



OECD New Chemicals Clearing House

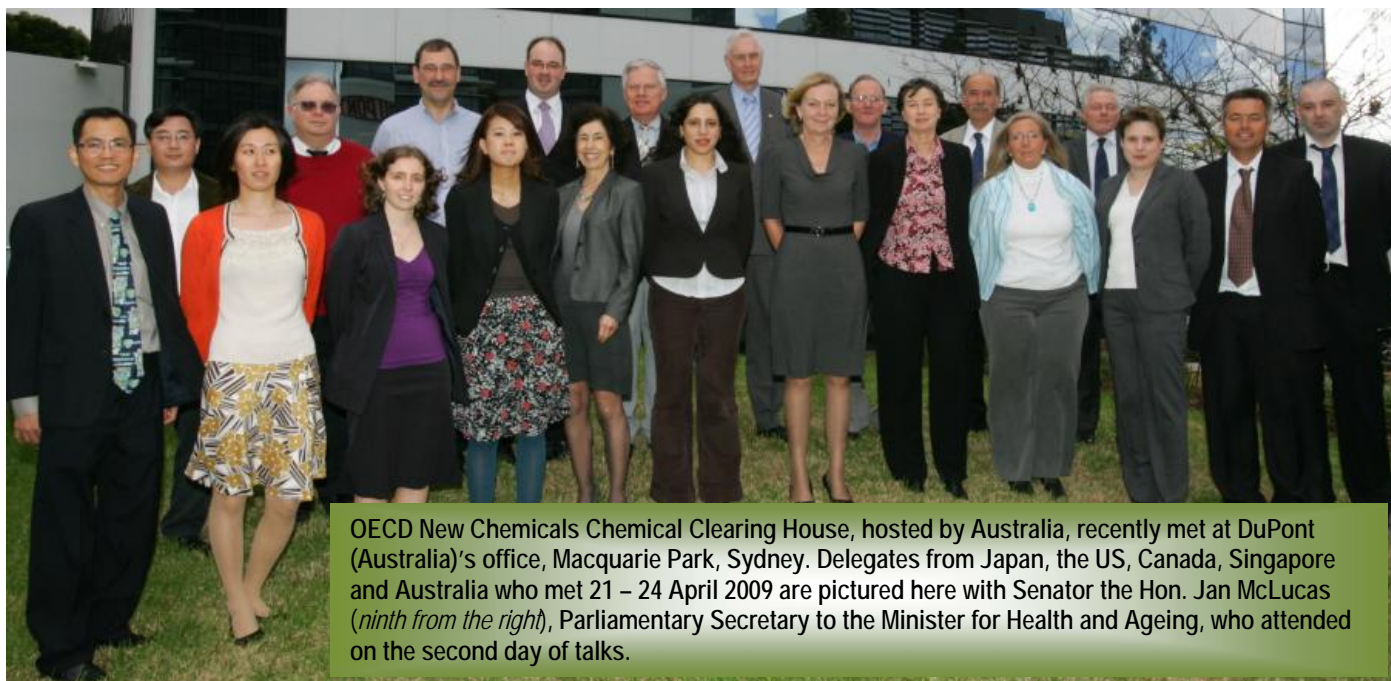
inaugural meeting held in Sydney

NICNAS – as Chair of the **OECD Clearing House on New Chemicals** – is pleased to announce that the first meeting of the newly established group met its objectives and is energised to take forward international work on new chemicals. Delegates and observers from Australia, Canada, Japan, Singapore and the United States met at DuPont Australia's head office in Macquarie Park, Sydney on 21-24 April 2009.

The meeting was largely for strategic planning and also reached agreement on a draft mandate for the Clearing House, the vision of mutual acceptance of notifications and a draft work-plan setting out the priorities and establishing working groups for specific topics (such as the new chemicals notification 'parallel process', electronic notifications, outreach programs and possibly polymers).

On the second day, Senator the Hon Jan McLucas (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Health and Ageing) welcomed delegates and observers at one of the sessions. Senator McLucas thanked the group for their accomplishments and noted that Australia sees the work of the Clearing House as providing great benefit to industry and to regulation.

