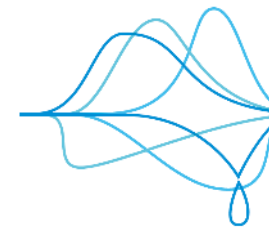




Australian Government

Asbestos Safety and Eradication Agency



Asbestos National
Strategic Plan

Implementation
2019–23

Annual Operational Plan and Corporate Plan

2022–2023



Who we are

The Asbestos Safety and Eradication Agency (ASEA) was established in 2013 to coordinate the implementation of the *National Strategic Plan for Asbestos Management and Awareness* (Asbestos National Strategic Plan). The Asbestos National Strategic Plan aims to prevent exposure to asbestos fibres in order to eliminate asbestos-related diseases in Australia.

ASEA is a non-corporate entity under the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*.

What we do

ASEA coordinates national actions to improve asbestos awareness and the effective and safe management, removal and disposal of asbestos.

ASEA is not a regulator. Our key functions under the *Asbestos Safety and Eradication Agency Act 2013* are to:

- ✓ encourage, coordinate, monitor and report on the implementation of the Asbestos National Strategic Plan, as well as reviewing and amending the plan
- ✓ commission, monitor and promote research about asbestos safety
- ✓ raise awareness of asbestos safety, including by developing and promoting materials on asbestos safety
- ✓ collect and analyse data required for measuring progress on preventing exposure to asbestos fibres and informing evidence-based policies and strategies, and
- ✓ promote consistent messages, policies and practices in relation to asbestos safety.

How we carry out our functions



Consultation, collaboration and cooperation

We work with all tiers of government as well as non-government groups to ensure consistent and coordinated awareness messages and asbestos management approaches.



Evidence-based decision making

We identify, analyse and disseminate Australian and international evidence, and where gaps exist, commission national research and data collection.



Transparency

We undertake our activities in an open and transparent manner so that stakeholders have access to all relevant information.



Sharing best practice

Our actions and resources are aimed at reducing duplication across jurisdictions, encouraging innovation and driving continuous improvement in asbestos awareness and management.



Precaution

We take a proactive and precautionary approach to how we consider and address the risks of asbestos exposure.

The Asbestos National Strategic Plan

The Asbestos National Strategic Plan facilitates a consistent and coordinated approach to asbestos awareness, management and removal.

The Commonwealth and all state and territory governments have agreed to implement the Asbestos National Strategic Plan, which commits signatories to develop jurisdictional action plans aligned with the four national priorities and to measure progress against a set of national targets.

This Annual Operational Plan is consistent with the principles and national priorities of the Asbestos National Strategic Plan.



Our priorities and activities

Coordinate implementation

We will continue to provide advice and support to assist governments implement the Asbestos National Strategic Plan, including by:

- ✓ participating in interagency coordination group meetings
- ✓ promoting implementation resources
- ✓ hosting forums for jurisdictions to discuss implementation challenges and share information
- ✓ refining data collection and online reporting

During 2022–23 we will also:

- ✓ collect and analyse data against the national targets for 2021–22 progress report
- ✓ complete a mid-term review of the national targets
- ✓ commence consultation to develop the third phase of the Asbestos National Strategic Plan.

Asbestos awareness

We will continue to:

- ✓ develop and promote materials on asbestos safety
- ✓ engage with hardware retailers and television producers of home DIY renovation programs to provide better information about asbestos safety to the community
- ✓ raise awareness of potential presence of asbestos in residential properties at the point of sale or lease.

During 2022–23 we will also:

- ✓ publish and promote guidelines on communicating asbestos risks
- ✓ conduct a targeted advertising campaign on asbestos safety
- ✓ promote National Asbestos Awareness Week in November 2022.

Research, data and policy

We will continue to ensure our research is designed to assist governments implement the Asbestos National Strategic Plan. During 2022–23 we will:

- ✓ work with stakeholders to develop a strategy that addresses legacy asbestos in remote Indigenous communities
- ✓ develop a national standard on assessing and documenting asbestos risk levels
- ✓ encourage the development and use of technology to make asbestos identification and management easier
- ✓ conduct research relating to non-occupational asbestos exposure
- ✓ develop options to improve Australia's asbestos waste management framework, including initiatives to combat illegal dumping of asbestos
- ✓ commission a cost-benefit analysis to inform the third phase of the Asbestos National Strategic Plan.

We will also work with the Office of the National Data Commissioner to improve our asbestos-related data inventory and make it easier to find, use and share data.

International engagement

We will continue to work across South-East Asia and the Pacific, along with partners in the field, to support nations and non-government organisations progress asbestos bans. We will continue to:

- ✓ promote reform of the Rotterdam Convention to include chrysotile asbestos on Annex III
- ✓ manage the asbestos import and export permissions system under Customs Regulations
- ✓ liaise with the Australian Border Force (ABF) on imported products containing asbestos and publish ABF data on asbestos testing and detections
- ✓ manage the secretariat for a regulatory working group which collaborates to trace asbestos-containing goods that have entered the Australian market unlawfully and commence remediation.

