



## Amendments to the *Asbestos Safety and Eradication Agency Act 2013*

The *Fair Work Legislation Amendment (Closing Loopholes) Act 2023* amends the *Asbestos Safety and Eradication Agency Act 2013* to expand the functions of the Asbestos Safety and Eradication Agency (the Agency) to include matters relating to respirable crystalline silica and silica-related diseases.

### What has changed?

The amendments provide the Agency with new silica-related functions, providing the Agency a central role in coordinating, monitoring and reporting on national efforts to eliminate silica-related diseases in Australia, and support those affected by these diseases. These amendments:

- rename the Agency to the Asbestos and Silica Safety and Eradication Agency to reflect its new silica-related functions
- provide for a Silica National Strategic Plan, administered by the Agency, aimed at eliminating silica-related diseases in Australia and supporting workers and others affected by these diseases
- provide the Agency with functions to coordinate, monitor and report on jurisdictional implementation of the Silica National Strategic Plan
- provide for the Agency to report annually on the Asbestos and Silica National Strategic Plans so that progress towards achieving the goals set out in the plans can be measured
- increase the membership of the Asbestos and Silica Safety and Eradication Council by 3 members, providing an additional member to represent workers, an additional member to represent employers, and an additional member with expertise in relation to asbestos safety, asbestos related diseases, silica safety or silica related diseases
- revise eligibility for appointment to the Asbestos and Silica Safety and Eradication Council so that those with direct or lived experience of an asbestos or silica-related disease may be appointed.

## What do these changes mean?

The Agency is well regarded for its role in coordinating efforts to address asbestos-related matters. Its new silica-related functions allow it to leverage its experience with asbestos and take on cross-jurisdictional, cross-portfolio coordination of the response to silicosis, and monitor and report on progress towards eliminating both asbestos and silica-related diseases in Australia.

## When will these changes come into effect?

These changes commenced on 15 December 2023.

For more information on the Closing Loopholes legislation, visit: <https://www.dewr.gov.au/workplace-relations>