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OECD New Chemicals Chemical Clearing House, hosted by Australia, recently met at DuPont (Australia)'s office, Macquarie Park, Sydney. Delegates from Japan, the US, Canada, Singapore and Australia who met 21 – 24 April 2009 are pictured here with Senator the Hon. Jan McLucas (*ninth from the right*), Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Health and Ageing, who attended on the second day of talks.

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NICNAS Matters

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a word
from the
director ...



Dr Marion Healy

Key objectives in NICNAS's program of continuous improvement are the utilisation of assessment approaches and methodologies that are considered international best practice and alignment of Australia's notification requirements with international norms, to the extent that is consistent with the philosophy and intent of Australia's underpinning legislation. We have two major strategies to achieving these aims: engaging in key multi-lateral activities and developing effective bi-lateral cooperative relationships.

The multi-lateral activities focus on the chemical safety activities of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC).

In the OECD, the Chemicals Committee within the Environment, Health and Safety Programme undertakes a number of activities important to NICNAS's role and responsibilities. These include ongoing improvements to assessment methodologies (such as structure function modelling), assessments of chemicals that are produced in high volume and approaches to assessing and managing specific classes of chemicals (such as manufactured nanomaterials and perfluorinated chemicals). Other important OECD activities include efforts to achieve recognition of an assessment in several countries without repeating the assessment, and harmonisation of notification requirements. Significant achievements include the so called 'parallel process' (a process to facilitate recognition of a single assessment), the development of agreed definitions and an analysis of the scientific basis for polymers of low concern.

The Chemicals Dialogue, established under APEC, provides a forum for regulatory and trade officials and industry representatives to address trade and economic challenges as well as regulatory policies and practices. Recently a Regulators Forum has been established in conjunction with the Chemicals Dialogue and this provides a mechanism for information sharing and cooperative approaches to chemicals management across the region.

However, there are a number of other multilateral activities that impact on NICNAS work, and these includes Conventions and Treaties to which Australia is a signatory, including the Stockholm and Rotterdam Conventions. The Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management and the International Conference on Chemicals Management, together with the United Nations Environment Program and the World Health Organisation's International Program on Chemical Safety all contribute to the comprehensive international chemical safety framework in which NICNAS operates.

NICNAS's bilateral activities have focussed on establishing cooperative activities with other countries that maintain a notification system, notably Canada and the USA. NICNAS has developed formal relationships and cooperative agreements with our counterpart agencies in these countries, and in the case of Canada, we have been able to formally recognise assessment work undertaken in some circumstances. We also have a work program with our New Zealand colleagues that aims to progress the alignment of the chemical management systems in the two countries.

This edition of NICNAS Matters reports on the outcomes of recent OECD activities that are important to NICNAS's work. These include strategic planning conducted by the newly formed OECD Clearing House on New Chemicals, the release of a database of research and development activities on manufactured nanomaterials and progress on the testing of a representative set of nanomaterials. In addition, an expert group met to develop the future focus and proposed workplan on hazard assessment activities. While recognising that investment in international activities yields benefits in the longer term, these initiatives all offer the prospect of improved international alignment of NICNAS's assessment and notification requirements. ■

NICNAS Training and Information schedule

Training and information sessions have been scheduled for the remainder of 2009 providing an opportunity for industry stakeholders to learn more about NICNAS and their obligations under the *Industrial Chemicals (Notification and Assessment) Act 1989*.

Mr Nick Walton, Team Leader NICNAS Compliance and Reporting, advises that the training sessions have been designed to assist industry meet their requirements under the Act: "NICNAS appreciates the feedback given by people who have attended the previous sessions and has incorporated case studies and more information on the exemption provisions of the legislation. We'll also

be running through some live demonstrations on searching the AICS and providing more information on how to calculate the value of introductions."

Full details of the training sessions can be found in the [NICNAS Training and Consultation Schedule](#) available from our website.

To register your interest for any of these sessions please email: industry.training@nicnas.gov.au ■



March and April inaugural meetings @ NICNAS:

- ◆ *Industry Engagement Group*
- ◆ *Cosmetic Advisory Group*

Meetings of two new consultative committees – the **Industry Engagement Group** and the **Cosmetic Advisory Group** – have been held recently at NICNAS.

