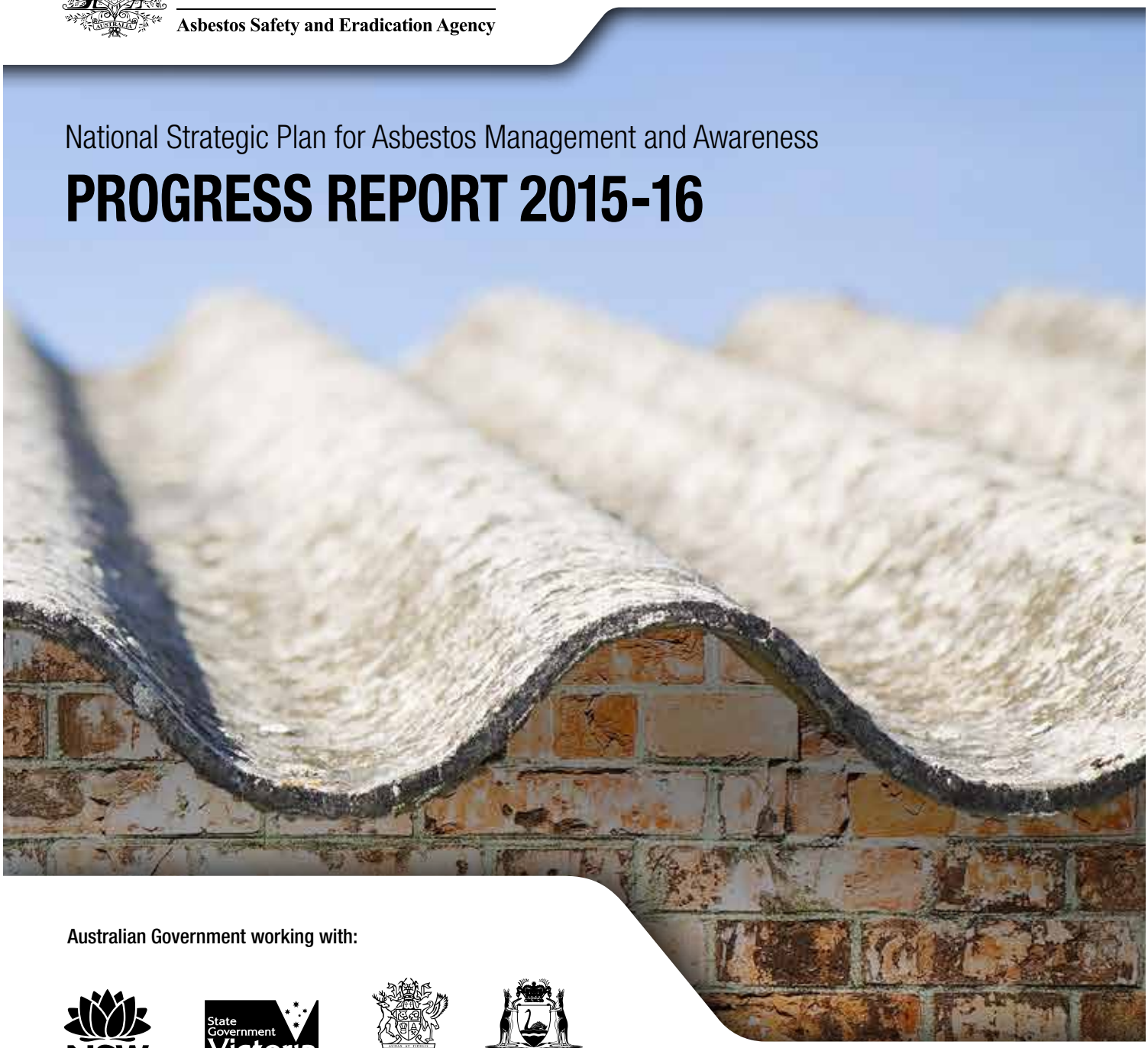
Australian Government

Asbestos Safety and Eradication Agency

National Strategic Plan for Asbestos Management and Awareness

# PROGRESS REPORT 2015-16



Australian Government working with:

NSW

State Government Victoria

Queensland Government

GOVERNMENT OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Government of South Australia

Tasmanian Government

ACT Government

Northern Territory Government

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# ABOUT THIS REPORT

## Asbestos Safety and Eradication Agency and the National Strategic Plan for Asbestos Management and Awareness

The Asbestos Safety and Eradication Agency (ASEA) is a statutory authority that provides a national focus on asbestos issues. ASEA was established 1 July 2013 to encourage, coordinate, monitor and report on the implementation of the National Strategic Plan for Asbestos Management and Awareness (the plan).

The plan is a long term strategy for achieving significant progress in six areas related to current asbestos issues in Australia. These six strategies contain deliverables and outcomes that all governments are working to achieve.

This report outlines the work that has been reported by state, territory and Australian Government agencies since the launch of the plan in August 2015 which contributes to the six strategies of the plan.

The information in this report is based on activities, data and case studies provided by state, territory and Australian Government agencies with a role in management of asbestos risks and working towards the elimination of asbestos-related disease.

The Asbestos Safety and Eradication Agency has complied the information provided and identified a progress assessment for each of the strategies of the plan, which has been confirmed by government representatives and the Asbestos Safety and Eradication Council.

## State and territory asbestos management plans

In addition to embracing national efforts across the strategy's six outcome areas, state and territory governments have direct responsibility for asbestos issues within their jurisdiction. Local government also plays an important role in supporting the objectives of the plan. Because of their links with building and construction regulation, local councils often bear much of the responsibility for the day-to-day management of asbestos and responding to concerns from members of the public. This report will contribute to these responsibilities by supporting common efforts across governments and facilitating information sharing.

# INTRODUCTION

I am pleased to report that significant work has been undertaken across Australia by all governments contributing to the goals of the National Strategic Plan for Asbestos Management and Awareness. In total, 118 activities reported as being undertaken during 2015-16 under the plan.

Work is being undertaken across all six strategies, including a number of removal programs in government properties and the residential sector. This includes the Victorian Government's removal of asbestos from public schools, New South Wales and Australian Capital Territory government taskforces to remove loose-fill asbestos from identified properties, and work in the Northern Territory to remove asbestos from remote Indigenous communities. These initiatives show the management and removal of asbestos is a challenge that can be addressed. The work must be managed closely with affected communities and stakeholders.

Over the last 12 months I have seen a strong interest in asbestos risk management and removal by governments and the community. By bringing the information reported by governments together, we can review the progress we are making. At the same time, we recognise that more work needs to be done in some areas. This progress report also provides data about the awareness levels of asbestos risks in Australia, and the amount of asbestos being removed and disposed of show the movement of asbestos from the built environment to final disposal.

The plan has been in place since August 2015 and it is too soon to see significant changes in the data. Our first challenge is to work towards more consistent methods of recording asbestos removal and disposal across states and territories. We have not seen significant changes in awareness levels, and there are some indications that do-it-yourself (DIY) home renovators have reported lower levels of asbestos awareness than previous surveys. We need to ensure that there is an ongoing effort to increase the knowledge of people about asbestos in homes and how to manage this safety when undertaking do-it-yourself renovations.

I would like to thank the Asbestos Safety and Eradication Council for providing advice and guidance, and recognise the contributions of members of the Building, Construction and Demolition Sectors Committee and the Research Advisory Committee. The work to the National Strategic Plan benefits from the perspectives of all levels of government, social partners and industry experts, and Australia's cooperative approach to eliminating asbestos-related diseases is well regarded internationally.

The plan is ambitious and we have more work to do. The final part of this report showcases case studies of a number of activities which highlight how governments are working towards achieving the deliverables and outcomes of the plan. As well as contributing to the plan's goal of establishing best practice, I hope this encourages others to learn from these examples and build on the emerging successes.

Looking toward the future, it is clear that Australia will benefit from improved consistency in recording and reporting of asbestos removal and disposal by governments, and we need to ensure a continued and coordinated effort is made to raise awareness about asbestos with DIY renovators.

I encourage you to read and consider the findings of this, the first National Strategic Plan for Asbestos Management and Awareness Progress Report.

**Peter Tighe**
**Chief Executive Officer**
**Asbestos Safety and Eradication Agency**

# RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

| | |
|---|---|
| 2012 | The Australian Government releases the *Asbestos Management Review Report* which recommends the development of a national strategic plan to improve asbestos awareness and management in the broader community |
| 2013 | In 2013, the Australian Government commits funding to Comcare to ensure the safe handling of asbestos during the removal of asbestos in telecommunication pits with a verification program |
| 1 July 2013 | The Asbestos Safety and Eradication Agency is established to support and monitor the plan, and provide a national focus on asbestos issues which go beyond workplace safety to encompass environmental and public health concerns |
| 2014 | The ACT Government establishes the Asbestos Response Taskforce to provide a coordinated response to address community concerns about contamination of over 1,000 Canberra houses with loose-fill asbestos insulation |
| 2014 | The Australian Government provides the ACT Government with a concessional loan of up to $1 billion to help pay for the demolition of homes affected by loose-fill asbestos |
| 2014 | ASEA works with commonwealth, state and territory governments to develop an agreed *National Strategic Plan for Asbestos Management and Awareness* |
| 2015 | The NSW Government establishes the Loose-fill Asbestos Implementation Taskforce in August 2015 |
| 28 August 2015 | The *National Strategic Plan* for Asbestos Management and Awareness is launched by the Minister for Employment |
| 2015 | Work commences on demolition of over 1,000 houses in the ACT as part of the ACT Government's Loose Fill Asbestos Insulation Eradication Scheme |
| 2016 | The Victorian Government announces the Victorian Asbestos Eradication Agency |
| 2016 | The first National Progress Report on the *National Strategic Plan for Asbestos Management and Awareness 2014–18* is released |

# Summary of the National Strategic Plan

The plan was launched on 28 August 2015 by the Commonwealth Minister for Employment following a meeting of state and territory ministers. The plan was a recommendation of the Asbestos Management Review and is defined in legislation by section 5A of the *Asbestos Safety and Eradication Agency Act 2013* (ASEA Act). It is the first time a plan of its type has been endorsed by state, territory and Australian governments.

The plan provides a framework within which states and territories are able to work cooperatively and independently to achieve set objectives. It will result in a coordinated effort across the country to reduce the deadly impact of asbestos on Australians, and will help put Australia at the forefront of international efforts to deal with asbestos.

The plan joins all Australian jurisdictions to work together to develop practical, long term solutions to the asbestos problem. It uses a phased approach to work towards the ultimate aim of eliminating asbestos-related disease.

The first phase of the plan (2014-18) focuses on conducting and disseminating research, projects and testing of approaches to gather the evidence, supporting tools, and systems to identify options that reduce the risks posed by asbestos in the built environment.

Following the current plan, further phases will be developed that will continue to work towards the goal of eliminating asbestos-related disease in Australia.

## Aim

To prevent exposure to airborne asbestos fibres in order to eliminate asbestos-related disease in Australia.

## Strategies

Six key strategies are identified as a means of achieving this goal:

- Awareness
- Best practice
- Identification
- Removal
- Research
- International leadership.

## Principles

The principles outlined below guide how the work to deliver the outcomes of the plan will be achieved.

**Precaution** – a proactive and cautious approach should be taken to ensure there is no increased risk to the community in any activities to be implemented under the plan.

**Evidence-based decision making** – decision making regarding asbestos management and awareness should be based on sound evidence and analysis from scientifically robust sources.

**Transparency** – activities will be conducted in an open and transparent manner and all stakeholders should have access to the information available.

**Public participation** – the risks of exposure to asbestos is a community issue and consideration needs to be given to the interests and concerns of all Australians.

**Collaboration** – with management of asbestos involving all tiers of government, activities must be planned and delivered through effective coordination between agencies and governments.

For more information about the National Strategic Plan, see ***www.asbestossafety.gov.au/national-strategic-plan***

# 2015-16 PROGRESS ASSESSMENT

## Strategy: Awareness

**Status: Significant progress underway**

### Progress made in 2015-16

- Deliverable 1.1, to review communications material, has been assessed as completed, following a review of national and international communications materials and awareness raising channels. Western Australia also completed a review of Australia also undertaking a review of a key asbestos awareness publication and a number of supplementary activities were also completed. This will contribute to the outcome, however deliverables 1.2 and 1.3 show there is more work to be done to achieve the behavioural change required to prevent asbestos exposure.
- All jurisdictions have identified websites, events and safety alerts as key vehicles for improving awareness about asbestos safety risks.
- 11 awareness raising activities were completed by jurisdictions in 2015-16, with remaining activities ongoing or perpetual, demonstrating a strong commitment by jurisdictions to asbestos awareness.

### Outlook for 2016-17

- There are emerging efforts being made to harness app technology to more effectively provide access to asbestos awareness materials at the time of renovations and removal work taking place.
- By the end of 2016-17, the final two deliverables will be nearing completion, noting ongoing effort will be required to promote information about asbestos safety and exposure pathways.

## NSP 1 – AWARENESS

**GOAL:** Increased public awareness of the health risks posed by working with or being exposed to asbestos

| Deliverable | | | Assessment |
|---|---|---|---|
| D1.1 Review of awareness raising information, programmes and campaigns in Australia and internationally to identify gaps and improve awareness in the Australian community of the risks of asbestos in the built environment | | | Complete |
| **Jurisdiction** | **Activity** | **Activity status** | **Outcome** |
| ASEA | **Asbestos communication campaigns and resources:** review of asbestos communication campaigns and resources in Australia research report finalised and published | Complete | O1.1 Increased community awareness of the risks posed by asbestos and its impact on the health of the community |
| WA | **Joint eLearning publication of 2013 kNOw Asbestos in Your Home:** updated resources to improve awareness of asbestos risks | Complete | |
| **Deliverable** | | | **Assessment** |
| D1.2 Develop a 'one-stop-shop' of information on asbestos-related issues, integrating information and providing referral points for members of the public | | | Significant progress underway |
| **Jurisdiction** | **Activity** | **Activity status** | **Outcome** |
| All jurisdictions | **Websites - respective jurisdiction and commonwealth asbestos websites, Asbestos Safety and Eradication Agency website:** public websites | Ongoing | O1.2 Improved access to information for those who work and live with asbestos, including where and when to source information and advice |
| NSW | **Asbestos-containing products database:** database developed and published to www.asbestosawareness.com.au | Complete | |
| SA | **Help centre for the general public:** call centre to provide information and advice on asbestos | Ongoing | |
| WA | **Information and advice for the general public:** email, telephone and web advice to the public, Worksafe website - communication materials developed | Ongoing | |
| TAS | **Helpline for general public:** email, telephone and web advice to the public providing asbestos information and advice | Ongoing | |

| Deliverable | | | Assessment |
|---|---|---|---|
| D1.3 Develop practical, evidence-based asbestos safety awareness material for people likely to come into contact with ACMs in a residential setting | | | In progress |
| **Jurisdiction** | **Activity** | **Activity status** | **Outcome** |
| NSW | **Asbestos in your home - the ultimate renovator's guide - video:** video on asbestos in the home produced | Complete | O1.3 Demonstrated cultural and behavioural change within the community as a result of improved understanding of both the health risks and exposure pathways of asbestos in both commercial and residential environments |
| NSW | **Aboriginal Communities Project:** working with Aboriginal communities - project developed | Ongoing | |
| QLD | **Promotion of short film 'Dear Dad' with safety ambassador Trevor Gillmeister:** promotion of short film to increase community awareness about asbestos safety (DIY focus) produced | Ongoing | |
| QLD | **Short film 'How to properly wear PPE':** published film to promote effective control of exposure to airborne contaminants (including asbestos) and skin exposure to contaminants in general | Complete | |
| QLD | **Short film 'Working safely with asbestos in minor renovations':** published film to promote controls for preventing exposure to asbestos during typical DIY and tradie renovation work on ACMs | Complete | |
| QLD | **Short film 'How to use, maintain and test H Class HEPA vacuum cleaners':** development of film to improve compliance of PCBUs performing asbestos related and removal work in regard to proper use of H Class vacuum cleaners | Ongoing | |
| QLD | **Asbestos and home renovations brochure:** updated materials to increase awareness about asbestos safety (DIY focus) - Information available through Bunnings and other outlets | Complete | |
| SA | **Community and industry information sessions:** community and targeted industry information sessions on health risks and exposure delivered | Ongoing | |
| VIC | **Trade Awareness Program:** November 2015 trade awareness campaign delivered | Complete | |
| WA | **Public seminars and other presentations:** presentations and seminars delivered to increase awareness | Ongoing | |

# NSP 1 – SUPPLEMENTARY ACTIVITIES

| Outcome | | |
|---|---|---|
| O1.1 Increased community awareness of the risks posed by asbestos and its impact on the health of the community | | |
| **Jurisdiction** | **Activity** | **Activity status** |
| All jurisdictions | **Asbestos week/month:** all jurisdictions support community awareness and education events in November | Ongoing |
| NSW | **National Asbestos Awareness Campaign:** Asbestos Education Committee | Ongoing |
| NSW | **Betty - the ADRI house:** awareness activities | Ongoing |
| QLD | **Home Show - March 2015 and August 2015:** Home show events attendance to increase awareness about asbestos safety (DIY focus) | Complete |
| SA | **Funding to asbestos victim support organisations:** SA Government funding to AVA and ADSSA | Ongoing |
| **Outcome** | | |
| O1.2 Improved access to information for those who work and live with asbestos, including where and when to source information and advice | | |
| **Jurisdiction** | **Activity** | **Activity status** |
| All jurisdictions | **Safety alerts:** consumer safety alerts | Ongoing |
| **Outcome** | | |
| O1.3 Demonstrated cultural and behavioural change within the community as a result of improved understanding of both the health risks and exposure pathways of asbestos in both commercial and residential environments | | |
| **Jurisdiction** | **Activity** | **Activity status** |
| ASEA | **Benchmark survey:** asbestos awareness survey results will identify changes in awareness | Complete |
| VIC | **Measuring community awareness survey:** baseline to measure community awareness of risks, how to mitigate and where to find information | Complete |

## Strategy: Best practice

**Status: In progress**

### Progress made in 2015-16

- Achievement of three of the four deliverables of the plan has been assessed as *In Progress*.
- New South Wales, South Australia and Western Australia have all undertaken work to review disaster planning and practices (D2.3) and ASEA anticipates this deliverable will be finalised in 2016-17 with a national review.
- Nine best practice activities were completed by jurisdictions in 2015-16, with the remaining activities ongoing, demonstrating a strong commitment by jurisdictions to identifying and sharing best practice approaches.

