



ITALIAN COURT DECISION:

An historic decision by an Italian court has seen the owner of asbestos-cement company Eternit and its major shareholder sentenced to 16 years each in prison.

Stephan Schmidheiny, former owner of Eternit - the largest manufacturer of cement products in the world, and Jean-Louis Marie Ghislain de Cartier de Marchienne, whose family founded the company, were found guilty of causing an environmental disaster and failing to comply with safety regulations.

Along with their prison sentences, the defendants must pay \$39,000 in damages to relatives of people killed by asbestos-related diseases, and \$43,000 for every sick person, as well as other payouts set to total hundreds of millions of dollars.

The sentence was handed down in February after a two year trial. The decision was welcomed by anti-asbestos campaigners across the world, many of whom travelled to Italy for the verdict, as a historic precedent.

Read more about the Great Asbestos Trial at: <http://ibasecretariat.org/eternit-great-asbestos-trial-toc.htm>

AUSTRALIAN VISIT BY INTERNATIONAL ANTI-ASBESTOS CAMPAIGNER:

PGARD co-chair Senator Lisa Singh met with prominent International anti-asbestos campaigner Laurie Kazan Allen in Perth last month.

Ms Kazan Allen is the coordinator of the International Ban Asbestos Secretariat. She is a long time supporter of a global ban of asbestos and of the need for the World Health Organisation to establish guidelines for the recognition of asbestos-related disease.

Senator Singh also visited the Asbestos Disease Society of Australia and met with President Robert Vojakovic AM and a number of asbestos stakeholders.

<http://ibasecretariat.org/lka-confronting-australias-asbestos-catastrophe.php>

ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT REVIEW UPDATE:

Almost 60 public submissions were received by the Asbestos Management Review Committee and work on draft recommendations is well underway.

The vast majority of submissions were in agreement on a number of issues:

- the pressing need for a National Strategic Plan that would address matters such as uniform asbestos management regulations; a need for effective education campaign for the general

population regarding the nature and dangers of asbestos; issues regarding the inadequacy of infrastructures such as waste disposal facilities and; a need for a national agency – although there were a wide range of views around the nature and role of such an agency.

The report is due to be handed to Workplace Relations Minister Bill Shorten by 30 June, 2012.

- **Asbestos Management Review Chairman Geoff Fary**

PGARD will host a briefing from Asbestos Management Review Chairman Geoff Fary and Asbestos Disease Foundation of Australia President Barry Robson at 12.30PM – 1.30PM on Wednesday 20 June in Committee Room 1S2. Please RSVP to Eliza.Grey@aph.gov.au or on (03) 6223 11 35.

KALGOORLIE TO PERTH WALK FOR WITTENOOM CHILDREN:

From May 1 – 5 the Kalgoorlie to Perth Walk for Wittenoom Children will take place in Western Australia. Participants are raising money for medical research into asbestos-related diseases, such as those which are taking the lives of those who lived in the asbestos mining town of Wittenoom. The walk has been organised by the Asbestos Diseases Society of Australia. For more information, or to make a donation, please email Robert Vojakovic at robert@asbestosdiseases.org.au

DEVIL'S DUST:

An ABC mini-series will tell the story behind the fight for compensation for asbestos victims.

Devil's Dust will tell the story of Bernie Banton, who battled for compensation for all asbestos victims; Matt Peacock, who has devoted his career to exposing the truth about asbestos; and Adam Bourke, a James Hardie PR man.

Based on the book *Killer Company* by ABC journalist Matt Peacock, the 2-part mini-series began production in Sydney on March 19. It will be broadcast on ABC later this year.

WORKERS' MEMORIAL DAY:

April 28 will mark Workers' Memorial Day – an international day of remembrance and action for workers killed, disabled, injured by their work. Workplace Relations Minister Bill Shorten unveiled the winning design of a new National Workers Memorial in Canberra in March. Sydney architect firm, Johnson Pilton Walker's design was selected from the 26 submitted. The memorial will sit in Kings Park on the shores of Lake Burley Griffin and it is expected to be completed by March 2013 in time for Canberra's centenary celebrations.



The winning National Workers Memorial design from Johnson Pilton Walker.

LINCOLN HALL:

The death of Australian mountaineer Lincoln Hall is a stark reminder of the dangers of asbestos. Hall, who is well known for surviving a night near the summit of Mt Everest in 2006 without appropriate supplies, died in March after a short battle with mesothelioma .

Media reports indicate that Hall was exposed to asbestos as a young child when he helped his father build two cubby houses using asbestos-cement sheets.

Hall's death reminds us of the dangers of this insidious carcinogen which can remain undetected for so long. The chance of a third wave of asbestos victims caused by exposure during DIY home renovations and the like.

Hall, 56, is survived by his wife and two sons.

Senator Lisa Singh

Labor Senator for Tasmania
PGARD Co-Chair

Russell Broadbent MP

Federal Member for McMillan
PGARD Co-Chair