



NATIONAL ASBESTOS EXPOSURE REGISTER

DATA ANALYSIS REPORT 1 JULY 2015 to 30 JUNE 2016

The National Asbestos Exposure Register (NAER) captures details of exposure, including where and when the potential exposure occurred, and details of any diagnosis of asbestos-related disease. The register provides the agency with a statistical analysis of potential or actual exposure events across Australia and allows the agency to remain informed about potential risks which are identified through registration trends. This report provides a snapshot of registrations from 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2016.

The data provided by registrants to the NAER allow the agency to analyse trends and themes in potential asbestos exposure based on age, gender, location and type of potential exposure, frequency of potential exposure, when potential exposure first occurred and the types of jobs or industries where the greatest potential risk may be. If people have been diagnosed with an asbestos-related disease it also allows the agency to estimate the time between the first exposure and when the disease was diagnosed.

Analysis of data in the NAER is based on information limited to the NAER and is general in nature. The registrations do not record confirmed exposure but where someone believes they have been exposed to asbestos fibres. This provides a view of perceived risk and general awareness can be inferred from what is recorded.

Registrations

Since its commencement in June 2013, there have been 4085 registrations. There were 65 registrations in June 2013. With data corrections, there were 1062 registrations in the 2013-2014 financial year, 1398 in the 2014-2015 financial year and 1560 in the 2015-2016 financial year.

Relative to population, the ACT and Western Australia both had disproportionately high representation in the 2015-2016 financial year. For the ACT, this is attributed to the ongoing issue of loose-fill asbestos in Canberra homes; in WA it is attributed to a large number of registrations relating to one employer and also to one school. A large proportion of these registrations were due to the registrant being informed of the NAER by their employer or union. Conversely Queensland has a disproportionately low percentage of registrants; there is no clear indication as to why.

Table 1: Registrations by location of registrant in 2015-2016

Jurisdiction								
ACT	NSW	NT	QLD	SA	TAS	VIC	WA	Total
149	534	26	177	108	44	212	310	1560
9.55%	34.23%	1.67%	11.35%	6.92%	2.82%	13.59%	19.87%	

Exposure by type and gender

The ratio of occupational exposure to non-occupational exposure was approximately 64% to 36% for the 2015-2016 financial year. This contrasts with previous years where the ratio has been in the order of 75% occupational to 25% non-occupational. This suggests that there may be a growing awareness in the community that the risks of exposure are due to a variety of factors and not just related to a person's occupation.

The ratio of male to female exposure was approximately 69% to 31% for the financial year. This is an increase of approximately 6 percentage points in female representation as compared to the previous financial year.

Non-occupational exposure for men is approximately 23% compared to approximately 77% for occupational exposure. Occupational exposure is slightly higher than for the same period last financial year when the ratio was approximately 25% to 75%. Non-occupational to occupational exposure for women was 64% to 36% in the 2015-2016 financial year compared to 76% to 24% in the previous financial year.

Almost 18% of male respondents were in electrical trades and just over 13% were in building and construction. A further 7.5% were in the mining sector. Of the 45% of male respondents who answered 'other' to their occupational activity, a significant proportion were in building and construction or trades related activities.

Almost 81% of female respondents answered other to their occupational activity; however most of these did not appear to be in occupations which have no direct relationship to working with asbestos as many were in the education or administrative positions.

Figure 1: Exposure type by gender (female)

