

MARINE NOTICE

Marine Notice 19/2008

Presence of Asbestos in Ships

The purpose of this Marine Notice is to notify operators and ship owners that the Australian Maritime Safety Authority has become aware of cases where asbestos treated panels, lagging, fire suits, helmets, gloves and aprons have been found on board ships.

Recent events have highlighted some instances where ships imported into Australia from neighbouring countries are being issued with certificates stating that the ships are asbestos free. Operators need to be aware that asbestos is still being used in products in these countries and whilst these products may only contain small amounts of asbestos, they would be illegal imports under Australian law. Therefore, Operators/Owners need to diligently check for the presence of asbestos in ships and products being imported into Australia.

Under the *Occupational Health and Safety (Maritime Industry) Act 1993* and the associated *Occupational Health and Safety (Maritime Industry) (National Standards) Regulations 2003*, it has been illegal to use any products containing asbestos in maritime workplaces since 31 December 2003. An exception has been made in the Regulations for 'in situ' asbestos. This is asbestos fixed or installed in a ship (or any other structure that forms a workplace or a plant or any other thing that is for use at a maritime workplace) before 31 December 2003 in such a way that it will not constitute a risk to users until the asbestos is disturbed.

In situ asbestos on ships must be managed using a management plan to assess, control and mitigate any risk from asbestos as described in Part 2 of the *Occupational Health and Safety (Maritime Industry) (National Standards) Regulations 2003*.

Removal of the asbestos is mandatory if it is to be disturbed for maintenance work etc. This must be done by an asbestos removal company recognised by the relevant state WorkSafe/ WorkCover authority.

In addition to the occupational health and safety bans on asbestos, the *Australian Customs (Prohibited Imports) Regulations 1956*, prohibit the import of asbestos. More information on these regulations is available from the Australian Customs Service.

Further information relating to Asbestos regulations is available from:

Seacare Authority
www.seacare.gov.au

Australian Maritime Safety Authority
www.amsa.gov.au

Australian Customs Service
www.customs.gov.au

Australian Safety and Compensation Council
www.ascc.gov.au

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Internet address for all current Marine Notices:
www.amsa.gov.au

