VICROADS GUIDELINE

TCG 015 – 1 – 2013

Dealing with Asbestos Pits

and

Conduits

Issue Date: December 2013

Foreword

This guideline has been developed by VicRoads. It is one of a number of technical specifications, and associated standard drawings, which set out the requirements for roadside ITS devices, traffic signal equipment and other electrical equipment and associated devices and control systems.

This guideline is intended for use in all relevant works undertaken by or on behalf of VicRoads.

VicRoads Standard Drawings, Specifications and Guidelines are available for downloading from VicRoads website at
http://www.vicroads.vic.gov.au/itsspecs

Guideline updates. VicRoads specifications and associated standard drawings are subject to periodic review. To keep the specifications up to date, amendments or new editions are issued as necessary. It is therefore important for users of VicRoads specifications to ensure that they have the latest version and associated amendments.

Road Operations
60 Denmark Street Kew 3101

Amendments

Final	22 December 2013	

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SECTION 1 SCOPE AND GENERAL

1.1 SCOPE

1.1.1 The purpose of this document is to set out the procedures to be followed to minimise the risks associated with the management of electrical assets where asbestos pits or conduits may have been installed.

1.1.2 This guideline is to be followed by VicRoads personnel as well as the personnel of VicRoads contractors and of other agencies who may need to be present at a VicRoads site.

1.2 BACKGROUND

1.2.1 Exposure to airborne asbestos fibres can cause a range of serious medical conditions.

1.2.2 VicRoads has a duty to eliminate exposure to airborne asbestos fibres, so far as is reasonably practical.

1.2.3 Asbestos presents a risk when dry if it can be crumbled, pulverised or reduced to powder by hand pressure or the result of a work process such as cutting or drilling. This friable condition can result in airborne fibres.

1.2.4 Material such as asbestos cement is generally not friable when it cannot be crumbled pulverised or reduced to powder by hand pressure.

1.2.5 The risk of exposure to fibres can be eliminated or minimised by the adoption of the procedures described in this Guideline.

1.2.6 This Guideline has been prepared to provide advice to VicRoads Regions, Project Groups and contractors.

1.3 RELATED DOCUMENTS

1.3.1 Further information is available from WorkSafe Victoria, and specifically in the Compliance Codes:

Managing asbestos in workplaces
Removing asbestos in workplaces

1.3.2 These Codes provide practical guidance to those who have duties under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* or the Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2007 (the Regulations) on how to comply with those duties or obligations.

1.4 DEFINITION

1.4.1 Occupational hygienist – the holder of an approved graduate diploma in occupational hygiene.

SECTION 2 IDENTIFICATION OF SITES

2.1 GENERAL

2.1.1 In order to effectively manage the presence of asbestos on sites, it is necessary, as a first step, that all sites where asbestos is present are comprehensively identified and recorded.

2.2 SURVEY AND RECORDING

2.2.1 Each Region is to ensure that the sites of all on-road electrical equipment are effectively inspected and the presence, or possible presence, of asbestos and its condition is to be recorded.

2.2.2 For each such site, the information on the presence or possible presence of asbestos is to be recorded in the RAI database. The procedure for updating the RAI database is attached as Appendix A.

2.2.3 All sites where asbestos may be present are to be recorded in RAI as detailed above, regardless of whether the site has been previously identified in other systems, such as the VicRoads Asbestos Register in the SMS (Safety Management System).

2.2.4 Regions are to ensure that all records from other systems are transcribed into RAI.

2.2.5 When a maintenance task is issued to a contractor through RAI, the email will contain an alert to indicate that asbestos is a risk at the site. An example is shown in Appendix B.

2.2.6 If work is issued by other processes than through RAI, e.g. by work order or tender, the supervising officer is to ensure that the contractor is advised of the possible presence of asbestos.

2.2.7 It is a VicRoads requirement that all instances where asbestos is present are also recorded in the VicRoads Asbestos Register in the SMS.

2.3 ASSESSMENT

2.3.1 For each site identified as possibly having asbestos components, the Region should arrange for a detailed survey to determine those sites with a risk of having airborne fibres present.

