



# CDPP

Australia's Federal Prosecution Service

Commonwealth Director  
of Public Prosecutions

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## MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate release

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**Man sentenced for sending asbestos to consulates**

**Date:** 11 September 2019

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Today<sup>1</sup>, Savas Avan (49) was sentenced in the County Court of Victoria to 3 years imprisonment, after pleading guilty to mailing packages containing asbestos to consulates and embassies in Melbourne and Canberra. Mr Avan has to serve 12 months in prison before being released on a good behaviour bond for 2 years.

In January 2019, Mr Avan used Australia Post to deliver 52 packages containing asbestos he had collected from his own home to more than 10 consulates and embassies. This resulted in the closure of some of the affected buildings for between one and five hours.

Police and emergency services were able to safely remove the suspicious packages received by the consulates and embassies in both cities.

The South Korean, Indian and New Zealand consulates in Melbourne were all evacuated after receiving packages. Packages were also delivered to the British, Spanish, Greek, Taiwanese and Turkish consulates.

The CDPP's Deputy Director for Illegal Imports and Exports, Mark de Crespigny, said Mr Avan's offending placed Australia Post staff, embassy staff and the community at risk.

"This offence caused fear and distress for staff at the embassies and consulates affected, but also had the potential to cause widespread fear among the general public," he said. "The dangers of even limited exposure to asbestos are well known in the community. This was a reckless and dangerous act."

Mr de Crespigny commended the police and emergency services who safely removed the packages from the embassies and consulates, and the efforts of Federal prosecutors who worked with investigators to send a clear message that this type of offending is serious and will not be tolerated.

### Summary of charges:

- 1 x causing a dangerous article to be carried by a postal or similar service, contrary to section 471.13 of the *Criminal Code* (Cth). *Note: this charge covers the period between 2 January 2019 and 7 January 2019. The charge includes 14 parcels sent on 2 January 2019 and a further 38 parcels sent on 7 January 2019.*

CDPP Media contact: [media@cdpp.gov.au](mailto:media@cdpp.gov.au) or 02 6206 5708.

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<sup>1</sup> Sentence was originally handed down by his Honour Judge McInerney on Friday, 6 September 2019, but was clarified by his Honour in a separate hearing in Shepparton on Wednesday, 11 September 2019.