



ASEAMATTERS

JANUARY 2019

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Welcome to the January ASEA Matters newsletter, and best wishes for a Happy New Year from the agency. This edition will provide an update on activities that the agency undertook at the end of 2018. This includes a wrap-up of the 2018 conference, the release of asbestos awareness information brochures, an update on the draft National Strategic Plan 2019-23, asbestos in the news, National Asbestos Awareness week activities and agency participation in industry events.

Asbestos Safety Hotline

At the end of last year ASEA released an [enhanced website and enquiry line](#). The website and enquiry line aims to ensure everyone in Australia has access to consistent and trusted information to protect from the risks of asbestos exposure. Additionally, these platforms are a one-stop-shop for referral information to state, territory or local authorities to reduce the number of calls required to get the right advice and information regarding asbestos.

On Friday 30 November 2018, Minister for Jobs and Industrial Relations, the Hon Kelly O'Dwyer MP, said from today, Australians can call the Asbestos Safety and Eradication Agency (ASEA) 'Asbestos Safety Hotline' on 1300 326 148 to get fast and accurate referral advice on dealing with asbestos around their homes, workplace or the environment.

"Sadly, around 4,000 Australians die from asbestos-related diseases each year. This figure is simply too high and the Government is committed to improving access to asbestos awareness information," Minister O'Dwyer MP said.

"This repurposing of the ASEA enquiry line and the new ASEA website will provide greater clarity on where the community can go to for help and advice, no matter which state or territory they live in."



Asbestos in the news: Asbestos dumping fraud jail term

21 December, 2018 - NSW Environment Minister Gabrielle Upton has welcomed an 18-month jail sentence handed down to Paul Mouawad at the Downing Centre Local Court today, in relation to a fraud charge brought by NSW Police with the assistance of the NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA).

"This sentence demonstrates illegal behaviour in relation to the disposal of waste is being taken seriously in NSW and tough penalties apply," Ms Upton said. "This is the second offender to be jailed for waste related offences this year. Earlier this year Dib Hanna was sentenced to three years' jail for the illegal transport and dumping of waste."

The court found that Mr Mouawad defrauded a construction company to the value of about \$225,000 by providing false invoices regarding the disposal of waste. In handing down her sentence, the Local Court Magistrate said that others in the industry need to know that fraudulent activities will have consequences.

A related EPA prosecution is continuing against Mr Mouawad and Aussie Earthmovers Pty Ltd for allegedly supplying false information about the transport and disposal of waste, including waste contaminated with asbestos, from a building site in

Central Sydney. Mr Mouawad has pled guilty to the charges brought against him by the EPA.

The EPA alleges that in June and July 2016, Mr Mouawad and Aussie Earthmovers Pty Ltd arranged for the removal of about 1,400 tonnes of asbestos-contaminated soil and supplied false information about where the soil was disposed.

Minister Upton said this prosecution is one part of the EPA's ongoing compliance to investigate work related to the incident and is an example of the inroads being made to tackle organised illegal dumping in NSW.

"The EPA's Waste Crime Taskforce is targeting the most serious and complex waste-related crimes and organised criminal behaviour."

Source: [NSW EPA media release](#)

DID YOU KNOW?



ASBESTOS CAN BE FOUND IN A THIRD OF AUSTRALIAN HOMES



6300 TONNES ILLEGALLY DUMPED PER YEAR



4000 AUSTRALIANS DIE FROM ARDs PER YEAR

More information on our website: <https://asbestosafety.gov.au>



2018 ASEA Conference highlights

The 2018 Asbestos Safety and Eradication Agency conference was held at Sheraton Grand Sydney Hyde Park from 18 to 20 November, 2018. The official welcome reception took place at The Loft, Doltone House Jones Bay Wharf and the gala dinner was held at Doltone House Darling Island, Sydney.

The conference welcomed over 300 industry professionals from a range of industries including work health and safety, public health and environment at this year's conference.

Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation the Hon Matt Kean MP opened the conference highlighting the work of the NSW Government including the establishment of the Heads of Asbestos Coordination Authorities (HACA), various initiatives, programs, and funding of projects recently implemented, and in particular their model asbestos policy for NSW councils.

"NSW will continue to be at the vanguard of protecting people from the menace of asbestos. Can I implore you to continue to work with us to make sure that our community is free from this terrible material and that people are safe in their homes and their workplaces," Minister Matt Kean MP said.

Minister for Jobs and Industrial Relations, the Hon Kelly O'Dwyer MP continued to open the conference with a video address highlighting the importance of the 2018 conference and the contributions of delegates to the next phase of the National Strategic Plan and the importance of the plan reflecting the expectations and needs of both governments and the community at large.

