



**THE HON. CHRISTIAN PORTER MP**  
**Attorney-General**  
**Minister for Industrial Relations**  
**Leader of the House**

**THE HON. GREG HUNT MP**  
**Minister for Health**

## **Media Release**

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### **New Workplace Exposure Standard for Silica Dust**

The Morrison Commonwealth is acting to protect Australian workers against the harmful effects of silica dust by reducing the workplace exposure standard (WES) for respirable crystalline silica from 1 July this year.

Under the *Work Health and Safety Regulations 2011* (Cth), the exposure standard will be halved from an eight-hour time-weighted average of 0.1 mg/m<sup>3</sup> to 0.05 mg/m<sup>3</sup>. The new standard was agreed by state and territory work health and safety (WHS) ministers following an extensive review of safe exposure levels conducted by Safe Work Australia.

Attorney-General and Minister for Industrial Relations, Christian Porter, said the change represented an important step forward in the fight against preventable dust diseases in the workplace.

“The Government strongly supports these new standards, which will significantly reduce the incidence of silicosis and help to keep Australian workers, their families and the community safe,” the Attorney-General said.

Health Minister Greg Hunt said the changes complemented the additional work being done by the National Dust Disease Taskforce to develop a national approach for the prevention, early identification, control and management of dust diseases.

“The Government is working with the states and territories to implement the five early steps identified in the Taskforce’s interim report, including ongoing staged development of a national dust disease registry,” Minister Hunt said.

Comcare, the Federal WHS regulator, has been working with employers in preparation for the commencement of the new workplace exposure standard for respirable crystalline silica.

Further information on the new workplace exposure standard is available on the Comcare website at [www.comcare.gov.au](http://www.comcare.gov.au).

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