The inaugural NICNAS **Industry Engagement Group** (IEG) was held on 19 March 2009. Established with the intention of providing an appropriate mechanism for NICNAS to engage with industry on technical matters affecting the regulation of industrial chemicals, the IEG is an informal advisory and consultative body of NICNAS. The group consists of a total of 14 industry representatives from a diverse range of industry sectors.

The March meeting was well attended, with discussion focused on the group's draft Terms of Reference, updates on new chemicals projects and progress on revisions to the [NICNAS Handbook for Notifiers](#). NICNAS staff provided brief presentations on each item on the agenda, and IEG members participated enthusiastically in discussions on each item. A brainstorming session on key priorities for future consideration by the IEG was a highlight of the meeting.

Four weeks later, on 16 April 2009, the NICNAS **Cosmetic Advisory Group** (CAG) met for the first time. The CAG's formation was foreshadowed in the 2005 [Regulation of Cosmetic Chemicals: Final Report and Recommendations](#) and its draft Terms of Reference (also discussed at the meeting) were prepared in 2006 by the Cosmetics Reforms Implementation Working Group.

It was believed that the formation of an expert advisory group would support reforms to the cosmetic / therapeutic interface (now implemented), allow for updates to the NICNAS [Cosmetic Guidelines](#) and [Cosmetic Standard](#) and provide a mechanism for advising the NICNAS Director on cosmetic-specific issues, where requested by NICNAS.

The CAG's twelve members are drawn from industry, the community and government, as well as specialist members with expertise in health and formulation and two NICNAS representatives. The focus of the group's work (discussed at the April meeting) is to finalise outstanding items from the reforms to the therapeutic / cosmetic interface:

- addition to AICS of chemicals not currently listed but already used as ingredients of therapeutic (TGA) products, where these products are now regulated as cosmetics
- assessment of new UV filters and efficacy requirements, and
- updating the Cosmetic Guidelines list of prohibited and restricted ingredients in cosmetic products. ■

Chemical Quiz

These quiz questions were part of a set of Trivia Questions asked at a NICNAS staff Harmony Day celebration, held on Friday 20 March 2009 ... answers on page 9.

1. What is the symbol of lead and what is the Latin word from which this symbol comes?
2. Who said: "All substances are poisons; there is none which is not a poison. It is the dose that makes a poison...."?
3. What is Uranium (discovered by Martin Heinrich Klaproth in 1789) named after?
(Hint: a celestial body – that triggered this name – was discovered in 1788)
4. What was the first metal to be discovered in Australia?
(Hint: discovered by explorer John Eyre in the Middleback Ranges of South Australia)
5. What is the name of the disease which caused 2,256 Japanese to fall ill from mercury poisoning, between 1956 and 2001?

3

OECD New Chemicals Clearing House meeting

.... from page 1

The group replaces the former OECD Task Force on New Chemicals Notification and Assessment which was established in 1999 to help governments increase the efficiency of national new chemicals notification and assessment systems. Notably, this Clearing House identified work that has the potential to engage with more countries across the globe, and in particular the Asia Pacific region, and to find new avenues in the international arena to impact positively on health, safety and the environment.

The Clearing House was established early 2009 to manage all work 'unique' to new chemicals and under the general oversight of the OECD Joint Meeting. As part of this arrangement, the OECD Secretariat will work with the Clearing House to provide periodic updates to future OECD Joint Meetings and will serve as liaison between the Clearing House and the Hazard Assessment Task Force, informing each on issues of common interest. ■



NICNAS and cosmetics



Chemicals in cosmetic products

As the Australian Government regulator for industrial chemicals – including cosmetics – NICNAS ensures that each ingredient of a product introduced into Australia through import or manufacture is on the Australian Inventory of Chemical Substances (AICS), or is assessed as a new chemical for its health and environmental effects before being released as a consumer product, unless it meets criteria for low volume concentration exemption. Chemicals already in use in Australia are subject to review based on health and/or environmental concerns and potential exposure.

From time to time, reports in the Australian media and elsewhere highlight the potential for adverse effects from the use of cosmetic products, including children's cosmetics.

