

## GUIDE TO INTERPRETATION OF REQUIREMENTS FOR SAFE REMOVAL OF ASBESTOS - [NOHSC:2002(2005)]

The following information provides guidance on interpretation of some aspects of the Code of Practice for the Safe Removal of Asbestos NOHSC:2002(2005) (the Code). Amongst other things the latest update to the Code brought about changes to the requirements in the following areas:

- Removal Control Plans
- Visual Inspections and Clearance Certificates
- Notification to Workplace Standards Tasmania
- Air Monitoring

**Definitions - The following terms are used in either the Code or this document:**

**ACM** - Asbestos containing materials.

**Asbestos Register** - A person, who has management and control of a building, structure or mine, which is a workplace, must take all reasonable steps to identify the presence of any forms of asbestos within the building, structure or mine and maintain a register in relation to any asbestos identified. Regular inspections must be undertaken of the asbestos by a competent person to ensure any deterioration or health risk is identified, the timing and findings from these inspections must be recorded in the register. The register will contain information in relation to the location, type and condition of the ACM, dates of inspections and their findings, findings from risk assessments and who conducted them, control measures recommended in respect to the ACM and the date and scope of work where any maintenance or service work is carried out on the ACM along with any clearance certificates or air monitoring results.

**Class A License Holder** - Licensed to remove all types of asbestos containing materials (friable and non-friable).

**Class B License Holder** - Licensed to remove only non-friable or bonded types of asbestos containing material. For example; asbestos cement sheet, asbestos piping, floor and wall tiles, gaskets and pipe sealants.

**Clearance Inspection** - Means a visual inspection, carried out by an independent and competent person, (see definition below) to verify that an asbestos work area is safe to be returned to normal use after work involving ACM has taken place. A clearance inspection must include a visual inspection, and may also include clearance monitoring (see definition below) and/or settled dust sampling.

**Competent Person** - Means a person possessing adequate qualifications, such as suitable training and sufficient knowledge, experience and skill, for the safe performance of the specific work. (Attending an approved Asbestos identification and removal course is considered by the Director the minimum training requirement to carry out the visual inspections). Additional

knowledge, experience and skills would be required by the competent person performing air monitoring (e.g. occupational hygienist).

**Clearance Monitoring** - Means air monitoring using static or positional samples to measure the level of airborne asbestos fibres in an area following work on ACM. An area is 'cleared' when the level of airborne asbestos fibres is measured as being below 0.01 fibres/ml.

**Exempt removal work includes** - Removal of amounts less than 10m<sup>2</sup> must be carried out over a period not exceeding two hours in any seven day period. **(NOTE: Removal of any amount of asbestos containing material over 10m<sup>2</sup> in a workplace now requires a licensed asbestos removalist to undertake the work).**

**Friable ACM** - Friable asbestos containing material which, when dry, is or may become crumbled, pulverised or reduced to powder by hand pressure. Examples of friable forms include sprayed limpet for ceilings and high density pipe insulation.

**Non-friable ACM** - Means asbestos containing material which when dry is unlikely to become crumbled, pulverised or reduced to powder by hand pressure. Examples of non-friable forms include cement sheeting and compressed asbestos fibre joints.

**Independent and Competent Person** - (in respect to visual inspections conducted following all removal and clean up of the asbestos from the removal area). The "Independent person" may come from within the company contracted to undertake the removal work however that person cannot have taken any part in the planning, removal activity or control of the removal work to be considered independent. Refer to definition of "competent" for additional information.

## **ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

### **Asbestos Removal Control Plan (Form AR2)**

The licenced asbestos removalist must conduct a risk assessment and have regard for its findings when developing a written site/job specific control plan before commencing any removal work. The plan should be prepared with reference to Part 8 of the Code and must address all relevant items listed at Table 1 of part 8. The removal control plan (Form AR2) must be submitted along with any written risk assessment to the local office of Workplace Standards Tasmania at the same time as the Asbestos Removal Notification.

### **Visual Inspections & Clearance Certificates (Form AR4)**

Following completion of removal work and prior to re-occupancy by unprotected persons a visual clearance inspection must be carried out in accordance with Part 11 of the Code. A "Competent Person" who is "Independent" of the removal process must conduct the visual clearance inspection. The term "Independent" does not prevent a person who is deemed competent but employed by the same company that carries out the removal from carrying out the visual inspection however they **must not** have been involved in the planning, removal or supervision activities in relation to the removal project to be considered "Independent".