During 2022–23 we will also:

- ✓ research the incidence of asbestos-related diseases in South-East Asian countries
- ✓ develop guidance on asbestos safety and regulatory options.

Measuring our performance

 Performance measures	 Targets
Number of jurisdictions that have developed action plans aligned with the Asbestos National Strategic Plan and are reporting against the targets	All jurisdictions
Level of satisfaction of Asbestos Safety and Eradication Council members and other stakeholders	80% satisfaction
Level of public awareness about asbestos safety	National awareness survey shows increase in awareness
Effective stakeholder engagement	Increased reach of ASEA's communications
National adoption of National Asbestos Awareness Week 2022	All jurisdictions promote National Asbestos Awareness Week 2022 and adopt ASEA's messages
Applications for permission to import and export asbestos finalised within 60 days	All applications

Our Corporate Plan

Section 5A(2) of the *Asbestos Safety and Eradication Agency Act 2013* states that the Asbestos National Strategic Plan is taken to be ASEA's corporate plan for the purposes of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*.

However, the Asbestos National Strategic Plan is designed to be implemented by all governments across Australia and does not include the requirements of a corporate plan as described under the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014*.

Until such time that the *Asbestos Safety and Eradication Agency Act 2013* is amended, this part includes the additional matters that must be included in corporate plans.

Our operating environment

Australia imposed a total ban on the mining, manufacture and use of asbestos on 31 December 2003. However, the past use of asbestos has left us with a harmful legacy. Australia has one of the highest rates of asbestos-related diseases of any country in the world. Some 4,000 Australians currently die each year from past exposure to asbestos, which is more than double the number of annual Australian road deaths.

Many public and commercial buildings, homes and infrastructure still contain large amounts of ageing asbestos-containing materials. Asbestos, if not managed safely, poses a significant public health threat. Ensuring the safe management, removal and disposal of asbestos involves governments at all levels, across a range of areas, as well as a network of organisations and people that can influence and assist in achieving the aims and targets of the Asbestos National Strategic Plan.

ASEA plays a critical role in working with these stakeholders to prevent exposure to asbestos fibres by coordinating practical and targeted actions across Australia. We will:

- ✓ assist governments to implement the Asbestos National Strategic Plan and track performance against the national targets
- ✓ identify any performance gaps and recommend new activities
- ✓ promote nationally consistent messaging to ensure everyone in the community understands the risks of asbestos exposure and knows what actions to take.

Our capabilities



Data

Become a more data-driven agency and continue developing our data management capability to establish an evidence base and measure progress against the national targets.

We will progress work as an Australian Government data custodian, including digital curation of new datasets, and forge partnerships with other data holders.



Workforce

Attracting and developing a workforce of highly skilled, dynamic, outward looking and resilient employees is central to achieving our key functions.

We are building human capital with relevant expertise to ensure we meet the expectations of our stakeholders. We will invest in tailored learning opportunities to strengthen skills and assist staff to work more efficiently and effectively.



Communication

Deliver asbestos-related messaging that is nationally consistent, coordinated and targets groups most at risk of asbestos exposure.

Through our dedicated Communications team, the Asbestos Awareness Committee and targeted engagement activities, such as bilateral meetings and summits with our stakeholders, we will raise awareness and be the trusted source of asbestos information at the national level.



Engagement

We proactively engage and collaborate with new and existing stakeholders.

We have established four consultative committees consisting of representatives from government and non-government sectors to assist in the performance of our functions. We will also work more closely with local government to identify their asbestos challenges and support councils with asbestos awareness and management.

Governance and risk management

The Asbestos Safety and Eradication Council (the Council) is established under Part 5 of the *Asbestos Safety and Eradication Agency Act 2013*. The Council's key functions include monitoring the implementation of the Asbestos National Strategic Plan, providing advice and making recommendations to ASEA's Chief Executive Officer (CEO), and providing advice to the Minister about asbestos safety.

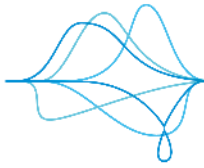
Our risk management framework is determined by a broader Commonwealth framework of legislation, policies, standards and guidelines and meets the requirements of section 16 of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*. All risk identification, analysis, evaluation and treatment for our operations are recorded and updated in ASEA's Dashboard and Risk Register.

As a micro-agency, our corporate governance structure and processes are streamlined, and include weekly meetings with all staff and the executive who oversee the risk management framework and corporate compliance.

The management of risk is incorporated in our day-to-day business activities, discussions and decisions. We consult and cooperate with our stakeholders to actively manage our shared risks.

Our Audit and Risk Committee's role is to provide independent advice and assurance to the CEO on ASEA's control framework, including risk oversight and management. Regular reporting on our risk profile is provided to the Audit and Risk Committee. Risk management activities are also reported in our annual report.

During 2022-23, we will continue to integrate, strengthen and embed our risk management framework in order to deliver on our priorities. We will regularly review our risk register to ensure ratings give a realistic appraisal of the risk profile and align with ASEA's risk management framework. Any high risks will be actively controlled.



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