

Media Release

**Slater &
Gordon**
Lawyers

www.slatergordon.com.au

December 14, 2011

Landmark High Court win for asbestos victims

A landmark decision handed down today by the High Court of Australia has sent the strongest message yet to the manufacturers of automotive brake pads that their products have a direct link to the deadly asbestos related disease, mesothelioma.

The case involved the companies responsible for Hardie-Bestos and Hardie-Ferodo brake linings.

Mr Booth commenced his case in 2008 in the NSW Dust Diseases Tribunal. It has been hard fought through the NSW Dust Diseases Tribunal, the NSW Supreme Court and now the High Court of Australia.

Ms Joanne Wade, specialist asbestos lawyer with Slater & Gordon, said the High Court decision in favour of John Booth, a former motor mechanic, against Amaca Pty Limited and Amaba Pty Limited is a major win for asbestos sufferers.

"This decision will provide a huge amount of relief to the possibly hundreds of mechanics and automotive workers who have contracted or may contract asbestos related diseases repairing brakes over the years.

"Today's decision clears the way for their families to continue their fight for justice and the hope of some compensation.

"Importantly today's decision provides clarity over the issue of causation, risk and the treatment of mesothelioma cases," Ms Wade said.

Asbestos was used as a component in brake linings until December 2003 when an Australia-wide ban on the importation, manufacture and use of all forms of asbestos and asbestos containing products took effect.

Ms Wade said that just like John Booth, Slater & Gordon currently represents the family of a former mechanic, the late Arnold Shingles, who died from the incurable disease, mesothelioma in March 2010.

"His case, also against Amaba, formerly known as Hardie-Ferodo Pty Ltd, and Bendix Mintex Pty Ltd has been on hold for more than 15 months waiting for this decision. His family will now be able to continue their fight for justice."

For further comment:

Joanne Wade 0410 325 621

Media contact:

Michael Salmon 0417 495 018