

Asbestos Safety and Eradication Council

Communique

Meeting 46 – 8 November 2023

The [Asbestos Safety and Eradication Council](#) (the Council) met on 8 November 2023 on Ngunnawal Land (Canberra).

Council members received presentations from the two successful proof-of-concept grant recipients, each with \$1 million research funding from the Department of Industry's Business Research and Innovation Initiative – Regulatory Technology Round. Research teams from Flawless Photonics and PAG R&D briefed members on progress with the development of technology for a hand-portable in-situ real-time non-contact asbestos sensor and microwave technology for in situ detection of asbestos in wall panelling. Further information on these projects can be found on the Asbestos Safety and Eradication Agency's (ASEA) [website](#).

ASEA presented Council members with a proposed final package of papers in support of the development of the third phase of the Asbestos National Strategic Plan 2024–2030 (ANSP). Phase three of the ANSP builds on progress from phases one and two and focuses on practical measures to support the safe removal of ageing asbestos containing materials (ACM). The Council noted the ANSP was informed by the *Economic Evaluation of Asbestos Management and Removal Options Report*, the *2012 Asbestos Management Review Report: Analysis of Recommendations* and the *ANSP Outcomes of Consultation Report*.

Council members agreed to ASEA progressing the ANSP and supporting documents to the Commonwealth and state and territory ministers for their endorsement. In addition, Council members considered a draft report on government incentives for proactive asbestos removal in non-government residential and commercial buildings.

ASEA updated Council members on the development of national guidance for conducting asbestos surveys. The guidance is being developed to address the need for a robust and consistent approach to identifying ACMs and assessing their risks across both residential and non-residential sectors in Australia. Council members also received a presentation on an ACM Product Guide that will take the form of an interactive, online database to assist in the identification of ACMs. The guidance material will be released for public consultation in 2024. Information on further improvements to the National Residential Asbestos Heatmap was also provided, with a demonstration from Tetra Tech Coffey consultants (ASEA's collaborators on this project) of v2.1 of the heatmap.

The Council received details on the planned activities for the 2023–24 National Asbestos Awareness Campaign and National Asbestos Awareness Week (NAAW) (20–26 November 2023). Members noted that NAAW will mark 20 years since asbestos was completely banned in Australia. A stakeholder pack is available on ASEA's website to assist stakeholders to disseminate messaging and also includes a calendar of NAAW activities across Australia.

The Council recorded a vote of appreciation to the outgoing Chief Executive Officer, Justine Ross. The Council acknowledged that Ms Ross' unique combination of strategic insight, skills and experience (across workplace relations and work health and safety) has seen ASEA build on its reputation nationally and internationally as a trusted source of advice and expertise on asbestos and as a leader in asbestos safety research.

The date of the next Council meeting is yet to be determined.