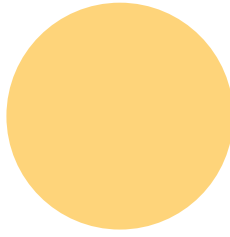
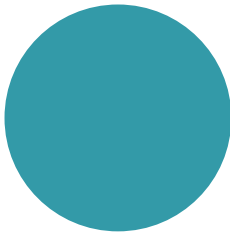




# Statewide Strategic Plan for the Safe Management of Asbestos in Queensland 2022-2025



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# Foreword



The Queensland Government is committed to providing an integrated and strategic direction for asbestos management and regulation through the *Statewide Strategic Plan for the Safe Management of Asbestos in Queensland 2022-2025* (the Queensland Asbestos Strategic Plan).

The Queensland Asbestos Strategic Plan builds on the achievements of the previous Statewide Strategic Plan and seeks to further improve the awareness and management of asbestos related risks as well as the way regulatory agencies respond to asbestos matters. The plan includes 23 actions across the following four priority areas:

1. Improve asbestos awareness to influence behavioural change
2. Identification and effective management of legacy in situ asbestos containing materials (ACM), imported asbestos and naturally occurring asbestos
3. Safe removal, transport and disposal of asbestos waste
4. Effective and coordinated regulation

I am proud of the Queensland Government's commitment to improve asbestos health and safety in Queensland. We will work cooperatively with local governments, industry, unions, organisations advocating for asbestos safety, other state and territory regulators and the wider community to implement the Queensland Asbestos Strategic Plan. Together we will continue to inform and educate workers and the community about the dangers of asbestos and protect Queenslanders from the harmful risks associated with exposure to asbestos fibres.



**The Honourable Grace Grace MP**

*Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing*

# Introduction

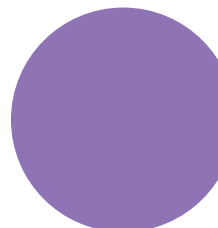
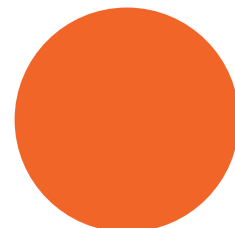
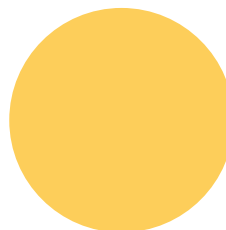
Over the last seven years, Queensland's coordinated, whole-of-government approach towards the management of asbestos has been guided by the *Statewide Strategic Plan for the Safe Management of Asbestos in Queensland 2014-2019*.

The previous plan has reached the end of its term, with most of the initiatives completed and progressed into the ongoing functions of the agencies involved in asbestos regulation. Key achievements under the previous plan include:

- relevant agencies working collaboratively through the Interagency Asbestos Group to provide coordination and strategic oversight of asbestos issues and incident response
- providing clarity on the roles and responsibilities of Queensland agencies in responding to and managing specific asbestos incidents, including the role of local governments
- joining up of asbestos services across government boundaries
- strengthening compliance and enforcement activities and licensing frameworks
- developing a single source of asbestos-related information through a dedicated website to improve public awareness of asbestos-related matters.

In addition to these achievements, in 2021, the Office of Industrial Relations updated its position on low density asbestos fibre board to state that it must be classified as friable in all circumstances, in a move to ensure the health risks associated with this type of asbestos containing material are appropriately managed. A range of educational materials were also developed to support industry, workers and the community with this change and to raise awareness about low density asbestos fibre board.

Though significant improvements have been made, the Queensland Government must continue its efforts to ensure the impacts of asbestos are minimised through all stages of its lifecycle. The *Statewide Strategic Plan for the Safe Management of Asbestos in Queensland 2022-2025* (The Queensland Asbestos Strategic Plan) provides the framework to further improve the awareness and management of asbestos related risks, as well as the way regulatory agencies respond to asbestos matters.

