

# Coal Mine Workers' Health Scheme

## New process for reading chest X-rays

### – information for workers

The Coal Mine Workers' Health Scheme protects the health of Queensland coal mine workers by ensuring periodic health assessments are conducted. Health assessments include a chest X-ray to detect Mine Dust Lung Diseases (MDLD) such as Coal Workers' Pneumoconiosis (CWP).

Early detection of MDLD is essential. A miner with early signs of CWP may have no symptoms, but their exposure to harmful dust should be reduced to prevent the disease from progressing. Accordingly, early detection through an effective screening program is critical to protecting the workforce.

Chest X-rays are examined to the International Labour Organization (ILO) International Classification of Radiographs of Pneumoconioses (ILO Classification) by at least two medical experts. These experts have achieved B-reader accreditation from the US-based National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health.

### New Australian-based dual-reading service

In July 2016, the Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy (DNRME) engaged the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) to provide chest X-ray dual-reading services for Queensland's coal mine workers. This was an interim solution until an Australian-based dual-reading service was established.

From 2017 the transition to Australian B-readers has been progressing. DNRME has engaged Lungscreen Australia (Lungscreen) to coordinate an Australian-based dual-read program. Lungscreen's B-readers have achieved the same NIOSH accreditation as UIC. The B-readers will report in the format recognised by the ILO, which provides a rigorous process for reporting on the abnormalities in chest X-rays that may indicate pneumoconiosis.

On 1 March 2019, Lungscreen replaced US-based B-reading for all Queensland coal mine worker chest X-rays. All chest X-rays must now be sent to Lungscreen for dual-reading. Amendments to the Coal Mining Safety and Health Regulation 2017 (the Regulation) that commenced on 1 March 2019 made this a mandatory requirement of the Coal Mine Workers' Health Scheme.

Other Australian B-readers registered with DNRME can undertake the first B-read and provide this to Lungscreen to complete the dual reading process.

Any X-ray sent to Lungscreen prior to 1 March 2019 will continue to be read once by Lungscreen before transferring to the US through DNRME. X-rays sent to Lungscreen from 1 March 2019 will be read twice (and any adjudication) unless it receives the first ILO report by another Australian B-reader registered

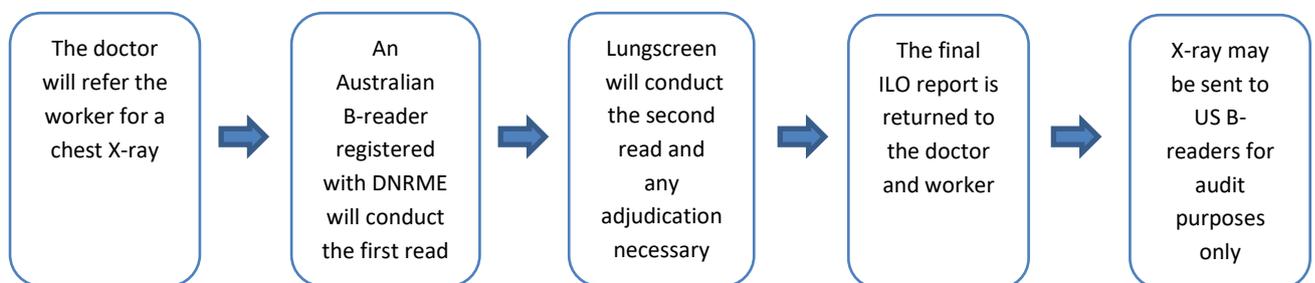
with DNRME. In these cases, Lungscreen will conduct one read and any adjudications before issuing the final report.

X-rays uploaded directly to DNRME prior to 1 March 2019 will be transferred to the US for dual-reading and the final ILO reports for these X-rays will be returned to doctors through the previously established process.

If the chest X-ray examination identified abnormalities, the appointed medical adviser is required to follow the Coal Mine Workers' Health Scheme (CMWHS) Clinical Pathways Guideline for follow-up investigations and referral to appropriate medical specialists.

DNRME will send a sample of chest X-rays and ILO Classification reports to US-based B-readers for audit as part of the ongoing quality assurance program as recommended by the Monash University review.

***New process for reading chest X-rays (from 1 March 2019)***



**Benefit of using Lungscreen**

A key feature of Lungscreen's service is that workers will be able to view their chest X-ray image and ILO report online. To do this workers will need to register with Lungscreen. This is only required once and before their first X-ray is taken.

Registration allows the X-ray to be accurately tracked through the reading process and allows workers to access their X-ray image and ILO reports online.

Workers can register for this service at [www.lungscreen.com](http://www.lungscreen.com) or ask the doctor conducting their health assessment to register on their behalf.

Workers will need to sign the Lungscreen referral form provided by the doctor so that the imaging clinic can send the worker's chest X-ray image to Lungscreen for B-reading.

Lungscreen will notify the worker when the ILO report is available to access.

## **More information**

### **Lungscreen Australia**

Call: 07 5376 3333

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Visit: [www.lungscreen.com](http://www.lungscreen.com)

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