### Outlook for 2016-17

- Two of the four deliverables of the plan, D2.3 and D2.4, are anticipated to be completed in 2016-17, finalising two of the four deliverables for this strategy.

## NSP 2 – BEST PRACTICE

**GOAL:** Identify and share best practice in asbestos management, education, handling, storage and disposal

| Deliverable | | | Assessment |
|---|---|---|---|
| D2.1 Identify opportunities to share best practice for initiatives related to the safe management of asbestos such as licensing, education, training and home renovations where ACMs may be present | | | Significant progress underway |
| **Jurisdiction** | **Activity** | **Activity status** | **Outcome** |
| All jurisdictions | **Asbestos licensing:** licensing of removalists and assessors, including training and compliance checks to improve management practices | Ongoing | O2.1 Evidence-based best practice to minimise risks in targeted areas |
| ASEA | **Case studies:** development and promotion of case studies that identify best practice opportunities in asbestos training, management and removal to targeted audiences | Ongoing | |
| NSW | **Model asbestos policy for councils:** model policy developed for NSW councils to improve local government management practices | Complete | |
| NT | **Education for asbestos identification and removal:** education sessions on WHS requirements for safe management of asbestos delivered | Complete | |
| QLD | **Contact with asbestos removal licence holders to increase compliance with certain requirements:** regulatory compliance checks delivered to improve management practices | Ongoing | |
| WA | **Guidance documents - health related:** revision of the Health (Asbestos) Regulations 1992 to improve management practices in residential sector | Ongoing | |
| ACT & NSW | Information sharing and collaboration between governments - ACT Government's Asbestos Response Taskforce and the NSW Loose-fill Asbestos Implementation Taskforce collaboration in relation to policy and program design | Ongoing | |
| **Deliverable** | | | **Assessment** |
| D2.2 Identify industry needs and gaps in awareness and training for workers who may come into contact with ACMs - such as tradespeople - and develop model training options for industry adoption | | | In progress |
| **Jurisdiction** | **Activity** | **Activity status** | **Outcome** |
| ASEA | **Model awareness training for utilities sector:** developed issues paper and model asbestos awareness training with utilities sector | Ongoing | O2.2 Model training for workers likely to come into contact with ACMs to increase competency and decrease risk |
| ACT | **Workers to complete VET Asbestos Awareness Training:** VET Asbestos Awareness Training completed for workers as defined by the Construction Occupations Licensing Act 2004 (ACT) | Ongoing | |
| QLD | **Promoting training outline for removal of small amounts of asbestos (non licensed asbestos removal work):** training outline for non-licensed removal delivered and promoted to workers | Complete | |
| QLD | **Increasing awareness of manufacturers, suppliers, hirers and users of high pressure water equipment about the illegality and risks of using high pressure water on ACMs:** tagged high pressure water cleaners with asbestos warnings to decrease risk that it will be used on ACM | Ongoing | |
| SA | **Codes of practice summary sheets:** summary guidance for National Asbestos Codes of Practice to increase identification and risk management requirements | Complete | |
| SA | **Contribution to Doorways2Construction:** the Doorways2Construction training program creates increased awareness and knowledge on how to manage ACM for young people considering construction as a career | Ongoing | |

| Deliverable | | | Assessment |
|---|---|---|---|
| D2.3 Review disaster planning practices and information regarding the risks of exposure to asbestos to assist in times of emergencies and natural disasters | | | Significant progress underway |
| **Jurisdiction** | **Activity** | **Activity status** | **Outcome** |
| NSW | **Natural disaster response:** developed state-wide emergency response plan – including ACM responsibilities | Complete | O2.3 Australian communities are supported to manage asbestos risks during natural disasters or emergencies |
| SA | **Bushfire information and strategies for clean-up:** developed post disaster strategies | Complete | |
| WA | **Guidance documents - fire related:** publication produced on Management of Fire Damaged Asbestos | Complete | |

| Deliverable | | | Assessment |
|---|---|---|---|
| D2.4 Identify and promote best practice transport, storage and disposal practices, including support for -<br>› initiatives to encourage safe storage and disposal at licensed facilities<br>› initiatives for the reporting of illegal disposal sites | | | In progress |
| **Jurisdiction** | **Activity** | **Activity status** | **Outcome** |
| NSW | **WasteLocate project:** delivered project to track movement of this waste to the EPA. The EPA has developed an easy to use online tool, WasteLocate | Complete | O2.4 Improved transport, storage and disposal practices for ACM |
| SA | **Pro-active interventions on illegal removal, dumping and transport of asbestos:** targeted initiatives to prevent illegal dumping | Ongoing | |
| SA | **Training of EPA officers:** conducted training for EPA officers on assessing the risk of asbestos | Complete | |

# NSP 2 – SUPPLEMENTARY ACTIVITIES

| Outcome | | |
|---|---|---|
| O2.1 Evidence-based best practice to minimise risks in targeted areas | | |
| **Jurisdiction** | **Activity** | **Activity status** |
| All jurisdictions | **State-wide approach to asbestos management:** state-wide asbestos plans and strategies promote reduction in risks posed by asbestos | Ongoing |
| ACT | **WHS Regulatory Reform - Adoption of ACT Asbestos Regulation:** establishment of mandatory asbestos training for workers who may work with ACM, all asbestos must be assessed by an assessor and removed by a removalist (removal of 10m$^2$ rule) | Complete |
| ACT | **Class A asbestos removalists - safety management system:** establishment of requirement for Class A removalists to have certified safety management systems | Complete |
| Commonwealth | **Asbestos Verification Program:** Comcare asbestos verification program for NBN roll out | Ongoing |

| Outcome | | |
|---|---|---|
| O2.4 Improved transport, storage and disposal practices for ACM | | |
| **Jurisdiction** | **Activity** | **Activity status** |
| NSW | **Verification program on the management of asbestos in waste facilities:** joint verification program between SafeWork NSW and EPA NSW on the management of asbestos in waste facilities | Ongoing |
| SA | **Collaborative arrangement with EPA:** MOU developed for collaborative arrangement with EPA SA | Ongoing |

## Strategy: Identification

**Status: In progress**

### Progress made in 2015-16

- During the past 12 months, there has been an increased focus on supporting the ban on the importation of ACMs with improved coordination.
- ASEA and Western Australia have undertaken multiple activities that review approaches to grading in situ ACMs. Also, significant progress has been made in 2015-16 piloting a range of approaches to ACM identification in the residential sector.
- Eight completed activities have been identified as meeting the deliverables of this strategy. This shows a significant effort by jurisdictions in supporting asbestos identification in Australia.

### Outlook for 2016-17

- It is anticipated that imported materials containing asbestos will continue to be a priority in 2016-17. The Senate inquiry into non-conforming building products was re-adopted in the 45th Parliament and is due to report in 2017.
- Of the three remaining deliverables, it is expected that D3.1 will be further progressed and approaching completion in 2016-17. This includes the publication of the results of studies into grading in situ asbestos.

## NSP 3 – IDENTIFICATION

**GOAL:** Improve the identification and grading of asbestos and sharing of information regarding the location of ACMs

| Deliverable | | | Assessment |
|---|---|---|---|
| D3.1 Review current practices with the aim of developing:<br>› a model grading system for the condition of ACMs<br>› a model framework for the stabilisation and containment of ACMs in poor condition<br>› a model process to identify asbestos contaminated land | | | In progress |
| **Jurisdiction** | **Activity** | **Activity status** | **Outcome** |
| ASEA | **Asbestos registers:** consultation to inform models for asbestos registers and asbestos assessment | Ongoing | O3.1 Evidence-based model for grading in situ asbestos is developed |
| ASEA | **Evidence-based best practice - identification and grading of in situ asbestos:** researched options to develop evidence based guidelines for the visual identification and grading of in situ asbestos | Ongoing | |
| WA | **Guidelines on asbestos identification and assessment:** reviewed guidelines and developed guidance notes for asbestos identification and assessment | Complete | |
| ACT | **Asbestos Removal Taskforce collaboration with industry for asbestos management:** asbestos management plans for ACT Mr Fluffy residences | Ongoing | O3.2 Improved stabilisation and containment practices for ACMs in poor condition |
| NSW | **Naturally occurring asbestos (NOA):** guidance on NOA developed and improved mapping in NSW delivered to increase awareness of the risks posed by NOA | Complete | O3.3 Improved identification and management of information regarding asbestos-contaminated land |
| WA | **Guidance documents - land related:** guidance delivered on asbestos in soil, fire, mining activities, mineral fibres | Complete | |

| Deliverable | | | Assessment |
|---|---|---|---|
| D3.2 Review building and infrastructure data to estimate likely presence of ACMs | | | In progress |
| **Jurisdiction** | **Activity** | **Activity status** | **Outcome** |
| Commonwealth | **Asbestos management projects:** Defence asbestos surveys delivered to inform remaining ACM in Department of Defence estate | Ongoing | O3.4 Estimated total presence of ACMs in the built environment is available |
| **Deliverable** | | | **Assessment** |
| D3.3 Pilot residential ACM identification tools and strategies with local government partners | | | Significant progress underway |
| **Jurisdiction** | **Activity** | **Activity status** | **Outcome** |
| ASEA | **Asbestos content reports:** reviewed the use of asbestos content reports in various jurisdictions to identify consumer understanding in the residential sector | Ongoing | O3.5 Improved practice in the residential sector to identify and minimise the risk of exposure, in particular for DIY home renovators |
| ACT | **Mandatory tagging of residential properties that contained loose-fill asbestos:** introduction of requirement for mandatory tagging of Mr Fluffy properties | Complete | |
| ACT | **Register of loose-fill asbestos affected residential properties:** development of register of Mr Fluffy properties | Complete | |
| NSW | **Householders' Asbestos Disposal Scheme:** delivered NSW disposal scheme to make it easier to dispose of household ACM waste | Ongoing | |
| QLD | **LGA training for council officers:** training of local council officers regarding asbestos risk management and complaint investigation of domestic (non-workplace) asbestos issues under the Qld Public Health Legislation. Future training to be provided as needed | Complete | |
| VIC | **Domestic removal kit pilot:** provided ACM removal kits for DIY renovators | Complete | |
| WA | **Workshops to local government:** Local Government Area workshops delivered to support local government ACM management | Ongoing | |
| WA | **Identification app:** WA Department of Health research by Curtin University to develop an app to identify and rate the risk in residential sector | Ongoing | |
| **Deliverable** | | | **Assessment** |
| D3.4 Support the 2003 ban on the importation of ACMs with improved coordinated efforts to identify and respond to the importation of ACMs | | | Nearing completion |
| **Jurisdiction** | **Activity** | **Activity status** | **Outcome** |
| All jurisdictions | **HWSA rapid response protocol and fact sheet:** rapid response protocol | Ongoing | O3.6 Effective coordinated response when ACMs in imported materials are identified |
| Commonwealth | **Intelligence led and targeted testing of consumer products that may cause injury or illness because they contain asbestos:** Australian Competition & Consumer Commission consumer product safety | Complete | |
| Commonwealth | **Independent (and internal) review of Department of Immigration and Border Protection management of Australia's asbestos border control:** delivered review of Department of Immigration and Border Protection's operations to prevent asbestos importation | Complete | |

# NSP 3 – SUPPLEMENTARY ACTIVITIES

| Outcome | | |
|---|---|---|
| O3.2 Improved stabilisation and containment practices for ACMs in poor condition | | |
| **Jurisdiction** | **Activity** | **Activity status** |
| All jurisdictions | **Compliance management:** regulatory compliance checks - including inspections and audits | Ongoing |
| Commonwealth | **Remediation works:** remediation works in Defence properties, does not involve removal work | Ongoing |
| Commonwealth | **Guide to identifying and handling low density asbestos fibre board:** Safework Australia publication | Complete |
| TAS | **Asbestos registers:** review of registers | Complete |
| VIC | **In-situ asbestos project - education:** project targeting school, kindergarten and tertiary sector compliance with the OHS Regulations | Ongoing |
| **Outcome** | | |
| O3.4 Estimated total presence of ACMs in the built environment is available | | |
| **Jurisdiction** | **Activity** | **Activity status** |
| ASEA | **Waste Data and Stocks and Flow report:** produced a waste data and stocks and flow report to inform estimates of current and future remaining ACM | Due for publication 2016/2017 |
| **Outcome** | | |
| O3.5 Improved practice in the residential sector to identify and minimise the risk of exposure, in particular for DIY home renovators | | |
| **Jurisdiction** | **Activity** | **Activity status** |
| ASEA | **Guide to the removal of less than 10m$^2$:** developed booklet on the safe removal of less than 10m$^2$ of non-friable asbestos | Due for publication 2016/2017 |
| NSW | **Real Estate Industry project:** collaborated with real estate industry to inform industry awareness of ACM risks and WHS responsibilities | Ongoing |

# Strategy: Removal

## Status: Significant progress underway

### At risk

Limited support has been identified to meet deliverable 4.5, to review the risks and benefits of a prioritised removal program. However, a number of governments are taking action to remove asbestos from government and non-government buildings.

### Progress made in 2015-16

- Significant effort is being made by governments across Australia to conduct multiple removal projects, including large scale removal of loose-fill asbestos in NSW and ACT, and removing asbestos in schools in Victoria.
- Deliverable 4.3 which prescribes conducting a review into asbestos removal infrastructure (transport, storage, and disposal) has been met. In 2016, ASEA published the Asbestos Waste in Australia report, which identified that the volume of asbestos waste needing to be disposed in Australia is likely to grow at a rate of 2.8 per cent annually for at least the next 20 years.
- Significant progress has been made in the removal strategy overall, however, no activities have been identified as contributing to one of the deliverables prescribed by the plan - to review the risks and benefits of a prioritised removal program. There is limited jurisdictional support for this particular deliverable in the plan, and is at risk of being completed by 2018.

### Outlook for 2016-17

- Two of the five deliverables prescribed by the plan in the removal strategy require the conduct of reviews and investigative research, which is yet to commence. ASEA will facilitate this work by coordinating efforts in this area in 2016-17.
- In addition, it is anticipated that preliminary research undertaken by the agency to identify the location of ACMs that may present a risk for deterioration will be completed in 2016-17.
- Management of risk: to facilitate meeting the deliverable 4.4 noted as at risk, ASEA will investigate the potential impact of prioritised removal through research. This will be structured to ensure there is a focus on how such a review could practically contribute to reducing asbestos-related disease.

