

Asbestos Safety and Eradication Council

Communique

Meeting 43 – 8 March 2023

The [Asbestos Safety and Eradication Council](#) met on 8 March 2023 on Ngunnawal Land (Canberra). Prior to the meeting members held a workshop to help set ASEA's priorities for 2023-2024 which will include the development of the next phase of the Asbestos National Strategic Plan. Members expressed a strong preference for ASEA to prioritise for 2023-2024 the development of a roadmap for governments to move towards proactive legacy removal.

Council members were briefed on progress against the nine targets set out in *the National Strategic Plan for Asbestos Awareness and Management 2019-2023 (Asbestos National Strategic Plan)*, based on information provided by the Australian Government, state and territory governments, and research undertaken by the Asbestos Safety and Eradication Agency (ASEA). Members were pleased that a major target had been achieved with the completion of the National Residential Asbestos Heatmap and that the remaining eight targets are progressing well.

Council members noted that although implementation of the Asbestos National Strategic Plan has been steady, it has been impacted by governments' need to prioritise the COVID-19 pandemic over the past two years. Following consultation with jurisdictional representatives the draft progress report will be finalised and published on ASEA's website. Members noted the findings from the annual progress reports will inform phase 3 of the Asbestos National Strategic Plan.

ASEA provided Council members with an update on the development of the National Guide for Asbestos Surveys. Members noted that the guide will be the first of its kind for Australia and will provide a robust and consistent standard for conducting asbestos surveys allowing for effective actions to be taken to prevent exposure to airborne asbestos fibres.

The Council noted that a draft of the National Guide for Asbestos Surveys will be released for public comment on the ASEA website in April 2023.

In November 2022, ASEA launched a national campaign to improve asbestos awareness and influence behaviour change to prevent exposure to asbestos fibres. The campaign consists of 2 phases of advertising targeting DIY home improvers and tradespeople. Phase 1 of the campaign was launched on 20 November 2022 to coincide with National Asbestos Awareness Week (NAAW) and ran until 23 December 2022. Council members noted the strong performance of the phase 1 campaign which reached millions of Australians. Phase 2 will be launched in March 2023 in the lead up to the Easter holiday period. Members also noted the successful collaborations and activities that took place during NAAW that helped expand the reach of the campaign messages.

The next Council meeting will be held in Canberra on 26 July 2023.