



29/03/2023

I am writing on behalf of Whitsunday Marble and Granite. I am the Director, we are a small Company based in the whitsundays we service Hamilton Island Airlie Beach and surrounding areas.

Our Company has 10 employees, 95% of the stone we cut is engineered stone, our livelihoods rely on this industry and so do our employees.

In 2019 We spent in excess of 100k in setting our factory up to be totally compliant to the silicosis code of practice, our staff have annual respiratory tests, we do air monitoring that cost a fortune, our boys wear over the head masks that cost \$2000 a piece, all our cuts are done in the factory.

The 60 minutes news story did not mention that this code of practice came into place in Queensland and that we have already been cutting engineered stone with only 28% silica. Not mentioned. This I believe is less than some granite in which we are allowed to cut if the ban is enforced.

If handled correctly engineered stone is safe and we induct our employees when they start about the risks of cutting the stone.

If there was to be a total ban on engineered stone what is the alternative? Porcelain is dangerous as well. We will have thousands of people unemployed.

Our Company pays 115k a year for work cover insurance.

I do not see the need for a license fee I believe that there should be a small fee added to the cost of the stone (small fee) If the total ban is introduced, myself and many other Companies that have adhered to the code of practice will be seeking compensation.

Apprentices and workers will need to be retrained into different industry's when they are totally safe in the industry, they are in.

SWA need to visit every Company and assess whether their manufacturing is compliant and issue a compliance certificate and only these Companies can then purchase stone from the wholesalers.

Narelle Stewart
Managing Director
Whitsunday Marble and granite