

Mining Industry Advisory Committee

COMMUNIQUE

A summary of the 10 June 2020 meeting

1. Introduction of Mr Harry Backes, Cement Concrete & Aggregates Australia (CCAA)

The Minister extended an invitation to Mr Harry Backes, State Director WA of CCAA, to attend the June MIAC meeting as a non-voting guest. Mr Backes noted the importance of aggregate to the mining industry and explained that CCAA members operating quarries are regulated by the Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety (DMIRS) under the *Mine Safety and Inspection Act 1994*. CCAA has produced safety documents relating to silica.

2. Coronavirus (COVID-19) response and action plans

DMIRS is adhering to all State Government recommendations. During the COVID-19 restrictions, fewer inspectors were in the field, but mine safety inspections are beginning to return to business as usual. The safety audit tool was converted to a desk top application which enabled effective auditing to occur during the COVID-19 restrictions. One of the controls now in place is ensuring that all DMIRS employees comply with any mine site COVID-19 protocols.

Some larger mine sites have COVID-19 testing regimes in place, which feeds into research. The Chamber of Minerals and Energy (CME) representative advised that some larger companies have testing centres around the State and all are conducting temperature testing on entry to site and onto aircraft.

3. Dissemination of information to contractors

At the previous meeting, MIAC agreed that the DMIRS Resources Safety news alert was the most appropriate method to communicate information and guidance to contractors. A social media campaign resulted in increased numbers registered to receive safety alerts, with data to be reported at the next MIAC meeting. DMIRS is continuing to work with CME and the Association of Mining and Exploration Companies (AMEC) to encourage contractors to register for the safety alerts.

4. Workplace Exposure Standards update

Work continues on progressing the revised workplace exposure standards for respirable crystalline silica and respirable coal dust through the legislative process. MIAC wrote to the Minister regarding a proposed legislative solution and once a response is received, DMIRS will communicate the date of implementation and its implications to industry.

MIAC noted that monitoring and maintenance of reduced workplace exposure levels would be important and agreed that actions to meet the new standards should already be in place.

5. Presentation – Brady Review – report recommendations applicability to WA mining industry

The Department presented an exploratory analysis into the *Review of all fatal accidents in Queensland mines and quarries from 2000 to 2019 – report* (Brady Review). This Review made 11 recommendations, which were cross-referenced against previous reviews of the WA mining industry and current industry trends, based on data submitted by industry via the Safety Regulation System (SRS). This analysis could provide input into benchmarking and formulation of strategies for future work toward reduction in fatalities.

MIAC discussed Brady Review findings in relation to supervisory experience, the age and inexperience of those involved in the fatalities recorded, and the use of different metrics in relation to frequency rates of fatalities. Research is also being conducted by CME, which is considering up to 6 identified sites.

6. Mines Safety Directorate: Upcoming events 2020

All events and sponsorships for 2020 have been postponed due to COVID-19 and the restrictions placed on social distancing. The Chair advised of suggested events for 2021 and of other proposed events to be hosted by external organisations.

7. Work Health and Safety (WHS) legislation

Work to review submissions received on the proposed WHS regulations is underway. It is anticipated the finalised reports for the general, mining and petroleum regulations will be sent to the Minister's office in late-June 2020. Work will then commence on sharing the non-confidential submissions received on the DMIRS website.

8. Mental Health Strategies Working Group (MHSWG)

The MHSWG met via teleconference to discuss progress with the initial 30 recommendations from the Jacob's Report. Outstanding items were agreed and delegated amongst the working group.

MIAC noted the working group's achievements and that discussions are underway about closing MHSWG and progressing mental health strategies through other methods.

A UnionsWA representative commended DMIRS on the resources made available and advised that a survey into FIFO workers and their experience in relation to extended rosters during COVID-19 is now being conducted by the universities who conducted the initial research commissioned by the Mental Health Commission. Dr Laura Fruhen will be invited to present at the next MIAC meeting and MIAC encouraged DMIRS to engage with Dr Fruhen to determine how stakeholders can use the findings for improving workers' mental health.

9. Nano Diesel Particulate Matter Working Group (nDPMWG)

nDPMWG meetings have been postponed, but its main tasks continue. The future of the group is being considered in relation to it continuing as a separate group or whether its work should be brought back to the MIAC level.

10. Significant incident reports

Two Mines Safety Bulletins have been published since the April 2020 MIAC meeting.

[MSB No. 175: Integrity of equaliser cables on vehicle hoists](#)

[MSB No. 174: High pressure water cleaning creates mists and aerosols causing Legionnaires' disease](#)

No Significant Incident Reports have been issued since the April MIAC meeting.

A UnionsWA representative noted a WorkSafe audit, which found that hoists are often overlooked in mechanics' workshops. A Safety Bulletin relating to vehicle hoists had been shared with WorkSafe and that DMIRS' checklist includes checks of hoists.

11. Commission Report

MIAC noted key items and issues from the 6 May 2020 and 3 June 2020 meetings of the Commission for Occupational Safety and Health (COSH). Meeting minutes are available on the DMIRS website. The Chair highlighted the completion of the COSH Strategic Plan, noting it as a milestone for outgoing COSH Chair, Ms Stephanie Mayman.

12. Towards 2020 Commitments

At the MIAC April 2020 meeting, members were provided with an opportunity to comment on the new Human and organisational factors (HOF) online guidance. No feedback has been received. The webpages will be advertised to industry via *ThinkSafe* magazine, web articles, Resources Safety news alert and during site inspections.

13. Next meeting: 12 August 2020

For further information on the Mining Industry Advisory Committee, refer to the MIAC page on the DMIRS website: <http://www.dmp.wa.gov.au/Safety/What-is-the-Mining-Industry-8578.aspx>.

Andrew Chaplyn – Chair