

'It's No Accident' is the OHS newsletter of the AMWU. Feedback and story ideas to amwu@amwu.asn.au

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 **AMWU Care**
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MADE IN AUSTRALIA BY
AMWU MEMBERS

AMWU urges a ban on the import of high content silica products

The AMWU has joined medical specialists' groups - The Thoracic Society and The Royal Australian College of Physicians - in the call for urgent action on the prevention of silicosis, a disabling lung disease caused by exposure to silica dust.

AMWU National President Andrew Dettmer has written to all State and Commonwealth Health Ministers and those responsible for health and safety, calling for all governments to immediately follow the Queensland government action to ban dry cutting of high content silica products such as artificial stone bench tops.

The AMWU also called for immediate action to:

- Lower the silica exposure standard to 25% of the current standard – the Australian standard is four times that of the USA
- Establish a national register of all dust related lung disease – unlike in the UK, there is no system of counting how many people are affected. As we have seen with asbestos, if no one knows the numbers governments don't act
- Require medical practitioners to notify health departments of cases of dust related lung disease – this is the method Australia uses to count the number of cases of cancer or infectious diseases like measles
- Place a ban on the importation of high content silica products – artificial stone bench tops are a "fashion" of the last 15 years - there are plenty of alternatives.

Dr Ryan Hoy, a Victorian lung disease specialist said –
"this is the largest occupational lung crisis we've seen since the peak of asbestos use in the 1960s and the 1970s. We really have forgotten the lessons from that terrible time in our history with asbestos use".
ABC News 9 October 2018.

It is always so disturbing when as a community we fail to take notice - these are similar calls to action that the ACTU made to a Senate Inquiry into Toxic Dust in 2005!

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IT'S NO ACCIDENT

HEALTH AND SAFETY NEWS

FEBRUARY 2019

Industrial Manslaughter Laws

The momentum is gaining for the introduction of Industrial Manslaughter Laws. In late 2018:

- The Senate Inquiry into industrial deaths called on governments to introduce a nationally consistent industrial manslaughter offence into the Model WHS Laws
- ALP National Conference passed a resolution that said in part - "All workers in Australia deserve to know that there are consequences to negligent and reckless conduct which may lead – or tragically does lead – to a death."

Strong industrial manslaughter laws and penalties which act as a real deterrent are an essential element of providing safer workplaces; and

- The re-elected Victorian ALP government has committed to introducing laws in 2019. Premier Daniel Andrews has noted that:

"It's my sincerest hope that these laws will never need to be used ... that instead, they'll change our workplaces and change our culture".

WorkSafe Victoria has just successfully prosecuted an employer who was sentenced to six months jail in January 2019. Worksafe ran the prosecution under current laws.

WHS Law Review Report to be released

Throughout 2018, Ms Marie Boland conducted an independent review of the Model WHS Laws.

Ms Boland's report was forwarded to WHS Ministers at the end of 2018. Following consideration by WHS Ministers the ACTU expects the Report to be released in February 2019.

For up to date news stay in touch through AMWU HSRs Facebook page.

2019 Health and Safety Handbook

A revised AMWU Health and Safety Handbook will be mailed to AMWU HSRs in February 2019.

Delegates
- please check that HSRs are listed as HSRs on your factory list.

We can't mail to HSRs we don't know about!



PLEASE PLACE ON NOTICEBOARD



2019

UNIONS CAMPAIGNING FOR HEALTHY WORKPLACES

