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Asbestos and Silica Safety and Eradication Council

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Communiqué

Meeting 2026-2 | 4 August 2026

The [Asbestos and Silica Safety and Eradication Council](#) (ASSEC) met on Tuesday, 4 August 2026 in Sydney, bringing together Council members, agency staff and observers.

The Chair opened the meeting with an Acknowledgement of Country, acknowledging the Traditional Owners of the land on which the meeting was chaired and the Traditional Custodians of the lands where participants were located. The Chair paid respects to Elders past, present and future, recognising the memories, traditions, culture and hopes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of Australia.

The Council acknowledged several membership changes since the April 2026 meeting. Members welcomed the newly appointed Chair of ASSEC, Phillip Hazelton and acknowledged the valuable contribution of outgoing Chair, Paul Bastian since his appointment in 2023, including his leadership and support for the Council's role in advancing national efforts to address the serious health impacts of asbestos and silica exposure. The Council also noted that Liz de Hoog's term as the Commonwealth representative had ended and welcomed Alex Ng to the role. Members recorded their thanks to Liz de Hoog and Yasmin Cox for their time and contribution.

The Agency updated the Council on progress against its lead actions under the Asbestos National Strategic Plan 2024-30 (ANSP). Members noted delivery of the National Asbestos Awareness Campaign, publication of updated mesothelioma clinical guidelines, work with Safe Work Australia on the Asbestos Framework Review, support for hand-held asbestos detection device trials, research related to asbestos-contaminated coloured play sands, and development of evaluation strategies to support implementation of the National Strategic Plans.

The Council also considered progress under the Silica National Strategic Plan 2024-30 (SNSP). This included completion of work to identify data sources for reporting against endorsed national targets, establishment of jurisdiction and Commonwealth reporting processes, publication of the Silica Facts and Figures resource, progression of silica awareness activities, and preparation for consultation on the SNSP Evaluation Strategy.

Members considered an update on the National Residential Asbestos Heatmap, including a revised public release strategy informed by Council feedback. The approach focused on targeted engagement with local governments and emergency services, use of the Combined Asbestos and Natural Disaster Risk Index, consultation through the Australian Local Government Association, and development of asbestos risk profiles for federal electorates in collaboration with the Parliamentary Group on Asbestos Related Diseases.

The Council was updated on implementation of ASSEA's Strategic Communications, Media and Engagement Roadmap. The Agency had progressed prioritisation and planning, commenced selected implementation activities, and focused on foundational work including stakeholder mapping, Customer Relationship Management planning, messaging, templates and media



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capability. Members also noted recent committee engagement and targeted local government engagement activities.

Members noted outcomes from the May 2026 Senior Implementation Forum and progress on the 2025-26 ANSP and SNSP progress reporting process. Jurisdictions were being consulted on narrative and quantitative inputs, with draft progress reports to be provided to jurisdictions and Council members for review before finalisation.

The Agency provided an activity report covering broader organisational matters, including ministerial approval of the 2026-27 Annual Operational Plan, the committee review, recent website resources and communication channels, and operational dashboard metrics.

The Chair thanked all participants, presenters and guests for their contributions and continued commitment to preventing exposure to asbestos fibres and respirable crystalline silica, and to eliminating asbestos- and silica-related diseases in Australia.

The next meeting is scheduled for 18 November 2026, with the location to be confirmed.