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Asbestos regulations in New Zealand woeful

New Zealand needs to follow Australia's lead and ban the importation of asbestos containing products, the rail union said today.

KiwiRail has pulled its forty DL locomotives from the network after asbestos was detected in the soundproofing of the drivers compartment.

"Our regulations in this area are inadequate", said Wayne Butson, General Secretary, Rail and Maritime Transport Union.

"Rather than a weak, labelling-only approach, New Zealand needs to take a stronger stance and stop the importation of asbestos containing products fully."

Australia has had [a ban since 2004](#) on the importation, manufacture and use of all forms of asbestos and asbestos containing products.

"Australia's stronger regulations ensure companies are held accountable for their actions. Australian engineering firm Bradken faces a fine of up to \$850,000 for importing locomotives from China that contained asbestos."

"In contrast, there is no accountability borne by KiwiRail for ensuring there is no asbestos included in goods produced along its supply chain."

Wayne Butson said that trains built locally would not have contained asbestos.

"Instead, the government took a short sighted view of procurement with these DL locomotives, and went for the cheapest possible option, regardless of the consequences, and in the process, have put the safety of their workforce at risk," he said.

Ends.

For further comment:

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