

Health Surveillance



Past History and Future Potential

Townsville Health & Safety Conference
August 2003

1

Background

- ✦ Coal mining industry established a Coal Mine Worker Health Assessment process in 1982 administered by the Queensland Coal Board
- ✦ QCB abolished in 1997 and health surveillance activities transferred into the *Coal Mining Act 1925* administered by the Mines Inspectorate
- ✦ Similar provisions continue into the current *Coal Mining Safety and Health Act 1999*
- ✦ *Mining and Quarrying Safety and Health Act 1999* contains provisions for health management in mines and quarries
- ✦ In 2002 a Review of the Mines Inspectorate determined that the role of government in mineworker health was not clear and tripartite committee was established to determine what, if any the regulators role should be

2

Review of Mines Inspectorate Structure - March 2002

Recommendation 19

That the role of the Health Surveillance Unit of the Mines Inspectorate should be reviewed within the next 12 months to consider:

- ✦ the unit's ability to contribute to improved safety and health in the industry
- ✦ location of the unit
- ✦ health research needs of the industry
- ✦ any requirements for medically qualified staff within the unit
- ✦ administration costs of the coal industry health scheme to industry and government

3

Objectives of Review

"To recommend a business model for health surveillance in Queensland in partnership with the mining industry, that will assist in the systematic identification, assessment and elimination / control of adverse occupational health risks to mine and quarry workers."

4

Steering Committee

- ✦ Peter J Dent - Executive Director - Chair
- ✦ Peter J Minahan - Chief Inspector of Mines - member
- ✦ Stewart Bell - Director, Simtars - member

5

Working Party Members

- ✦ Dr David Smith - Chair
- ✦ Brian Lyne - Deputy Chief Inspector of Mines (Coal) - Internal Facilitator
- ✦ Roger Billingham - Deputy Chief Inspector of Mines (Metalliferous)
- ✦ Les Wynn - Manager, Operational Services
- ✦ Carmel Bofinger - Simtars
- ✦ Andrew Vickers - G Dalliston - CFMEU
- ✦ Ben Swan - AWU
- ✦ Alan Miskin - BMA, William Wheatley - Pacific Coal
- ✦ Peter Lewis - MIM (Metals)

6

Consultation

- ✦ Mine operators and contractors
- ✦ Mount Isa, Cannington, Townsville, Moranbah, Gladstone, Brisbane
- ✦ Western Australia – Regulator
- ✦ New South Wales – Regulator, Mine Safety Council
- ✦ Minerals Council of Australia
- ✦ Workers Compensation, QCOS
- ✦ Unions

