

Reference Group Terms of Reference

1. Name

National Silicosis Prevention Strategy Reference Group “(the Reference Group)”

2. Purpose

The Reference Group is a decision informing committee, convened by Lung Foundation Australia (LFA), to inform the development of a National Silicosis Prevention Strategy (NSPS) and accompanying National Action Plan (NAP) for the Australian Government's Department of Health (DoH). The development of the NSPS and accompanying NAP is in response to the National Dust Disease Taskforce's [Final Report](#), in which the development and implementation of a silicosis prevention strategy was recommended to help address the rise of silicosis cases in Australia.

3. Responsibilities

The responsibilities of Reference Group members will include the following:

- To use their expertise, knowledge and experience to inform the development of the NSPS and accompanying NAP [the Project]
- To provide advice and input at strategic points throughout the Project
- To attend and participate in meetings (virtual) for the duration of the Project
- To attend and participate at the most relevant virtual or face-to-face Roundtable Consultation Session in March 2022, as required
- To review and provide input on the development of each draft NSPS (three in total; one and two for internal consultation and third (penultimate) for public consultation) and NAP
- To review and provide input on any other materials that may support the Project.

4. Composition

4.1 Members

- a) The Reference Group will consist of any number of members and be broadly multi-disciplinary in skills, expertise, experience (including lived experience, wherever practical), geographical and cultural background. The Reference Group should ideally reflect a variety of workplaces and settings where employees are exposed to silica dust.

The composition of the Reference Group will ideally include representatives from the following fields:

- Thoracic / Respiratory / Occupational Medicine
- Occupational Hygiene
- Clinical Epidemiology
- Public Health / Health Protection
- Policy, Administration and Governance
- Legislative accountabilities and regulatory systems
- Regulatory Practice, including Standard Setting, Compliance and Enforcement (i.e. state / territory WorkSafe departments)
- Industry Practice, including industry / employer groups (large and small business), unions and manufacturers

- Peak Bodies and Professional Societies as relevant
- Insurance groups (i.e. state / territory WorkCover departments)
- Individuals with either a lived experience of silicosis or representing patients with a lived experience of silicosis.

Additional input may be sought from outside the Reference Group as required from areas including the following:

- Workplace Health and Safety
- Occupational Lung Disease research
- Respiratory Physiology
- Radiology and lung health screening
- Other Allied Health disciplines
- Other relevant disciplines as needed.

Additional input may be required from the following agencies:

- Cancer Council Australia
- Public Health Association of Australia
- Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
- Minerals Council of Australia
- Housing Industry Association
- Australian Industry Group
- Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

- b) All members must act in accordance with its Code of Conduct, see Appendix One
- c) Appointments will be made through an Expression of Interest process overseen by LFA on behalf of DoH. LFA may make direct appointments at its discretion
- d) DoH may appoint representatives to this Reference Group in an ex-officio capacity as observers.

Conflicts of Interest

All members must provide full disclosure on conflicts of interest via an online Conflict of Interest declaration. During meetings, members may be asked to step out during discussions where a conflict has been identified.

4.2 Specific Roles

a) Chairperson

- The Chairperson shall chair all meetings and review all agendas and minutes
- The appointment of the Chairperson of the Reference Group shall be approved by the LFA Chief Executive Officer, in consultation with DoH
- The Chairperson shall be appointed for the duration of the Project
- The Chairperson seeks consensus, ensures equitable opportunity of input from all, and assists with resolutions of disputes.

b) Secretariat

- The NSPS Program Manager will act as Secretariat
- The Secretariat will be responsible for working in partnership with the Chairperson to coordinate meeting schedules, agendas and minutes
- The Secretariat will also be responsible for organising all meetings.

c) Invitees

- Non-members may attend meetings by invitation of the Reference Group

- The Reference Group may recommend to LFA that it co-opts other experts to complement its range of expertise.

5. Decision Making and Dispute Resolution

- Decisions are made by consensus (i.e. members are satisfied with the decision even though it may not be their first choice)
- Where the Reference Group is unable to reach a determination of any issue, the Reference Group must refer that issue to the NSPS Expert Steering Committee
- Where the Reference Group resolves that it is dissatisfied with the resolution, members are invited to lodge in writing to the LFA CEO that the matter be referred to DoH for noting in the NSPS Consultation Report.

6. Meetings

6.1 Frequency

- The Reference Group will meet at least three times for the duration of the Project, and at such other times as it deems necessary to conduct its business
- Meetings will be conducted virtually, via video conference
- Members may nominate a proxy to attend one meeting in their absence, if agreed by the Chairperson.

6.2 Notices, Agendas, Minutes

- There shall be an agenda and minutes for all meetings. The Secretariat shall prepare an agenda in consultation with the Chairperson, which shall be distributed together with supporting papers if possible seven days in advance of the meeting
- Reasonable notice shall be given of meetings through the formal publication of a forward meeting schedule.

6.3 Quorum

- The quorum for meetings shall be half the Reference Group number
- Members must advise of availability a minimum of two weeks before the scheduled meeting date.

6.4 Budget

The cost of administration for the Reference Group will be managed by the Secretariat.

7. Links to other Bodies

7.1 Reporting to the Reference Group

In pursuit of its responsibilities, the Reference Group will receive regular written and verbal reports from the Secretariat as determined from time to time.

7.2 Authority

The Reference Group has no executive power in relation to its functions, as it is purely an advisory body.

Appendix One: Lung Foundation Australia Code of Conduct

Appendix Two: NSPS Project Plan

Version: 1.1

Approved: 1 February 2022

Approved by: Mark Brooke, LFA CEO