

Review of National Registration Scheme for agricultural and veterinary chemicals

Background:

- The current National Registration System for Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals was established in 1995. Under this system the Commonwealth is responsible for the controlling the manufacture, importation and supply of agricultural and veterinary chemicals in Australia, up to and including the point of retail sale. The States and Territories are responsible for controlling the use of these chemicals. The Victorian Department of Primary Industries is primarily responsible for administration of the control of use system in Victoria.
- In 2006, the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) established a ministerial taskforce to develop measures to achieve a streamlined and harmonised system of national chemicals and plastics regulation.
- The Productivity Commission (PC) was requested in July 2007, to conduct a research study to inform the work of the COAG Ministerial taskforce. The PC's final report was released on 7 August 2008, with a supplement being published on 22 January 2009. (Both reports are on the Productivity Commission's website - <http://www.pc.gov.au/projects/study/chemicalsandplastics/docs/finalreport>
<http://www.pc.gov.au/projects/study/chemicalsandplastics/docs/supplement>
- The PC made a number of recommendations, one being that the National Registration Scheme for Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals should be extended to cover regulation of agricultural and veterinary chemical use after the point of retail sale. This would include, as a minimum, a uniform approach to enforcing 'conditions of use' on product labels and the licensing and training of users.
- In late November 2008, COAG directed the Primary Industries Ministerial Council (PIMC) to consider and bring forward proposals, in the first half of 2010, for a new national regime to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the regulation of agvet chemicals. The Product Safety and Integrity Committee (PSIC) was given the task of developing the new regime.
- The Commonwealth Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) engaged consultants, in August 2009, to assist PSIC with their consideration of a new framework for the agricultural and veterinary chemical regulatory system. The consultants have prepared a discussion paper and are seeking input from stakeholders.

Sue Duncan

Chemical Standards

DPI Victoria

24 December 2009