Australia has one of the most stringent regulatory systems in the world for cosmetic chemicals and NICNAS has reviewed the safety of a number of ingredients in cosmetics. Where a public health risk has been identified, NICNAS has:

- made recommendations to the appropriate agency for regulatory action, and/or
- provided advice to the community on the safe use of these chemicals through information sheets published on the NICNAS website, and/or
- openly responded to enquiries on specific chemicals.

Specific measures to protect the public from ingredients in cosmetics are implemented by state and territory poisons legislation through adoption of the [Standard for the Uniform Scheduling of Drugs and Poisons](#) (SUSDP). It includes model provisions on labelling, and restrictions and prohibitions, and minimises public exposure to chemicals of concern through restrictions on the amounts allowed in cosmetics and the way they are used.

NICNAS information sheets related to chemicals found in cosmetics include:

[1,4-Dioxane](#) (Safety information sheet)

[Ammonium, Potassium and Sodium Persulfate](#) – for hairdressers

[Ammonium Laurel Sulfate](#) (April 2003)

[DEG in toothpaste](#) (June 2007) [Lead in Cosmetics](#) (Oct 2007)

[Methyl Methacrylate](#) (MMA) (May 2007)

[Phthalates](#) (June 2008) [Sodium Lauryl Sulfate](#) (Oct 2007)

[Triclosan](#) (October 2008) [Urea](#) (June 2003)

² This enables consumers to identify ingredients to which they may be allergic or which may cause an adverse reaction and to compare various cosmetic products.

Labelling

Mandatory labelling requirements apply to cosmetic products in Australia, under the [Trade Practices Act 1974](#). All ingredients in a cosmetic product must be listed on the product label in descending order calculated either by mass or volume².

Cosmetic labels must also indicate specific hazards posed by ingredients, where applicable. For example, if a cosmetic ingredient is listed in SUSDP schedules, it is mandatory to include warning or safety statements on the label. Consumers are urged to follow label instructions carefully when using cosmetic products and to cease using any product that causes any health effects such as irritation or discomfort to the skin.

Regulation of cosmetic ingredients

If a NICNAS risk assessment identifies adverse health and/or environmental effects, additional controls are recommended to agencies with risk management responsibility for worker safety, public health and environmental risks arising from chemicals. NICNAS also has some regulatory powers in relation to the introduction of chemicals.

The [National Drugs and Poisons Schedule Committee](#) (NDPSC), a statutory committee established under the [Therapeutic Goods Act 1989](#), is responsible for determining the appropriate classification or scheduling of chemicals in cosmetics in Australia. NDPSC decisions are published in the SUSDP and adopted by the states and territories in their legislations. Chemicals are scheduled based on criteria which include the chemical's toxicity, purpose or use, potential for abuse, safety in use and the need for the substance.

NICNAS is currently reviewing its legislative framework and practices in consultation with the [Nanotechnology Advisory Group](#) to also ensure that nanoscale ingredients in cosmetics are safe. NICNAS reminds businesses to ascertain whether the nanomaterials they introduce / plan to introduce comply with legislative requirements (please see pages 11 & 12, [December 2008 NICNAS Matters](#)). Further advice on this matter is available in the [February 2009 NICNAS Chemical Gazette](#).

More information

For more information, please see the [Cosmetics](#) page on the NICNAS website. It includes links to:

[The Cosmetic Standard](#) (2007)

[NICNAS Cosmetic Guidelines](#) (September 2007)

The ACCC's [Cosmetics and toiletries: ingredient labelling, product information](#) (December 2000) ■



LRCC evaluation – industry survey online

An industry wide survey evaluating NICNAS's LRCC reforms was recently made available online. The survey – being conducted by Campbell Research, an independent consultant commissioned by NICNAS – aimed to get industry feedback on LRCC reform initiatives (listed below) which were implemented in 2004:

- Audited self-assessment of polymers of low concern and non-hazardous chemicals
- Increased exemptions for low volume, trans-shipment, cosmetic and research and development/analytical chemicals
- Administrative renewals for Low Volume Chemical and Commercial Evaluation permits
- Mandatory registration for Tier 1 companies
- Improved access to chemical safety information, including the Australian Inventory of Chemical Substances (AICS) online
- Option for early listing of notified chemicals on the AICS

NICNAS encouraged industry to become involved in the evaluation by completing the survey – the findings from which will enable us to develop a robust evidence base from which to consider future improvements to these initiatives.

