**Queensland
Government**

2 5 OCT 2005

Mr Neil Laurie
The Clerk of Parliament
Parliament House
George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Mr Laurie

Thank you for your letter received on 31 August 2005 forwarding petition no 424-05 which was lodged on 25 August 2005 by Ms Stephanie and Mr Tony Rankin regarding the removal of asbestos product at Birkdale State School.

Asbestos products were used extensively in Queensland buildings constructed during the last century, including houses, office buildings and schools. In fact, most houses built before the mid 1980's contain asbestos.

There are different types of asbestos and as a result of an audit of schools in the 1990's, the Department of Public Works removed all unstable asbestos material. The remaining asbestos does not pose a health risk unless disturbed. Our government places the highest priority on the safety of students and has initiated a $120m Asbestos Roof Replacement Program (ARRP).

The Roof Replacement Program has been accelerated and asbestos roofs at 20 schools were replaced over the September school holidays. The removal of a further 48 roofs at 18 schools will commence before the summer school holidays.

All remaining asbestos roofs are currently being reaudited by the Department of Public Works. This reaudit will inform a scoping and scheduling process to replace all roofs in Queensland state schools. Any roof that is in poor condition will be replaced as a matter of priority.

The asbestos roofs at Birkdale State School were inspected on 20 September 2005. The result of the inspection has established that the roofs on Blocks C and D are in fair and good condition respectively and that they do not represent a health risk. These roofs will be scheduled for replacement when the reaudit is finalised at the end of October 2005.

Thank you for raising the concerns of petitioners with me in relation to these matters.

Yours sincerely

Rod Welford MP

Ref: 05/91774