(18)

COPY.

GOVERNMENT OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

PHD.618/48.
Your Ref. 818/51

Department of Public Health,
57 Murray Street,
PERTH.

26th October, 1951.

THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR MINES.

With reference to your memorandum of the 27th September, 1951.

In the "Tabulation of Dust Counts" from Wittenoom forwarded under your memo of 21st September, it is assumed that the counts refer to p.p. c.c. The upper permissible limit of asbestos dust for a working atmosphere is 178 p.p. c.c. It will be noted that many of the counts are far in excess of this.

The method of count is unknown and although there is no known really satisfactory method it is highly probable that the one used excluded many long fibres from the count because of their reluctance to enter a machine of the Watson Konimeter type.

Unlike normal silicosis where small particles are the danger the main hazard in asbestosis is from the longer fibres and these will probably be in excess of anything indicated in the counts.

Asbestosis produces more rapid fibrosis of the lung than silicosis and is more liable to superimposed infection. It is therefore apparent on the data submitted that conditions are far from satisfactory and in the interest of the health of the workers, this Department must investigate the matter further and press for immediate improvement of supervision and working conditions at Wittenoom.

(Sgd) Linley Sennell.

COMMISSIONER OF PUBLIC HEALTH.

INSPECTOR OF MINES OFFICE
..., 1951
KALGOORLIE

C 1726

(66)

PHD.618/48
Your Ref:818/51

WSD/OS

26th October, 1951.

THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR MINES.

With reference to your memorandum of the 27th September, 1951.

In the 'Tabulation of Dust Counts' from Wittenoom forwarded under your memo. of 21st September, it is assumed that the counts refer to p.p. c.c. The upper permissable limit of asbestos dust for a working atmosphere is 176 p.p.c.c. It will be noted that many of the counts are far in excess of this.

The method of count is unknown and although there is no known really satisfactory method it is highly probable that the one used excluded many long fibres from the count because of their reluctance to enter a machine of the Watson Konimeter type.

Unlike normal silicosis where small particles are the danger the main hazard in asbestosis is from the longer fibres and these will probably be in excess of anything indicated in the counts.

Asbestosis produces more rapid fibrosis of the lung than silicosis and is more liable to superimposed infection. It is therefore apparent on the data submitted that conditions are far from satisfactory and in the interest of the health of the workers, this Department must investigate the matter further and press for immediate improvement of supervision and working conditions at Wittenoom.

LINLEY HENZELL
COMMISSIONER OF PUBLIC HEALTH

C 1727