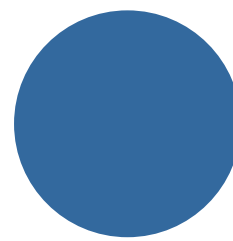
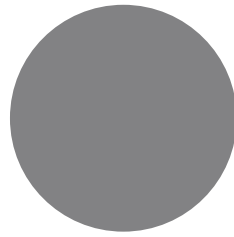
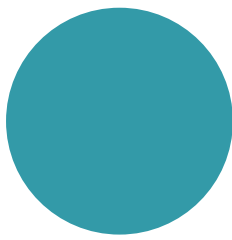


# Coordinated regulation of asbestos in Queensland

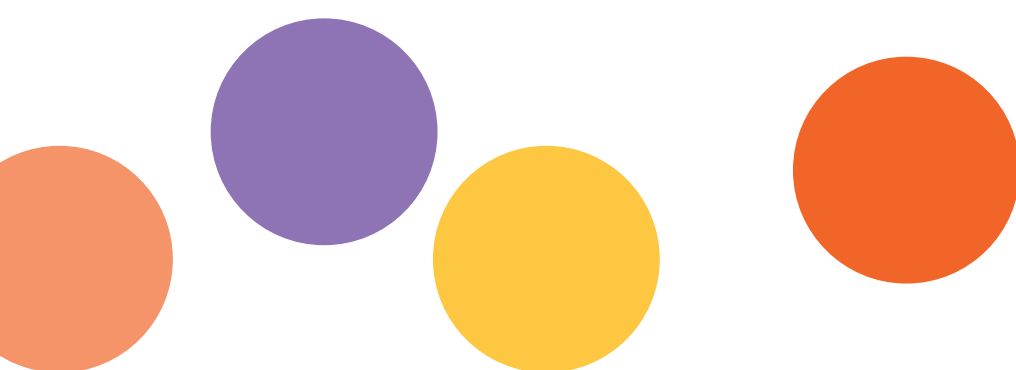
The Queensland Government has a comprehensive regulatory framework to minimise the risks of exposure to asbestos in workplaces and mine sites, domestic premises and the natural environment. These laws are administered through a collaborative service delivery model by the regulatory agencies listed below, that each have a role in managing or responding to asbestos related issues.

**Table 1: Roles and responsibilities of government agencies in the management of asbestos in Queensland**

Area of responsibility	Agency	Roles
Environmental protection – contaminated land, illegal dumping, waste management	Department of Environment and Science	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Administer legislation:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <i>Environmental Protection Act 1994</i></li> <li>– <i>Waste Reduction and Recycling Act 2011</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>License landfills that accept asbestos waste</li> <li>Set waste levies for asbestos waste</li> <li>Regulate illegal dumping</li> <li>Respond to environmental contamination</li> </ul>
Transport of asbestos waste	Department of Environment and Science	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Administer the <i>Environmental Protection Act 1994</i></li> <li>Regulate the transport of asbestos (licensing of transporters, administering system for tracking hazardous wastes including asbestos)</li> </ul>
Work health and safety	Office of Industrial Relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Administer the <i>Work Health and Safety Act 2011</i></li> <li>Issue licenses to asbestos removalists and assessors</li> <li>Regulate the management, control and removal of asbestos in workplaces</li> <li>Regulate asbestos removal by a person conducting a business or undertaking at domestic premises</li> </ul>
Public health	Queensland Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Administer the <i>Public Health Act 2005</i></li> <li>Regulate the management and removal of asbestos undertaken by a person that is not conducting a business or undertaking at domestic premises</li> </ul>
Mining and quarrying	Resources Safety and Health Queensland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Administer legislation:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <i>Mining and Quarrying Safety and Health Act 1999</i></li> <li>– <i>Coal Mining Safety and Health Act 1999</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>Regulate asbestos containing materials and naturally occurring asbestos in mines and quarries</li> </ul>