Information provided during the survey is confidential and no individual or company will be identified to either Campbell Research or NICNAS.

The survey followed initial targeted stakeholder consultation and a series of case studies performed by Campbell Research. A draft report with the findings from all phases of the project will be published in June 2009 at which time there will be an opportunity for stakeholders to provide feedback on the findings. This feedback will be incorporated into the final report.

For more information on this project please contact [Dr Sarah Rumble](#) on (02) 8577 8832. ■

STOP PRESS: 11 June 2009 [New LRCC Categories Workshop in Melbourne](#)

Compliance and reporting

To ensure business entities and individuals involved in the chemical industry are meeting their legal obligations the NICNAS Compliance & Reporting Team is finalising a number of chemical and registration related audits.

These audits include:

- requesting further information from many certificate holders to determine if a secondary notification is required;
- ensuring all operators with Annual Reporting obligations have submitted the required information;
- contacting over 200 previously registered introducers of chemicals to check and inspect their import and/or manufacturing records.

These audits form part of the on-going process to monitor and encourage compliance with Legislation across the broader industries that introduce chemicals into Australia. Where a business is found to be non-compliant with the *Industrial Chemical (Notification & Assessment) Act 1989* they are encouraged to immediately rectify the matter. Consideration will be given to the imposition of a range of sanctions or severe fines

depending on the issues surrounding any non-compliance.

The audit process also provides a good opportunity for NICNAS inspectors to engage with industry participants to offer assistance and information on regulatory obligations. The conducting of audits to monitor compliance activities and provision of information, education and outreach activities to heighten industry awareness, ultimately contributes to increased protection for workers, public health and environment from the harmful effects of chemicals.

NICNAS, in the coming months, will be following up businesses that have not responded to the request for information about their chemical assessment certificate and/or not submitted their annual reports for 2007/08. The responsible person, usually Chief Executive Officer, will be requested to explain why a breach of Legislation has occurred.

If your business has failed to provide NICNAS with the requested information, you are strongly advised to contact Team Leader, Compliance & Reporting, Mr Nick Walton by email nick.walton@nicnas.gov.au as soon as possible to arrange for submission of the information. ■



Existing Chemicals Review update

The 2006 Existing Chemicals Review (ECR) aimed to develop a more flexible program that is responsive to emerging issues, is simple for industry to comply with and enables safe and sustainable use of industrial chemicals. An Implementation Steering Group (ISG) consisting of community, industry and government (Commonwealth, State & Territories) has developed proposals to address three specific recommendations from the [NICNAS Existing Chemicals Program Review: Final Report and Recommendations](#).

Two of the proposals from the ISG (which was established to provide guidance to NICNAS on strategies to implement recommendations arising from the ECR) on **new assessment products** and **streamlined processes for secondary notification** of existing chemicals, require amendments to the *Industrial Chemicals (Notification and Assessment) Act 1989* (the Act).

New assessment products

Currently, Priority Existing Chemicals (PEC) are the only legislated assessment category for existing chemicals. The Act permits mandatory information gathering by NICNAS for PECs and penalties apply for non-compliance. The ability to obtain assessment information through a mandatory call enables NICNAS to make more accurate risk determinations in chemical assessments.

The processes identified for the new assessment products propose a legislative base for all assessment types with mandatory information gathering powers which are not linked to the type of assessment product, and which can be invoked under specified circumstances. This provides more certainty for industry yet enables NICNAS to make more comprehensive and accurate risk determinations, where they are warranted on health, safety and environmental grounds.

It is proposed that three general **Assessment Activity Types** (Information, Advisory and Regulatory that NICNAS currently utilises) be formalised. These different assessment activity types give rise to particular assessment products, which may be supplemented with new products as circumstances require. Each assessment product involves specific consultation mechanisms and appeals processes, and a mandatory call for information (if warranted) precedes the decision on which assessment product is most suitable.