Minister O'Dwyer also spoke of how the Australian Government is taking on an international leadership role when it comes to asbestos-related matters, and their commitment to prevent the illegal importation of asbestos.

Conference delegates also heard from international and local industry experts in a variety of plenary and panel discussion sessions throughout the two-day program.

The conference presented a unique opportunity to come together, exchange information and share ideas. A highlight of the conference was the positive feedback and collaboration received from delegates on the vision, the aim and the national priorities and action plans of the National Strategic Plan 2019-23.

The two-day program also included a tradeshow exhibition featuring 14 local and international exhibitors displaying a range of practices, products and services from across the industry.

Thank you to all the delegates, speakers, exhibitors, The Biaggio Signorelli Foundation for your support in hosting the two social functions at both Doltone House venues, and to our major sponsors – SafeWork NSW, Cbus and Thuroona Services for your ongoing support and attendance at the conference.

Revisit the event highlights and view the infographic, photos and presentations [here](#).



Photo: Justine Ross, CEO, ASEA presenting at the 2018 ASEA Conference at Sheraton Grand Sydney Hyde Park

Asbestos awareness information brochures

The agency has released three asbestos awareness information brochures for the general construction, automotive and fire installation industries.

These brochures provide tailored information on where asbestos may be found, how to know whether something contains asbestos, what to do if asbestos is present, safety tips and the common activities that require extra care specific to each industry.

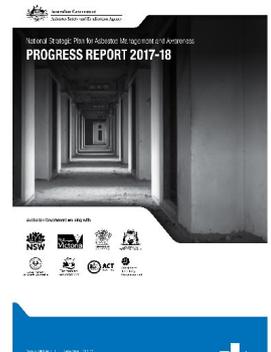
The brochures can be downloaded [here](#) or to order printed copies, email events@asbestossafety.gov.au.



National Strategic Plan for Asbestos Management and Awareness Progress Report 2017-18

The 2017-18 Progress Report on the National Strategic Plan for Asbestos Management and Awareness 2014-18 was released in November 2018. This is the final annual report on activities undertaken by state, territory and Australian Government agencies during the first phase of the Plan.

This [report](#) highlights the significant achievements made by all stakeholders progressing the goals of the Plan. The activities and best practice case studies in this report illustrate our collaborative successes implementing the Plan and the progress that has been made toward our ultimate aim of eliminating asbestos-related disease in Australia.



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National Strategic Plan 2019-2023 draft update

One of ASEAs key functions is to administer the National Strategic Plan for Asbestos Management and Awareness. The first phase of the plan from 2014-2018 has come to an end and the second phase, the National Strategic Plan for Asbestos Management and Awareness 2019-2023 (NSP 2019-2023) is now in the final stages of development.

Evidence from research reports, progress measurements and targeted consultations has informed the development of the draft NSP 2019-2023. The most recent consultations took place during the 2018 ASEA Conference in Sydney where over 150 delegates participated in workshops providing valuable collaboration and feedback on the new goals and targets.

The National Strategic Plan for Asbestos Management and Awareness is a long-term framework focused on key priorities being jointly pursued by Commonwealth and all state and territory governments to eliminate asbestos-related disease in Australia. The NSP 2019-2023 aims to build on the previous plans progress and to complement and enhance existing asbestos policies and actions at all levels of government.

It is proposed to have four national priorities:

1. Improve asbestos awareness to influence behavioural change

2. Identification and effective legacy management

3. Safe prioritised removal and effective waste management

4. International collaboration and leadership



In December 2018, the Minister for Jobs, Industrial Relations and Women provided in-principle approval of the draft NSP 2019-2023 and senior officials' support will be sought in early 2019.

National Asbestos Awareness Week 25 November to 1 December 2018

4,000 Australians die from asbestos-related diseases each year. This fact reflects Australia as having one of the highest rates of reported asbestos-related diseases of any country in the world.

On the 25 November to 1 December 2018 in recognition of National Asbestos Awareness Week, the agency encouraged the public to take some time out to become asbestos aware, find out more about the significant health risks and dangers posed by exposure to asbestos fibres, and learn how to keep themselves and their families safe.

ASEA staff also had the opportunity to attend and participate in some of the National Asbestos Awareness week activities and events held across the country by the asbestos support groups. ASEA Director, Shane McArdle presented at the Asbestos Awareness Day held by the Asbestos Council of Victoria in Morwell and appeared on the Gippsland 9 News – view the video [here](#).