# NSP 4 – REMOVAL

**GOAL:** Identify priority areas where ACMs present a risk, identify the barriers to the safe removal of asbestos and review management removal infrastructure to estimate the capacity and rate for the safe removal of asbestos

| Deliverable | | | Assessment |
|---|---|---|---|
| D4.1 Identify priority areas where ACMs may present a risk due to deterioration for action | | | Significant progress underway |
| **Jurisdiction** | **Activity** | **Activity status** | **Outcome** |
| Commonwealth | **Managing ACM risks:** Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade - Asbestos management plans - for overseas Commonwealth properties | Ongoing | O4.1 Priority actions identified support removal of ACMs in poor condition |
| WA | **Audit of asbestos management in government buildings:** proactive audit of asbestos management in government buildings | Complete | |
| **Deliverable** | | | **Assessment** |
| D4.2 Develop and conduct projects in various locations and conditions where ACMs are in poor condition or likely to cause risks to ensure removal approaches are effective | | | Significant progress underway |
| **Jurisdiction** | **Activity** | **Activity status** | **Outcome** |
| ASEA | **Effectiveness of asbestos removal:** identify projects in various locations and conditions undertaken by government and business to review appropriateness and effectiveness of asbestos removal to reduce risk of asbestos-related disease | Ongoing | O4.2 Options to remove asbestos in poor condition are practical, evidence-based and targeted towards sources of asbestos-related disease |
| ACT | **Loose-Fill Asbestos Insulation Eradication Scheme - proactive community engagement:** ACT Taskforce conducted community engagement to increase knowledge and awareness about asbestos risks and provide community support | Ongoing | |
| ACT | **Loose-Fill Asbestos Insulation Eradication Scheme - removal:** removal of loose fill asbestos insulation from over 1000 dwellings, and subsequent safe demolition and disposal of rubble | Ongoing | |
| Commonwealth | **Planned works for asbestos removal across the portfolio of Finance - small to medium projects based on risk:** Department of Finance delivered planned works for asbestos removal across the portfolio from small to medium projects based on risk | Ongoing | |
| Commonwealth | **Funding for the NT Govt for asbestos management and removal in NT Communities:** provision of funding to the NT Government for the risk management, remediation and removal of dangerous asbestos and asbestos-containing materials from NT communities. Finalised 30 June 2016 | Complete | |
| NT | **National Partnership on NT Remote Aboriginal Investment (previously known as Stronger Futures in the Northern Territory (SFNT)) Remote Australia Strategy Implementation Plan:** removal and management of ACM in remote communities | Complete | |
| Commonwealth | **Defence Estate Works Program:** significant asbestos removal and management projects undertaken within Defence through the Defence Estate Works Program (EWP) | Ongoing | |
| NSW | **Loose-Fill Asbestos Taskforce:** identification of loose-fill asbestos in NSW | Ongoing | |
| QLD | **Reimbursement scheme for local councils carrying out priority clean-up of certain urgent asbestos incidents:** support for local councils in managing the clean-up of asbestos incidents which meet certain criteria | Complete | |
| SA | **Management of the asbestos waste legacy in the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY) lands:** management and removal of asbestos waste from remote Aboriginal communities | Due for completion Sept 2016 | |
| SA | **Removal of asbestos in government buildings:** removal of asbestos in government buildings based on risk grading of asbestos | Ongoing | |
| VIC | **Removal of asbestos from schools program:** prioritised removal of asbestos in schools | Ongoing | |
| VIC | **Victorian Asbestos Eradication Agency:** developing Victorian government agency to target and prioritise removal of asbestos across government buildings | Ongoing | |
| Commonwealth | **Asbestos Removal from Christmas Island National Park** | Complete | |

| Deliverable | | | Assessment |
|---|---|---|---|
| D4.3 Conduct a review into asbestos removal infrastructure (transport, storage and disposal facilities) across Australia focusing on capacity and future risks | | | In progress |
| **Jurisdiction** | **Activity** | **Activity status** | **Outcome** |
| Commonwealth | **Hazardous waste data and reporting:** Department of Environment has undertaken a series of studies as inputs towards the reform of Australian hazardous waste policies, regulations, markets and management, which are relevant to asbestos | Ongoing | O4.3 Asbestos removal infrastructure can meet the future needs and demands of ageing ACMs without creating increased risk |
| **Deliverable** | | | **Assessment** |
| D4.4 Investigate the barriers to the safe removal of ACMs from government, commercial and residential properties, and develop policy options to support removal of asbestos in poor condition | | | In progress |
| **Jurisdiction** | **Activity** | **Activity status** | **Outcome** |
| ASEA | **Asbestos risk management practices in remote Indigenous communities:** consultation and evidence coordination of asbestos risk management practices in remote Indigenous communities - report drafted | Ongoing | O4.4 The barriers to the safe removal of ACMs are reviewed and options to address the challenges faced by government, commercial and residential sectors are evaluated |
| ACT | **Buy back of houses of entirely bonded asbestos sheeting** | Complete | |
| QLD | **Pilot scheme on disposal options for homeowners needing to dispose of small quantities of asbestos waste:** improved access to asbestos waste disposal facilities and reducing illegal dumping | Ongoing | |
| **Deliverable** | | | **Assessment** |
| D4.5 Review the potential risks and benefits of a prioritised removal program to safely remove ACMs in government occupied and controlled buildings and commercial premises, including the requirement for exceptions, to reduce asbestos-related disease | | | No activities identified |

# NSP 4 – SUPPLEMENTARY ACTIVITIES

| Outcome | | |
|---|---|---|
| O4.1 Priority actions identified support removal of ACMs in poor condition | | |
| **Jurisdiction** | **Activity** | **Activity status** |
| ACT | **Demolition Code of Practice adoption:** adoption of the code of practice | Complete |
| SA | **Construction initiatives:** deliver proactive initiatives on major construction projects to reduce ACM risks | Ongoing |
| **Outcome** | | |
| O4.4 The barriers to the safe removal of ACMs are reviewed and options to address the challenges faced by government, commercial and residential sectors are evaluated | | |
| **Jurisdiction** | **Activity** | **Activity status** |
| ACT | **ACT Asbestos regulation adoption:** mandates the licensing of asbestos assessment and removal work - 10m$^2$ | Complete |
| WA | **Improved identification of ACM pre-demolition:** asbestos surveys required pre-demolition | Ongoing |

# Strategy: Research

## Status: Significant progress underway

### Progress made in 2015-16

- Of the two research deliverables, the first, to identify key relevant national research to enable better sharing of information to inform policy and best practice, is close to being met. A number of national activities have supported this deliverable. In addition, ASEA has launched a national research framework and online research portal to facilitate access to this material and support meeting this deliverable.
- During the past 12 months, a number of research projects have been undertaken in NSW, ACT, WA and the Commonwealth about asbestos and asbestos-related disease, which highlights the continued effort by governments to commission vital research to reduce the risks of ARDs in Australia.

### Outlook for 2016-17

- By the end of 2016-17, it is anticipated that key research will be identified and shared through a National Asbestos Profile that ASEA is developing for Australia.
- The deliverable that prescribes a requirement to commission and promote research is perpetual, and this will continue to be undertaken in 2016-17.
- ASEA will deliver a comprehensive research program that will provide the evidence to support the implementation of all strategies of the National Strategic Plan.

# NSP 5 – RESEARCH

**GOAL:** Commission, monitor and promote research into the prevention of asbestos exposure and asbestos-related disease

| Deliverable | | | Assessment |
|---|---|---|---|
| D5.1 Identify key national and international research and reports to enable better sharing of information to inform policy and best practice | | | Nearing completion |
| **Jurisdiction** | **Activity** | **Activity status** | **Outcome** |
| ASEA | **National research framework:** developed national research framework in consultation with stakeholders and support dissemination of research to focus on third wave exposure risks | Complete | O5.1 Coordination of key research supports evidence informed policy and practice |
| NSW | **Research - review literature:** reviewed literature and maintained watch list of emerging asbestos hazard issues | Ongoing | |
| VIC | **Asbestos reporting to local government - data collection and analysis project:** review of data available in Victoria for local government asbestos reporting | Complete | |

| Deliverable | | | Assessment |
|---|---|---|---|
| D5.2 Commission and promote research that reduces the risks of exposure to asbestos and minimises the impact of asbestos-related disease | | | In progress |
| **Jurisdiction** | **Activity** | **Activity status** | **Outcome** |
| ASEA | **Research on exposure risk:** disseminated research on sources of exposure risk in the Australian community (remote communities, illegal dumping, grey literature, and fibre release) | Ongoing | O5.2 Commissioned research identifies practical and innovative approaches to prevent or minimise risks from exposure to asbestos fibres, and support for people with asbestos-related diseases |
| ASEA | **Research evidence to inform post exposure advice and monitoring:** delivered evidence to inform post exposure advice and monitoring | Complete | |
| ASEA | **Future burden of mesothelioma:** published research on identifying the future burden of mesothelioma | Complete | |
| ACT | **Research - long term effects of loose-fill asbestos:** research on impact living within a Mr Fluffy property | Ongoing | |
| Commonwealth | **Australia Mesothelioma Registry (AMR):** maintenance of the Australian Mesothelioma Registry | Ongoing | |
| NSW | **Research - assess cost/benefit of screening for mesothelioma:** updated guidelines for health screening and monitoring | Complete | |
| NSW | **Research - provide epidemiological/research studies:** commissioned research studies and report on trends and risk profiles | Ongoing | |
| WA | **Research into groups at risk of ARD:** commissioned research on high risk groups for developing mesothelioma as a result of exposure | Ongoing | |

# NSP 5 – SUPPLEMENTARY ACTIVITIES

| Outcome | | |
|---|---|---|
| O5.1 Coordination of key research supports evidence informed policy and practice | | |
| **Jurisdiction** | **Activity** | **Activity status** |
| ASEA | **National Asbestos Exposure Register:** manage and promote the National Asbestos Exposure Register (NAER) and publish first report on the NAER report analysis | Ongoing |

| Outcome | | |
|---|---|---|
| O5.2 Commissioned research identifies practical and innovative approaches to prevent of minimise risks from exposure to asbestos fibres, and support for people with asbestos-related diseases | | |
| **Jurisdiction** | **Activity** | **Activity status** |
| Commonwealth | **Defence Asbestos Evaluation Exposure Scheme (DAEES):** assisting people who have been exposed to asbestos | Ongoing |

# Strategy: International leadership

## Status: Significant progress underway

### Progress made in 2015-16

- The Australian Government has a significant role to play to ensure the achievement of these deliverables due to the international focus of this strategy. This involves the Department of Environment, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, and the agency working collaboratively to support sharing Australia's knowledge and expertise to prevent the continued use of chrysotile asbestos.
- Both of the deliverables for the international strategy are perpetual and require continued effort each year. Significant effort has been made by government in 2015-16 to pursue opportunities through a variety of channels for improvements in international arrangements for asbestos awareness, management, and a global ban on asbestos mining and manufacturing.

### Outlook for 2016-17

- During 2016-17, it is expected that continued efforts will be made to share research and evidence, with a focus on Australia's neighbours in the South-East Asia region.
- A key highlight of 2016-17 will be the Conference of the Parties for the Rotterdam Convention.

# NSP 6 – INTERNATIONAL LEADERSHIP

**GOAL:** Australia continues to play a leadership role in a global campaign for a worldwide ban on asbestos mining and manufacturing

| Deliverable | | | Assessment |
|---|---|---|---|
| D6.1 Pursue opportunities for improvements in international arrangements for asbestos awareness, management and a global ban on asbestos mining and manufacturing | | | Significant progress underway |
| **Jurisdiction** | **Activity** | **Activity status** | **Outcome** |
| Commonwealth | **Support of the listing of chrysotile in the Rotterdam Convention:** Department of Environment - coordinates whole of government response to supporting the listing of chrysotile on the Rotterdam Convention | Ongoing | O6.1 International issues relating to asbestos and asbestos-related disease are effectively coordinated |
| ASEA | **International activities - asbestos mining and manufacturing, awareness and management:** awareness and management on an international level. Provision of support for international activities promoting asbestos bans | Ongoing | O6.2 Australia recognised as an international voice in the global campaign against asbestos hazards |
| **Deliverable** | | | **Assessment** |
| D6.2 Commission and promote research that reduces the risks of exposure to asbestos and minimises the impact of asbestos-related disease | | | In progress |
| **Jurisdiction** | **Activity** | **Activity status** | **Outcome** |
| ASEA | **Internationally share knowledge and information:** proactively share knowledge, tools and information on best practice with other countries and relevant international organisations | Ongoing | O6.3 Best practice for awareness, management and eradication of asbestos is shared internationally |
| ASEA | **International Conference:** delivered 2015 Conference | Complete | |
| Commonwealth | **Australian Aid Program:** Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade - support for asbestos management in developing countries | Ongoing | |

# PROGRESS REVIEW

## Review of progress by the Chair of Asbestos Safety and Eradication Council

**The Asbestos Safety and Eradication Council is an independent body established by the Asbestos Safety and Eradication Agency Act 2013. Members represent the Commonwealth, state and territory governments, workers and employers and other experts, as appointed by the Minister for Employment. The Council's functions include monitoring the implementation of the National Strategic Plan by Commonwealth, state, territory and local governments.**

**To fulfil this function, the Council has reviewed the progress report and the Chair of the Council has provided the following assessment on behalf of the Council.**

The Asbestos Safety and Eradication Council is pleased to note the progress that has been reported through the first National Strategic Plan for Asbestos Awareness Progress Report on the implementation of the plan. The agreement of a national approach that is represented in the plan is a significant achievement for Australia in working towards the elimination of asbestos-related disease.

The Council notes reported activities indicate there are multiple activities taking place under the removal strategy. We encourage further reporting of removal activities that will hopefully demonstrate the removal of asbestos is not cost-prohibitive and can be achieved on a large scale. It is a challenge that we believe can be addressed, despite concerns some may have about the scale and cost. Council is particularly pleased to note the efforts being undertaken to remove asbestos from remote Indigenous communities in the Northern Territory. This example demonstrates that governments can effectively invest in the prevention of asbestos-related disease by linking the removal of ACM to building and housing maintenance programs.

This Progress Report highlights that the importance of cooperation to eliminate asbestos risks from our built environment. The Council is an effective tripartite body. Working collaboratively with industry, employer and employee representatives, disease support groups and independent experts is critical to achieving the ambitious goals of the National Strategic Plan.

Whilst much is being done to raise awareness and deliver removal projects, the Council also encourages focus on Outcome 4.4 of the National Strategic Plan; the systematic removal of asbestos-containing material. This was a conclusion of the Asbestos Management Review, which recommended this be examined in more detail. Specifically, the Review found:

- Prioritised removal and risk management are not mutually exclusive. A program should be considered that would build on the current risk management approach by mandating that, depending on the level of risk it poses, all in situ ACMs be progressively removed within defined periods. It could also encourage and support ongoing opportunistic removal of ACMs, such as during major renovations. Accordingly, the National Strategic Plan should also include an activity to investigate, assess and evaluate the costs and benefits of extending current asbestos risk management principles and practices to require the staged, systematic safe removal of ACMs that are deemed to pose a risk within defined timeframes.

As the Review stated, risk management and prioritised removal are complementary. Removal efforts should be directed to sources of highest risk. Prioritised removal is a strategy to address and ultimately prevent asbestos-related disease. The Council therefore believes it is appropriate that all governments and stakeholders be encouraged to now also focus on this.

**Geoff Fary**
**Chair of the Asbestos Safety and Eradication Council**

# SUPPORTING EVIDENCE AND DATA

This chapter highlights the available data in Australia regarding asbestos awareness, removal and disposal. There is no single source of data that can accurately measure progress towards elimination of asbestos-related disease in Australia. The most effective data that is available are awareness levels of the risks posed by asbestos, and evidence that the remaining asbestos in our built environment is being safely removed and disposed. Over time, these data sources will show the management of asbestos out of our built environment and identify emerging trends.

## Awareness

We are pleased to note some change in targeted demographics; although it is too soon to identify change in the general population.

Research shows that DIY renovators remain an at-risk group. The results of the 2016 survey suggest DIY renovators knowledge of asbestos risks is lower than the 2014 survey found.

In 2014, the agency conducted a nationwide baseline survey to assess community awareness, understanding and attitudes regarding asbestos in the domestic built environment – this is known as Survey 1. In 2016, the agency commissioned an updated assessment of the community's awareness levels of asbestos (Survey 2).

To ensure comparability between Survey 1 and Survey 2 research, the same contact methodology was used along with a similar sample structure and survey questions. In Survey 2, the study engaged 1,125 members of the Australian general population, 848 DIY home renovators and 130 real estate agents or landlords via an online survey. The research also consulted 402 tradespeople using a telephone survey approach. All participants in the research were randomly selected and invited to participate (not self-selected). Fieldwork took place between 3 May and 26 May 2016.

