

ASBESTOS REMOVAL — SAFETY MEASURES

4256. Hon Alison Xamon to the Minister for Commerce

I refer to the handling of asbestos-containing materials during demolition and renovation and ask —

- (1) What steps are license holders required to undertake to protect the public from asbestos-containing dust and debris while —
 - (a) dismantling asbestos containing material;
 - (b) storing asbestos-containing material on-site prior to transport; and
 - (c) transporting asbestos-containing material?
- (2) What signage should be in place to alert passers-by that asbestos-containing material is being demolished on a work-site?
- (3) In adverse weather, such as high winds, what obligations do contractors have to cease the destruction and removal of asbestos containing material?

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN replied:

- (1) (a)–(c) Asbestos removal work involving more than 10 square metres of non-friable asbestos must be conducted by a licensed asbestos removalist and be done in accordance with the National Occupational Safety and Health Commission Code of Practice for the Safe Removal of Asbestos 2nd Edition [NOHSC: 2002 (2005)] (the National Asbestos Removal Code). As asbestos removal is considered high risk construction work, the main contractor is also required to prepare a Safe Work Method Statement under regulation 3.143 of the Occupational Safety and Health Regulations 1996 (the OSH regulations), which includes a requirement for a written risk assessment. Specifically,
 - (2) The National Asbestos Removal Code includes requirements for security signs and barriers, including signs at potential entry points. In addition, regulation 3.11 of the OSH regulations requires warning signs where there is a hazard that is not readily apparent to a person working in, or entering a workplace.
 - (3) The National Asbestos Removal Code and the OSH regulations do not contain specific requirements in relation to adverse weather conditions. However, it is expected that adverse weather conditions would be considered in preparing the risk assessment for the Safe Work Method Statement.