

# HRP03: Asbestos Management

## Section 1 - Purpose and Scope

- (1) The purpose of this procedure is to ensure the management of risks associated with asbestos management at Southern Cross University (SCU) are appropriately managed and controlled.
- (2) The purpose of this procedure is to ensure Southern Cross University's management, employees, contractors, students, visitors and others are aware of the risks associated with asbestos management in the workplace, management strategies and to provide advice on appropriate controls.
- (3) All employees, students and others including both independent contractors and contractors under SCU control are to be made aware of and follow this procedure.
- (4) This Procedure applies to all SCU Work Units and sites. The procedure aligns with WHS legislation in the relevant jurisdictions SCU operates in.

## Section 2 - Definitions

Airborne Asbestos	Any fibres of asbestos small enough to be made airborne. For the purposes of monitoring airborne asbestos fibres, only respirable fibres are counted.
Asbestos	The asbestiform varieties of mineral silicates belonging to the serpentine or amphibole groups of rock-forming minerals, including actinolite asbestos, grunerite (or amosite) asbestos (brown), anthophyllite asbestos, chrysotile asbestos (white), crocidolite asbestos (blue) and tremolite asbestos, or a mixture that contains one or more of these.
Asbestos Containing Material (ACM)	Any material or thing that, as part of its design, contains asbestos.
Asbestos-Related Work	Work involving asbestos (other than asbestos removal work that is permitted under the WHS Regulations)
Asbestos Removalist	A person conducting a business or undertaking who carries out asbestos removal work.
A Class Removalist	Can remove any amount or quantity of asbestos or ACM, including: any amount of friable asbestos or ACM; any amount of ACD; any amount of non-friable asbestos or ACM.
B Class Removalist	Can remove: any amount of non-friable asbestos or ACM (Note: A Class B licence is required for removal of more than 10 m <sup>2</sup> of non-friable asbestos or ACM but the licence holder can also remove up to 10 m <sup>2</sup> of non-friable asbestos or ACM); ACD associated with the removal of non-friable asbestos or ACM; (Note: A Class B licence is required for removal of ACD associated with the removal of more than 10 m <sup>2</sup> of non-friable asbestos or ACM but the licence holder can also remove ACD associated with removal of up to 10m <sup>2</sup> of non-friable asbestos or ACM.
Asbestos Removal Work	Work involving the removal of asbestos or ACM. Class A asbestos removal work or Class B asbestos removal work as outlined in the WHS Regulation.

Competent Person	In relation to carrying out clearance inspections under WHS Regulation—a person who has acquired through training or experience the knowledge and skills of relevant asbestos removal industry practice and holds: a certification in relation to the specified VET course for asbestos assessor work, or a tertiary qualification in occupational health and safety, occupational hygiene, science, building, construction or environmental health. For all other purposes—a person who has acquired through training, qualification or experience, the knowledge and skills to carry out the task.
Exposure standard	For asbestos is a respirable fibre level of 0.1 fibres/mL of air measured in a person's breathing zone and expressed as a time-weighted average fibre concentration calculated over an eight-hour working day and measured over a minimum period of four hours in accordance with: the Membrane Filter Method a method determined by the relevant regulator.
Friable asbestos	Material that is in a powder form or that can be crumbled, pulverised or reduced to a powder by hand pressure when dry, and contains asbestos.
Hazard	A situation or thing that has the potential to harm a person. Hazards at work may include: noisy machinery, a moving forklift, chemicals, electricity, working at heights, a repetitive job, bullying and violence at the workplace.
Health and safety representative	An employee who has been elected by their work group under the WHS Act to represent them on health and safety matters.
NATA-accredited laboratory	A testing laboratory accredited by the National Association of Testing Authorities (NATA), Australia, or recognised by NATA either solely or with someone else.
Naturally occurring asbestos (NOA)	The natural geological occurrence of asbestos minerals found in association with geological deposits including rock, sediment or soil.
Non-friable asbestos	Material containing asbestos that is not friable asbestos, including material containing asbestos fibres reinforced with a bonding compound.