Summary results are provided below. For more information, see www.asbestossafety.gov.au/research

### General population

There is widespread recognition of the importance of being knowledgeable about asbestos and its dangers. However, actual knowledge and the perception of being informed have moderated.

- In 2016, around three quarters of Australians (76% in both Survey 1 and 2) felt it was important to be knowledgeable about asbestos and its dangers. Positively, the depth of this conviction has hardened since Survey 1 with 43% strongly agreeing (Survey 1) compared to 52% in Survey 2.
- However, the perception of being informed about asbestos has softened slightly since Survey 1 with 52% (Survey 1) saying they felt informed vs. 47% (in Survey 2). Similarly, 53% said they felt knowledgeable in Survey 1 compared to 49% in Survey 2.
- DIYers experienced the greatest decline in perceptions of being informed and feeling knowledgeable with 62% stating they felt informed in Survey 1 compared to 49% in Survey 2. 67% felt knowledgeable in Survey 1 compared to 53% in Survey 2. In addition to this, fewer DIYers felt that knowledge of asbestos and its dangers were important (87% Survey 1 vs. 78% Survey 2).
- Also of concern is the attitudes of younger Australians (those aged under 50 years of age) and in particular the lower level of importance they place on knowledge of asbestos (84% of those aged 50+ years felt knowledge was important compared to 70% of those under 50 years). Younger Australians have substantially lower levels of knowledge and feel less informed about asbestos compared to their older counterparts (62% of those aged 50+ felt knowledgeable compared to 40% of those under 50 years, 59% of those aged 50+ felt informed compared to 40% of those under 50 years). These findings are of particular concern as this younger group is becoming more engaged in DIY (albeit more likely to conduct DIY on newer housing stock, i.e. post 1990), and an awareness of the dangers of asbestos when conducting DIY is critical.

## Target groups

Tradespeople:
Positive attitude towards asbestos remained largely consistent across the surveys.

- This group has the strongest awareness of the dangers of asbestos across all key audiences included in this research. While the other three audiences experienced a softening in some attitudes towards asbestos, tradespeople have conversely seen a positive uplift in some of their attitudes.
- Almost all reported their business/organisation take asbestos and its dangers seriously (93% Survey 1, 95% Survey 2). Similarly, employees also reported that they are positively discouraged to take any risks on a job site when asbestos is involved (94% Survey 1, 94% Survey 2).

DIY home renovators:
DIY home renovators experienced the largest negative shift in awareness and attitudes towards the dangers of asbestos.

- In Survey 1, 38% of DIY home renovation enthusiasts reported having undertaken some form of home renovation in properties built before 1990. In Survey 2, this declined significantly to 31%.

Real estate agents and private landlords:
The importance of knowledge and understanding of asbestos appears to be slipping amongst this audience.

- In Survey 1, just under 50% of estate agents/ landlords believed that understanding asbestos is important. This sentiment has decreased somewhat to just under 40% in Survey 2. This may be a result of:
  - A lack of enquiries from tenants/clients, which have notably declined between the two surveys (25% Survey 1, 17% Survey 2)
  - A drop in the proportion of real estate agents/ landlords that recognise they have a duty of care to their tenants and legal obligations (though the latter shift is not significant).

# REMOVAL NOTIFICATIONS

## Asbestos removal notifications provided to work health and safety regulators

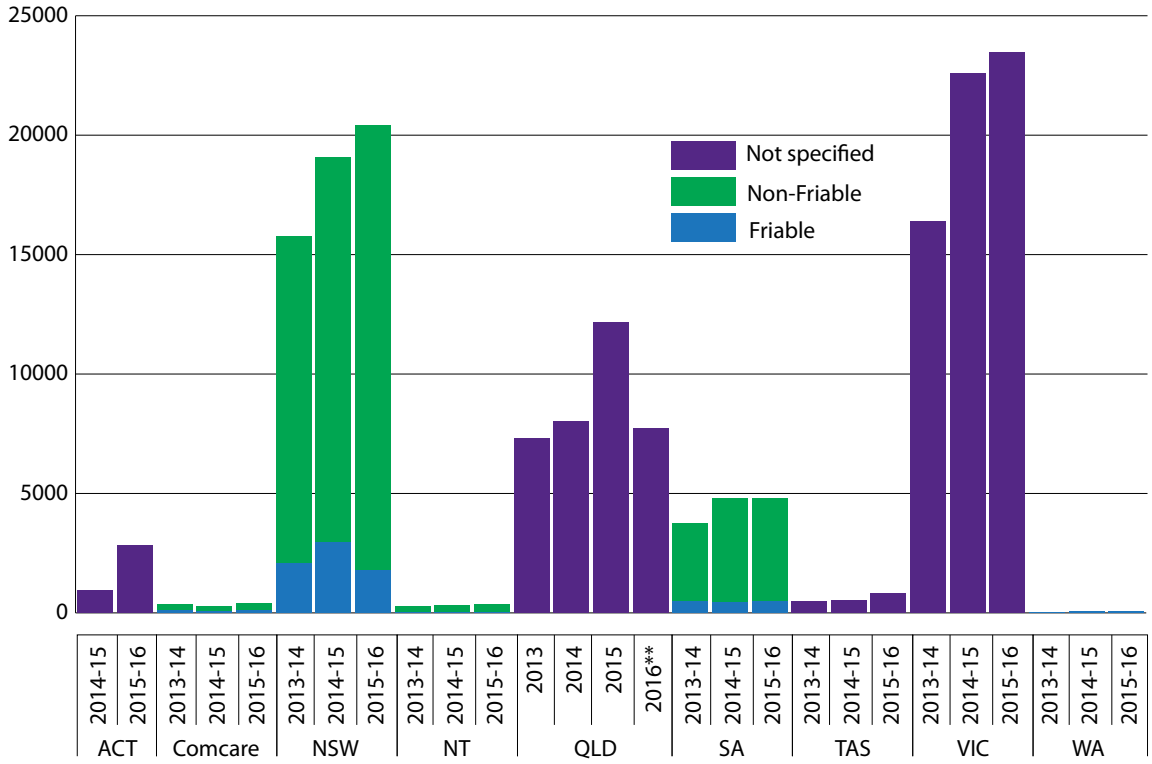
This is the first national collation of asbestos removal data. Inconsistencies in the collection and reporting of data limits analysis. We recommend more consistent approaches to recording asbestos removal notifications, particularly the amount of asbestos being removed.

The requirement for licenced asbestos removalists to notify the WHS regulator prior to commencing removal varies slightly in each state and territory. A summary of requirements is provided below.

| Jurisdiction | Non-Friable | Friable |
|---|---|---|
| Commonwealth | Five days prior<br>Estimated amount | Five days prior<br>Estimated amount |
| NSW | Five days prior<br>Estimated amount | Five days prior<br>Estimated amount |
| QLD | Five days prior<br>Estimated amount | Five days prior<br>Estimated amount |
| VIC | Five days prior<br>Estimated amount | Five days prior<br>Estimated amount |
| SA | Five days prior<br>Estimated amount | Five days prior<br>Estimated amount |
| WA | Not required | Seven days prior<br>Estimated amount |
| NT | Five days prior<br>Estimated amount | Five days prior<br>Estimated amount |
| ACT | Five days prior<br>Estimated amount | Five days prior<br>Estimated amount |
| TAS | Five days prior<br>Estimated amount | Five days prior<br>Estimated amount |

There are currently no uniform requirements on how asbestos removal notification data is provided across jurisdictions. Asbestos removalists provide information on the quantity of asbestos to be removed in a wide range of formats (including metres squared, cubic metres, tonnes, bags and skips). The development of a more consistent and streamline process for collating and reporting removal notification data would improve the ability to monitor and analyse removal patterns and trends.

## Figure 1: Notification of asbestos removal (to WHS regulators)




This table outlines the number of notifications WHS regulators have received for asbestos removal works. As noted above, there are variations on what is required to be notified in each jurisdiction. What is apparent is that over the last three financial years, there is a national trend towards increasing numbers of removal notifications.

This may indicate that more removal jobs are being undertaken, or an increase in understanding of reporting requirements by duty holders, or a combination of both of these factors.

Note: Amendments to Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (ACT) commenced 1 January 2015.

**Table 1:** Sum of Licensed asbestos removal work notifications

| | Friable | Non-Friable | Not specified | Grand Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| ACT | | | 3774 | 3774 |
| 2014-15 | | | 961 | 961 |
| 2015-16 | | | 2813 | 2813 |
| Comcare | 246 | 813 | | 1059 |
| 2013-14 | 85 | 276 | | 361 |
| 2014-15 | 66 | 205 | | 271 |
| 2015-16 | 95 | 332 | | 427 |
| NSW | 6815 | 48435 | | 55250 |
| 2013-14 | 2053 | 13709 | | 15762 |
| 2014-15 | 2963 | 16124 | | 19087 |
| 2015-16 | 1799 | 18602 | | 20401 |
| NT | 71 | 913 | | 984 |
| 2013-14 | 13 | 288 | | 301 |
| 2014-15 | 28 | 287 | | 315 |
| 2015-16 | 30 | 338 | | 368 |
| QLD | | | 35225 | 35225 |
| 2013 | | | 7320 | 7320 |
| 2014 | | | 8002 | 8002 |
| 2015 | | | 12169 | 12169 |
| 2016 | | | 7734 | 7734 |
| SA | 1389 | 11981 | | 13370 |
| 2013-14 | 464 | 3305 | | 3769 |
| 2014-15 | 455 | 4347 | | 4802 |
| 2015-16 | 470 | 4329 | | 4799 |
| TAS | | | 1781 | 1781 |
| 2013-14 | | | 465 | 465 |
| 2014-15 | | | 508 | 508 |
| 2015-16 | | | 808 | 808 |
| VIC | | | 62476 | 62476 |
| 2013-14 | | | 16411 | 16411 |
| 2014-15 | | | 22606 | 22606 |
| 2015-16 | | | 23459 | 23459 |
| WA | 163 | | | 163 |
| 2013-14 | 37 | | | 37 |
| 2014-15 | 63 | | | 63 |
| 2015-16 | 58 | | | 58 |
| Grand Total | 8684 | 62142 | 103256 | 174082 |

In addition to the number of notifications, some jurisdictions have provided the total amount of asbestos removal in $m^2$, $m^3$ or tonnes. This has been collated below. It suggests that while the number of removal jobs is increasing, this may not be translating to significantly larger quantities of asbestos being removed. As there is no mandatory way for the amount of ACM being removed to be recorded, and it is generally an estimate by the removalist, there is limited insight which can be gained at this stage. We suggest that more consistent guidance in this area would lead to improved ability for analysing this data and understanding the removal trends in Australia.

Table 2: Quantity of Asbestos removed (where available)

| Jurisdiction | Year | Type | Estimated quantity removed $m^2$ | Estimated quantity removed $m^3$ | Estimated quantity removed tonnes |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| QLD | 2015* | Not specified | 1138000 | 55800 | 177330 |
| | 2016** | Not specified | 1114000 | | |
| SA | 2013-14 | Friable | 19794 | | |
| | 2014-15 | Friable | 35688 | | |
| | 2015-16 | Friable | 28710 | | |
| | 2013-14 | Non-friable | 387621 | | |
| | 2014-15 | Non-friable | 464511 | | |
| | 2015-16 | Non-friable | 421903 | | |
| VIC | 2013-14 | Non-friable | 1076366 | | |
| | 2014-15 | Non-friable | 1132570 | | |
| | 2015-16 | Non-friable | 1238793 | | |
| | 2013-14 | Friable | | 13810 | |
| | 2014-15 | Friable | | 121580 | |
| | 2015-16 | Friable | | 16571 | |
| Comcare | 2013-14 | Non-friable | 1401539^ | | |
| | 2014-15 | Non-friable | 200147 | | |
| | 2015-16 | Non-friable | 122483 | | |
| | 2013-14 | Friable | 112512 | | |
| | 2014-15 | Friable | 450849 | | |
| | 2015-16 | Friable | 234175 | | |
| NSW | 2013 (Oct-Dec) | Friable | 58205 | | 25647 |
| | 2014 | Friable | 75531 | | 63456 |
| | 2015 | Friable | 338931 | | 697399 |
| | 2016 (Jan-present) | Friable | 244206 | | 991623 |
| | 2013 (Oct-Dec) | Non-friable | 497158 | | |
| | 2014 | Non-friable | 2010525 | | |
| | 2015 | Non-friable | 2203061 | | |
| | 2016 (Jan-present) | Non-friable | 2255769 | | |
| ACT | 2015 | Friable & Non-friable | | | 13.74 |
| | 2016* | Friable & Non-friable | | | 16.26 |

* As notified by duty holders – As duty holders have flexibility in how they specify the estimated quantity of asbestos being removed, there are other formats specified (e.g. bags, doors, gaskets, unspecified number of sheets). The figures estimated for 2015 do not include asbestos specified in other formats.

** Complete data for 2016 to date has not been examined, however, a preliminary analysis shows approximately 1114000 square metres of asbestos has been notified for removal.

^This number was confirmed with Comcare, who noted that the higher quantity in 2013-2014 relates to one employer.

# ASBESTOS DISPOSAL DATA

## Asbestos disposal data tracked by environmental protection agencies

Significant amounts of asbestos are being disposed of in Australia. Due to the age of the remaining asbestos in our built environment, we recommend that governments:

- Monitor that amount of waste and ensure that reporting is accurate and work towards national consistency
- Review availability of disposal facilities for household asbestos waste to ensure that households can dispose of asbestos appropriately within a reasonable distance and at a reasonable cost to minimise inappropriate and illegal disposal streams.

State and territory governments capture data on asbestos contaminated waste from their tracking systems for hazardous wastes and/or reports from licensed landfill operators. Data was provided by these governments, some directly and some from historical submissions to the Australian Government for inclusion in its annual report under The Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal.

In interpreting the data, the following issues should be considered:

1. Hazardous waste tracking systems are maintained primarily to enable checking of transport certificates and operators in the event of suspected illicit activity. Many thousands of records are collected each year. They are infrequently collated, and gaps or even errors may not be readily recognised or followed up.
2. The extent of contamination before waste needs to be considered 'asbestos contaminated' may differ between jurisdictions. NSW appears to take a particularly risk-averse position.
3. In some jurisdictions, domestic or smaller loads do not need to be tracked.
4. Soil contaminated with asbestos could potentially be reported as 'contaminated soil' rather than 'asbestos contaminated waste', and hence be missed off the record.
5. Asbestos contaminated waste from natural disasters may not always be assessed or recorded.
6. Waste may be reported in volumetric units, requiring conversion to weight. The assumed density values applied by jurisdictions may not always be consistent.

Tonnages and trends

Quantities of asbestos contaminated waste are presented in Table 1 for the last two years. Longer term annual trend data is shown in tonnes in Figure 1 and in kilograms per capita in Figure 2.

Quantities vary significantly between years and jurisdictions. Spikes are often associated with particular large projects. In the ACT, for example, the impact of the 'Mr Fluffy' home demolitions is apparent in the most recent data. NSW dominates waste generation on absolute and per capita measures, probably mainly because in that state even the smallest proportion of contamination (for example, of soil) qualifies material as asbestos contaminated waste.

Overall, a rising trend is apparent.

