

Project Profile

Rail Facility Asbestos Remediation Project Stages 2 and 3



Client	Downer Rail
Location	Port Augusta, South Australia
Duration	November 2017 to April 2018
Contract	Lump Sum Construct Only
Cost	\$2.5 million

Project Overview

Downer Rail is a full rail service provider covering all sectors from rolling stock to infrastructure and in every project phase, from manufacturing to through-life-support and operations. Downer's track record spans project management services, engineering design, systems engineering, supply chain engagement, systems integration, manufacturing, logistics, testing, commissioning, asset management, fleet maintenance, rail infrastructure design and construction, and through-life-support and operations.

In November 2017 Downer announced it was selling its freight rail business to Progress Rail, a Caterpillar company and the world's leading manufacturer of diesel-electric locomotives. The sale included customer contracts, facilities located at Malaga, Port Augusta and Clyde as well as other licensed facilities, and associated assets and liabilities.

McMahon Services were engaged by Downer Rail to replace asbestos containing roofing and other infrastructure at the Port Augusta facility, completing the work ready for the transfer to Progress Rail ownership.

Scope of Work

The project team undertook the remediation of asbestos and associated contamination at the Downer Rail Facility on Carlton

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Parade in Port Augusta. Asbestos containing materials included switchboards, cupboards, structural beams, dirt outside the facility and window sills of the main workshop building. Roofing materials included sheeting, guttering, downpipes, ridge capping, barge capping eaves and fascia on the main workshop building, the majority of which bonded asbestos material. Comprehensive decontamination of all areas was undertaken on a full-time basis during the works within full encapsulated work areas.

Over 8,910m² of roofing was replaced equating to 142t of asbestos containing materials remediated. All asbestos containing materials were encapsulated in protective 200µm plastic sheeting and transported to EPA licenced asbestos receiving stations. 2,600m² of wonder glass sheeting was installed in 18 bays to provide natural lighting to the interior of the facility.

Scaffolding was used extensively on the project to significantly reduce the risks of working at heights up to 16m, working over rail and to fully encapsulate the asbestos remediation areas. A total of 2,300m² of scaffolding was erected on site and was progressively moved to different work areas as the program of works progressed. Scaffolding was also erected with waterproofing materials to protect all plant and equipment inside the facility during the works.

The project team faced various challenges during the works including working over operational and electrified rail, working on steep saw-tooth roof configurations and working in strong winds blowing off the nearby Spencer Gulf Ocean.

A major challenge was the heat. Daytime temperatures often reached 39°C or more which was compounded by another 10°C radiating off the roofs and an additional 12°C from working in full encapsulated asbestos remediation suits. Despite these challenges, works were completed on time and without incident. A total of 19 personnel delivered the works. Plant and equipment utilised included a 200t and 250t cranes.