## Section 3 - General Principles

(5) SCU minimises the risks of asbestos to SCU employees, students, and visitors within our workplaces by:

- a. Providing all employees access to this procedure, asbestos management plan, asbestos register and an induction to the safety management system.
- b. Outsourcing asbestos removal to a competent PCBU who has received nationally recognised training and is certified to remove asbestos.
- c. Periodically engaging a competent person to survey all sites and facilities. The qualified person will provide a report that will form the basis of each Buildings Asbestos Register and Asbestos Management Plan.
- d. Property Services maintains an up-to-date Asbestos Register located on the website and selected onsite locations.
- e. Labelling known asbestos locations with appropriate and visible signage.
- f. Prioritising removing any damaged or compromised asbestos materials as urgent projects.
- g. Ensuring removal works are scheduled, and all affected parties are provided adequate notification.
- h. All maintenance and removal of asbestos is undertaken by an approved licenced contractor that is organised and co-ordinated by Property Services.

### Consultation

(6) Consultation and communication with a person who may be affected by any maintenance and service work that might disturb asbestos will occur. People performing the work must receive all necessary training and review the current asbestos register and the appropriate asbestos management plans and the work should be documented and

supervised.

(7) Where there is more than one Person Conducting a Business or Undertaking (PCBU), for example an asbestos contractor and an air quality technician, both must consult to coordinate activities to ensure all risks are known and controlled.

### **Information, Instruction and Training**

(8) SCU will provide nationally recognised Asbestos Awareness training through a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) to all Property Services employees.

(9) Contractors engaged by SCU to carry out licenced asbestos removal work must have completed the relevant Asbestos Removal Training, and the correct classification, provided by an RTO and should be able to provide this to Property Services upon request.

(10) The person(s) removing asbestos must be a holder of an A class asbestos removal licence for friable asbestos and a B class asbestos removal licence for non-friable asbestos.

### **Identification and inspection**

(11) Property Services must ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, that all asbestos or Asbestos Containing Material (ACM) at the workplace is identified and inspected by a competent person. EAL soil and compost samples must also be analysed for ACM by a competent person.

(12) An inspection of the Work Unit for asbestos and ACM by a competent person must occur:

- a. at least every five years, or
- b. before any work impacting the asbestos management plan is undertaken, or
- c. when any disturbance of the environment or buildings uncovers potentially or previously unidentified asbestos or ACM.

### **Assessment**

(13) All buildings and structures constructed and/or refurbished prior to December 2003 are assessed by the competent person. The assessment report includes the following:

- a. The sources of asbestos and ACM
- b. The condition of the asbestos or ACM
- c. The likelihood of exposure and potential health risks
- d. The nature and location of any work that may be carried out that would disturb the asbestos or ACM.

(14) Research equipment owned or controlled by SCU, due to the age of the equipment, may contain ACM. Work units should conduct inspections to identify such equipment. Equipment that contains ACM should be disposed of correctly and replaced with non-asbestos equipment or components. The work unit should contact the WHS team and Property Services for further instructions on the disposal of such equipment.

### **Naturally occurring asbestos**

(15) Naturally occurring asbestos (NOA) is unlikely to be encountered at the majority of SCU workplaces. However, NOA and ACM may occur during construction or excavation activities that involve disturbing the earth and creating dust. Where this occurs, work should cease, and Property Services should be contacted for further instructions.

## Register

(16) An asbestos register as described in the requirements of the WHS Regulations is to be maintained by Property Services and includes the following mandatory requirements as a minimum. An additional register is maintained for G block at Lismore campus.

- a. The date the register was last reviewed and/or updated by a competent person.
- b. The type of material, including a sufficient description for identification.
- c. The condition of the material.
- d. The location of all asbestos and asbestos-containing material.
- e. Ensure the register is accessible to the employees, contractors and sub-contractors at the site.
- f. The revision of the Register

(17) The register is reviewed at least once every five years by the competent person. The competent person conducts a visual inspection of the asbestos and ACM listed within the register to determine its condition and to revise the asbestos register as appropriate.

(18) An update of the asbestos register is also required:

- a. if more asbestos is identified on the site.
- b. if substances that are tested are suspected of containing asbestos.
- c. if asbestos has been damaged or compromised.
- d. after work affecting the asbestos management plan has been undertaken.
- e. after completing demolition or refurbishment works where asbestos has been removed as part of the project.

