

# HAZMAT2007

## NICNAS REVIEW OF EXISTING CHEMICALS PROGRAM

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## Existing Chemicals Review – why?

- Faster response to problem chemicals
- Small number of chemicals assessed compared to total number of chemicals in use (38 000 on AICS)
- Need for more use of overseas assessments
- Need for more information to be publicly available
- Need for better use of resources
- More effective ways to obtain information on use, exposure etc ...



## EC Review – final report and recommendations

- All 23 recommendations accepted by the Director, NICNAS with in-principle approval from the Parliamentary Secretary
- Final report released on NICNAS website on 18 December 2006
- Recommendations include innovative elements, modified elements and consequential activities that maintain regulatory confidence



# Engagement

## *Importance in reform activities*

- Need to engage all stakeholders (industry, community, government)
- Seek views of stakeholders to feed into reform process
- Propose solutions to problems in consultation with stakeholders – ensures acceptance and compliance
- Community Engagement Forum (CEF) established from the Low Regulatory Concern Chemicals reform process
- Development of NICNAS Community Engagement Charter with the CEF



## Community consultation during the review

- Recognition of importance of community involvement in design of consultation strategy
- Representation on Review Steering Committee and technical working groups
- Participation at every stage of the review
- Adoption of CEF recommendations for community consultation
- Community engagement processes fully resourced



## Maximising opportunities for effective engagement about industrial chemicals (1)

- NICNAS is keen that representatives of civil society have maximum opportunity to participate when decisions are made and policies are developed about the safe use of chemicals.
  - Each of NICNAS's community engagements is carefully planned, and involves:
    - definition of the aim and objectives of the engagement
    - review of past examples and experiences
    - development of guiding principles, objectives and protocols
- ..... (2)



## Maximising opportunities for effective engagement about industrial chemicals (2)

*... continued from (1)*

- identification of key stakeholders
- explanation of the demographics covered by the issue
- setting of budgetary limitations
- outlining of information requirements/  
information flows and capacity-building needs
- splitting of the process into achievable and defined units
- establishment of realistic timeframes, and
- development and confirmation of review, monitoring and feedback processes.



## Supports community's *right to know* about industrial chemicals

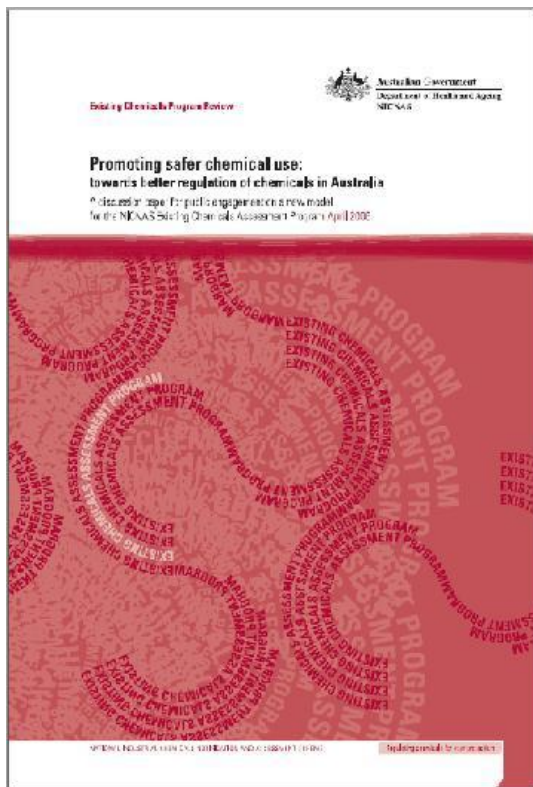
In recognising the community's *right to know* NICNAS is committed to:

- improving public access to chemical safety information
- addressing aspects of the community's *right to know* in relation to the control and use of industrial chemicals
- enabling representatives of civil society – interested persons, organisations and key stakeholders – to have effective input into policy and decision-making processes regarding the safe use of chemicals, and
- upholding the principles of community *right to know* as identified in the Bahia Declaration 2000 of the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety.





## Inviting civil society to make a difference



- Release of discussion paper: ***Promoting safer chemical use: towards better regulation of chemicals in Australia***
- Broadly distributed – inviting comment
- Community forums held across all states, capital cities and major rural centres



## Publicity – accessing the community

- Need to reach all those who are interested
- CEF provided extensive list of names and organisations, with contact details
- Invitation to disseminate information to enable others to self-nominate
- Newspaper advertisements around the country
- Radio interviews in most states and territories



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## Options for community to make input

- Attend forums – sessions day and evening
- E-mail
- Freecall telephone
- Written submissions
- Visitation by appointment
- On-line questionnaire via NICNAS webpage



## Key recommendations

### *Better engagement and communications*

- Promoting community awareness
- Enhancing NICNAS website for EC program
- Improve seminars/training programs to better identify target audiences and improve outcomes
- Clarify roles and responsibilities of the various government agencies and put on website
- Publish current awareness bulletin on EC issues, including international safety information



## Recommendations – what's new?

- Greater range of assessment products, supported by enhanced information-gathering powers
- Scoping study for nationally-coordinated system of surveillance, monitoring and post-market reporting
- More proactive approach to selection of chemicals for assessment, eg. screening of AICS
- Greater transparency in decision-making processes, eg. publication of decisions taken



## Recommendations – modifications

### *Modification to existing processes*

- Enhancement of processes for handling enquiries
- Review of selection criteria for prioritisation of chemicals for assessment
- Streamline secondary notification
- Improved relationships with other government agencies
- Development of information requirements for various assessment types
- Improved uptake of recommendations



## Implementation strategy

- Strategy developed in consultation with stakeholders
- Documented strategy – with timelines and impact on key stakeholders
- Scorecard to measure implementation
- Technical working parties for key recommendations
- Some legislative changes required
- Opportunities for further consultation during implementation of recommendations





## How long will it take?

- ***Short-term***  
eg. community awareness programs, handling of enquiries
- ***Medium-term***  
eg. development of new assessment products, screening and prioritisation processes, scoping study for adverse impacts
- ***Longer-term***  
eg. development of bilaterals with other countries, enhanced control powers



## Legislation changes

- Increased range of assessment types
- Information requirements for different assessment types
- Streamlined process for secondary notification (as for new chemicals)
- More flexibility in timelines eg. public comment phases



## Formaldehyde – PEC report

- PEC Report No. 28 released December 2006
- Full risk assessment for occupational health and safety, public health and environment
- Report contains 18 recommendations on health and environmental matters
- Report on NICNAS website at [www.nicnas.gov.au/Publications/CAR/PEC/PEC28.asp](http://www.nicnas.gov.au/Publications/CAR/PEC/PEC28.asp)



## Formaldehyde - occupational recommendations

- Hazard classification amended
  - R23/24/25 R34 R43 R49 (New R49 May cause cancer by inhalation - Category 2 carcinogen)
  - Concentration cut-off is 0.1% (was 1.0%) – therefore impact on suppliers
- Proposed occupational exposure standard – reduction to 0.3 ppm TWA and 0.6 ppm STEL (for OASCC consideration)
- Use of formaldehyde in spray and aerosol products only under controlled conditions



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