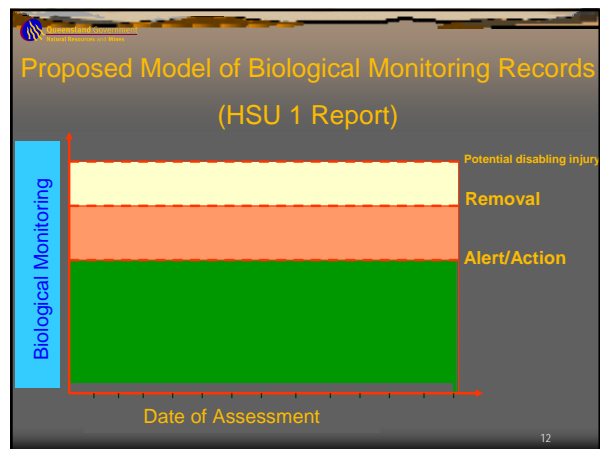
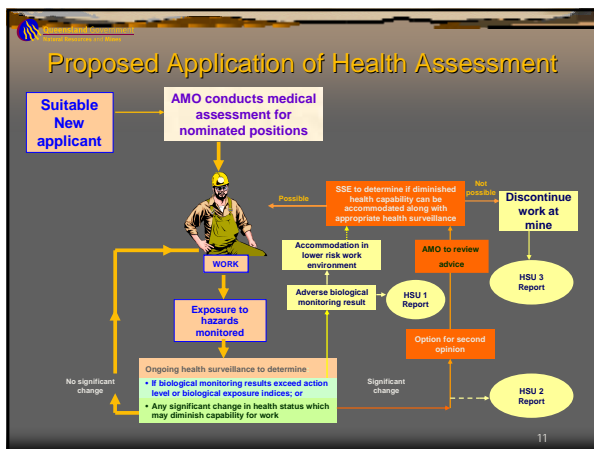
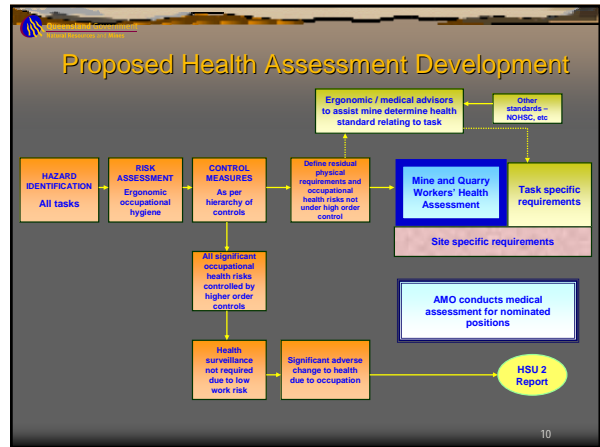
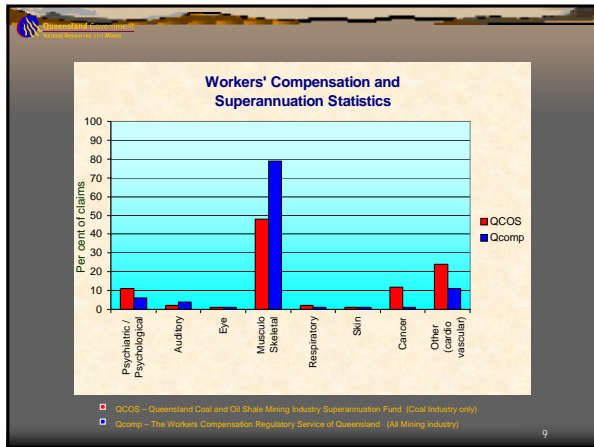
7