## Asbestos Management Plan

(19) An asbestos management plan sets out how asbestos or ACM that is identified at the workplace will be managed, for example what, when and how it is going to be done.

(20) An asbestos management plan must include information about the following:

- a. the identification of asbestos and ACM, for example, a reference or link to the asbestos register for the workplace, and the locations of signs and labels
- b. decisions, and reasons for the decisions, about the management of asbestos at the workplace, for example, safe work procedures and control measures.
- c. procedures for detailing accidents, incidents, or emergencies involving asbestos at the workplace, and
- d. employees carrying out work involving asbestos, for example, consultation, information, and training responsibilities.

(21) Other information that may be included in the asbestos management plan is:

- a. an outline of how asbestos risks will be controlled, including consideration of appropriate control measures.
- b. a timetable for managing risks of exposure, for example, priorities and dates for any reviews, circumstances, and activities that could affect -the timing of action.
- c. identification of each person with responsibilities under the asbestos management plan and the person's responsibilities.
- d. procedures, including a timetable for reviewing and, if necessary, revising the asbestos management plan and asbestos register, and
- e. air monitoring procedures at the workplace, if required.

(22) The asbestos management plan should be kept at the workplace to ensure it is accessible and it must be reviewed and revised, if necessary, every five years or when:

- a. there is a review of the asbestos register or a control measure.
- b. asbestos is removed from or disturbed, sealed, or enclosed at the workplace.
- c. the plan is no longer adequate for managing asbestos or ACM at the workplace, or
- d. a health and safety representative requests a review on the basis that they reasonably believe that any of the matters listed in the above points affects or may affect the health and safety of a member of their work group.

(23) The SCU Asbestos Management Plan can be found in the SCU Policy and Procedure Library.

### **Control indicators for asbestos-containing materials**

(24) Managing the risks arising from asbestos-related work is to be done in a way that is consistent with the hierarchy of control measures. Whatever the control method used, it should be effective in making all employees aware of the presence of asbestos and prevent any work activity that might expose them, or others nearby, to airborne asbestos. Particular attention should be paid to controlling work activities that affect inaccessible areas listed in the asbestos register, such as wall cavities and ceiling spaces.

(25) For effective control measures refer to the Code of Practice 'How to manage and control asbestos in the workplace'.

### **Potentially Hazardous Processes**

(26) There are a variety of maintenance and service work processes that have the potential to disturb asbestos-containing materials. These include any process that is likely to release asbestos fibres such as:

- a. Removal of asbestos or ACM.
- b. Drilling of asbestos or ACM.
- c. Sealing, painting, and cleaning asbestos cement products.
- d. Cleaning gutters on asbestos cement roofs.
- e. Handling asbestos cement conduits or boxes.
- f. Working on electrical mounting boards containing asbestos.
- g. Removing glass from external windowpanes where glazing has been secured with ACM.
- h. Refurbishing flooring materials such as tiles which may contain ACM.

(27) Asbestos related work, meaning any work involving the disturbance of asbestos or ACM is prohibited. The exception to this is that a trained and competent person may conduct works involving asbestos for the purpose of implementing a control measure or removing asbestos or ACM. As a minimum a Class A or Class B licensed asbestos contractor should be used for such tasks when required.

(28) Property Services have designed a system whereby suitably qualified contractors are required to complete a Permit prior to working in an area identified in the Asbestos Management Plan as having or potentially having Asbestos or ACM. Refer to the Access Permit to a Restricted Work Area Containing Asbestos Form found here.

(29) The 'Code of Practice – How to safely remove asbestos' includes detail of the licensing requirements for employees engaged in removing asbestos.

### **Exposure Monitoring**

(30) The exposure standard for asbestos must not be exceeded in the workplace.

(31) If respirable airborne fibres are suspected or identified, air monitoring may be required. This requires consultation with a competent person who may request an Occupational Hygienist or Licence Asbestos Assessor to take a sample measurement of the air quality within the employees' breathing zone. This sample is sent for analysis by an approved laboratory to assess the sample against the exposure standard. The result may require (as guided by the hygienist or competent person) the use of PPE including respiratory protective equipment. Where necessary, work may be stopped to assess and mitigate the cause of the airborne asbestos level before continuing on.

