

## **Additional Recommendation on Occupational Health Questionnaire**

### **Recommendation**

The Board recommends pilot testing of the Occupational Health Questionnaire (OHQ) in its most recent version provided to the Board with the following additions:

- 1) Adding a general open-ended question for the end of the OHQ, such as:

“Did we miss anything? For example, are you concerned about any exposures to toxic substances that were not adequately described in your responses in this questionnaire? Please describe your concern: for example, what types of substances these were (even if you don’t know the technical name), when the exposures happened, what kind of PPE you used at the time and whether you think these exposures are related to the health problem for which you are applying for compensation.”

- 2) Sending claimants, prior to the OHQ interview, either a copy of the OHQ or a simplified version of the OHQ or worksheet, together with brief examples of common work tasks and processes, which the claimant could use to gather their occupational information.

### **Rationale**

The structure of the current version of the OHQ is very useful for the purpose of collecting structured information concerning important aspects of an individual claimant’s history of work for the Department of Energy. An open-ended question, as suggested above, will permit claimants to add information that may not have been prompted by the questions of the OHQ.

Many claimants are advanced in age so that many years have passed since the earlier years of their employment at a DOE facility and the time of administration the OHQ. It may be very useful to such claimants to be able to organize their thoughts and memories prior to the telephone or face to face interview during which the OHQ is administered. Sending the claimant the OHQ or a simplified version of it, along with some examples of the kind of information sought by the OHQ, one to two weeks prior to the OHQ administration may result in a better yield of information and a more relaxed atmosphere during OHQ completion.