

MEDIA RELEASE



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MOBILE SCREENING UNIT TO HELP IDENTIFY MINE DUST DISEASES

The establishment of a mobile screening van to test Queensland coal mineworkers for dust diseases such as Black Lung will save lives, according to the CFMEU Mining & Energy Division.

CFMEU Mining & Energy Queensland President Steve Smyth today said many current and former mineworkers were missing out on respiratory screening.

“The mobile service will make it much easier for mineworkers, including retired mineworkers, to get vital health services in their home towns.

“Over 100 Queensland mining workers have been diagnosed with mine dust diseases, and we are aware of at least 200 more workers currently going through the testing and diagnosis process.

“Sadly, it is highly likely that many more workers are affected.

“The key to managing these deadly diseases is early diagnosis and treatment, which is why having access to a mobile screening unit is absolutely critical.

“Government and industry dropped the ball on monitoring and managing mine dust over many years – we are very pleased the current Queensland Government has recognised the health crisis in the coal mining industry and is investing resources to address it.”

Mr Smyth said the CFMEU would continue to push for improved safety standards in coal mines to prevent workers from contracting mine dust diseases, such as further lowering allowable respiratory dust levels, as well as an industry fund to support victims.

“Government has stepped up. It’s time the coal companies took responsibility for the health of their workers, and invested one cent per tonne, per week, into a fund to assist workers suffering dust diseases.”

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