Area of responsibility	Agency	Roles
Managing asbestos in government buildings	Department of Energy and Public Works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Administer internal whole-of-government asbestos management policy</li><li>• Provide trade and professional services to government agencies including asbestos removal, audits, asbestos registers, advisory services, project management and incident response</li></ul>
Local management of asbestos in domestic settings, landfills, illegal dumping and minor contamination events	Local councils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Investigate, manage and respond to asbestos incidents in non-workplace (domestic) settings</li><li>• Oversee council managed landfills and transfer stations licenced to ensure the safe disposal of asbestos containing material</li><li>• Respond to illegal dumping and minor environmental contamination events</li></ul>
Building safety standards	Queensland Building and Construction Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Administer the <i>Queensland Building and Construction Commission Act 1991</i></li><li>• Investigate the use of non-conforming building products (including asbestos containing products)</li></ul>
Public housing	Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Manage asbestos in social housing</li><li>• Landlord and agent responsibilities for social housing</li></ul>
Emergency response	Queensland Fire and Emergency Services, with OIR, QH and DES as relevant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Respond to emergencies involving fires, floods and other natural disasters (with OIR, QH and DES as relevant)</li></ul>
Border protection	Australian Border Force (Federal government)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Respond to incidents where materials containing asbestos are imported into Australia</li></ul>
Consumer protection	ACCC (Federal government)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Administer the Australian Consumer Law</li><li>• Facilitate the recall of consumer goods containing asbestos</li></ul>



An Interagency Asbestos Group (IAG) brings together the key agencies with regulatory responsibility for asbestos, to facilitate a cooperative, coordinated and systematic approach to the management of asbestos in Queensland. The IAG is chaired by a senior representative from the Office of Industrial Relations (OIR) and includes senior representatives from the following agencies:

- Office of Industrial Relations
- Queensland Health (QH)
- Resources Safety and Health Queensland (RSHQ)
- Department of Environment and Science (DES)
- Department of Energy and Public Works (DEPW)
- Department of the Premier and Cabinet (DPC)
- Local Government Association of Queensland (LGAQ)

## Implementing the Queensland Asbestos Strategic Plan

The IAG has developed the second Queensland Asbestos Strategic Plan to further improve the management of asbestos risks in Queensland and build on the success of the previous plan. The IAG will provide strategic oversight of the implementation of this plan. Departments and local councils will remain responsible for carrying out their regulatory functions and operational activities for public health, work health and safety and environmental protection.

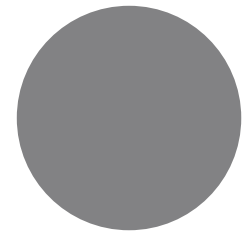
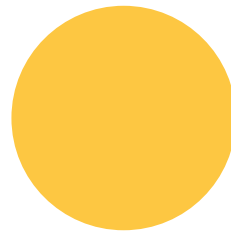
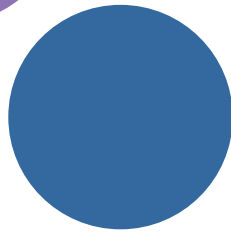
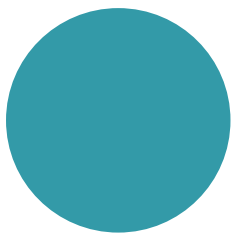
## Aim of the Queensland Asbestos Strategic Plan

The aim of the Queensland Asbestos Strategic Plan is to provide a strategic and coordinated approach to the regulation and management of asbestos in Queensland, and to minimise the risk of exposure to asbestos fibres at workplaces and mine sites, domestic premises and in the natural environment.

### The plan has four priority areas:

1. Improve asbestos awareness to influence behavioural change: Ensuring there is up-to-date, accurate, clear and consistent information available to workplaces and members of the community, about potential health risks of asbestos-containing materials and how to minimise exposure to these risks
2. Identification and effective management of legacy in situ asbestos containing materials (ACM), imported asbestos and naturally occurring asbestos (NOA): Ensuring ACM, NOA and asbestos is identified and managed in a safe state.
3. Safe removal, transport and disposal of asbestos waste: Ensuring ACMs are removed and transported safely and that there are appropriate facilities to dispose of asbestos waste safely.
4. Effective and coordinated regulation: Ensuring robust regulatory controls are in place to manage asbestos through each stage of its life cycle, and that there is coordination, cooperation and communication between responsible government agencies to enable effective enforcement of regulatory controls.





The strategic actions in the plan incorporate the Queensland Government's 2020 election commitment to 'Consider the establishment of a Queensland Asbestos Eradication Agency (for government owned or controlled buildings)'.