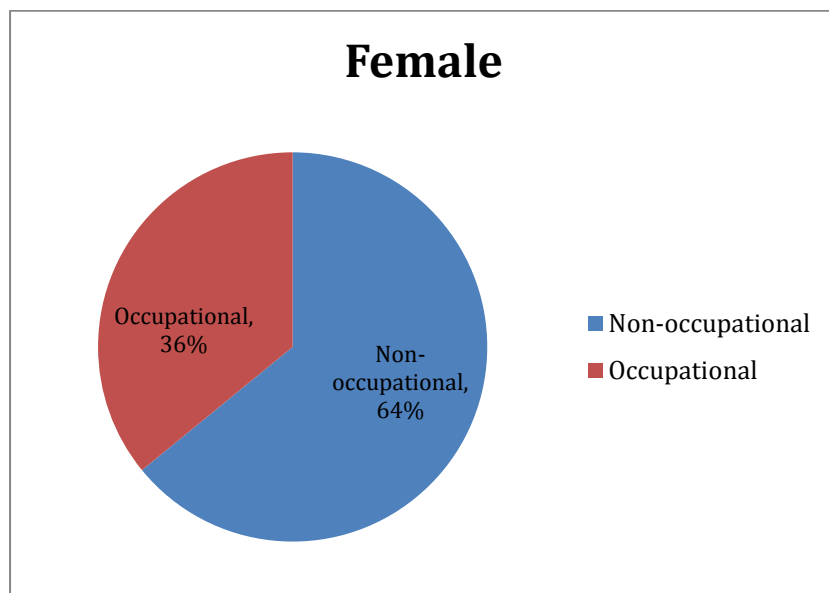
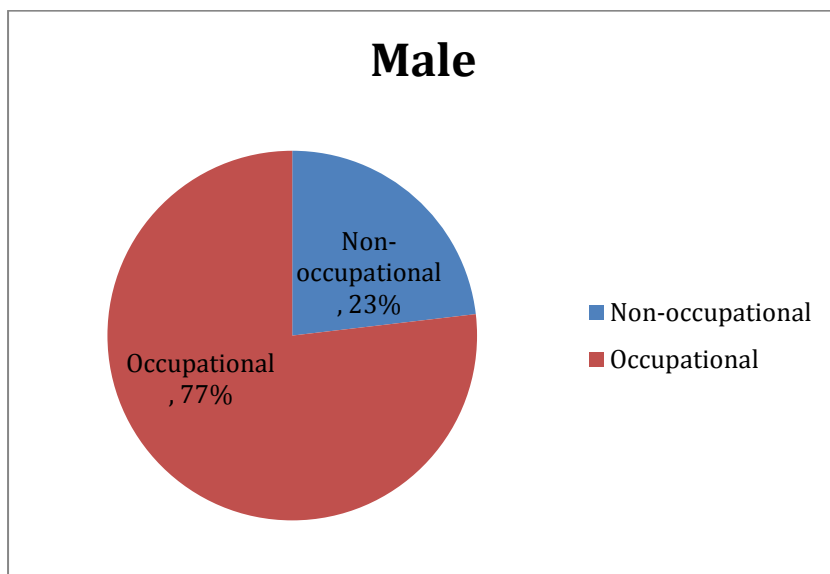


Figure 2: Exposure type by gender (male)



Age at exposure and frequency

Just over 70% of reported first exposures occurred before the age of 40 with just under 22% occurring before the age of 20. Of these, approximately 50% were occupational exposures. Occupational exposures for the other age groups are significantly higher.

As in the previous financial year, the most commonly reported frequency of exposure was 5 years or more at approximately 33%. This was followed by approximately 28% for exposures of 0-6 months.

Just over one third of respondents reporting frequency of exposure of more than five year and more than 2 years to 5 years reported first exposure at less than 20 years of age (just under 22% of respondents). This figure declines progressively for the other age groups where frequency of exposure is greater for the periods up to 2 years.

Table 2: Exposure by age range at first exposure

Age	Exposure type	
	Non-occupational	Occupational
<20	49.85%	50.15%
20-29	26.17%	73.83%
30-39	37.33%	62.67%
40-49	36.08%	63.92%
50-59	26.77%	73.23%
60+	32.00%	68.00%
Total	35.77%	64.23%

Table 3: Frequency of exposure by type of exposure

Frequency	Exposure Type	
	Non-occupational	Occupational
> 5 years	47.60%	52.40%
>2 years to 5 years	39.89%	60.11%
>6 months to 2 years	35.11%	64.89%
0-6 months	23.58%	76.42%
Once only	29.28%	70.72%
Total	35.77%	64.23%

Factors influencing registration numbers

There have been significant fluctuations from one month to another in the number of registrations on the NAER. Influencing factors include media reports on asbestos issues and large numbers of employer or union initiated registrations.

Trends

At 69% to 31% for male to female registrations respectively, the reporting gap has decreased compared to the previous financial year. This is reflected by a large number of registrations reporting school-based exposures which are predominantly reported by females.

The occupational to non-occupational ratio has narrowed at 64% to 36% respectively; compared with approximately 75% to 25% in the previous financial year. This reflects a high incidence of reporting of potential exposure to loose-fill asbestos in the residential setting.

The NAER into the future

Media focus on asbestos issues appears to impact reporting patterns on the NAER. Issues include loose-fill asbestos in residences in both the ACT and NSW as well as reports which appear in the media from time to time about the existence of asbestos containing materials in schools and hospitals. This indicates a growing concern amongst community members about the risks they may be incurring in settings other than their workplaces.

