

**Submission
No 5**

INQUIRY INTO 2024 REVIEW OF THE DUST DISEASES SCHEME

Organisation: NSW Self Insurers Association

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NSW Self Insurers Association Submission to the 2024 Review of the Dust Diseases Scheme

Introduction

This submission is made by the New South Wales Workers Compensation Self Insurers' Association Incorporated (NSW SIA) and encompasses the general views of its members, which include self-insured companies, specialised insurers, and companies seeking self-insurance.

The NSW SIA welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the 2024 Review of the Dust Diseases Scheme.

The NSW SIA is a non-profit association representing New South Wales employers who are licensed to manage their own risk for workers' compensation. Established in 1979, the association now includes 98 full member companies, 13 associate members, and 21 affiliate members. The members range from top ASX-listed companies to smaller, single-state entities across various industries, including banking, steelworks, local councils, and healthcare.

Position

The NSW Self Insurers Association (SIA) fully supports measures that prioritize worker safety and the prevention of dust diseases, including silicosis, through effective risk management and regulatory compliance, as outlined in the 2024 Review of the Dust Diseases Scheme Terms of Reference. However, while we agree with the overall objectives, we urge the committee to consider the financial impact of the Dust Diseases Levy on Self-Insurers as it currently stands. The levy diverts resources away from what could be specifically directed toward the mitigation of risks in this area.

Levy Concern

The SIA highlights the significant financial burden that the Dust Diseases Levy imposes on Self-Insurers. For many members, the levy represents a substantial operational cost,



and in some cases, members pay six-figure sums despite not being involved in any dust disease claims or related injury notifications. These levies are not only exorbitant but also inequitable for members who have no, or minimal, exposure to dust diseases.

We submit that a reduction in the levy payable by Self-Insurers should be seriously considered. Lowering the levy would allow self-insured companies to allocate more resources toward internal safety programs and targeted risk mitigation measures. Furthermore, a reduction in the levy would enhance competitiveness among Self-Insurers, potentially leading to job creation and economic growth within NSW, as businesses would be better positioned to expand or invest in new technologies.

Call for Transparency

In addition, the SIA calls for greater transparency around the use of levies in funding the Dust Diseases Scheme. Many members express concerns that the levy funds are not being adequately reinvested into dust disease prevention or mitigation. We urge the committee to review how these levies are being utilized and to ensure that the allocation of funds is both fair and beneficial to employers and workers alike.

Summary

We encourage the committee to adopt a balanced approach—one that maintains the necessary funding for the Dust Diseases Scheme while offering financial relief for Self-Insurers. A reduction in the levy would free up resources for safety initiatives that could have a direct impact on the prevention of dust diseases, while increased transparency in levy allocation would foster trust and ensure that funds are being used effectively. This approach would benefit both worker safety and economic development across NSW.

Sincerely,

Maddy Herbert
Acting Secretary

NSW Self Insurers Association