

Letter to the Editor

Readers are invited to submit letters for publication in this department. Submit them to: The Editor, Journal of Occupational Medicine, P.O. Box 370, Bryn Mawr, PA 19010. Letters should be typewritten and double spaced and should be designated "For Publication."

ILO "A" and "B" Reader Classification

To the Editor: Some clarification could be added to your informative response to the question "Should all asbestos exposure films be read by an ILO reader?" in the September, 1989, Occupational Medicine Forum. The International Labour Office (ILO) classification is used throughout the world, and anyone who understands and appropriately uses the classification could legitimately be designated an "ILO reader." The "A" and "B" reader certification program was developed by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), and functions primarily in the

United States. "B" readers, therefore, represent one subset of ILO readers.

Department of Health and Human Services regulations mandate that both the ILO classification and NIOSH-certified A and/or B readers be used in its surveillance program for underground coal miners. By requiring access to ILO standard films and completion of a report formatted according to the ILO classification, OSHA also mandates "ILO reader" interpretations for asbestos-exposed workers. As you note, however, OSHA does not require interpretation by NIOSH-certified B readers. Finally, while prospective B readers are highly encouraged to attend a 2-day course or take a home study course, they are not required to do this.

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Correction

In the February 1990 Letter to the Editor "Asbestos-Related Disease in the Jewelry Industry" (p 87), the name of Howard Frumkin, MD, MPH, was inadvertently omitted. Dr. Frumkin co-authored the letter with Dr. David G. Kern. The *Journal* regrets the error.

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