

AUSTRALIAN CUSTOMS NOTICE NO. 2010/45

Importation of asbestos or goods containing asbestos.

This Notice is being issued following the detection of asbestos in a range of pre- assembled and pre-manufactured equipment imported for use in Australia’s resource exploration and development industry.

Asbestos (chrysotile and amphibole), and goods containing asbestos are controlled under Regulation 4C and Schedule 3B of the *Customs (Prohibited Imports) Regulations 1956*. Importation of asbestos, or goods containing asbestos, is prohibited without a permit.

**Asbestos has recently been detected in a wide range of imported goods, including gaskets, jointing materials in flues, furnaces, ducts, pipe spools, heating equipment and pressurised hoses. It has also been detected in packaging for these goods.**

As a result, the Australian Customs and Border Protection Service is actively targeting imported goods at risk of asbestos contamination.

Brokers should remind clients who may be importing these types of goods, of their obligation to ensure their goods are asbestos free. While Customs and Border Protection makes every effort to clear goods as quickly as possible after their arrival, importers should also be aware that there may be delays in releasing goods suspected of asbestos contamination.

Where goods arriving at the border are suspected of containing asbestos, they may be detained. Importers may be required to arrange and pay for the inspection of the goods by an independent, suitably qualified occupational hygienist. The importer is also responsible for arranging for the removal of the item for testing purposes, storage, and (if required), removal and disposal of the asbestos. As it is an offence to import goods containing asbestos without a permit, they may be seized as prohibited imports and the importer prosecuted.

While many importers have contracts with overseas suppliers that stipulate their goods must be asbestos free, experience indicates that certification by overseas manufacturers or suppliers is not always reliable when determining whether the goods comply with Australian law.

To assist with facilitating the clearance of their goods, importers may therefore wish to arrange for inspection and certification of their goods as asbestos free, by an independent and appropriately qualified occupational hygienist, *before* the goods are exported to Australia.

For additional information regarding Customs and Border Protection import requirements, please refer to the Australian Customs and Border Protection Service website [www.customs.gov.au](http://www.customs.gov.au/) or contact the Customs Information and Support Centre on 1300 363 263. Inquiries concerning this notice may be directed to the Director, Community Protection on (02) 6275 6642 or to [community.protection@customs.gov.au](mailto:community.protection@customs.gov.au)

Geoff Johannes National Manager Trade Branch Canberra ACT

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