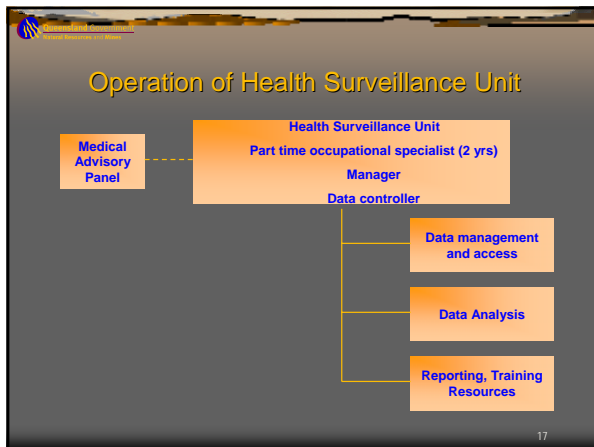
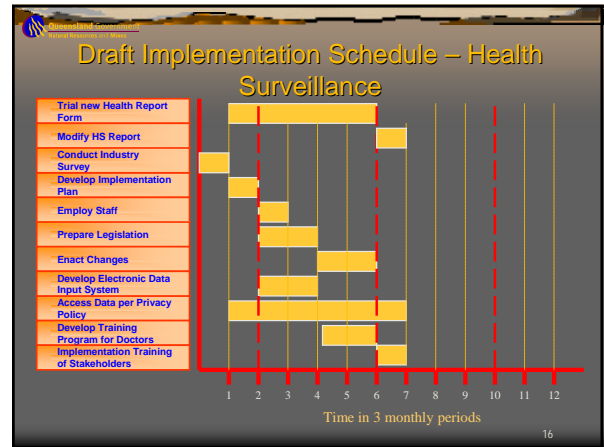
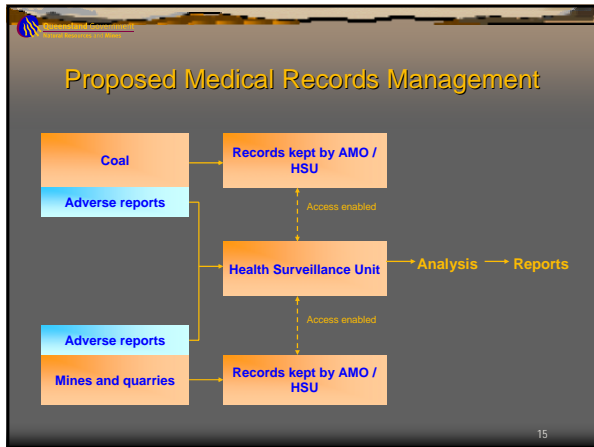
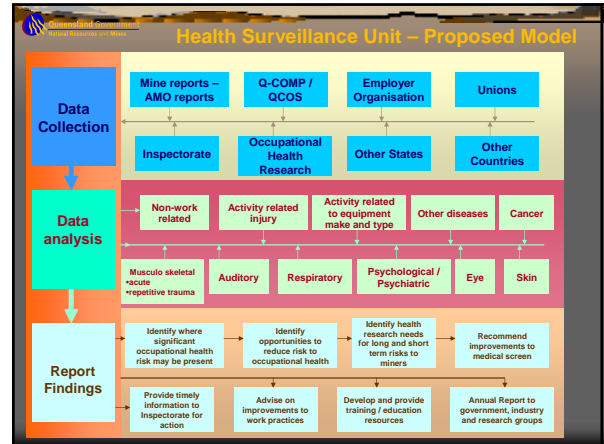
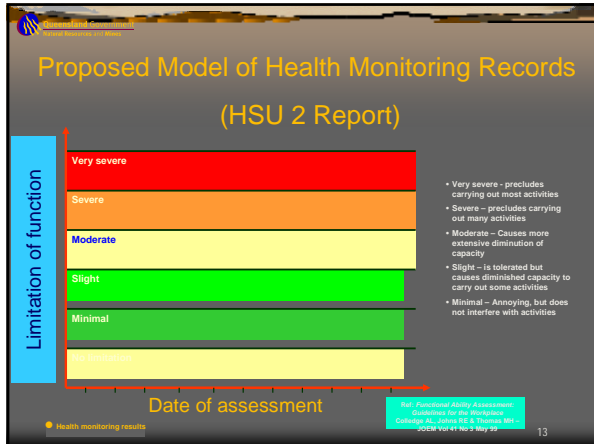
Key Findings

The "Review of the Health Surveillance Unit" found that:

- ✦ the current health surveillance system for the coal industry did not access all potentially available occupational health data
- ✦ the current health surveillance process had been effective in assisting the coal industry in controlling occupational health risks identified in the 1950's but was not effective in relation to the current occupational health problems evident in mining or quarrying industries
- ✦ anecdotal evidence identified that the employment of a number of workers was terminated each year due to occupational illness or injury with minimal reference to the current surveillance unit
- ✦ the new HSU focus should be on the analysis of adverse medical reports for the broad mining and quarrying industries using exception reports

8





- ### Future Opportunities
- ✦ QMC and NRM to work in partnership and facilitate sharing of information between large and small operators
 - ✦ Develop a common electronic data management format with NSW Coal Services (Coal Safety Trust / NRM?)
 - ✦ Seek Minerals Council of Australia involvement
 - ✦ Develop common competencies for Appointed Medical Officers at mines
 - ✦ Establish access to multiple data bases containing mineworker injury and illness information under the Privacy Policy
- 18



Health Surveillance



Past History and Future Potential

19