

## 70% of global workforce exposed to health risks from climate change

Every year on April 28, the trade union movement unites around the world to mark International Workers' Memorial Day. We mourn those who have died at work or because of their work, and we fight like hell for the living.

This year's global theme is the impact that climate change has on workers' health. An ILO (International Labour Organisation) report published this week has highlighted climate change is impacting 70% of the global workforce.

The report notes that numerous workers' health conditions have been linked to climate change, including cancer, cardiovascular disease, respiratory disease, kidney dysfunction and mental health conditions.

We also take this time to acknowledge those that have lost their lives in the course of their work. Every year 200 workers are killed at work with more than 5,000 dying from work related diseases. In July this year Australia will be the first place in the world to ban deadly engineered stone and implement some of the toughest workplace silica rules. These changes will save thousands of lives and is a credit to the union members that fought for these world leading changes.

### Quotes attributable to ACTU Assistant Secretary Liam O'Brien:

"Workers are on the frontline of the climate crisis, be it working outdoors in extreme heat, or those battling floods and extreme weather conditions, the climate crisis is having a detrimental effect on workers' health.

"Unions will continue to fight for better and safer protections for workers. This International Workers' Memorial Day we also mourn those who have lost their lives at work or due to work related diseases.

"This year our movement acknowledges the efforts of unions to win world leading protections for workers against deadly silica dust including the banning of engineered stone which has been responsible for as many as 1 in 4 stonemasons being diagnosed with this incurable disease."

"The fight for safety at work must continue until all workers are safe."

**ENDS**

**Notes to editors:** ILO report can be found here: OSH and climate change. [Climate change creates a 'cocktail' of serious health hazards for 70 per cent of the world's workers | International Labour Organization \(ilo.org\)](#)

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