



# Australian Government

## Asbestos and Silica Safety and Eradication Council

### Asbestos Advisory Committee

#### Communique

#### Meeting 3 – 25 March 2026

The Asbestos Advisory Committee (the Committee) held its third meeting on Ngunnawal and Ngambri lands on 25 March 2026. After the Chair's welcome, members reflected on the outcomes of ASSEA's Forum held the previous day and acknowledged the value of ASSEA's committee and Council members coming together to share ideas and expertise.

Members discussed the Committee advisory plan and provided feedback on the action areas and projects for which they could provide advice. Members noted draft guidance on the use of handheld devices will be circulated by the end of March 2026 for feedback.

Members discussed the national response to imported coloured sand products that have been found to be contaminated with asbestos. Members highlighted some of the coordination challenges, the importance of consistent messaging and advice especially regarding risk, disposal, and the roles of various agencies. The CEO provided an overview of ASSEA's role along with changes already made by various parties, it was agreed that there is a need for improved protocols and scenario testing for future incidents.

The agency provided updates regarding its continued efforts to enhance the asbestos waste management system. Members identified the necessity for more robust tracking and disposal systems, discussed competency frameworks for those involved in removal and transport, and considered the potential of alternative disposal technologies.

Members noted the update on ASSEA's research into low level exposures to asbestos in non-workplace environments, following the initial Report by the Joanna Briggs Institute. The agency advised additional work with the University of Adelaide will be undertaken to further the research through a Dose-Response Meta-Analysis based on the low-level exposures research findings. ASSEA indicated they will welcome members to provide input on the design, audience, and review of research throughout the course of the project.

The agency provided an update regarding the promotion and use of the National Guide for Asbestos Surveys, as well as publication of supporting guidance for both commercial property owners and homeowners. The agency reported that the Guide has been adopted for training surveyors and by various government and non-government organisations seeking to improve the quality of their asbestos registers and management plans. The agency continues to promote the Guide through industry workshops, presentations at events and meetings.

To conclude, Safe Work Australia provided an update to members on the Asbestos Framework Review, inviting submissions and feedback from the committee, with discussion focusing on competency standards, regulatory gaps in residential settings, and the need for harmonised enforcement and training. Members also received a report back from Professor Tim Driscoll on the International Mesothelioma Interest Group and Global Asbestos Forum conferences, noting advances in mesothelioma management, international research collaborations, and the challenges faced by countries such as the UK, Norway, and Ukraine in asbestos control and remediation.

The next meeting will be held virtually in September 2026.