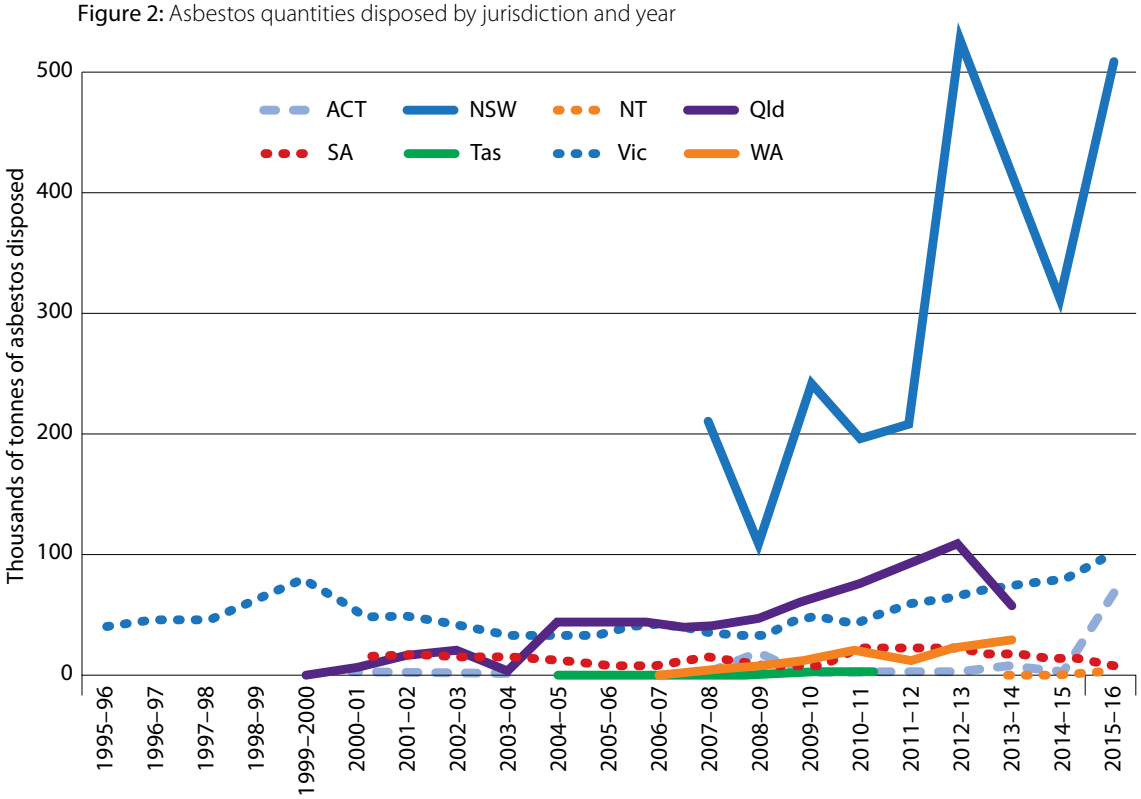
For more information about asbestos waste disposal facilities, see **www.asbestossafety.gov.au/search-disposal-facilities**

**Table 3:** Quantities of asbestos contaminated waste generated, 2014–15 and 2015–16 (tonnes)

| | ACT | NSW | NT | SA | Vic |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2014–15 | 1,766 | 305,621 | 2,000 | 14,516 | 80,078 |
| 2015–16 | 68,405 | 508,156 | 5,982 | 9,145 | 101,636 |

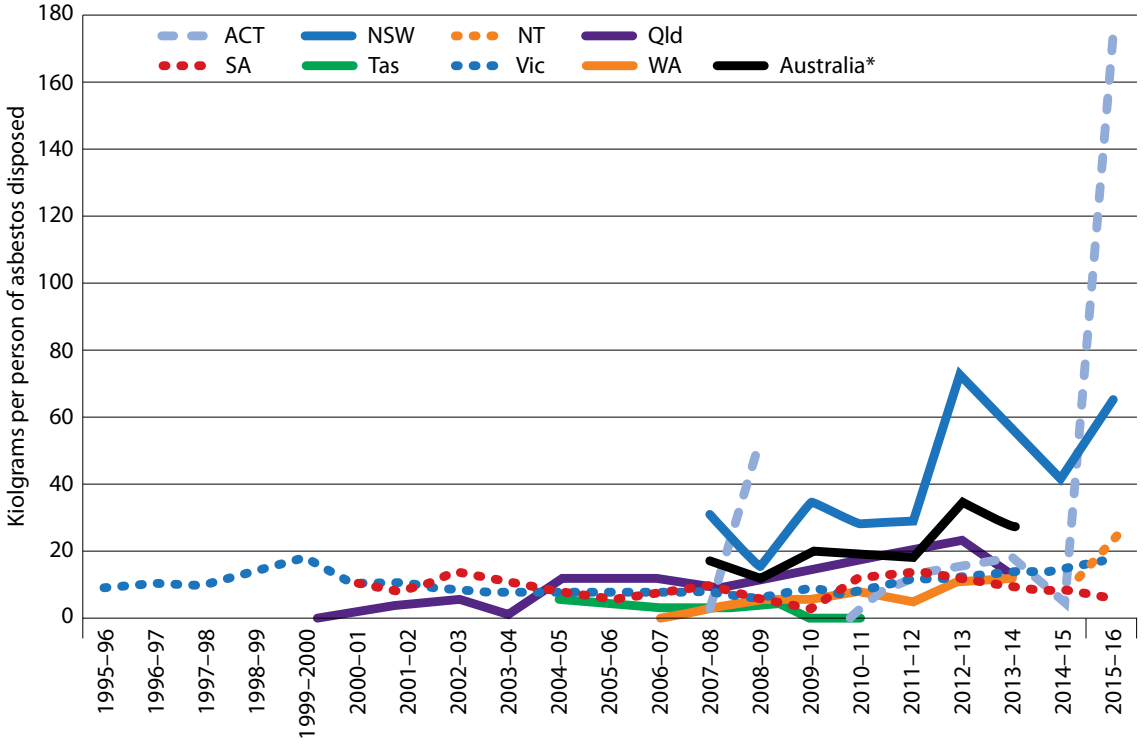
*Data was not received from Queensland, Tasmania and Western Australia*

**Figure 2:** Asbestos quantities disposed by jurisdiction and year




*Notes: Qld and Vic tracking system data were corrected to remove asbestos sent to 'storage', which was assumed to be also included in landfill data and therefore double-counted. SA data may include some limited double-counting.*

**Figure 3:** Asbestos quantities disposed per person by jurisdiction and year




** The data for Australia includes NSW, Qld, SA, Vic, WA and, for some years, ACT, NT and Tas.*

# CASE STUDIES

These case studies have been developed showing a variety of approaches to asbestos management and awareness across Australia. This section shows the depth of work being undertaken by governments in Australia working towards the outcomes of the National Strategic Plan.

## South Australia

- Managing Asbestos Waste Legacy in Remote Aboriginal Community Landfills

## Northern Territory

- Central Australia Remote Communities – Legacy Asbestos Mapping Program
- Indigenous Communities 'Medium Risk' Asbestos Remediation Program

## New South Wales

- Introduction of WasteLocate to track asbestos transport in NSW
- Loose-fill Asbestos Implementation Taskforce
- Combating Illegal Dumping: Clean-up and Prevention Program

## Western Australia

- Public Health Asbestos Regulatory Protection Package

## Australian Capital Teritory

- Asbestos Response Taskforce

## Victoria

- Asbestos in Schools Removal Program
- Asbestos Awareness Campaign for Tradespeople

## Queensland

- Tagging of High Pressure Water Cleaners

## Tasmania

- Young Construction Workers Awareness Prrogram

## Commonwealth

- Defence Estate Works Program
- Asbestos Waste Removal in NT National Parks

# SOUTH AUSTRALIA

## Link to the national strategic plan:

| Strategy | Deliverable | Outcome | Location |
|---|---|---|---|
| Removal | 4.2 Develop and conduct projects in various locations and conditions where ACMs are in poor condition or likely to cause risks to ensure removal approaches are effective. | 4.2 Options to remove asbestos in poor condition are practical, evidence-based and targeted towards sources of asbestos-related disease. | Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY) Lands, South Australia |

## Managing Asbestos Waste Legacy in Remote Aboriginal Community Landfills

### The issue

To safely manage the asbestos waste legacy across South Australia's Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY) Lands community landfills.

### Action taken

South Australia's Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure managed the remediation of landfills across the APY Lands, many of which included asbestos containing materials (ACM).

Accurately quantifying the total amount of the different ACM forms identified in APY landfill sites was difficult due to the majority of ACM being mixed with building and demolition material, or partially buried in soil mounds. It was likely that ACM was present in other parts of landfill sites, in old landfill trenches and in other disturbed areas at the sites.

It was not considered feasible, practical or cost effective to identify, transport and dispose of all ACM off-site. It was therefore decided to implement on-site management strategies for identified ACM at each landfill, adopting a precautionary approach across all of the landfill sites, minimising disturbance and access to the landfill sites, collecting and cleaning up all hard waste at each site, and burying or mounding the waste prior to capping.

Signage in both English and the Pitjantjatjara language (below) was developed and posted at remediated landfill sites. This includes a specific sign warning of the dangers of asbestos.

### Results

The program cleaned up and closed existing landfill sites and constructed new landfills at four communities - Iwantja (Indulkana), Pukatja (Ernabella), Kaltjiti (Fregon) and Pipalyatjara. The total area with hard waste including ACM cleaned up at these four sites was approximately 387,000 $m^2$.

### Outcomes

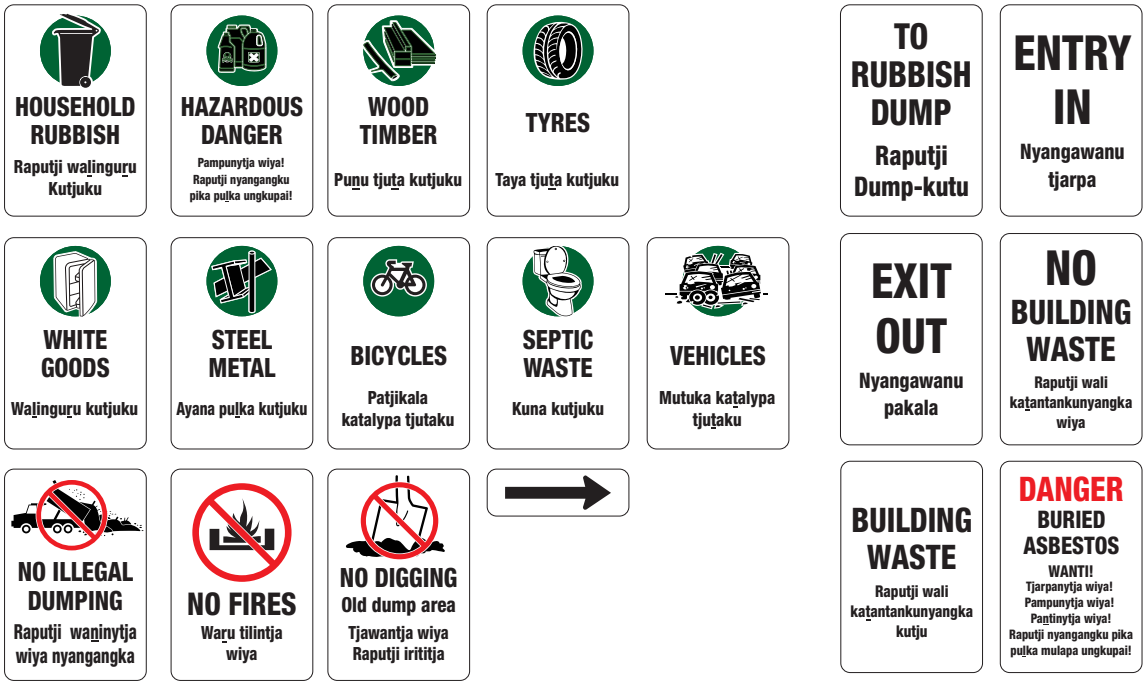
The identification of new landfills site areas was a long process, requiring extensive consultations with community members, Traditional Owners, and local community councils. As a result of these consultations it was decided not to relocate the Pipalyatjara landfill site, but to re-establish a new landfill site on remediated land adjacent to this area. The management of the asbestos contaminated areas for this landfill site remained a core focus of the remediation process. Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) approvals by the APY Anthropology Team were also required as part of the APY's cultural engagement process. This involved anthropologists ensuring that identified areas did not impinge upon land used for traditional cultural business.

Approvals for the establishment of the new landfill sites were then granted by South Australia's Development Assessment Council. These approvals required the input of other SA Government agencies, such as the Environment Protection Authority.

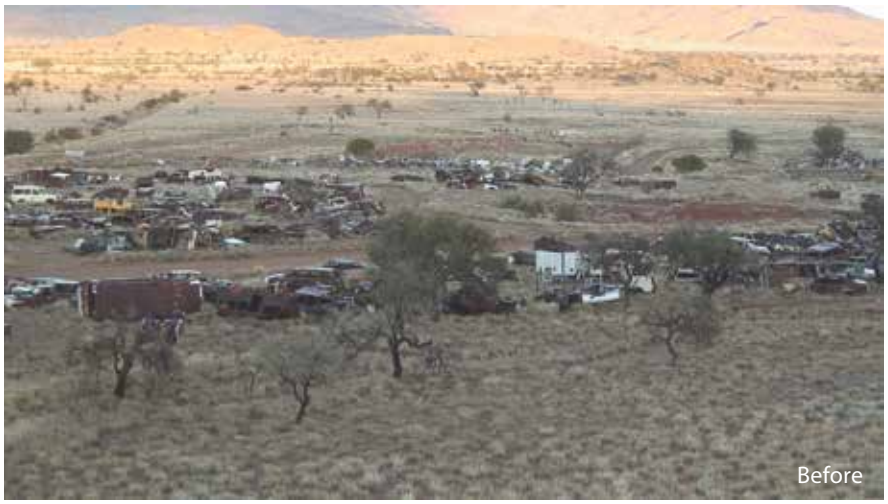
### Next steps

Evaluation of the process is not required as the remediation of the landfill sites simply involved burial of all potential ACM contaminated building waste and rubble.

Future demolitions of buildings require the identification and removal of ACM from the APY Lands before the remainder of the structure concerned is demolished.




Pipalyatjara, APY Lands, SA





Translation of the Pitjantjatjara language on the "Danger Buried Asbestos" sign:

Do not enter!
Do not touch!
Do not smell (breathe in)!
This rubbish gives
really great sickness!

Images supplied by the Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure, South Australia

# NORTHERN TERRITORY

## Link to the national strategic plan:

| Strategy | Deliverable | Outcome | Location |
|---|---|---|---|
| Identification | 3.3 Pilot residential ACM identification tools and strategies with local government partners. | 3.2 Improved stabilisation and containment practices for ACMs in poor condition. | Central Australian Remote Communities |

## Legacy Asbestos Mapping Program in Central Australian Remote Communities

### The issue

Barkly, Central Desert and MacDonnell Regional Councils recognised the need for a remote community legacy asbestos mapping program to establish the volumes of asbestos contaminated material (ACM) left in and around communities in Central Australia.

The use of building materials containing ACMs in the domestic built environment was never tracked or documented when used in the construction of housing in Central Australia. As a result it was not known how much ACMs remain in these communities.

The risk posed by asbestos is of particular concern in remote communities across Australia where the harsh environment coupled with little or no maintenance of the ACMs has caused deterioration and eventual demolition or collapse of buildings. Without proper handling or disposal methods, these ACMs have been dumped around the outskirts of the community in close proximity to where people live.

### Action taken

The objective of the "Legacy Asbestos Mapping Program" is to determine the extent of legacy asbestos in and around Central Australian Remote Communities by: Mapping the legacy asbestos not captured on the AG/NTG asbestos register, determine the volume, make plans to remediate the legacy asbestos volumes, establish budgets for the isolation & remediation of the sites, and provide asbestos education and training.

### Results

18 Communities within Central Australia have been identified to participate in the program. The project forms part of the Central Australian Waste Management Program and will provide benefits to remote communities by developing a long-term management plan for asbestos in the community.

The management plan included a 3-way strategy to:

- Identify the legacy asbestos.
- Isolate the legacy asbestos from the community.
- Make plans for the remediation of these sites.

The project is being completed in two stages.

Stage 1 of the project concentrated on the following actions:

- Identify the legacy asbestos areas.
- Map the legacy asbestos sites using a Global Information System produced for this project.
- Isolate the legacy asbestos sites by erecting a stock proof fence and signage
- Provide asbestos education material to the local authority and community and train staff in asbestos identification and removal.

Stage 2 of the project concentrated on the planning of site remediation, closure and then seeking the necessary funds to achieve these works.

Site Remediation involved the following phases:

- Asbestos removal training for local staff
- Councils applying for an Asbestos Removal Business Licence
- Site clean-up
- Burial of ACM
- Site closure
  - Applying Cover material
  - Capping
  - Revegetating
  - Recording site details
  - Erection of security fencing and signage
  - Site Clearance certificates
  - Maintenance plans

## Outcomes

This project will provide insight on the way ACMs can be mapped in remote communities to reduce the risks of exposure to asbestos fibres and assist communities in development and maintenance of asbestos management plans.

## Next steps

Funding will need to be identified through external agencies, or allocated from Council's own budgets for these remediation/closure works.

Owner ship of the Land containing the ACMs will need to be established.

Following this program the remaining 12 remote indigenous communities will need to be assessed for asbestos management plans.