The competent person conducting the visual inspection must issue a written clearance certificate stating effective removal has been completed and no visible ACM remains within the removal area. Where ACM is found to be still present in the removal area by the competent person a **"failed clearance"** certificate must be issued to the removalist who is required to have the removal area cleaned and inspected again by the competent person, this process is to be

repeated until a final clearance certificate is issued. The client must receive a copy of the final clearance certificate before they permit unprotected persons to re-occupy the removal area. Where more than one area is subject to removal and re-occupancy a visual inspection & clearance must be conducted following each stage of the removal and before re-occupancy of each removal area.

Wherever clearance monitoring is required the competent person engaged to undertake the clearance monitoring may also conduct the visual inspection and issue the visual clearance certificate prior to conducting the clearance monitoring. All clearance certificates, including those issued in relation to failed inspections must be forwarded to the relevant regional office of Workplace Standards Tasmania by the licensed asbestos removalist within 5 working days of completion of the removal work.

### **Notification of Removal Work (Form ARI)**

A licensed asbestos removalist must forward to the relevant regional office of Workplace Standards Tasmania, a detailed asbestos removal notification (Form ARI) accompanied by any written risk assessment & the written removal control plan (Form AR2). The notification is to be in a form approved by Workplace Standards Tasmania and must include the name and contact details for the nominated “Independent Competent Person” who is to carry out the visual inspections as well as the name and contact details for the competent person engaged to conduct control monitoring or clearance monitoring where appropriate.

The written notification, risk assessment and control plan must be forwarded to Workplace Standards Tasmania at least 5 working days prior to the commencement of the removal work, Workplace Standards Tasmania will respond by forwarding to the notifier an “Acknowledgement of Notification” document (Form AR3) which may contain additional requirements at the discretion of the inspector reviewing the control plan. The acknowledgement of notification (Form AR3) can be used by the removalist to confirm to their client that the notification process has been completed.

In the event that an incident or accident occurs which causes damage to ACM, in amounts that exceed the exempt limits, prompt removal of the damaged material is required., Before commencing the removal work the licensed removalist must still complete the risk assessment, removal control plan and the notification forms and fax or email completed forms to the relevant regional office of Workplace Standards Tasmania (see details below).. If the removalist has the regional inspector’s phone contact number they are also to place a call to the inspector to advise of the emergency removal work before commencing.

### **Air Monitoring**

A decision must be made during the planning stage regarding the need to conduct air monitoring, this includes background monitoring prior to any removal work, control monitoring during the removal process and clearance monitoring following the removal of the ACM. In accordance with Part 9.8 of the Code air monitoring must always be conducted when friable asbestos is being removed and a competent person must be engaged to determine the monitoring requirements for all friable work.

Air monitoring during non-friable removal work is not always required: eg. External non-friable ACM removal on domestic buildings and removing non-friable ACM from buildings that are being demolished and will not be reoccupied, provided minimal breakage occurs are two

examples. This does not prevent the client from requiring monitoring in these types of removal work in accordance with best practice principles.

Any internal removal work in public buildings or workplaces where the material and surrounding infrastructure is fixed in such a way that the ACM cannot be removed without excessive breakage must be followed by clearance monitoring prior to re-occupation.

Where a removal plan and notification is submitted to Workplace Standards Tasmania that does not include air monitoring and an inspector is of the opinion that air monitoring is warranted a competent person shall be engaged to undertake the monitoring work and the monitoring results will be made available prior to re-occupancy. **All licensed asbestos removalists should advise clients when quoting on removal work that air monitoring or any other condition may be required as determined by the Inspectorate.**

**Where to send notification:**

Notification should be faxed to the relevant regional office of Workplace Standards Tasmania. Details are given below.

<p><b>HOBART</b> 30 Gordons Hill Road Rosny Tas 7018 P.O. Box 56 Rosny Park Tas 7018 <b>Tel:</b> 1300 366 322 <b>Fax:</b> (03) 6233 8338</p>	<p><b>LAUNCESTON</b> Henty House, 1 Civic Square Launceston Tas 7250 <b>Tel:</b> 1300 366 322 <b>Fax:</b> (03) 6334 4543</p>	<p><b>BURNIE</b> Reece House, 46 Mount St Burnie Tas 7320 PO Box 287 Burnie Tas 7320 <b>Tel:</b> 13 00 366 322 <b>Fax:</b> (03) 6431 1606</p>
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