

Our Guide to Asbestos Management Plans (AMPs)



Asbestos is a hazardous material that was widely used in the construction industry in Australia until it was banned in 2003. As a result, Asbestos-Containing Materials (ACM) often exist in buildings constructed prior to this date and may be present in or on soil due to uncontrolled demolition, importation of bulk materials (i.e., filling) or illegal tipping.

Effective management of asbestos is necessary to protect workers and the public from potential health risks, including lung cancer and mesothelioma, and ensure legislative compliance. In almost all Australian states and territories, a site-specific Asbestos Management Plan (AMP) must be prepared if asbestos is identified or likely to be present at a workplace. This includes temporary workplaces, such as construction sites.

The key steps to developing an AMP are outlined below.

Asbestos Register

The first step in managing asbestos is to create an asbestos register for the building or site. An asbestos register is a document that lists all ACM identified in a building or site. It also includes information on asbestos type (e.g., friable, or non-friable), extent and condition. The asbestos register must be kept up-to-date and be readily accessible to workers, contractors, and anyone who may need to access the building or site.

Risk Assessment

Once ACM have been identified, a risk assessment must be carried out to evaluate the degree of risk that each material poses. Risk assessments are typically included in the Asbestos Register and consider a variety of factors that influence risk (e.g., material type, extent, condition, and accessibility). The results of the risk assessment are used to identify and prioritise controls.



Management Plan

Following risk assessment, a site-specific AMP should be developed to ensure that human exposure and environmental contamination are controlled, and legislative compliance maintained. The AMP will identify the actions required to achieve these outcomes and the timeframes that apply. Amongst other things, a comprehensive AMP will also include a link to the site asbestos register, information on the regulatory framework, a summary of stakeholder responsibilities, licensing and notification requirements, consultation, training, safe work procedures, air monitoring, clearance inspections and management unexpected/additional finds.

Implementation

Implementation is critical to the success of any AMP. Responsibilities must be assigned and communicated, key stakeholders must be engaged, and resources provided to ensure that controls are adequate and implemented in a timely manner. In addition, the AMP must be maintained up-to-date and performance under the AMP must be reviewed regularly to ensure effectiveness and enable continuous improvement.

It is important to note that the legislative requirements, codes, and industry practices may vary between jurisdictions, so further professional advice is recommended to address your specific asbestos management requirements. At Douglas Partners, we are committed to providing professional guidance at all stages of the asbestos management process. Whether you require a site-contamination investigation, preparation of asbestos registers or management plans, airborne asbestos monitoring or asbestos clearance/validation assessments, our qualified, licensed, and experienced consultants are ready to assist you meet your legal obligations and safeguard worker health.



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