## More information

**www.asbestossafety.gov.au**

# NORTHERN TERRITORY

## Link to the national strategic plan:

| Strategy | Deliverable | Outcome | Location |
|---|---|---|---|
| Removal | 4.1 Develop and conduct projects in various locations and conditions where ACMs are in poor condition or likely to cause risks to ensure removal approaches are effective. | 4.1 Priority actions identified support removal of ACMs in poor condition. | Across 54 remote Indigenous communities in the NT |

## Indigenous Communities "Medium Risk" Asbestos Remediation Program

### The issue

Asbestos is common in many of the Northern Territory's (NT) remote Indigenous communities. With funding from the Commonwealth Government, the NT Department of Housing and Community Development (the department) has implemented a project to make all community buildings in 54 remote Indigenous communities free from the risk of airborne asbestos fibres. By the end of the program, all immediate and medium risk asbestos will have been removed from these buildings.

### Action taken

A key action was community education regarding the potential health risks that asbestos can pose. In all communities, specialised training programs have been established so that the project can serve as a vehicle for skill development of local Indigenous residents on how to identify and remove asbestos.

Each of the asbestos removal contractors was required to demonstrate how they would be contributing to the development of the local community. Contractors were required to employ an Indigenous Liaison Officer and local Indigenous workers who had completed an accredited non-friable asbestos removal training course.

The department partnered with the Commonwealth's Community Development Program (CDP) providers to identify local residents who would be suited to undertake this training. A registered training provider was selected to deliver the training program covering the units from (CPCCDE3014A) Remove Non- Friable Asbestos.

The training was appropriately adapted to the cultural and literacy skills of Indigenous participants. The trainer extended the length of the program to ensure that participants had adequate time to absorb the content of the material which included additional visual resources to demonstrate safe and unsafe practices, the use of audio, videos and interpreters.

Removal contractors and licenced assessors overseeing the removal works were required to attend the training sessions to meet the participants and help contextualise the training.

### Results

279 Indigenous men and women completed the training, 151 were employed across 54 communities. A total of 12,658 hours of work have been undertaken.

### Outcomes

1) The main outcome is the remediation of medium risk asbestos throughout 54 communities in non-government public owned assets. However the significant outcome in the remote Indigenous communities in the Northern Territory was the opportunity to upskill Indigenous residents for employment opportunities which enabled engagement of the economy.

2) The opportunities to create further employment can be further developed through new government and non-government initiatives. For example the Department of Housing (Australian Government asbestos removal fund) and Indigenous Essential Services (major capital works fund) will be required to remove asbestos containing material throughout

remote communities within major projects. Utilising the remote Indigenous residents skilled in asbestos removal ensures future employment in remote areas. It also assists with significant savings with service delivery by not having to mobilise external contractors.

## Next steps

The program delivery was subject to a continuous improvement methodology driven by the collected data.

The program delivered educational outcomes, school participation, community participation and a legacy documentary about engaging Indigenous participants in community projects.

CDP providers have been advised on the next major project roll outs and are in the process of preparing certified residents to be further trained and employed.

Indigenous Business Enterprises are investing in NT major projects to ensure training and employment opportunities are further explored.

The program has created public awareness about the remaining asbestos materials still located in remote communities. This has now generated numerous enquiries to the department on how to eradicate or remediate asbestos in public housing, homelands and sewers. Research to determine remaining risk in these communities is required.

Data collection or current research into delivery methodology of programs in remote Australia will deliver consistently better outcomes if cultural and remote funders are appropriately included.

The department is currently working with other departments to explore future funding initiatives to ensure the eradication of asbestos containing materials in all properties throughout remote NT is achieved. This aims to utilise the current funding available to allow for expedient service delivery and to obtain economic beneficial outcomes for remote communities.

Images supplied from Department of Housing and Community Development

# NEW SOUTH WALES

## Link to the national strategic plan:

| Strategy | Deliverable | Outcome | Location |
|---|---|---|---|
| Removal | 4.2 Develop and conduct projects in various locations and conditions where ACMs are in poor condition or likely to cause risks to ensure removal approaches are effective. | 4.2 Options to remove asbestos in poor condition are practical, evidence-based and targeted towards sources of asbestos-related disease. | Parramatta, Sydney |

## Loose-fill Asbestos Implementation Taskforce

### The issue

On 29 June 2015, the NSW Government announced the Voluntary Purchase and Demolition Program for NSW residential premises affected by loose-fill asbestos insulation.

The objective of the program is to locate and eradicate loose-fill asbestos insulation from the NSW community. The greatest single risk to the success of this objective is failure to engage with potentially affected homeowners as a consequence of low levels of community awareness.

The program offers eligible homeowners a choice of two options: a NSW Government purchase of the premises and land, or a NSW Government purchase of the premises only.

Under the program owners of properties affected by loose-fill asbestos insulation are eligible for a range of financial assistance and support options.

### Action taken

In August 2015, NSW Fair Trading established the Loose-fill Asbestos Implementation Taskforce. The Taskforce is responsible for overseeing and implementing the Voluntary Purchase and Demolition Program and its associated assistance package. Homeowners in 28 local government areas were eligible to register for free sample testing to determine if their property contained loose-fill asbestos insulation. Sample testing is completed by NSW licensed asbestos assessors.

Owners of properties affected by loose-fill asbestos insulation are allocated a case manager who provides support and assistance including arranging further technical testing and property valuations, providing guidance on personal belongings that can be taken or disposed of, and guiding them through the acquisition process.

Where owners select to retain their land and only sell the affected premises to the NSW Government, case managers continue to provide support through the demolition and remediation phases of the program.

Case managers also provide information on the financial assistance to homeowners and tenants, including:

- $1,000 towards legal expenses
- $850 towards counselling services
- Up to $14,000 assistance for relocation expenses
- $1,000 for the replacement of soft furnishings
- $10,000 for owner investors that service a current loan and are unable to rent out the affected premises
- $15,000 for owners of rural properties.

Recent legislative amendments allow for a stamp duty concession to be passed on to an owner of a loose-fill asbestos insulation affected property purchased by the NSW Government when the owner is purchasing their next property.

A range of other legislative amendments were introduced in 2016 to identify properties affected by loose-fill asbestos insulation and to protect residents, workers and communities. This includes:

- a publicly available Loose-Fill Asbestos Insulation Register
- mandatory hazard labelling (or 'tagging') of properties that appear on the Register

- inclusion on the section 149 (2) planning certificate
- disclosure requirements for agents and landlords.

In order to build public awareness of loose-fill asbestos and to engage with homeowners, an integrated advertising, communications and engagement strategy was delivered. This included a 16 week advertising campaign that was launched in April 2016 with the headline message "Don't lose the value of your home to loose-fill asbestos". A range of communications tactics were also implemented, including social media activities and direct mail to residents in affected local government areas. The direct mail included information about loose-fill asbestos, why eligible homeowners should register for free sample testing, and the options and financial assistance available to affected homeowners and tenants. In addition to advertising and communications strategies, community, industry and stakeholder engagement was delivered in each of the 28 identified local government areas.

A further mail out to all licensed professionals in the home building industry and real estate industry regarding the legislative changes for properties affected by loose-fill asbestos is planned.

## Results

- By the time the advertising campaign ended on 1 August 2016, the paid advertising component of the public awareness campaign had reached 4.4 million citizens of NSW with its messaging at least 3 times.
- Notably the campaign had:
  - reached cumulative radio audiences of up to 1.3 million in Sydney plus an estimated 400k in regional NSW
  - attracted more than a million Facebook video viewers and gained more than 6.8 million views of digital banner advertisements.
- Direct mail reached 770,000 residences
- More than 2,800 people attended 87 community, industry and stakeholder engagement events
- As at 15 September 2016, these efforts resulted in:
  - over 77,000 registrations for free sample tests
  - 8,641 properties tested
  - 8,525 samples determined not to contain loose-fill asbestos insulation
  - 116 properties confirmed to contain loose-fill asbestos insulation
  - 25 properties affected by loose-fill asbestos insulation acquired by the NSW Government.

## Outcomes

As at September 2016, 118 properties are confirmed to contain loose-fill asbestos insulation. The NSW Government has purchased 25 affected properties and therefore removed them from the community.

## Next steps

- The program has increased awareness of loose-fill asbestos insulation. The Taskforce continues to receive enquiries about the program. Homeowners are provided with information about private testing should they have concerns about their property being affected by loose-fill asbestos insulation.
- Quantitative research into community awareness undertaken for the NSW Government by McNair Ingenuity during the public awareness campaign shows significant increases in owners' awareness of messages about the risk of loose-fill asbestos - 26% to 38% for all homes, 35% to 58% for medium risk homes and 70% to 90% for high risk homes.
- No further research is planned as the awareness building phase of the program has ended and registration period for free home testing closed on 1 August 2016.
- The program is currently being implemented and sample testing properties registered under the program is continuing. The NSW Government will purchase, demolish and remediate the land of affected properties identified in the program to ensure the objectives of the program are met.

## More information

The NSW Fair Trading website provides detailed information about the program
**www.loosefillasbestos.nsw.gov.au**

# NEW SOUTH WALES

## Link to the national strategic plan:

### Strategy
Best practice

### Deliverable
2.4 Identify and promote best practice transport and disposal practices including support for:

- initiatives to encourage safe storage and disposal at licenced facilities
- initiatives for reports of illegal disposal sites.

### Outcome
2.4 Improved transport, storage and disposal practices for ACM.

### Location
NSW – Statewide

## Introduction of WasteLocate to Track Asbestos Transport in NSW

### The issue

Introducing a new and innovative tracking tool to monitor the transportation of asbestos waste within NSW to ensure lawful disposal.

### Action taken

Illegal dumping and other compliance issues in the asbestos removal sector required a new approach to regulate the transportation of this asbestos waste and ensure its safe and lawful disposal. To achieve this, the NSW EPA introduced a GPS-enabled online tool to monitor the transportation of asbestos in NSW. WasteLocate is a smartphone and tablet application that allows those who transport these wastes to create electronic consignments that allow the EPA to monitor their movement in real time, like a parcel in the post. WasteLocate uses QR codes and scanners, making it easy for industry to comply with their reporting.

### Results

The uptake of the system has exceeded expectations, with most of the relevant parts of the industry registered and using the system and all waste facilities in NSW that receive these materials participating in the system. Approximately 2,000 consignments are being created every month and there are over 3,000 active users across the State.

WasteLocate is contributing to keeping NSW's communities safe from the health effects of asbestos by establishing a level playing field for lawful operators in the industry and making it difficult for those who illegally dump asbestos to hide. WasteLocate stores vital information about asbestos loads and provides the EPA with a tool to ensure lawful disposal of asbestos. It also provides instant alerts for non-compliances and new reporting capabilities for smarter regulation and deterrence of illegal dumping. WasteLocate has contributed to enhance service delivery and improved government services by making it easier for people to comply with the law through an easy-to-use, real time web-based service.

### Outcomes

The introduction of WasteLocate has delivered tangible improvements for legitimate businesses involved in the transportation of asbestos. It was developed with extensive consultation with major industry stakeholders, who have fully supported its introduction. These stakeholders have provided feedback to the EPA saying operators are refusing to use transporters who do not know about the system or refuse to use it. This is providing a level playing field for legitimate businesses and strengthening protection of the environment and human health in NSW.

### Next steps

The project design and implementation stages were evaluated and found that the project was delivered successfully and with high levels of support from stakeholders. It is anticipated that this will significantly reduce the number of illegal dumping incidents of asbestos over time. This will be evaluated in the near future to determine the effectiveness of WasteLocate as a deterrent of illegal dumping of asbestos.

## More information

Introduction to WasteLocate with animation
**www.epa.nsw.gov.au/wasteregulation/transport-asbestos-tyres.htm**

WasteLocate - Asbestos
**www.epa.nsw.gov.au/wasteregulation/wastelocate-asbestos.htm**

WasteLocate – Waste Tyres
**www.epa.nsw.gov.au/wasteregulation/wastelocate-tyres.htm**

Frequently asked questions
**www.epa.nsw.gov.au/wasteregulation/wastelocate-faqs.htm**

YouTube WasteLocate instructional video (asbestos)
**www.youtube.com/watch?v=oenxVnRznwU**

YouTube WasteLocate instructional video (tyres generators)
**www.youtube.com/watch?v=APIkkULrYhc**

YouTube WasteLocate instructional video (tyre transporters)
**www.youtube.com/watch?v=_GIrBdWOCLc**


Image supplied by NSW Environmental Protection Authority

# NEW SOUTH WALES

## Link to the national strategic plan:

### Strategy
Best practice

### Deliverable
2.4 Identify and promote best practice transport and disposal practices including support for:

- initiatives to encourage safe storage and disposal at licenced facilities
- initiatives for reports of illegal disposal sites.

### Outcome
2.4 Improved transport, storage and disposal practices for ACM.

### Location
NSW – Statewide

## Combating Illegal Dumping: Clean-up and Prevention Program

### The issue

The NSW Environment Protection Authority's Waste Less Recycle More initiative supports grant programs for local government, business, industry and the community to stimulate new investment and transform waste and recycling in NSW. The Combating Illegal Dumping: Clean-up and Prevention Program awards funding to support local councils, public land managers and community groups to identify local illegal dumping sites and implement prevention and clean-up action on publicly managed land. Dumped waste often contains building products and other asbestos-containing material. The aim of this program is to reduce the incidence and impact of illegal dumping. A total of $4.36 million in funding has been provided to 71 projects over 3 funding rounds.

### Action taken

One successful grantee, NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS), has used this program to identify and target hotspots of illegal dumping in two of their conservation areas. EPA funding was used to develop a strategy, gather data, clean-up dumped asbestos and install barriers, signs and surveillance cameras to deter future dumping.

### Results

The grant funding supported the clean-up of 97 sites including over 607 tonnes of asbestos, 923 tonnes of mixed waste, 1186 tyres and 221 mattresses. Regulatory action taken resulted in 18 investigations resulting in 6 penalty notices, sites being cleaned-up by offenders and a successful court prosecution.

Images supplied by NSW Environmental Protection Authority

Illegal dumping had reduced dramatically in the hotspot areas.
Dumping before and after clean-up and implementation of prevention techniques.

This success was a result of NPWS forming strong partnerships with other regulatory bodies such as local councils and specialised illegal dumping squads.

## Outcomes

Combining prevention methods (signage, barriers, and surveillance) with clean-up of waste, successfully reduced dumping at hotpots. The program provided valuable knowledge of the successful use of prevention methods.

Building strong relationships with local council and specialised regional dumping squads enabled joint investigations and use of surveillance footage to identify and penalise dumpers.

NPWS report a significant reduction in the amount of time and resources spent on managing dumped waste. They have now been able to dedicate more resources to core land management responsibilities.

A set of criteria was developed to identify which areas to target (hotspots) and what prevention method to use. By using a strategic approach better outcomes were achieved at each location and overall the program was more effective at reducing illegal dumping.

## Next steps

The identified dumping hotspots were surveyed every 6 months and after the installation of each prevention measure. This monitoring will continue to evaluate the effectiveness of the different prevention methods in reducing illegal dumping.

NPWS continue to improve their data collection and illegal dumping prevention strategy to reduce the impact of illegal dumping in their conservation areas.

NPWS will continue to partner with other regulatory bodies such as local council to manage the issue.

This case study emphasises the importance of NSW EPA's continued grant funding to reduce illegal dumping.

## More information

**www.epa.nsw.gov.au/wastegrants/combat-illegal-dump.htm**

# WESTERN AUSTRALIA

## Link to the national strategic plan:

| Strategy | Deliverable | Outcome | Location |
|---|---|---|---|
| Best practice | 2.1 Identify opportunities to share best practice for initiatives related to the safe management of asbestos such as licensing, education, training and home renovations where ACMs may be present. | 2.1 Evidence-based best practice to minimise risks in targeted areas. | Western Australia |

## Public Health Asbestos Regulatory Protection Package

### The issue

Western Australia is one of few Australian jurisdictions that has public health asbestos legislation, the Health (Asbestos) Regulations 1992 (HAR). This is consistent with Western Australia's very high historic asbestos use and mesothelioma rates, both in national and international terms. An increasing proportion of these mesotheliomas are related to public rather than workplace asbestos exposure, especially for home renovators.

In 2011 the Department of Health (DOH) reported on a survey of Local Government and other regulators experience with asbestos which identified many areas requiring improvement. A major issue was the HAR which was considered weak and in need of revision to take account of increasing asbestos deterioration, damage, and disturbance.

### Action taken

DOH decided to take a comprehensive approach to address this problem by developing a public health regulatory package consisting of revised HAR, an accompanying Code of Practice and supported by issue specific Guidance Notes. These were to be based on and to complement the WA Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) legislation related to asbestos.

