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State Mining Engineer,
Mines Department,
PERTH.

KALGOORLIE,
10th October, 1957.

Australian Blue Asbestos Ltd. - Wittenoom.

I visited Wittenoom during the period 1st to 5th October in order to take dust counts in the treatment plant and to give evidence at the Board of Reference convened for 3rd October.

I arrived, prepared to take the dust samples early in the morning on Wednesday 2nd, but the installation had not been completed. More ducting had to be installed. At 3.30 p.m. that day the installation was completed, except for ducts to draw from the vicinity of the fibre bagging section. I took dust samples throughout the plant at the same points as the samples were taken during my previous visit on 17. 8. 57. These were counted and the results tabulated.

On Thursday 3rd the Board of Reference, consisting of President - Dr. Joyce; Members - Mr. F. Collard and Mr. J. Broadhurst inspected the treatment plant. I accompanied them and recorded dust samples at the request of Dr. Joyce. These were taken at the fibre bagging section and in the No. 1 dust room. The Board then met and took evidence. I presented the results of the dust sampling and was asked by the President my opinion of the alterations. I considered there was some improvement as evidenced by the dust counts. I was questioned by the other members of the Board and by the advocates for the employer and the unions.

With the new installation the dust created is drawn off by ducting of various sizes and led to three Rotoclones. The dust is collected in water and the sludge pumped away. Some dust is still ejected from the collectors, but the dust is of a considerably lesser amount now, compared with that ejected when the exhaust was discharged through the roof of the building. Several sections of the plant have been enclosed in rooms made of steel plate, and it will be essential that the doors to these rooms be kept closed. I do consider however that the whole of the building will need to be cleaned as with every vibration of the building and gust of wind dust now deposited on the frame of the building will be liberated into the air.

The installation of the dust collection system should make a great improvement, eventually, if the equipment is maintained and operated efficiently. Were the surrounding of the plant cleaned and bitumen paving laid the dust created by motor vehicles moving around the area could also be eliminated.

At the Colonial mine progress is being made with the foundations for the new treatment plant. The surface at various elevations has been bulldozed level, and the concrete foundations for the primary crusher have been commenced. Representatives of the contractors for the steelwork etc. are in attendance at the site.

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The underground mining operations at the Wittenoom mine were stopped on Friday October 4th. All the ore will now come from the Colonial mine, where it appears the development is now being increased. The development of No. 4 level is proceeding with two ends. One end is being driven south, and another end is advancing north from the cliff face.

A copy of the dust counts recorded in the treatment plant is attached.

J. M. 7.
DISTRICT INSPECTOR OF MINES.