

Media Release

Robin Scott MP

Minister for Finance

Minister for Multicultural Affairs

Acting Minister for Police

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NEW AGENCY TO HELP REMOVE ASBESTOS FROM VICTORIAN WORKPLACES

The Andrews Labor Government will establish a dedicated agency to target and prioritise the removal of asbestos in Government buildings across Victoria.

Minister for Finance Robin Scott today announced the Victorian Asbestos Eradication Agency (VAEA) which will plan for and advise the government about removing asbestos in government buildings, including schools and hospitals.

The VAEA's establishment will enhance the safety of the Victorian community by working toward minimising the threat of asbestos related diseases, such as mesothelioma and asbestosis.

The VAEA will create a comprehensive and consolidated register of asbestos in Victorian government buildings to ensure the removal of asbestos in buildings of greatest concern are dealt with first.

The agency will work across all relevant departments and agencies and provide independent, authoritative advice to Government on best practice risk management of asbestos removal.

This will ensure any removal is carefully managed to minimise any health or safety risks to workers and members of the community.

The VAEA is expected to be established by the end of 2016.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Finance Robin Scott

"The Victorian Asbestos Eradication Agency will ensure a long term plan for the removal of hazardous asbestos from Victorian government buildings. This agency will go a long way to making our workplaces and communities safer."

"By working toward the eradication of asbestos from all government buildings, we will reduce the risk of asbestos related diseases."

Quotes attributable to Secretary of Victorian Trades Hall Council Luke Hilakari

"Victorian workers – including teachers, nurses and doctors – have the right to a safe workplace and this agency will ensure that happens as quickly as possible."

"We've seen too many workers over the years suffer from illnesses such as mesothelioma and asbestosis, and this will go a long way to ensuring those numbers are only part of our past – and not the future."