This strategic plan contributes to the Queensland Government's objectives for the community by:



**Safeguarding our health:** protecting Queenslanders' health from the risk of asbestos exposure



**Protecting the environment:** addressing illegal dumping of asbestos containing materials and land contaminated by asbestos



**Investing in skills:** improving the quality of asbestos-related training

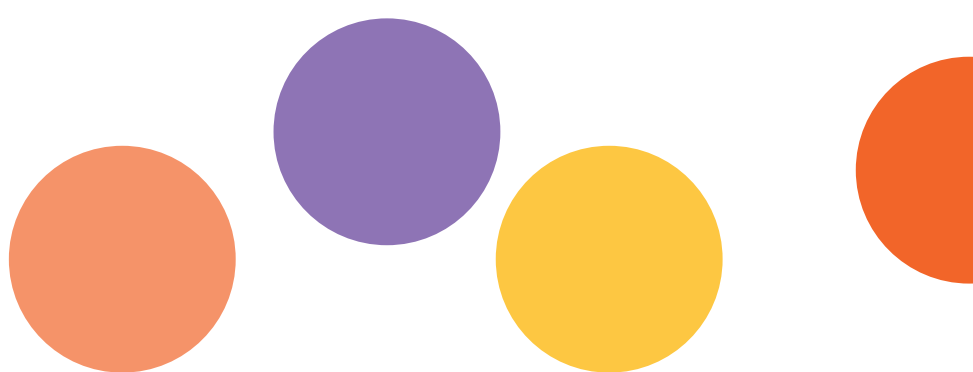
Where possible, the Queensland Asbestos Strategic Plan has been developed to align with the targets of the *National strategic plan for asbestos awareness and management 2019-2023* (the National Strategic Plan), developed by the Commonwealth Government's Asbestos Safety and Eradication Agency (ASEA). The National Strategic Plan recognises the importance of coordinated, practical and targeted action across Australia, to ensure a harmonised approach in effectively dealing with asbestos remaining in the built environment. Queensland will also use research and material developed by ASEA to inform local asbestos policy and actions where relevant.

# Queensland Asbestos Strategic Plan 2022-2025

Priority 1	Priority 2	Priority 3	Priority 4
<p><b>Improve asbestos awareness to influence behavioural change</b></p> <p><i>Ensuring there is up-to-date, accurate, clear and consistent information available to workplaces and members of the community about potential health risks of asbestos-containing materials and how to minimise exposure to these risks.</i></p>	<p><b>Identification and effective management of legacy in situ asbestos containing materials, imported asbestos and naturally occurring asbestos</b></p> <p><i>Ensuring ACM, NOA and asbestos is identified and maintained in a safe state.</i></p>	<p><b>Safe removal, transport and disposal of asbestos waste</b></p> <p><i>Ensuring ACMs are removed and transported safely and that there are appropriate facilities to dispose of asbestos waste safely.</i></p>	<p><b>Effective and coordinated regulation</b></p> <p><i>Ensuring robust regulatory controls are in place to manage asbestos, ACM and NOA through each stage of its life cycle, and that there is coordination, cooperation and communication between responsible government agencies to enable effective enforcement of regulatory controls.</i></p>

Our goals for 2025			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased awareness in our community and workplaces of asbestos risks and where to find information</li> <li>Increased compliance with asbestos-related laws</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Asbestos risks in all government assets are identified and assessed with asbestos management plans in place</li> <li>Commercial buildings have up to date asbestos registers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Government agencies that own or control assets have prioritised schedules for the safe removal of asbestos based on risk</li> <li>Reduced illegal dumping of ACMs</li> <li>Reduced incidence of unsafe asbestos removal</li> <li>Asbestos removal, transport and disposal is accessible, safe and compliant</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All regulators have implemented asbestos compliance programs to raise awareness and improve compliance, where relevant to the legislation they administer</li> <li>All regulators are investigating, prosecuting and penalising serious breaches of asbestos-related laws including unsafe removal practices, unlicensed work, illegal waste disposal and importation</li> </ul>

# Priority 1



## Improve asbestos awareness to influence behavioural change

Initiatives	Responsibility
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Produce targeted comprehensive asbestos awareness advice and information campaigns for the community and workers</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Department of Health and Office of Industrial Relations</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Produce additional practical information material on asbestos safety in the home, workplace and the environment</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Office of Industrial Relations with participation from Department of Health and Department of Environment and Science</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Improve education and training for those at risk of exposure to asbestos fibres or who make decisions about ACMs</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Office of Industrial Relations with participation of IAG</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Review and re-design a trusted single source of asbestos-related information in Queensland (<a href="http://www.asbestos.qld.gov.au">www.asbestos.qld.gov.au</a>)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Office of Industrial Relations with participation of IAG</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Continue to promote asbestos safety messages to the community</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Interagency Asbestos Group</li></ul>

