



## AfPA Renews Its Commitment to Industry Safety as its 2023 Priority

**Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> February 2023**

The Australian Flexible Pavement Association (AfPA) has ushered in the new year with a renewed commitment to comprehensive industry safety, in alignment with a set of national safety priorities founded by the National Health & Safety Committee (NHSC).

The 2023 priority will see safety guide action around four key themes:

- Separation of people and traffic
- Separation of people and plant
- RCS, silica and dust management
- Workplace mental health

AfPA, alongside the NHSC, will aim to harmonise industry safety standards and practices across the country to establish an improved road network that protects road workers, reduces emissions and improves conditions for motorists alike.

Separation of people and traffic aims to minimise risk caused to workers on foot in and around worksites by influencing driver behaviour and regulating speed levels. This priority will see AfPA and the NHSC collaborate with industry bodies and road authorities to develop a national standard of leading practice to keep workers safe.

Our separation of people and plant strategic priority aims for safer worksites by keeping workers safe from heavy plant and equipment. This is to be achieved through advocating for increased industry commitment to training and risk mitigation on maintenance and construction projects. Support for members to be provided through the development of worker/plant interaction scenarios that detail activities, plant and workers involved, specifics of when incidents occur happen and existing typical controls available to manage risk. The establishment of AfPA's Worker on Foot training scheme will be a cornerstone of this commitment.

Our RCS, silica and dust management strategic priority, aims to address the emerging issue of this risk to workers and the environment arising from road work. AfPA and the NHSC will seek to assess and measure worker exposure levels to RCS dust during road profiling. The strategy also advocates for the adoption of new operational procedures and materials such as increasing the use of Warm Mix Asphalt (WMA) as a means of reducing fuming impacts to staff and emissions impacts to the environment.



Our final strategic priority, addressing workplace mental health, will see AfPA seek to assess the overall mental health challenges the industry faces and work alongside relevant bodies to create more mental health friendly environments. This priority is seeking to support industry members in reducing stigma and adopting management strategies, that encourage proactive discussion around general wellbeing.

Chair of the NHSC, Rory Bracken, said:

“Our industry’s value and importance to Australian infrastructure has arguably never been clearer than in the wake of a year of road damaging events, however, being busy does not mean we can afford to halt improvement. We look forward to working closely with regulatory bodies and industry members to work toward these crucial priorities.

“Far and away the biggest challenge and also opportunity our industry faces is greater alignment and consistency in the manner in which we apply safety standards and practices nationally. It is AfPA and the NHSC’s focus in 2023 to lay the foundations for improving the overall base-line standards for workers, the work itself and for the wider environment.