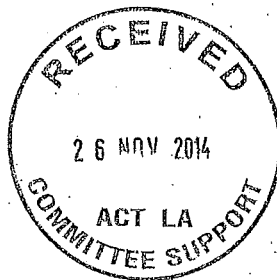


ACT Asbestos Industry Forum – Promoting safe asbestos management in the ACT

Ms. Katy Gallagher,
Chief Minister
ACT Legislative Assembly

25th November 2014



 A.C.T. LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE OFFICE	
SUBMISSION NUMBER	19
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**SUBMISSION FROM THE ACT ASBESTOS INDUSTRY FORUM IN RELATION TO
PROPOSED LEGISLATION AFFECTING ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT IN THE ACT**

At the inaugural meeting of the ACT Asbestos Industry Forum, it was resolved that we approach yourself to ensure that you are aware of the views of the ACT Asbestos Industry Forum, representing ACT licensed asbestos assessors and removalists primarily resident by person or business in the ACT. To formalise this action please find below a submission placed before you and copied to other members of the Assembly:

The proposed legislative changes affecting asbestos management in the ACT, which we understand adopts in the main Chapter 8 of the SafeWork Australia WHS model regulations with changes and explanatory notes specific to the ACT, is understood to be placed before the Assembly this week. This proposed legislation has not been made available for public or industry comment. We, as the industry most effected, are extremely concerned that these changes may result in a weakening of the ACT standards for asbestos management and are being justified by a desire to ensure the ACT harmonise with other states, particularly NSW, and by pressure from commercial interests resident outside ACT who do not wish to see standards they may not be able to reach introduced into the ACT, so affecting their ability to work in the Territory. The short term considerations of the Mr Fluffy situation should not be allowed to unduly influence the longer term.

It is also noted that the Taskforce, who appear to have been the drafters of this legislation, do not have any member who is or has been an asbestos removalist or assessor with commercial or practical experience in the industry. Occupational health and safety and occupational hygienist backgrounds are not considered appropriate experience to understand the asbestos industry.

Of particular concern is the intention of adopting a single Asbestos Assessor standard which is considered a severe degradation of the current standards applying in the ACT for recognition and licensing of assessors. It compromises the ability to provide experience and training for potential assessors, impacts on the employment opportunities for potential assessors and has grossly inadequate safeguards to ensure the capability of assessors to competently carry out their role in protecting the health and safety of community and the workforce in asbestos situations. It also conflicts

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with your statements and those of the Taskforce that there would be no reduction in ACT asbestos standards.

The Forum also expressed concern at the standard being taught and assessed on the course *CPCCBC5014A Conduct asbestos assessment associated with removal* which currently is a requirement for licensing as an assessor in NSW.

Forum members have individually forwarded comment and suggestions on this issue but have had no feedback on whether suggestions have been accepted or any reasons for their rejection. The Forum offers its support to improve this legislation and advises that time should be allowed for industry consideration before committing to legislation.

Yours sincerely

Frank Poole

Frank Poole
Chairman
ACT Asbestos Industry Forum