(32) If test results suggest employees have been exposed to asbestos, the WHS Regulator is to be notified. A report of the action the SCU has taken in response to the findings is to be supplied to the WHS Regulator.

(33) An air quality test shall be conducted prior and post completion to removal of ACM, in accordance with the Asbestos Management Plan and is organised by Property Services.

### **Warning Signs and Labels**

(34) All warning signs and labels must comply with AS1319:1994 - "Safety Signs for the Occupational Environment".

(35) Examples of signs and labels are included in the Code of Practice - How to manage and control asbestos in the workplace - Appendix A. The wording may vary in accordance with AS1319:1994 - Safety Signs for the Occupational Environment. The positioning of these must be determined by the competent person, adhere to the asbestos management plan, and placed in positions that provide the necessary identification and information required to prevent inadvertent disruption to the asbestos or ACM e.g. at access points to ceilings or next to valves where asbestos has been used as pipe lagging.

### **Health Surveillance**

(36) Any exposure or potential exposure is reported in RiskWare incident notification form. For individuals who have been potentially exposed, SCU will arrange for an appropriate personal health surveillance where required, which usually includes a chest x-ray. Detail of any potential exposures will be kept on employees' personal staff records. Employees who have been exposed must be registered with the Regulatory Asbestos Register within three months of the exposure.

(37) SCU will maintains a register of people who are known to have been exposed to asbestos. This register includes:

- a. Name of exposed employee.
- b. Staff number.
- c. Details of the exposure.
- d. Date of the investigation.
- e. Facility Contacts/Responsible Persons

(38) Further information on Asbestos Registers and Asbestos Management Plans can be obtained by contacting Property Services.

## **Section 4 - Roles and Responsibilities**

(39) Refer to WHS Responsibility and Accountability Statement.

## **Section 5 - Records of Documentation**

(40) All relevant documentation will be recorded and kept in accordance with WHS Legislation and other legislative obligations including:

- a. Details and scope of the work performed.
- b. Names of those performing the work.
- c. Date or dates of the work.
- d. Include copies of any clearance certificates or permits.
- e. Records of visual inspections.
- f. Copies of all disposal receipts.
- g. Copies of notifications to occupants.
- h. Images of any onsite visual restrictions.

(41) The following documents are also required at sites with asbestos and sites where there is a possibility that asbestos is present:

- a. Site asbestos audit.
- b. Site asbestos register.
- c. Site asbestos management plan.
- d. Asbestos monitoring records.
- e. Clearance certificate.

(42) Health surveillance records for employees are maintained and kept for a period of 40 years. The employee is also be provided with a copy.

(43) All other asbestos records are maintained and retained for at least 5 years, or if a notifiable incident has occurred 40 years.

## Section 6 - Revision and approval history

(44) This procedure will be reviewed as per nominated review dates or because of other events, such as:

- a. Internal and external audit outcomes.
- b. Legislative changes.
- c. Outcomes from management reviews.
- d. Incidents.

## Section 7 - References

Work Health and Safety Act 2011
Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011 (QLD) 2017 (NSW)
How to manage and control asbestos in the workplace 2021 COP (QLD) 2022 (NSW)
How to safely remove asbestos code of practice 2011 COP (QLD) 2022 (NSW)
AS 1319:1994 Safety Signs for the Occupational Environment

## Section 8 - Related Documents

WHS Responsibility and Accountability Statement
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## Status and Details

<b>Status</b>	Current
<b>Effective Date</b>	9th December 2024
<b>Review Date</b>	9th December 2027
<b>Approval Authority</b>	Vice President (People and Culture)
<b>Approval Date</b>	9th December 2024
<b>Expiry Date</b>	Not Applicable
<b>Responsible Executive</b>	Kim Franks Vice President (People and Culture)
<b>Head of Work Unit</b>	Brendan Pearce Director, Workplace Relations
<b>Enquiries Contact</b>	Shaun Brown Manager, Workplace Health and Safety <hr/> Vice President (People and Culture) portfolio