Legal advice was for the work to be led by the development of the Code which would then inform work on the revised HAR. Priority Guidance Notes would be published in parallel to achieve some interim improvements pending promulgation of the whole regulatory package.

Consultation included circulating a draft document for public comment, holding a workshop and drawing on input from a stakeholders' Asbestos Advisory Working Group.

### Results/outcomes

As a result there are now draft revised HAR, a draft Code of Practice – Managing Public Health Risks from Asbestos, a Draft Memorandum of Understanding between WA WorkSafe and DOH, and Guidance Notes on Identification of Asbestos-Containing Material and on Asbestos Cement Fences.

The regulatory package seeks to improve management of asbestos in a wide range of public exposure scenarios including: domestically; as a result of poor workplace practice and those associated with contaminated soils and through mining activities. Most importantly any domestic removal of >10m$^2$ of non-friable asbestos or any friable will have to be undertaken by a WorkSafe licenced removalist.

### Next steps

The stage of implementation of new public health legislation as well as a revision of OHS regulations in WA prevents the finalisation and promulgation of the complete new asbestos regulatory package until the other processes are sufficiently advanced.

However, to improve community asbestos exposure management in the meantime DOH will:

- Continue to publish Guidance Notes and other advisory material

- Seek to implement a substantial increase in fines under the current HAR
- Engage more closely with other regulators on issues where the public may be put at asbestos risk, for instance by trying to improve the training and practice of licenced asbestos removalists.

## More information

The status of the draft regulatory package is outlined under the heading of "Consultation on the Health (Asbestos) Regulations 1992" at:
**www.public.health.wa.gov.au/3/1143/2/asbestos_in_the_home.pm**

The supporting Guidance Notes are at:
**Guidance Note: Identification of Asbestos Containing Material** (PDF)

**Guidance Note: Asbestos Cement Fences** (PDF 1.1MB)

# AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

## Link to the national strategic plan:

| Strategy | Deliverable | Outcome | Location |
|---|---|---|---|
| Removal | 4.1 Develop and conduct projects in various locations and conditions where ACMs are in poor condition or likely to cause risks to ensure removal approaches are effective. | 4.1 Priority actions identified support removal of ACMs in poor condition. | Australian Capital Territory |

## Loose-fill Asbestos Insulation Eradication Scheme

### The issue

'Mr Fluffy' is the commonly-used name for the loose fill asbestos insulation installed in around eleven hundred Canberra houses between 1968 and 1979. Contemporary advertisements promised "sure comfort and fuel savings" to homeowners who paid less than $100 to insulate an average house with what was claimed to be "CSIRO tested and approved" as "the perfect thermal insulating material". That material comprised pure, raw asbestos (mostly amosite but in some cases crocidolite) that was crushed and blown into the houses' roof spaces.

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, a joint Australian and ACT Government program was undertaken to remove visible and accessible asbestos insulation from affected houses. That understanding – and that residual fibres remained in the walls of remediated houses – remained current until a significantly contaminated house that had been missed in the original removal program came to light in late 2011 in the suburb of Downer. The ACT Government acquired that house and forensically deconstructed it in 2013.

The ACT Work Safety Commissioner wrote to residents of affected homes on

18 February 2014 – drawing on the report of that forensic deconstruction received in late 2013 – reminding them of the continuing presence of loose fill asbestos insulation in the structure of their houses and recommending asbestos assessments be undertaken.

Following increasing public concern driven by the findings of those asbestos assessments that revealed significant contamination of living areas of houses that were part of the original removal program, the ACT Government's Asbestos Response Taskforce (the Taskforce) was established to deliver an enduring, coordinated, comprehensive and compassionate response. By June 2014:

- asbestos fibres had been found in the living areas of around sixty percent of affected houses – with around ten per cent deemed immediately uninhabitable
- private sales of affected houses had collapsed
- residents were self-selecting social isolation rather than risking exposing visitors to asbestos, and
- some service providers were refusing to work in or on affected houses.

This legacy of Mr Fluffy presented unprecedented and unique challenges for the ACT Government: the $1 billion cost of the Loose Fill Asbestos Insulation Eradication Scheme (the Eradication Scheme) equated to around 22% of total Government revenue. The net cost of the Eradication Scheme is expected to be $400 million. The continuing contamination of houses created significant health, social, financial and practical consequences for owners and residents and for the wider community, and generated intense emotional responses. It also raised complicated policy and regulatory questions.

A defining feature of the ACT Government's Eradication Scheme is the extent to which the Taskforce has, from its inception, managed delivery of one phase of the Eradication Scheme in parallel with undertaking detailed planning for subsequent stages, and the refinement of approaches to the current phase. The Eradication Scheme, and the Taskforce, began life as an emergency response, and so focussed on delivering emergency financial support while work was undertaken on future

policy and program design and implementation planning. In subsequent stages, for example, approaches to demolition and disposal – and associated community engagement – have been tested and refined through a formal pilot program, as well as ongoing and iterative improvements as packages of demolition work have been awarded.

## Action taken

The ACT Government announced the formation of the Taskforce, along with an emergency financial assistance package for affected owners on 25 June 2014. That assistance comprised grants of $10,000 per household (plus $2,000 per dependant) for emergency accommodation and replacement of essential household items. Another key element of this emergency package was the facilitation of asbestos assessments by the Taskforce to manage market demand, ease financial costs to owners, and to ensure that the Government had access to the resulting information on contamination quickly to assist policy and program design.

A key focus for the Taskforce in these early stages was to support homeowners and tenants, particularly those with concerns about health, relocation and financial issues. A dedicated team was formed within the Taskforce to provide personalised support and advice. The Taskforce also engaged with the wider community about the issue, and the Government's response. A Community and Expert Reference Group made up of homeowners, industry groups and unions, and senior government officials including the Work Safety Commissioner and Chief Health Officer, was formed to provide additional guidance and support to the Taskforce. This period also saw activity from community-led groups advocating on behalf of affected owners.

In light of the Long Term Management of Loose Fill Asbestos Insulation in Canberra Homes report prepared by the Taskforce, the ACT Government reached the conclusion that demolition of all affected houses was the only enduring solution to the health risks posed to residents, visitors and workers by the continuing presence of loose fill asbestos insulation, and their attendant social, financial and practical consequences.

On 28 October 2014, the ACT Government announced the Eradication Scheme under which it offered to voluntarily acquire all affected houses in the ACT with a view to demolishing them and selling remediated blocks. The delivery of the Eradication Scheme is supported by a $1 billion loan to the ACT Government by the Australian Government.

The voluntary buyback program commenced immediately and closed on 30 June 2015. By then, around 600 houses had been acquired by the Taskforce. On 1 July 2015, the definitive list of affected houses was published for the first time. The pilot demolition program commenced that same week. The indicative demolition schedule was published at the end of August 2015. The arrangements for the sale of remediated blocks were released in September 2015. By the end of 2015, 57 houses had been demolished (exceeding the target of 50). The sale of remediated blocks commenced in April 2016. The 2016 demolition target of 200 houses was exceeded on 18 July 2016.

## Results

As at 28 October 2016 – the second anniversary of the Eradication Scheme's announcement:

- the owners of 998 of the 1,022 affected houses had agreed to participate
- 902 houses have been acquired
- 417 houses have been demolished, and
- 85 remediated blocks have been sold.

While the impact on affected owners and their families – profound and complex as it is – is perhaps less visible to the community as a whole (notwithstanding that the random spread of houses means most if not all Canberrans know someone directly affected by this issue), progress in implementing the Eradication Scheme is most evident in the unfolding demolition program. The public indicative demolition schedule has been updated twice since it was first released in August 2015, and records the complexity of that scheduling task. The overriding consideration has been, and remains, safety for workers undertaking the asbestos removal and demolition work, as well as for neighbours and the wider community. From there, considerations of efficiency and minimising community disruption come to the fore.

As part of the community engagement around demolition, targeted sessions were held for residents near the ACT Government's West Belconnen Resource Management Centre where demolished houses are being safely disposed of. Friable asbestos waste is being disposed of separately at a dedicated facility at the Government's Mugga Lane Resource Management Centre.

Ongoing information provision and education continues to support implementation of the Eradication Scheme by the Taskforce. The Taskforce's approach to

communications with affected owners and the wider community has been subject to ongoing refinement, as well as formal testing and review. This approach has encompassed:

- evaluation and refinement of the communications strategy and materials to respond to emerging issues
- identification and mapping of pressure points and gaps in information and materials through various feedback mechanisms including neighbour surveys, social media, community engagement activities, phone calls and email
- regular attendance at Community Council Meetings, community events, hosting public forums and less formal drop in sessions at local shops
- door knocking and face to face engagement, and
- real time social media engagement.

From its inception, the Taskforce has engaged with industry experts and industrial organisations in the development of policy and regulatory responses, as well as in program design and implementation. More than 30 significant legislative and regulatory amendments have been approved by the ACT Legislative Assembly to support the buyback program, provide assistance and concessions to affected owners, and to support demolition arrangements. These include changes to legislation affecting residential tenancies, feed-in tariffs for renewable energy, and the sale of property, in addition to changes to the Dangerous Substances Act 2004 (ACT) to establish the Affected Residential Premises Register, and regulations governing asbestos management plans and danger tagging for affected properties.

The Taskforce has worked collaboratively with ACT Public Service colleagues, national public sector and academic asbestos experts; property valuers; contractors and regulators in enhancing safe and efficient demolition practices; experts in contaminated land in settling soil clearance requirements; regulators and local industry leaders in framing and codifying medium term asbestos management plan arrangements; industry peak bodies and educational institutions in relation to training and workforce capacity needs and development opportunities; community service organisations providing support to affected homeowners; and health care providers and organisations like Council on the Ageing and the Capital Health Network in providing psychological and social support.

The ACT Government has commissioned the National Centre for Epidemiology and Public Health at the Australian National University to examine the health effects of living in a house with loose fill asbestos insulation in the ACT. The study will provide information on domestic exposure to loose fill asbestos in the ACT and on the health concerns of current and former residents of Mr Fluffy houses. It will also report on mesothelioma incidence in the ACT, and if data allows it, provide estimates of the risk of mesothelioma and other cancers associated with living in an affected residence.

## Outcomes

The ACT Government is well established on the path to achieving its goal of providing an enduring solution to an issue that has affected Canberra and Canberrans for nearly 50 years. Delivery of the Eradication Scheme remains on budget and the demolition program is tracking ahead of schedule. Demolition continues to be conducted with paramount focus on safety for workers and the wider community.

The Taskforce continues to work closely with its counterparts in New South Wales.

The Taskforce's governance framework, financial management framework, and approach to engagement with risk was recently endorsed by the ACT Auditor-General in the first of three planned performance audits of the Scheme: "the planning for and management of the financial arrangements for the implementation of the Loose-fill Asbestos Insulation Eradication Scheme (the Scheme) has been effective ..... The Taskforce's approach to governance and risk management reflects better practice. This has enabled the Taskforce to develop processes and procedures which provide a structure for managing and re-assessing the implementation of the Scheme, including expenditure and commitments".

## Next steps

The Taskforce will continue to pursue the demolition program with a focus on safety, and engage with contractors and regulators to share better practice and lessons learned along the way. The demolition of houses acquired by the Taskforce is expected to be complete by mid 2018, with the balance of demolitions to occur after 30 June 2020 (at the end of the available deferred settlement period). The current pattern of community events and targeted engagement with neighbours will continue to support delivery of the demolition program.

The resale of remediated blocks is becoming an established part of the real estate market in Canberra,

and is expected to run broadly parallel to the demolition program. The rebuilding of new houses on remediated blocks has signalled the beginning in earnest of the social, community and psychological regrowth that was intended in the design of the Eradication Scheme.

The Taskforce will continue to provide personalised support and assistance to owners as they move through the phases of the Eradication Scheme. It will continue to work with business and community sector partners to ease the transition for affected owners and their families to new homes and neighbourhoods.

## More information

http://www.asbestostaskforce.act.gov.au/




Images supplied from ACT Asbestos Response Taskforce

# VICTORIA

## Link to the national strategic plan:

| Strategy | Deliverable | Outcome | Location |
|---|---|---|---|
| Removal | 4.1 Develop and conduct projects in various locations and conditions where ACMs are in poor condition or likely to cause risks to ensure removal approaches are effective. | 4.1 Priority actions identified support removal of ACMs in poor condition. | Statewide |

## Asbestos Removal in Victorian Government Schools

### The issue

The Victorian Government has set a goal for public schools to be free of dangerous asbestos containing materials by 2020. To support this goal, the Government has committed $100 million.

The 2015-16 State Budget provided $42 million of this commitment to extend the asbestos audit program, demolish 780 relocatable classrooms with high amounts of asbestos and replace 200 of these classrooms, ensuring school capacity is not affected.

The 2016-17 State Budget provided a further $28 million; $10 million to demolish and replace 80 relocatable classrooms with high amounts of asbestos, and $18 million to remove asbestos in permanent buildings and school grounds.

### Action taken

As part of the asbestos removal plan, as of 31 March 2016, the Victorian School Building Authority (the Authority) completed the most thorough audit of schools in Victoria's history. These audits were undertaken to identify where asbestos is, the risk it poses, and how best to manage it until it can be removed.

In a major achievement, the Government has now removed all identified high-risk (A1 and A2 rated) asbestos containing material from public schools.

### Results/outcomes

To date, the Authority has:

- Audited 1,712 schools and updated their asbestos registers;
- Removed all identified high risk asbestos containing materials (A1 & A2), improving the safety of the state's school infrastructure;
- Invested $334 million in 2015-16 State Budget, with a further $376 million in 2016-17, to modernise buildings across 231 existing schools. During these capital works projects, asbestos containing material is removed from the construction zone. The Government estimates that within these projects, around $71 million will be spent on asbestos removal.
- Removed asbestos from over 303 relocatable classrooms with a further 477 classrooms funded for asbestos removal.

### Next steps

The Authority's Asbestos Removal Program continues to provide dedicated asbestos management services, including contract management of specialist hygienist and asbestos removal companies. This includes a 24-hour advice and response hotline that allows schools to access expert advice and arrange for asbestos site inspections, incident response, risk assessments and planned removal works as required.

To support schools to be compliant with Victoria's Occupational Health and Safety framework, the Department of Education and Training has assisted all schools to develop and maintain Asbestos Management Plans. The plans identify where asbestos containing materials are located and how to effectively manage them. The Department also provides ongoing comprehensive training to key school staff to ensure that they can implement their Asbestos Management Plans effectively.

# VICTORIA

## Link to the national strategic plan:

| Strategy | Deliverable | Outcome | Location |
|---|---|---|---|
| Awareness | 1.3 Develop practical, evidence-based asbestos safety awareness material for people likely to come into contact with ACMs in a residential setting. | 1.1 Increased community awareness of the risks posed by asbestos and its impact on the health of the community. | Victoria |

## Asbestos Awareness Campaign for Tradespeople

### The issue

The campaign targeted tradespeople conducting renovation and maintenance activities where asbestos containing material (ACM) may be present. The marketing activity aimed to encourage tradespeople to seek out further information about asbestos and drive people to the asbestos.vic.gov.au website.

### Action taken

The audience for this campaign was all domestic tradespeople with a more targeted focus on carpenters, electricians and plumbers. The campaign focused on reaching the audience through relevant industry print publications, radio, targeted online activity and through Google Search ads.

The campaign messaging was delivered to the target audience while they were thinking about work and would be more likely to listen to the message (e.g. while driving to or between jobs). The campaign utilised an 'always on' approach, which meant that the audience was exposed to the campaign multiple times over its seven month duration, ensuring saturation of the message to increase the likelihood of shifting attitudes.

The launch of the campaign coincided with National Asbestos Awareness Week to maximize interest around the issue.

### Results

Evaluation results indicate that 35% of tradespeople aged 18-59 heard the radio ad at least once and 20% heard it three times or more. The campaign was served online over 4 million times and generated over 5,000 clicks through to the asbestos website. In addition, the Google Search activity drove 9,998 clicks to the website during the campaign period, and electronic direct mail was sent to 25,000 tradespeople, with a significant 12.01% clicking through to the website for more information. In addition, there were increased organic search queries about asbestos during the campaign period, which contributed 60% of total website traffic. This increase can at least in part be attributed to interest driven by campaign activities.

### Outcomes

The campaign was very successful on two key objectives, which were to encourage tradespeople to seek further information on asbestos, and to drive more people to the asbestos.vic.gov.au website. This was evidenced by a 189% increase in unique visitors to the website during the period, when compared to the pre-campaign benchmark.