The Regulatory activity type includes current PEC assessment reports, and includes two new types of assessment products that provide for more streamlined assessment processes than that provided for by the current PEC process:

- Existing Chemical Risk Assessment, and
- Selective Assessment.

Streamlining secondary notification

The secondary notification process currently outlined in the Act, whereby additional information must be provided to, and considered by, NICNAS, has timeframes aligned with the PEC assessments. This affords little flexibility, particularly where an assessment is less complex and can be finalised more quickly than the current process allows. The proposed streamlined secondary notification process minimises unnecessary delays caused by rigid legislated timeframes and enables less complex assessments to be fast tracked where possible, by building in flexible timeframes at various stages.

Prioritisation of Chemicals on the Australian Inventory of Chemical Substances

The ISG in December 2008 provided broad guidance on an implementation strategy for this major recommendation from the Existing Chemicals Review, and agreed that the experience gained by Canada during the prioritisation of their [Domestic Substances List](#) (DSL) should be considered.

The supporting Technical Working Party (TWP) which met on 4 March 2009, agreed to focus first on developing scientific criteria for hazard and exposure indicators. Two separate expert working groups will assist with the development of criteria for environmental and health hazard endpoints. This work is being progressed over the next 3 to 6 months. ■

Cooperative arrangement with US EPA

In the [last issue of NICNAS Matters](#) we referred to the establishment in December 2008 of a framework to work with the United States Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Pollution Prevention and Toxics in the area of Chemical Assessment and Management. Completion of the arrangement provides the two countries with a framework for structured chemical management communications and activities.

A [copy of the agreement](#) is available with introductory details about the agreement on the [US EPA's OPPT international activity website](#).

On 20 April, prior to the OECD Chemicals Clearing House meeting, US EPA officers met with staff of NICNAS at NICNAS to discuss and further develop elements of a workplan for the implementation of the agreement. ■



Chemical safety update International harmonisation

Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition Arrangement (TTMRA)

The Productivity Commission's review on Mutual Recognition Schemes was released 9 February 2009. While the Government's response to the recommendation is awaited, projects which can be progressed under an MoU are being developed bilaterally between NICNAS and the New Zealand Environmental Risk Management Authority (ERMA). These agencies have agreed to investigate if use can be made of discrete 'packets' of data from each other's assessments, adopting classifications where one agency has done a classification, harmonisation of controlled use criteria and cooperation on international programs and forums.

Chemicals in Articles and Products / Management of PFOS
An Informal Workshop on Stakeholders' Information Needs on Chemicals in Articles/Products was held in Switzerland on 9-12 February, organised by UNEP and Sweden and supported by Japan. A NICNAS representative provided an overview of the 2006 OECD work on PFOS, PFAS, PFOA, PFCA and related substances, and Australian regulatory activities. Outcomes of the workshops will inform the next International Conference on Chemicals Management – to be held as part of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM).

Our representative later gave two papers and facilitated a breakout session at a workshop on **Managing perfluorinated chemicals and transitioning to safer alternatives** (12-13 February, 2009). This workshop was organized by UNEP and the US Government (through the US EPA).

OECD activities

The **OECD Hazard Assessment Task Force** convened for the first time in March 2009. The Task Force has oversight of the evolution of the new High Production Volume (HPV) Program; the work on QSARS* undertaken within the OECD; implementation of [eChemPortal](#) (portal that links to assessment reports on national websites) and continuous improvement and harmonisation of methodologies.

In preparation for the SIDS Initial Assessment Meeting (SIAM) 28, held in April 2009, NICNAS staff reviewed draft dossiers on:

- Tris(2-chloro-1-methylethyl)phosphate (TCPP)
- Tris[2-chloro-1-(chloromethyl)ethyl] phosphate (TDCP)
- 2,2-bis(chloromethyl)trimethylene bis(bis(2-chloroethyl)phosphate) (V6)
- HHCD thioglycolic acid ▪ dodecyl acid
- phosphoric acid, and ▪ bumetrizole.