This is likely to become more apparent with the increasing trend in DIY activities and major home renovations. The agency has received a number of enquiries from concerned members of the public about neighbourhood renovation activities. This also reflects growing awareness amongst members of the public that there are risks in the residential setting of asbestos fibres becoming airborne and posing a risk to the community.

With average monthly registrations running at 130 per month in the 2015-2016 financial year, some trends are now beginning to emerge. Analysis of the data collected in the NAER will continue to build on the statistical base which is being developed and support the agency to develop an evidence base which is vital for the implementation of the National Strategic Plan. The NAER is an important component of the work of the agency and continues to complement the other sources of information collected by the agency through other research which will help to address the issue of asbestos and its risks to the Australian community into the future.

Table 4 – Monthly responses by jurisdiction of exposure

Month	Jurisdiction								Total
	ACT	NSW	NT	QLD	SA	TAS	VIC	WA	
2015	141	285	10	90	49	13	91	242	921
July	106	28		20	23	2	6	99	284
August	14	44	1	16	4	4	34	6	123
September	6	28	1	13	4		16	4	72
October	3	46	3	10	3	1	11	11	88
November	7	62		18	8	2	5	21	123
December	5	77	5	13	7	4	19	101	231
2016	51	252	15	55	62	28	108	68	639
January	16	31	3	14	5	1	24	19	113
February	5	18	1	10	9	1	19	10	73
March	5	20	1	9	8	10	10	8	71
April	2	54	1	9	4	5	21	5	101
May	11	82	7	9	18	2	27	15	171
June	12	47	2	4	18	9	7	11	110
Total	192	537	25	145	111	41	199	310	1560
	12.31%	34.42%	1.60%	9.29%	7.12%	2.63%	12.76%	19.87%	
Population	385,996	7,518,472	245,079	4,722,447	1,685,714	514,762	5,841,667	2,573,389	
Proportion of population	1.64%	32.01%	1.04%	20.11%	7.18%	2.19%	24.87%	10.96%	

Table 5 – Gender breakdown by jurisdiction of exposure

Gender of registrant	Jurisdiction of exposure									% Gender
	ACT	NSW	NT	QLD	SA	TAS	VIC	WA	Total	
Female	105	138	4	57	11	9	52	103	479	30.71%
Male	87	398	21	88	100	32	147	207	1080	69.23%
Not specified		1							1	
Total	192	537	25	145	111	41	199	310	1560	
Female	54.69%	25.70%	16.00%	39.31%	9.91%	21.95%	26.13%	33.23%	30.71%	
Male	45.31%	74.12%	84.00%	60.69%	90.09%	78.05%	73.87%	66.77%	69.23%	
Not specified	0.00%	0.19%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.06%	

Table 6 – Occupational to non-occupational exposure by gender

Gender	Exposure type			Exposure type		
	Outside workplace	Workplace	Total	Outside workplace	Workplace	Total
Female	307	172	479	64.09%	35.91%	100.00%
Male	250	830	1080	23.15%	76.85%	100.00%
Not specified	1		1	100.00%	0.00%	100.00%
Total	558	1002	1560	35.77%	64.23%	100.00%

Table 7 – Age range by gender at 1st exposure

Age range - 1st exposure	Gender				% of age group				% female total	% male total
	Female	Male	Not specified	Total	Female	Male	Not specified	% of total	Female	Male
<20	97	244		341	28.45%	71.55%	0.00%	21.86%	20.25%	22.59%
20-29	101	326	1	428	23.60%	76.17%	0.23%	27.44%	21.09%	30.19%
30-39	103	256		359	28.69%	71.31%	0.00%	23.01%	21.50%	23.70%
40-49	113	142		255	44.31%	55.69%	0.00%	16.35%	23.59%	13.15%
50-59	54	73		127	42.52%	57.48%	0.00%	8.14%	11.27%	6.76%
60+	11	39		50	22.00%	78.00%	0.00%	3.21%	2.30%	3.61%
Total	479	1080	1	1560	30.71%	69.23%				

Table 8 – Proportion of workplace exposure to not workplace exposure

Age range	Exposure type			Exposure type	
	Not workplace	Workplace	Total	Outside workplace	Workplace
<20	170	171	341	49.85%	50.15%
20-29	112	316	428	26.17%	73.83%
30-39	134	225	359	37.33%	62.67%
40-49	92	163	255	36.08%	63.92%
50-59	34	93	127	26.77%	73.23%
60+	16	34	50	32.00%	68.00%
Total	558	1002	1560	35.77%	64.23%

