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Minister's Office.

17th March, 1960.

Hon. Chief Secretary,
Chief Secretary's Department,
PERTH.

Dear Mr. Hutchinson,

Your letter of the 4th instant concerning industrial health in the mining industry is acknowledged.

I am very aware and extremely grateful for the work which has been undertaken by your Department in the mining industry generally, in respect to silicosis. The figures on Wittenoom are indeed very disquieting.

In the Department of Mines our officers are very conscious of dust nuisance and every possible precaution is taken to minimize the incidence of dust by the provision of adequate ventilation.

In this regard our mines inspectors maintain constant vigilence, and we have special ventilation inspectors.

The asbestos industry is relatively new in Western Australia, production having taken place only over the past 10 years or so, and no doubt the industry is still "learning", but as you say, better methods of ventilation are being adopted.

I do not quite understand the Commissioner for Public Health's statement that his responsibility is not clearly and unequivocally laid down in the Mining Act. However, the responsibilities of the Minister for Mines and the Mines Department are clearly and unequivocally laid down in the Mining Act.

I have no objection to the conference suggested by you taking place between officers of both Departments, in fact I think it is a good idea.

Yours sincerely,

MINISTER FOR MINES.

PLAINTIFF'S EXHIBIT WV-04126

PLAINTIFF'S EXHIBIT 10381.0