

## What is a PRSA?

A Preliminary Risk Screen Assessment (PRSA) is a tool to help determine whether a site requires an environmental audit or not. It forms part of the Environmental Audit system and is conducted by an [EPA appointed environmental auditor](#) (contaminated land).

A PRSA cannot determine if land meets the definition of potentially contaminated land under the land use planning framework.

But it may be used to help form part of planning decisions or approvals.

## Purpose – What does it do?

- Checks whether contaminated land is likely to be present at a site
- Determines if a site needs an environmental audit for the proposed use. A PRSA can be used to assess a specific proposed development.
- Recommends a scope of the environmental audit, if one is needed.

## What Triggers a PRSA?

- Because of the land-use planning approval or permit conditions of a site. [Planning Practice Note 30 \(PPN30\)](#) provides a guide to when a PRSA may be required.
- For voluntary reasons.

## What is involved?

A PRSA starts with a Preliminary Site investigation (PSI). This is a review of the site’s history and current land use. It helps identify possible sources of contamination.

It may require limited and targeted sampling of soil, soil vapour or groundwater. This should only be used to confirm that contamination is not present. An independent environmental auditor reviews the assessment and decides whether an environmental audit is needed.

## How to complete a PRSA?

To get a PRSA conducted for your site you can:

- Engage just an environmental auditor who undertakes the PSI and prepares a PRSA report and PRSA statement (s), or
- Engage a consultant and environmental auditor separately so that:
  - The consultant undertakes the PSI
  - The environmental auditor assesses the PSI and prepares a PRSA report and statement.

## How long does it take?

A PRSA should be completed in a relatively short timeframe compared with an environmental audit. The length of time depends on the size and history of the site. They typically take several weeks or months.

## What are the possible outcomes of a PRSA?

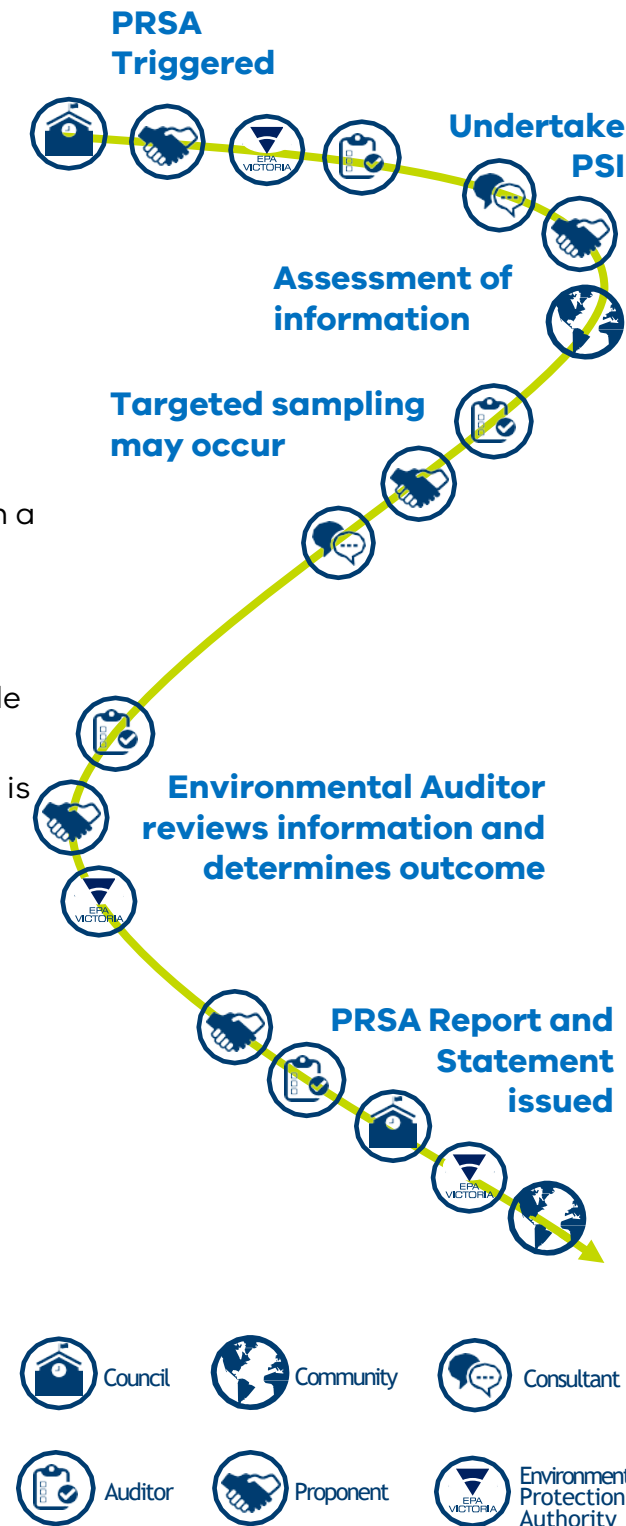
- Site is not contaminated, and no environmental audit is needed.
- Site is contaminated, but no environmental audit is required. Although contamination may be present, there may not be a risk of harm based on the proposed development of the site. That’s why an audit may not be required despite contamination. Site owners or occupiers may still have a [duty to manage contaminated land](#).
- Site is contaminated and an environmental audit is needed.

## What does a PRSA statement contain?

Broadly, these statements:

- Are a short-form summary of key information and outcomes.
- Has each statement area aligning with existing or proposed title boundaries (exceptions may apply).
- Must include the scope if recommending an environmental audit.

An assessment may lead to more than one statement. For example, two statements may be produced where a PRSA concludes that one part of the site requires an environmental audit, and another part does not.



**Useful links:**

- [Guideline for conducting a PRSA](#) (EPA Publication 2021)
- [Preliminary Risk Screen Assessment Statement form](#) (F1031.1)
- [Planning Practice Note 30](#) (Potentially Contaminated Land)
- [How to engage an environmental auditor](#)