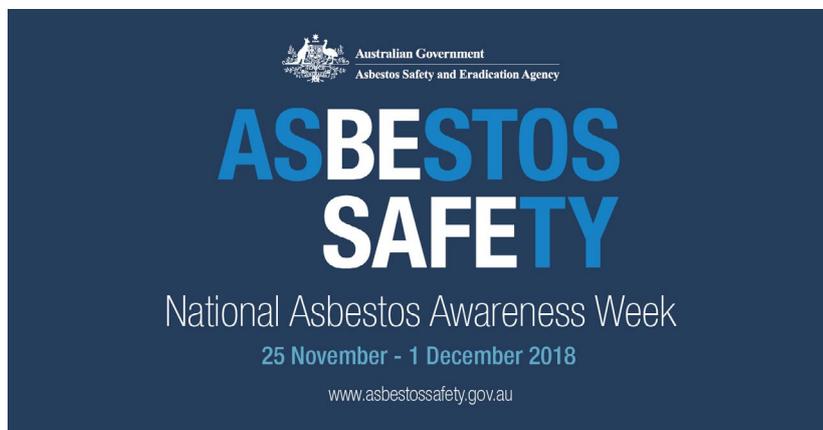


Photo: Shane McArdle, Director, ASEA presenting at the ACV GARDS Asbestos Awareness Event on Friday 29 November.

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CBFCA National Conference 2018 - Sydney

1 to 3 November

The 2018 Customs Brokers and Forwarders Council of Australia Inc. (CBFCA) National Conference was held at Sheraton Grand Sydney Hyde Park from 1 to 3 November.

The theme addressed throughout the conference was 'Emerging technologies affecting international trade' with regulators and key industry stakeholders recognising the need for Government and industry partnership. The conference provided an opportunity for ASEA staff to hear presentations from representatives of the Australian Border Force (ABF), The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) and the opening keynote address from The Hon. Linda Reynolds, Assistant Minister for Home Affairs. These presentations provided further insight into emerging technology transforming the way business is conducted at the border, how the ABF facilitates trade and enforces the law at the border, and regulatory compliance.

ASEA participated in the trade show component of the event which provided an opportunity to network with stakeholders and provide further information on the potential risk of importing goods containing asbestos and the permits application system and process.



Photo: CBFCA National Conference 2018 at Sheraton Grand Sydney Hyde Park

Lao Workshop: The National Action Plan on Elimination of Asbestos-Related Diseases – Vientiane, Laos, 28 November

ASEA was delighted to attend the official launch of the National Action Plan to Eliminate Asbestos-Related Diseases by the Ministry of Health in Laos on the 28 November. The World Health Organisation (WHO) and Union Aid Abroad - APHEDA have worked closely with the Lao Government on the National Action Plan for eight months. The ten year plan was signed off by the Health Minister and proposed a full ban of asbestos in December 2020.

ASEA CEO, Justine Ross travelled to Laos to participate and present in national workshops with Government officials and to progress their National Action Plan for a nationwide ban on asbestos to eliminate asbestos-related disease. Also in attendance were fellow international experts from ADRI Australia, KOSHA Korea and Asia Ban Asbestos Network Japan joining together to support the Ministry of Health, the Lao Federation of Trade Unions (LFTU), LAOBAN and other Ministries as they plan to ban asbestos in Laos and manage remaining asbestos usage. Union Aid Abroad also ran a one day training for trade unions and LAOBAN.



Photo: Justine Ross, CEO, ASEA and Government officials in Laos attending the workshop sessions.

AIOH 2018 – Melbourne, 1 to 5 December

ASEA also exhibited at the 36th Annual Conference and Exhibition of the Australian Institute of Occupational Hygienists (AIOH) held at the Crown Conference Centre, Southbank, Melbourne from 1 to 5 December.

The theme for the conference was 'Occupational Hygiene: Challenges, Opportunities & Solutions'.

ASEA's exhibition booth was visited by a range of delegates including representatives of NATA accredited laboratories, permit holders, occupational hygienists and government, including work health and safety regulators. Delegates showed interest and support of the role of ASEA, as well as seeking information on ASEA events, and the National Strategic Plan 2019-23.

This event provided a valuable opportunity for ASEA staff to not only engage and network with stakeholders providing the latest information on the work of the agency, but also provided an opportunity to learn about the latest technology and developments being employed in the industry to identify asbestos fibres and increase awareness.



Photo: Lawrence Lo, Project Officer, Asbestos Safety and Eradication Agency at the ASEA exhibition booth at the AIOH 2018 Conference.

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