The **OECD Ad hoc Experts Meeting** was convened to discuss and recommend a refocused OECD HPV Program after 2010. The OECD conducted a survey of member countries prior to the meeting

to gather information on national programs and ascertain outputs of these programs that could contribute to the OECD Program, and expectations of member countries. The meeting found the current framework for assessing chemicals to be effective and recommended the new program continue to produce hazard assessments of industrial chemicals with inclusion of basic exposure information. The scope of the program would be extended to include national assessments of varying types of both HPV and non-HPV chemicals and assessments that focussed on particular endpoints of concern (targeted assessments). QSARS and other expert system tools are also recommended to be used to fill the data gaps in the absence of test data.

The fifth meeting of the **OECD Working Party on Manufactured Nanomaterials** (WPMN) was held from 4-6 March 2009 and a meeting of the Sponsorship Program for safety testing of a representative set of nanomaterials, from 2-3 March 2009. NICNAS was the Australian representative at both meetings. At the Sponsorship Program meeting, the Australian consortium of research organisations, led by the CSIRO, was confirmed as co-sponsors for silver, zinc oxide and cerium oxide. Australian researchers are enthusiastic and willing to provide scientific expertise and testing capability to the Program, and NICNAS is the conduit to the Australian consortium. Australia (through the CSIRO, the National Measurement Institute [NMI] and NICNAS) has also provided input to the Guidance Manual for Sponsors to support the overall Sponsorship Program, and Australian companies are providing materials for testing.

Outcomes from the 5th WPMN meeting included:

- ★ A compilation of current developments within delegations and other international organisations will be referred to the OECD Chemicals Committee for declassification.
- ★ The [OECD database on environmental health and safety research](#), a project led by Australia through NICNAS, was publicly launched on 1 April 2009.
- ★ Several technical documents finalised/progressed at the meeting will increase Australia's risk assessment capability.
- ★ A report on cooperation on voluntary schemes and regulatory programmes is a valuable resource to NICNAS and other Australian regulators as we review our regulatory frameworks for their applicability to nanomaterials.
- ★ A road map for the program of work for 2009-2012 was discussed and a path forward determined.
- ★ NICNAS was re-elected a co-chair to the WPMN Bureau and remains Chair of the Steering Group for the EHS research database. ■

7 * Quantitative structure-activity relationships



Voluntary call for information on chemicals

NICNAS is seeking assistance from companies and organisations in providing information on twelve chemicals which can be utilised in the manufacture of explosives. Information on import or manufacture, quantities, uses, concentration of these chemicals in products, transport and container sizes of these chemicals are requested for 12 chemicals. NICNAS is collating the information on behalf of the Australian Government Attorney General's Department (AGD).

The notice is directed to all persons who have manufactured, imported or acquired one or more of the chemicals (whether in its pure form or as part of a mixture) listed in [Attachment 1 of the April 2009 Chemical Gazette](#) from 1 January 2007 to 31 March 2009 inclusive.

The specific information sought on the chemicals listed in Attachment 1 includes:

- quantities of each chemical imported into and/or manufactured in Australia for the calendar years 2007, 2008 and 1 January 2009 to 31 March 2009
- all uses of the chemicals
- if the chemicals are present at greater than 2% in products, the concentration of the chemicals in these products, and the total volume of the chemicals imported. The concentrations of nitric acid, perchloric acid and hydrogen peroxide should also be specified
- container sizes used for these chemicals or products containing the chemicals

Survey forms were forwarded by NICNAS to all identified end-users of these chemicals to obtain information on downstream use, with end-users of nitric acid and hydrogen peroxide surveyed first. A response template can be downloaded from the [NICNAS website](#).

The information is to be provided by **19 May 2009** and all information received will be treated as confidential and there is no intention to make any information publicly available.

All manufacturers, importers and end-users of the chemicals listed in Attachment 1 are encouraged to provide the requested information.

If you would like further information or wish to discuss any aspect of this activity please contact [Phillip Sharp](#) - phone: 02 8577 8820, fax: 02 8577 8888.

Please send the information requested above to: [Lorelie Flood](#), NICNAS Existing Chemicals. ■

Adoption of the Globally Harmonised System for Classification and Labelling of Chemicals in respect to domestic and consumer chemicals

The Office of Chemical Safety and Environmental Health (OCSEH) is currently seeking public comment on a Discussion Paper which outlines possible options for the adoption of the Globally Harmonised System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS) within the system of public health regulation of domestic and consumer chemicals, including pesticides.

