



Private No. 243

ASBESTOS

AUSTRALIAN BLUE ASBESTOS LIMITED

18 WILLIAM STREET

PERTH

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

MINES & MILLS
WITTENOOM, W.A.

G.P.O. BOX NO. 968 M
TELEPHONE B 2238

Wittenoom Gorge

14th June, 1949

The Managing Director,
Australian Blue Asbestos Limited,
S Y D N E Y : N.S.W.

Dear Sir,

INDUSTRIAL MATTERS. After copies of the Industrial Agreement were forwarded to you about four weeks ago, the Carpenters and Painters entered a claim for an award and the Engineers Union raised some objection to the terms of the agreement. The position was discussed with the Unions, agreement reached on three occasions, followed by attempted alterations on the part of the Unions, but finally the matter was submitted to the Court without any alteration of note.

Evidence was submitted by the Union at Perth and transcript is enclosed. The Court then proceeded to Wittenoom where further evidence was called by the Unions and Mr. West has been asked to forward the Transcript to you when he receives copies from the Employers Federation. It has now been arranged for the Court to hear our evidence after completion of the Yampi case, probably the first or second week in July.

It will be noted that a good deal has been made of the possible effects of dust and fibre on health of employees, but except as a general disability, it has little direct bearing on any of the specific claims made by the Unions and although calling for improvements in working conditions in this regard, should not influence the Court's decisions.

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A somewhat vigorous attack was made on our diesel locomotives and this will be defended in principle both in Court and with the Mines Department. The local Workman's Inspector gave extraordinary evidence which is in keeping with his personal character and mental condition, but this can be effectively dealt with both in and out of Court. Unfortunately it may have some repercussions in dealings with Mines Department Inspectors for the time being.

*Mr. Brown
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Crown*

The Unions claim a District Allowance of 30/- for single men and 40/- for married men. Although no mention has been made to the Court, or anyone, we have, in effect, agreed to this claim in principle by agreeing to subsidise rentals in the Township. The question now arises whether to put the subsidy into force before the formal hearing and hope to forestall the Court, or to await the Court's decision on the matter. We think it unlikely that the Court would grant an increase if we reduced rent. We await your decision on this matter and our proposal regarding rents is that we subsidise to the extent of 5/- per week at present, but if the Housing Commission increase rents the tenants should not be asked to pay more than 25/- per week. The latter would not, of course, be made public and could be decided after the Court's decision. If a rental of, say, 35/- for cottages at Wittenoom exists, it is considered that this will always be cause for claims by the Unions irrespective of concessions granted by the Court in the form of District Allowance and it is thought better to remove the cause as soon as possible.

*Up with
the Court
and the
unloaded*

Yours faithfully,



Manager

Enclosures: Transcript - Industrial Matters. .
Manager's Report for May, 1949
Financial Statement, May, 1949
Detailed Lists of Cheques Drawn, May, 1949