

Friday, 29 October 2010

## ACTU welcomes appointment of Geoff Fary to chair new national asbestos review

Assistant Secretary Geoff Fary has announced today that he will be leaving the ACTU to head up a new organisation to manage and remove asbestos in Australian workplaces and households.

ACTU Secretary Jeff Lawrence and President Ged Kearney welcomed the establishment of the new Asbestos Management Review and congratulated Mr Fary on his appointment as chair of the review

They thanked Mr Fary for his contribution to the ACTU over the past three years.

Mr Fary was elected an ACTU Assistant Secretary in 2007, and his responsibilities have included occupational health and safety, workers' compensation, and asbestos.

In his new role he will head a major review that will make recommendations to the Government on the future management of asbestos issues in Australia, including materials handling, education, reporting and public health issues.

"Unions have a strong history of campaigning for the banning and removal of asbestos, better treatment and compensation for victims, and effective punishment for corporate neglect on this issue," Mr Lawrence said.

"The death rate from asbestos-related diseases is yet to peak, and there is much to do to eradicate asbestos from Australian workplaces and houses.

"This review is an important and welcome development, and is consistent with the call from unions and asbestos diseases groups for a national approach to these issues.

"Geoff Fary's long experience and his particular work in this field at the ACTU make him eminently qualified for this role.

"I congratulate Geoff on his appointment and thank him for his service on behalf of working Australians at the ACTU.

"We wish Geoff well in this important new role."

Mr Fary said he looked forward to the challenges of his new role.

"Australia has one of the highest rates of asbestos related disease in the world," Mr Fary said.

"I welcome the opportunity to work with the advisory group to provide advice to government on this issue which is critically important to the health of current and future generations of Australians. The review will look forward to taking advice from a wide range of stakeholders and interested parties."

Mr Fary will finish as ACTU Assistant Secretary next month. Mr Lawrence said the ACTU will shortly call for nominations to fill the vacancy of Assistant Secretary.

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