2.3.2 While the positive identification of sites with a risk of having airborne fibres present can only be provided by an occupational hygienist, the scope of the inspections for which a hygienist is required can be modified based on:

- Input from the person/s carrying out the original survey
- Local knowledge of which sites were installed in the period before materials other than asbestos cement were used;

2.3.3 The hygienist is to determine whether or not asbestos is present, its location, its condition and shall submit a report on his/her findings and recommendations. The report is to be in

accordance with the requirements of an asbestos register as defined in the WorkSafe Compliance Code "Managing asbestos in workplaces"

2.3.4 The Region is to ensure that the RAI database and the Asbestos Register are kept up to date to reflect any changes to affected sites.

2.3.5 Where it is identified that the asbestos is damaged or is friable steps are to be taken to arrange for the removal of the item.

2.4 SITES WITH UNDAMAGED ASBESTOS

2.4.1 For each asbestos-containing site which has been identified by the industrial hygienist as not having damaged or friable asbestos, the relevant pits are to be left in place and shall be labelled as detailed below.

2.4.2 For each asbestos pit, and the pits at each end of an asbestos conduit, a prominent cable in the pit shall be tagged with a water resistant warning label.

2.4.3 The wording of the label shall be "WARNING – HAZARDOUS MATERIAL"

2.4.4 A warning label shall also be prominently displayed in the controller cabinet. The wording shall be "WARNING – HAZARDOUS MATERIAL MAY BE PRESENT AT THIS SITE".

2.5 SITES WHERE DAMAGED OR FRIABLE ASBESTOS IS PRESENT

2.5.1 All pits and conduits which have been identified as having damaged or friable asbestos during the survey shall be labelled in accordance with clause 2.4 and programmed for immediate replacement.

2.5.2 Removal of the asbestos shall be undertaken by an appropriately licensed contractor.

2.5.3 The law permits the removal of a limited amount of asbestos by a contractor without a licence if:

- The material is non-friable
- The area to be removed does not exceed 10 m^2 in total
- The total time asbestos removal work is performed in any period of seven days does not exceed one hour (this period is the cumulative total time the asbestos removal work is carried out by all employees of the contractor over a period of seven days).

2.5.4 Asbestos removal work without a licence must be carried out in accordance with the Regulations.

2.5.6 In accordance with the requirements of WorkSafe Victoria, WorkSafe Victoria must be notified prior to the removal of any quantity of friable asbestos or of non-friable asbestos of a quantity greater than 10m^2 or would take more than 1 hour in total in a seven day period to remove.

2.5.7 When arranging for the removal of asbestos, appropriate steps shall be taken to inform the community and minimise the concerns of those in the vicinity of the works.

SECTION 3 UNDERTAKING WORKS ON SITE

3.1 GENERAL

3.1.1 Any work undertaken on sites where it is possible that asbestos is present shall be undertaken in accordance with the relevant procedures of WorkSafe Victoria.

3.1.2 VicRoads contractors shall follow the procedures described in Appendix M – Replacing cabling in asbestos cement conduits or boxes, of WorkSafe Victoria Compliance Code "Managing asbestos in workplaces"

3.2 WHERE ALTERATIONS TO AN ASBESTOS PIT OR CONDUIT ARE REQUIRED

3.2.1 If alterations to an asbestos pit or conduit are required, or if the item is damaged, it shall be replaced.

3.2.2 A pre-qualified contractor shall disconnect and withdraw cables as required.

3.2.3 The contractor's personnel shall use personal protective equipment in accordance with the Compliance Code whilst undertaking this task.

3.2.4 All removal of the pit must be undertaken in accordance with the WorkSafe Victoria Compliance Code "Removing asbestos in workplaces" by an appropriately qualified contractor.

