



Australian Government

Department of the Environment and Heritage

Dr Margaret Hartley
Director
NICNAS
GPO Box 58
SYDNEY NSW 2001



Margaret

Dear Dr Hartley

The Department of the Environment and Heritage appreciates the opportunity to comment on the reforms that NICNAS has proposed to its Existing Chemicals Assessment Program. The Department understands that the reforms seek to improve three basic elements of the Program:

1. inputs required for an effective program;
2. processes required for efficient delivery; and
3. outputs necessary to address stakeholder needs.

The Department is supportive of the direction of the reforms and believes that they are consistent with the proposals for a national approach to managing the environmental risk of chemicals currently being developed by the Environment Protection and Heritage Council's Chemicals Working Group. These proposals are known as the National framework for **Chemicals Environmental Management (NChEM)**.

The Department looks forward to working closely with NICNAS on several of its proposed reforms, such as the screening criteria for identifying and prioritising chemicals for assessment, as well as the establishment of a working party to revise the Priority Existing Chemical selection criteria.

We would welcome more detailed consultation with you on these matters at an appropriate time.

Yours sincerely

Mary Harwood

Mary Harwood
First Assistant Secretary
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