### Next steps

The campaign provided valuable insight into what types of channels are most effective at reaching the tradesperson audience. Electronic direct mail proved particularly effective at reaching and engaging the audience, and radio activity also had good reach and saturation. This insight will help build successful future activity in this area.

**CARPENTER**


**ELECTRICIAN**


Images supplied by WorkSafe Victoria

# QUEENSLAND

## Link to the national strategic plan:

| Strategy | Deliverable | Outcome | Location |
|---|---|---|---|
| Awareness | 2.1. Identify opportunities to share best practice for initiatives related to the safe management of asbestos such as licensing, education, training and home renovations where ACMs may be present. | 2.1 Evidence-based best practice to minimise risks in targeted areas. | Queensland – Statewide |

## High Pressure Water Cleaner Tags to Prevent Use on Asbestos

### The issue

In recent years, Workplace Health and Safety Queensland (WHSQ) has taken steps to reduce the incidence of high pressure water cleaners being used on asbestos containing material. In particular, high pressure water cleaning of asbestos cement sheet roofs can create a significant amount of asbestos debris. This can create a risk of exposure to airborne asbestos fibres and in addition to the risk to human health, the decontamination of properties following a high pressure water cleaning incident can be a costly exercise.

The project has involved both communication and awareness strategies as well as engaging with the manufacturers of various brands of high pressure water cleaners requesting they place a label on the equipment at the point of manufacture warning users not to use the equipment on asbestos containing material.

The aim of the project is to increase awareness among relevant businesses and the community more generally about the use of high pressure water cleaners on asbestos containing material being unlawful and causing a risk to health from airborne asbestos fibres.

### Action taken

Workplace Health and Safety Queensland (WHSQ), Office of Industrial Relations' Asbestos and Occupational Hygiene and Health Unit liaised with overseas manufacturers of high pressure water equipment and worked with WHSQ's Awareness and Engagement Unit to develop tags and fact sheets warning users not to use this equipment on asbestos-containing material. These products were distributed to hardware stores, hire equipment businesses, paint suppliers, other relevant businesses by work health and safety inspectors throughout regional offices in Queensland.

### Outcomes

Inspectors have visited business operators who use, hire, and sell high pressure water cleaners and provided them with a water proof warning tag designed to be attached to the equipment. Inspectors revisit these businesses annually to provide replacement tags. Business operators are also provided with a poster that displays warning information about not using high pressure water cleaners on asbestos materials, and are asked to display the poster in a prominent place. WHSQ has also liaised with large hardware chains and auto part retailers to request their participation in placing the poster in their stores.

To date, the manufacturer of Gerni high pressure water equipment has advised these warning labels are now being placed at point of manufacture on Gerni domestic equipment.

### Next steps

To date, no formal evaluation has been carried out for the project. All Australian jurisdictions would benefit from a warning label being placed on the equipment at the point of manufacture, and liaison could be undertaken with overseas manufacturers on this issue.

### More information

Water blasting equipment tag
**www.deir.qld.gov.au/asbestos/resources/pdfs/water_blast_factsheet.pdf**

Prohibited use of water blasters
**www.deir.qld.gov.au/asbestos/resources/pdfs/prohibited-use-of-water-blasters.pdf**

# Cleaning asbestos containing materials

## Caution: Using water blasters on asbestos containing materials, including asbestos cement roofs, is illegal.

Asbestos containing materials (such as fibrous cement or 'Super Six') must not be cleaned using a water blaster.

Cleaning asbestos containing materials, including a 'fibro' roof, with a high pressure water blaster is illegal as it can destroy the surface, cause cement debris and asbestos to spray into the air, and result in widespread contamination.

It is very difficult to contain asbestos fibres released during the process and very expensive to clean up. It puts you and your neighbours' health at risk.

Homeowners can be fined up to $10 000 for water blasting asbestos containing materials, as well as any additional costs associated with clean-up. Businesses may face heavier fines.

**Well maintained asbestos cement roofs are not a risk to human health unless they are physically disturbed or being worked on. They can be left alone until they are no longer water tight.**

Commercial fungicides and sealants have been developed that can be applied to fibro roofs, avoiding the need to clean them.

**Instead of cleaning an asbestos cement roof or other asbestos containing material, apply a fungicide or sealant or consider replacing it.**

You can find out more about sealants and fungicides from your local roof restoration company, paint supplier or hardware store.

For more information about asbestos visit **www.worksafe.qld.gov.au** or call the Workplace Health and Safety Infoline on **1300 369 915**.

Queensland Health also provides further information on identifying asbestos, the health risks of asbestos, what it looks like and more information on handling asbestos safely. Call **1300 QH INFO** (**1300 744 636**) or visit **www.health.qld.gov.au/asbestos**.

Queensland Government

DJAG 11/4083

Image supplied by Workplace Health and Safety Queensland

# TASMANIA

## Link to the national strategic plan:

| Strategy | Deliverable | Outcome | Location |
|---|---|---|---|
| Awareness | 1.3 Develop practical, evidence-based asbestos safety awareness material for people likely to come into contact with ACMs in a residential setting. | 1.1 Increased community awareness of the risks posed by asbestos and its impact on the health of the community. | Tasmania |

## Young Construction Workers Awareness Program

### The issue

Research has shown young workers have lower levels of awareness of asbestos risks at work. The aim of this program was to provide building and construction apprentices and pre-employment students with the knowledge and understanding of asbestos and the risks it presents; their legal rights and obligations as working people and the tools to enter into discussions with their employer in work situations where asbestos containing material (ACM) may be present. The program targeted young and potential tradespeople who will be conducting renovation and maintenance activities and encouraged them to seek out further information about asbestos.

### Action taken

WorkSafe Tasmania developed a new asbestos awareness and avoidance session and delivered it to 1,005 building and construction apprentices and pre-employment students through 88 sessions across Tasmania.

The audience for this program was building and construction apprentices and pre-employment students. The campaign focused on reaching the audience through face to face direct delivery in a learning environment.

The campaign messaging was delivered to the target audience while they were in a learning environment and able to immediately ask questions and explore situations relevant to their individual circumstances.

### Results

Evaluation results indicate that the number of sessions delivered exceeded the number of sessions scheduled by 10% (80 sessions scheduled – 88 sessions delivered). The scheduled number of participants of 1000 was also exceeded. This indicates that this program was effective in reaching a wide audience across Tasmania for workers who may come into contact with asbestos. Evaluations completed post session delivery indicated that participants' level of knowledge and awareness was enhanced to levels that either met or exceeded their expectations.

### Outcomes

A measure of success has been the response from trainers and group leaders. The program was slow to take off mainly as the trainers and group leaders had full agendas and did not begin to appreciate the session until they had experienced it. However, once they had experienced the sessions, it was very popular and the issue became scheduling all the sessions across the state. The program was very successful on two key objectives, which were to encourage building and construction apprentices and pre-employment students to seek further information on asbestos, and to encourage them to visit information available on the internet.

### Next steps

The program provided valuable insight into what types of channels are most effective at reaching the building and construction apprentices and pre-employment students audience. This information will be factored into decisions regarding future delivery of program messages.

# COMMONWEALTH

## Link to the national strategic plan:

| Strategy | Deliverable | Outcome | Location |
|---|---|---|---|
| Removal | 4.2 Develop and conduct projects in various locations and conditions where ACMs are in poor condition or likely to cause risks to ensure removal approaches are effective. | 4.2 Options to remove asbestos in poor condition are practical, evidence-based and targeted towards sources of asbestos-related disease. | Defence estate and infrastructure distributed nationally. |

## Department of Defence Estate Works Program

### The issue

Asbestos removal and management projects are currently undertaken within Defence through the Defence Estate Works Program (EWP). The Defence EWP undertakes targeted, risk-based projects across Australia in order to remove, remediate and manage asbestos present in Defence properties.

### Action taken

The 2015-16 asbestos removal and remediation projects are a continuation of a long standing program to remove asbestos from Defence properties. In 2015-16, the market was approached to source licensed asbestos removalists from the states and territories to undertake work at 30 sites. Approximately $26.1m was spent on this activity.

The project identified, from existing asbestos registers, the high risk properties at which the asbestos removal works would be undertaken.

Each project is scoped by the Defence delivery agent to confirm all known asbestos is captured in the project for the designated building or facility. Once the presence of asbestos has been determined, the market is approached for asbestos removal/remediation quote and delivery. Delivery agents manage conduct of works including statutory notification, communication with affected parties, removal works, disposal, inspection, update of asbestos register and remediation.

All projects engage licensed asbestos removalists and independent occupational hygienists to ensure works are undertaken and completed in accordance with relevant federal and state legislation and codes of practice.

### Outcomes

The identified outcomes are:

a. Identification of high risk properties. The estate appraisal process has developed an evidence-based approach for grading in-situ asbestos and capturing this information in estate asbestos registers

b. Programming of works to make efficient use of funds and industry capacity.

Works are combined into a project, according to risk, for release to a Defence delivery agent. The project release considers industry capacity to complete the works for both project size and location.

c. Effective asbestos management systems. Comcare routinely conducts inspections of Defence removal activities. Comcare inspection reports largely find that Defence:

   i. is providing effective oversight of removal activities;

   ii. has comprehensive contractor management systems in place for overseeing asbestos removals/remediations;

   iii. is displaying compliance with asbestos management requirements stipulated in Commonwealth Work Health and Safety Legislation and associated Codes of Practice.

# COMMONWEALTH

## Link to the national strategic plan:

### Strategy
Removal

### Deliverable
4.2 Develop and conduct projects in various locations and conditions where ACMs are in poor condition or likely to cause risks to ensure removal approaches are effective.

### Outcome
4.2 Options to remove asbestos in poor condition are practical, evidence-based and targeted towards sources of asbestos-related disease.

### Locations
Christmas Island National Park - Indian Ocean. Located:

- 2650 kilometres from Perth
- 1565 kilometres to the nearest point on the Australian mainland (Northwest Coast)
- 380 kilometres south of Java.

# Asbestos Removal: Christmas Island National Park

## The issue

Asbestos removal work was required at Grants Well House, Grants Well Road, Christmas Island, Indian Ocean 6798, due to concerns about the structural integrity of the building, the amount of asbestos in this location (over 131 square metres) and the weather conditions for the island (prone to extreme wet season storms and occasionally cyclones). Concerns were raised that if the island experienced a cyclone or intensive storm system then the structure may collapse spreading the asbestos material over a wide range.

Grant's Well building layout is made up of the following:

- Old original cement building (house for railway workers & miners)
- Newer extension that wraps around the old original building
- Active Chinese Temple where religious ceremonies are held (located about 5 metres from the old structure but not connected to the building where the asbestos situations were removed). As this temple is still actively used and has cultural and community value the surrounding site warranted specific protection.

The aim of this work was to safely remove the substantial amount of asbestos and 'make safe' the remaining building structure for future use. The work was undertaken in accordance with:

- Parks Australia's Asbestos Management Policy
- Asbestos Management Plan for Christmas Island
- Chapter 8 of the Work Health and Safety Regulations 2011 (Cth)
- Code of Practice - How to Safety Remove Asbestos (December 2011).

## Action taken

**Background**

**December 2014**
Asbestos containing materials were identified at Grant's Well, Christmas Island National Park, Indian Ocean 6798, during an asbestos identification and testing process, conducted by Safe Work and Environments (SWE), for the development of an Asbestos Management Plan. Asbestos was located in many locations including Grants Well. Refer to supporting photos for park site and location of the asbestos at Grants Well.

**August 2015**
SWE attended the site to provide air-monitoring services for asbestos removal for the Pink House (another location that contained asbestos on the island). During the work SWE revisited Grants Well, at the request of Chief Ranger who expressed concerns about the integrity of the Grants Well House, due to the storm activity (wet season) that occurs on the park each year.

SWE attended the site and following a site inspection, provided the WHS Advisor advice to remove the asbestos as soon as possible due to the white ant activity which had eaten through many parts of the internal structure holding the asbestos in place. See supporting photos.

**October 2015**
Quote sourced from a construction company (Morganti Roofing and Construction), who had the correct certification to remove asbestos. The quote also included construction and building materials to reroof and repair the structure after the asbestos was removed. Quote was approved and the building material was ordered. Due to the location (very remote) there was a delay in getting the required building material shipped to the island.

**March 2016**

SWE was contracted by Parks Australia to carry out asbestos air monitoring and clearance services at Grants Well House – Grants Well Road, Christmas Island, Indian Ocean, from 16th to the 22nd March 2016. The regulator, Comcare, was informed of the planned asbestos removal work in accordance with Regulation 466.

The following asbestos removal work was undertaken by Morganti Roofing and Construction at Grants Well House:

- corrugated fibre cement sheeting from roof of house
- corrugated fibre cement sheeting from southeast corner wall of house
- fibre cement guttering to house
- fibre cement sheeting from ceiling of house
- fibre cement sheeting from walls of extension (internal & external).

Removed asbestos containing material was disposed of at the Shire of Christmas Island Tip (licensed to take asbestos waste).

**April 2015**

SWE supplied clearance report following the asbestos removal work. Parks Australia Executive informed of completed removal work and online Asbestos Register updated.

## Results

131m$^2$ of non-friable asbestos was removed during the project.

## Outcomes

All asbestos was removed from this location and the site was 'made safe' for future workers, residents (those using the shrine) and visitors.

## Next steps

All asbestos was removed from this location therefore no further asbestos work is required at this location.


Images supplied by Parks Australia

# National Strategic Plan for Asbestos Management and Awareness

2014 – 18 Strategies and outcomes summary

**AIM:** to prevent exposure to airborne asbestos fibres in order to eliminate asbestos-related disease in Australia.

| | 1. AWARENESS | 2. BEST PRACTICE | 3. IDENTIFICATION |
|---|---|---|---|
| **GOALS** | Increase public awareness of the health risks posed by working with or being exposed to asbestos | Identify and share best practice in asbestos management, education, handling, storage and disposal | Improve the identification and grading of asbestos and sharing of information regarding the location of ACMs |
| **OUTCOMES** | 1.1 Increased community awareness of the risks posed by asbestos and its impact on the health of the community.<br>1.2 Improved access to information for those who work and live with asbestos, including where and when to source information and advice.<br>1.3 Demonstrated cultural and behavioural change within the community as a result of improved understanding of both the health risks and exposure pathways of asbestos in both commercial and residential environments. | 2.1 Evidence-based best practice to minimise risks in targeted areas.<br>2.2 Model training for workers likely to come into contact with ACMs to increase competency and decrease risk.<br>2.3 Australian communities are supported to manage asbestos risks during natural disasters or emergencies.<br>2.4 Improved transport, storage and disposal practices for ACM. | 3.1 Evidence-based model for grading in-situ asbestos is developed.<br>3.2 Improved stabilisation and containment practices for ACMs in poor condition.<br>3.3 Improved identification and management of information regarding asbestos contaminated land.<br>3.4 Estimated total presence of ACMs in the built environment is available.<br>3.5 Improved practice in the residential sector to identify and minimise the risk of exposure, in particular for DIY home renovators.<br>3.6 Effective coordinated response when ACMs in imported material are identified. |

## PRINCIPLES

- precaution
- evidence-based decision making
- transparency
- public participation
- collaboration

### 4. REMOVAL

Identify priority areas where ACMs present a risk, identify the barriers to the safe removal of asbestos and review management and removal infrastructure to estimate the capacity and rate for the safe removal of asbestos

4.1 Priority actions identified support removal of ACMs in poor condition.

4.2 Options to remove asbestos in poor condition are practical, evidence-based and targeted towards sources of asbestos-related disease.

4.3 Asbestos removal infrastructure can meet the future needs and demands of ageing ACMs without creating increased risk.

4.4 The barriers to the safe removal of ACMs are reviewed and options to address the challenges faced by government, commercial and residential sectors are evaluated.

### 5. RESEARCH

Commission, monitor and promote research into the prevention of asbestos exposure and asbestos-related disease.

5.1 Coordination of key research supports evidence informed policy and practice.

5.2 Commissioned research identifies practical and innovative approaches to prevent or minimise risks from exposure to asbestos fibres, and support for people with asbestos-related diseases.

### 6. INTERNATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Australia continues to play a leadership role in a global campaign for a worldwide ban on asbestos mining and manufacturing

6.1 International issues relating to asbestos and asbestos-related disease are effectively coordinated.

6.2 Australia recognised as an international voice in the global campaign against asbestos hazards.

6.3 Best practice for awareness, management and eradication of asbestos is shared internationally.

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