3.2.5 The pre-qualified contractor shall install the new item(s) and reinstate cabling.

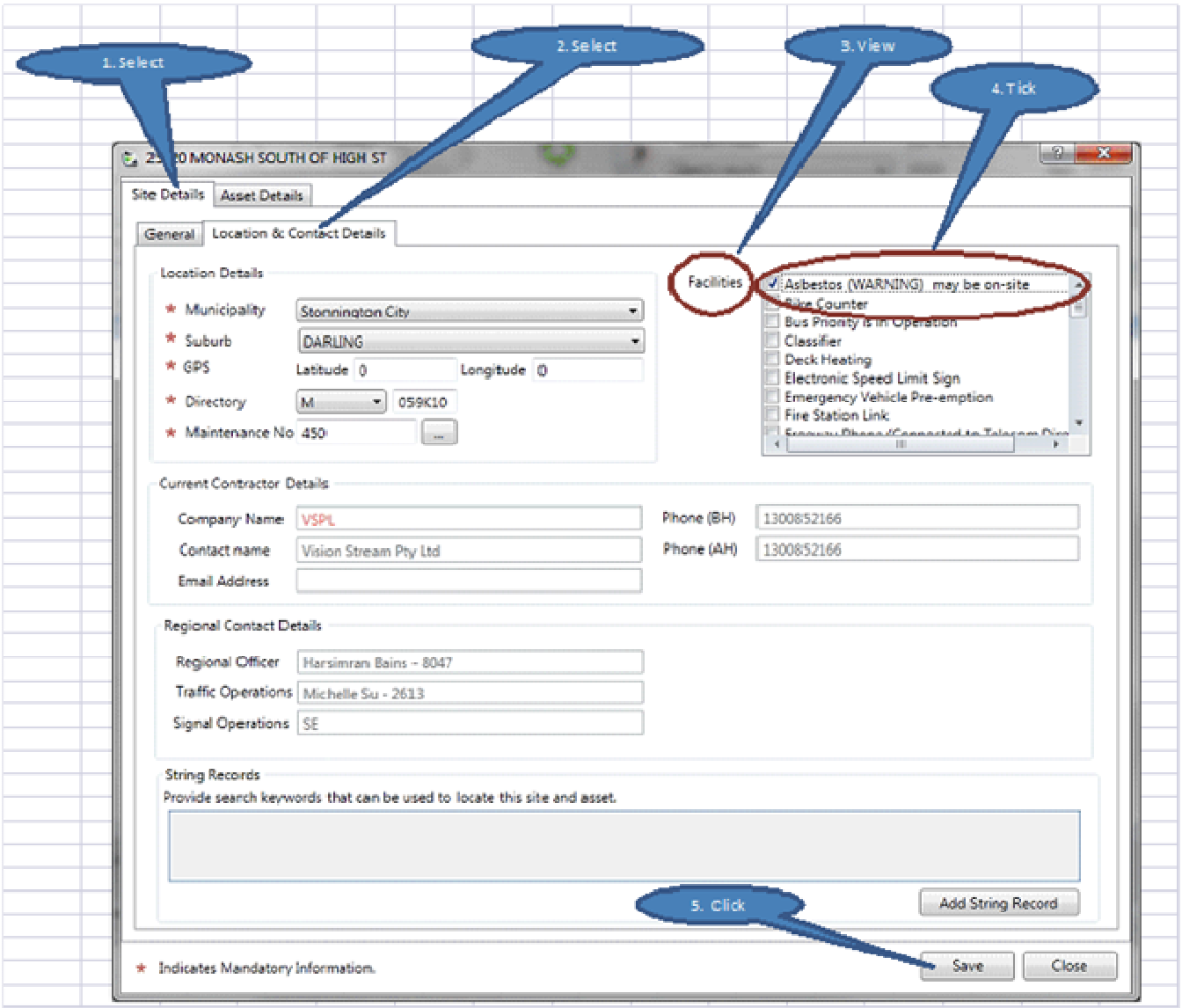
3.3 INFORMING STAFF AND CONTRACTORS

3.3.1 All staff and contractors who may need to work on sites where asbestos may be present, are to be advised of these procedures.

APPENDIX A

RECORDING THE PRESENCE OF ASBESTOS AT A SITE IN THE RAI DATABASE

The recording of the presence of asbestos at a site is recorded in the RAI database via the “Facility” field, as indicated below:



APPENDIX B

EXAMPLE OF ALERT MESSAGE WHEN A JOB IS ISSUED FROM RAI