Table 9 - Location of exposure

Location of exposure	Count	% of total
Environmental/Domestic	30	1.92%
Other	29	1.86%
Residential	374	23.97%
School/Educational	125	8.01%
Work	1002	64.23%
Total	1560	100.00%

Table 10 – Exposure by job category

Job category	Total	% total
Asbestos Removal / Disposal	24	3.22%
Boilermaker	16	2.14%
Building / Construction	93	12.47%
Electrician	126	16.89%
Fitter and Machinist	43	5.76%
Mining / Resources Occupations	53	7.10%
Other	358	47.99%
Plumber	33	4.42%
Total	746	100.00%

Table 11 – Loose-fill asbestos exposure by jurisdiction of residence at time of exposure

Jurisdiction	Loose fill exposure type						Total
	Owner – no work done on house	Owner having done DIY on house	Owner having had work done on house	Tenant	Tradesperson worker	Visitor to residence of family friends	
ACT	6	47	39	47	2	11	152
NSW	24	29	24	21	2	9	109
NT				1			1
QLD	6	6	2	4	1		19
SA			2	1			3
TAS		1					1
VIC	2	8		9	1		20
WA	1						1
Total	39	91	67	83	6	20	306

Table 12 – Frequency of exposure

Frequency	Location of exposure					
	Environmental/Domestic	Other	Residential	School/Educational	Work	Total
> 5 years	10	10	163	65	273	521
>2 years to 5 years	2	2	52	19	113	188
>6 months to 2 years	1	2	47	16	122	188
0-6 months	15	9	64	16	337	441
Once only	2	6	48	9	157	222
Total	30	29	374	125	1002	1560

Frequency by exposure location

Frequency	Environmental/Domestic	Other	Residential	School/Educational	Work	Total
> 5 years	33.33%	34.48%	43.58%	52.00%	27.25%	33.40%
>2 years to 5 years	6.67%	6.90%	13.90%	15.20%	11.28%	12.05%
>6 months to 2 years	3.33%	6.90%	12.57%	12.80%	12.18%	12.05%
0-6 months	50.00%	31.03%	17.11%	12.80%	33.63%	28.27%
Once only	6.67%	20.69%	12.83%	7.20%	15.67%	14.23%
% of total exposure types	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Frequency as % of location

Frequency	Environmental/Domestic	Other	Residential	School/Educational	Work	Total
> 5 years	1.92%	1.92%	31.29%	12.48%	52.40%	33.40%
>2 years to 5 years	1.06%	1.06%	27.66%	10.11%	60.11%	12.05%
>6 months to 2 years	0.53%	1.06%	25.00%	8.51%	64.89%	12.05%
0-6 months	3.40%	2.04%	14.51%	3.63%	76.42%	28.27%
Once only	0.90%	2.70%	21.62%	4.05%	70.72%	14.23%
% of total exposure types	1.92%	1.86%	23.97%	8.01%	64.23%	100.00%

Table 13 – Means of finding out about NAER

Means of finding out	Jurisdiction								Total	% total
	ACT	NSW	NT	QLD	SA	TAS	VIC	WA		
ASEA Website		9		5	1	1	7	4	27	1.73%
Employer	6	152	7	36	54	18	65	108	446	28.59%
Friends/Family	32	121	4	31	16	5	41	35	285	18.27%
Internet Search	17	45	3	22	6	5	12	22	132	8.46%
Local Council	3	4	1	4			2		14	0.90%
Medical Practitioner	1	17		4	4	2	5	1	34	2.18%
Newspaper/Television Report	17	24	1	7	1		10	4	64	4.10%
Other	35	93	7	40	19	6	41	20	261	16.73%
Pamphlet/Leaflet	2	5		2	1	1	1	1	13	0.83%
State/Territory Regulator	33	20	3	13	3	1	10	3	86	5.51%
Training Course	2	5		2		4	2	1	16	1.03%
Union	1	39		11	3	1	16	111	182	11.67%
Total	149	534	26	177	108	44	212	310	1560	100.00%

Table 14 – Proportion of workplace to non-workplace disease diagnoses

Disease type	Not workplace	Workplace	Total
Asbestosis		17	17
Cancer	1	2	3
Mesothelioma	2	1	3
Pleural Plaques	2	20	22
Unknown		2	2
Total	5	42	47
	10.64%	89.36%	