# Priority 2

## Identification and effective management of legacy in situ asbestos containing materials, imported asbestos and naturally occurring asbestos

Initiatives	Lead agency / responsibility
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider the establishment of a Queensland asbestos eradication agency (for government owned or controlled buildings)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Department of Energy and Public Works</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess existing asbestos management practices across government agencies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Department of Energy and Public Works</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify and promote robust models for identifying and grading ACMs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Department of Health, Department of Energy and Public Works, Office of Industrial Relations</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure effective management of asbestos-contaminated land</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Department of Environment and Science</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage with government agencies to ensure timely review and revision of emergency and natural disaster management planning to incorporate best-practice asbestos guidance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interagency Asbestos Group</li> </ul>

# Priority 3

## Safe removal, transport and disposal of asbestos waste

Initiatives	Lead agency / responsibility
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Improve the quality of asbestos-related training and ensuring effective oversight of licensing regimes</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Office of Industrial Relations</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ensure existing tools for prioritising removal of ACMs are reviewed, tested, promoted and used</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Department of Energy and Public Works, Queensland Building and Construction Commission</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Develop guidance on the strategic removal of ACMs from government owned and controlled assets</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Department of Energy and Public Works</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Encourage the safe removal and disposal of ACMs from commercial buildings, land and infrastructure</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Office of Industrial Relations with support from IAG</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Review existing requirements for the transport and disposal of asbestos waste to identify any barriers to compliance</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Department of Environment and Science</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Improve the accessibility and availability of information on waste disposal facilities that can receive ACMs</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Department of Environment and Science</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Link with the enablers and opportunities provided in the <i>Keeping Queensland Clean: The Litter and Illegal Dumping Plan</i> to encourage the legal disposal of ACMs by members of the public</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Department of Environment and Science, Local Councils</li></ul>

# Priority 4

## Effective and coordinated regulation

Initiatives	Lead agency / responsibility
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Examine the need for improvements to regulatory standards, including reviewing the '10m<sup>2</sup> rule' provisions under public health and work health and safety regulations by early 2023, and adopting amendments to the model work health and safety legislation in Queensland</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Department of Health with participation from Office of Industrial Relations</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage with regulators in other jurisdictions to monitor developments and share best practice approaches to asbestos awareness and management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Department of Health and Office of Industrial Relations</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure effective compliance and enforcement of relevant laws by regulatory agencies and undertaking cross-agency regulatory activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All regulatory agencies</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support local governments to enforce devolved responsibilities, including by:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continuing to coordinate and deliver authorised officer training and refresher training</li> <li>Coordinating communication and information sharing forums through regional regulator networks</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Office of Industrial Relations and Department of Health</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Undertake research into trends and emerging issues, including the health risks associated with naturally occurring asbestos, to support evidence-based policy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All agencies (Resources Safety and Health Queensland in relation to naturally occurring asbestos)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Respond effectively to imported materials containing asbestos found in the Queensland supply chain in accordance with established protocols</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All regulatory agencies in consultation with Australian Border Force</li> </ul>



# Reporting and evaluation

The Queensland Asbestos Strategic Plan is a three-year plan. The initiatives in this plan are intended to protect the long-term future health of Queenslanders. As a result, the real impact of this plan may not be evident for many years. However, the IAG will monitor and evaluate its success to ensure the priorities, goals and actions outlined remain relevant.

Progress against the actions in the Strategic Plan will be reported annually each calendar year to Cabinet by the Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing through a Matter to Note. IAG will make annual progress reports available on the Government's asbestos website: [www.asbestos.qld.gov.au](http://www.asbestos.qld.gov.au). The information collected will be consistent with the information required by ASEA for measuring progress against the National Strategic Plan and will include measures relating to the priorities of this plan under the following categories:

- Awareness of the risks of ACMs
- Identification and effective management of asbestos
- Waste management
- Compliance programs
- Enforcement actions taken

Further information on the Government's actions on asbestos is available at [www.asbestos.qld.gov.au](http://www.asbestos.qld.gov.au).

