



COMPENDIUM OF CANADA'S ENGAGEMENT IN INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL AGREEMENTS AND INSTRUMENTS

Cooperative Arrangement between the National Industrial Chemicals Notification and Assessment Scheme (NICNAS)¹ of Australia and the Department of Environment of Canada and the Department of Health of Canada Related to Enhancing Technical Cooperation and Sharing Information on Industrial Chemicals

SUBJECT CATEGORY:

Chemicals and Wastes

TYPE OF AGREEMENT / INSTRUMENT:

Bilateral

FORM:

Cooperative Arrangement

STATUS:

Signed by Canada on September 16, 2011

LEAD & PARTNER DEPARTMENTS:

Lead: Health Canada

Partner: Environment and Climate Change Canada

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

Web Links:

Not applicable

Contacts:

- [Health Canada Inquiries](#)
- [Substances Management Information Line - Chemicals Management Plan](#)

COMPENDIUM EDITION:

February 2022

PLAIN LANGUAGE SUMMARY

This Cooperative Arrangement offers a unique platform for the technical cooperation on priorities common to both Canada and Australia, and for sharing of information on industrial chemicals. This arrangement also supports Canada's ability to share best practices and lessons learned, and highlights Canada's leadership in chemicals management on the international stage. In fact, Canada has been recognized by Australia as a key source of assessment information. This bilateral arrangement also offers collaborative opportunities for sharing on the integration of new scientific methods and data in chemicals management. In turn, Canada is better equipped to address ongoing, new and emerging chemicals management issues, and to deliver on its mandate to protect the health and environment of Canadians with greater efficiency.

OBJECTIVE

The objective of this arrangement is to:

- achieve efficiencies of resources in new and existing industrial chemical reviews;
- to gain increased knowledge of each other's risk assessment and management approaches and practices;
- to facilitate exchange of operational experience to strengthen regulatory capacities on mutual interest matters; and
- to lead to greater harmonisation where appropriate with the aim of protecting human health and the environment.

¹ In 2019 Australia passed the *Industrial Chemicals Act*, which established the Australian Industrial Chemicals Introduction Scheme (AICIS) as the replacement for NICNAS. Canada and Australia are working on a renewed arrangement to reflect this change.

KEY ELEMENTS

This arrangement includes provisions for:

- exchanging of information on new and existing industrial chemicals;
- working cooperatively through joint projects of mutual interest;
- sharing of assessment and management related expertise; and
- adopting, when desirable and where possible, consistent practices and regulatory approaches.

EXPECTED RESULTS

This arrangement is of benefit to both industry and governments:

- Governments - reduced duplication and increased efficiencies of activities related to assessments, research, and scientific approaches ;
- Industry - shorter product to market times and greater comparability between regulatory schemes in both economies.

CANADA'S INVOLVEMENT

This arrangement is important to Canada because it:

- Advances delivery of domestic mandate through work and information sharing leading to increased efficiencies, reduced resources and avoiding duplication;
- Supports global action on issues and substances of global concern;

- Shares the science base leading to reduced barriers to trade.

The *Canadian Environmental Protection Act (CEPA)* provides general authority for action.

RESULTS / PROGRESS

Activities

Implementation of this arrangement will be achieved through a cooperative work program, reviewed on an as-needed basis. The work program addresses six specific areas of cooperation as outlined below:

- New Chemicals issues;
- Risk assessment methodologies;
- Risk Assessment and Risk Management issues, persistent, bio accumulative, and toxic (PBT) chemicals;
- High-level Program information/knowledge Exchange;
- Predictive toxicology;
- Nanomaterials.

Results

Australian legislation has recognized Canada as a "Competent Authority" which allows sharing of Canadian new substances assessments with Australia. The company notifying in Australia realizes significant benefit in reduced notification obligations and a reduced notification fee.

Australia serves as a peer-reviewer for Canadian assessment reports on new and existing industrial chemicals, as needed.