Comments – initially sought by 15 May 2009 – should be directed to OCSEH and not to NICNAS.

The main purpose of the GHS is to introduce an internationally harmonised approach to classification and labelling of chemical substances which will provide the foundation for the development of national programs to ensure the safe management of chemicals during their entire life cycle. The GHS is intended to cover hazardous chemicals, either in their pure form, as dilute solutions or in mixtures. The possible adoption of the GHS is therefore likely to have implications for the chemical industry, manufacturers and distributors of chemical products, regulatory agencies (Commonwealth, State and Territory) and consumers.

The discussion paper explores the options and possible implications that might arise from the adoption of the GHS in respect to domestic and consumer chemicals (including

pesticides) within the Australian regulatory framework for the uniform scheduling of drugs and poisons. The discussion paper also provides a comparative analysis of the health hazard criteria used in the current system of poisons scheduling for domestic and consumer chemicals in Australia with those proposed in the Globally Harmonised System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS). The paper outlines the options for possibly adopting the GHS, the likely costs and benefits of those options and a technical assessment of the similarities and differences between current poisons scheduling criteria and GHS criteria which may have a bearing on the scope of any future proposal to implement the GHS.

Comments received on issues raised in the Discussion Paper will be used to further assist the Office of Chemical Safety and Environmental Health in the development within the public health sector of a more detailed draft position on the possible adoption of the GHS in Australia informed by the views of stakeholders including industry and the public. Further consultation may be undertaken.

The discussion paper, including the contact details for comments, are available from the [OCSEH website](#). ■



NICNAS Matters

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Upcoming events

AT HOME

May 2009

- 22 Community Engagement Forum (CEF 19) at NICNAS
[NICNAS Industry Training, Melbourne](#)
- 29 [NICNAS Industry Training, Sydney](#)

Nanotechnology Advisory Group meeting at NICNAS

June 2009

- 1-3 [PACIA Conference](#), Melbourne
- 11 [New LRCC Categories Workshop in Melbourne](#)

August 2009

- 15-23 [National Science Week](#)
- 17 Industry Government Consultative Committee 34 meeting at NICNAS
- 18 Community Engagement Forum 20 meeting at NICNAS

ABROAD

May 2009

- 11 – 15 SAICM International Conference on Chemicals Management, Geneva Switzerland
- 18 – 27 [WHO World Health Assembly](#), Geneva, Switzerland
- 25-29 QSAR* Workshop, Bulgaria

June 2009

- 10 – 12 OECD Joint meeting Paris France
- 29 – 1 July UN 17th Subcommittee of Experts on the GHS of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals

* Quantitative structure-activity relationship



Graeme Rayner (*above*) has joined the Compliance & Reporting Team at NICNAS. Graeme previously worked for many years with the Australian Customs Service in a variety of roles ranging across Information Management, Customer Service, Compliance and Investigations.

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INFORMATION SHEETS AND ALERTS

[Safety Information Sheet No 30, on Formaldehyde exposures from pressed wood products, for Cabinet makers and Construction workers](#)

CHEMICAL GAZETTES

[May 2009](#)

[April 2009](#)

Contacting NICNAS

Do you have an industrial chemicals issue or matter you would like to raise with us?

Please feel free to call or write to us. Our contact points are:

Freecall: 1800 638 528

Email: info@nicnas.gov.au

Post: GPO Box 58, SYDNEY, NSW 2001 AUSTRALIA

Answers (*from page 3 Chemical Quiz*)

1. Pb / Plumbum;
2. Paracelsus (1493-1541);
3. Planet Uranus;
4. Iron;
5. Minamata disease

July 2009

11 – 15 OECD WPMN-WPN Joint conference on Potential Environmental Benefits of Nanotechnology, Paris France

31 – 1 August APEC 8th Chemical Dialogue, and Regulatory Forum Singapore

October 2009

11 – 16 Stockholm Convention, Geneva, Switzerland

December 2009

9 – 11 UN 18th Subcommittee of Experts on the GHS of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals

