to do the necessary work.