



Consultation on the requirements for competent persons in relation to asbestos-related tasks

Cover sheet and consultation questions for submissions provided by email or post

When making your submission by:

- email to occhygiene@swa.gov.au
- or post to

Consultation – Competent Persons for Asbestos-related Tasks
Safe Work Australia
GPO Box 641
Canberra ACT 2601

please complete the following form, answer the consultation questions, and include the form with your submission.

Submissions will be accepted until **11.59 pm (AEST) on Sunday 1st October 2023.**

1. Your details

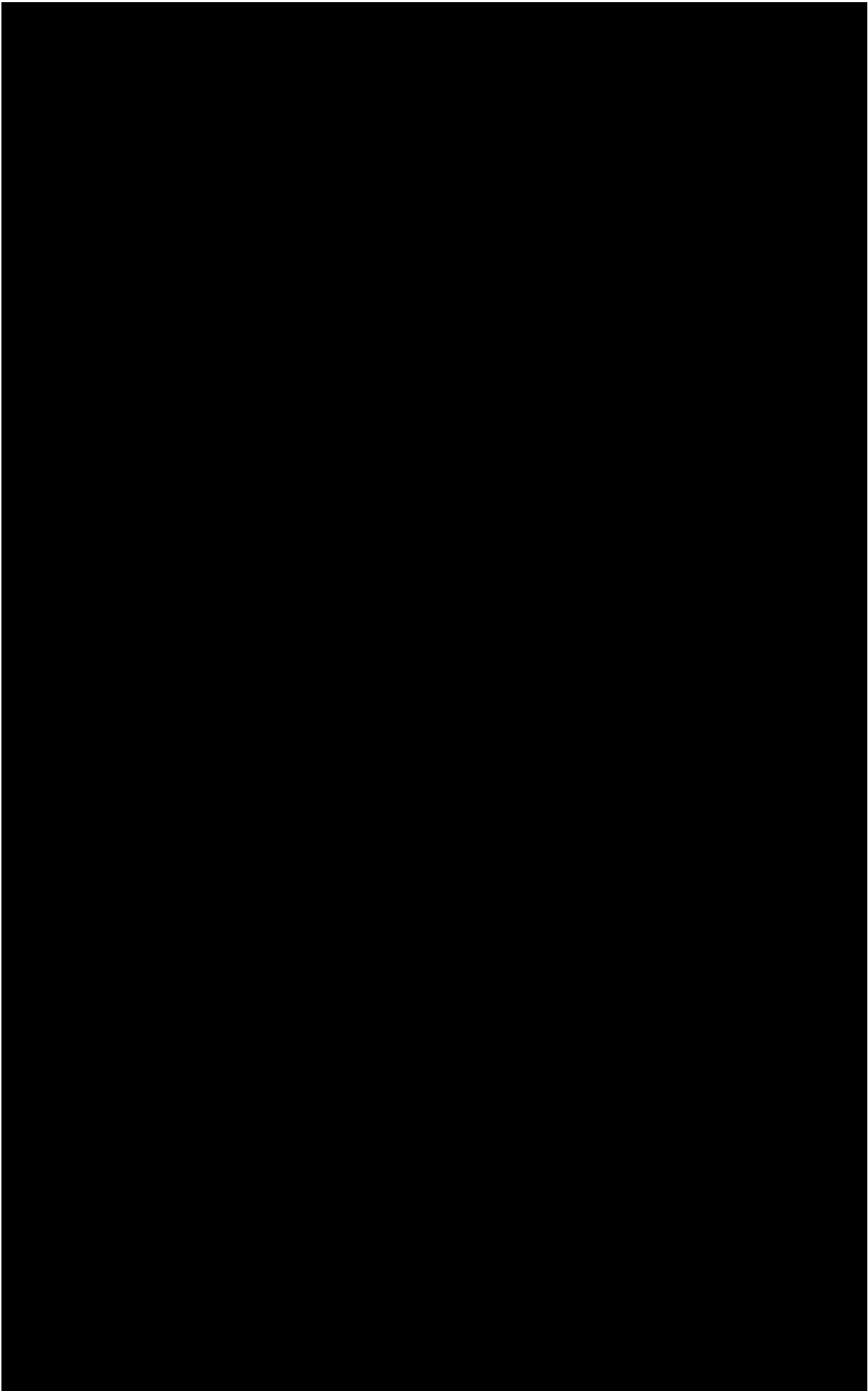
(Please leave blank if you wish to remain anonymous)

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2. This submission is written on behalf of an:

☐ Individual ☒ Organisation

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Select one:

- ☐ Publish my submission online
(your organisation or individual name will be identified along with your submission)
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- ☒ I have read and understand the below Privacy Collection Notice and other terms listed below.

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If you do not wish to disclose your personal information, you can choose not to include identifying information on the cover sheet and in your submission. However, if we are not able to collect your personal information, we will not be able to contact you for any further consultation if required. If you choose not to provide details about your occupation, this may limit our understanding of the implementation potential options across different workplaces and industries.

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Consultation questions

These consultation questions are aimed at understanding the nature and extent of any issues with the term "competent person" as it relates to asbestos-related tasks. There is no requirement to answer all the questions; and stakeholders are welcome to provide other feedback relevant to the requirements for competent persons for asbestos-related tasks. Wherever possible, please include reference to the relevant regulation number in the model WHS Regulations in your response.

Q.1 Do you have a clear understanding of the definitions of a competent person for asbestos-related tasks? How could any misunderstandings be addressed or clarified?

Yes, I believe so. However, I believe it could be made more clear without too great an increase in its level of onerous training or cost by indicating such holds a qualification in a competency unit called "asbestos awareness"

Q.2 Do you see a benefit in aligning the training, qualification and experience requirements of competent persons, licensed asbestos assessors and asbestos removal supervisors

for asbestos-related tasks? If so, what do you think the training, qualification and experience requirements should be? Please provide information and reasons to support your response.

Including a current version of “asbestos awareness” in the national competency units and making holding it the effective definition of a “competent Person”. It would not need to be heavily upgraded over the current non-VET course, just formalised and still be deliverable online to facilitate regional and rural access easily and cost-effectively.

Q.3 Are there any other issues regarding the definition and requirements of competent persons for asbestos-related tasks that should be considered? Please provide information and reasons to support your response.

There should be the capacity for people to assume something is asbestos, without doing the testing. In many cases, it is simply more efficient to treat something that is likely asbestos as such, rather than losing time and costing money for testing, especially in regional and remote areas. That way, workers removing less than 10m² of asbestos can do so without having to have a testing competency, just an awareness competency and general Class B supervision. This is really important for repair crews working with asbestos potable water pipeline breaks so the job can be completed in a timely manner and services reinstated with urgency.