



Australian Government

Australian Government response to the
Joint Standing Committee on Treaties Report 197:

Minamata Convention on Mercury

NOVEMBER 2021

Response

The Government thanks the Committee for its consideration of the Minamata Convention on Mercury and provides the following response to the Committee's recommendations:

Recommendation 2

The Committee supports the Minamata Convention on Mercury and recommends that binding treaty action be taken.

Response:

The Government welcomes the Committee's agreement that binding treaty action be taken in relation to the Minamata Convention and commits to move swiftly to implement this recommendation.

Recommendation 3

The Committee recommends the Government reassess the need to seek an exemption to allow for the continued importation of High Pressure Mercury Vapour (HPMV) lamps into Australia, considering such an exemption to be reputationally damaging and of limited practical benefit.

Response:

The Government accepts this recommendation.

Following publication of JSCOT Report 197, the Australian Government further consulted the streetlighting sector regarding the implications of phasing out HPMV lamps.

Feedback from the sector indicated that while the proposed exemption would assist some providers, there is heightened awareness across the sector of the need to complete the transition to other kinds of streetlights as soon as possible. This is driven both by an understanding of the need to prepare for Australia's impending ratification of the Minamata Convention, and by the rapidly diminishing global supplies of HPMV lamps (due to the effectiveness of the Convention).

Noting industry feedback that phase out of HPMV lamp use in the short term is considered achievable, the Government will not pursue an exemption for the continued importation of HPMV lamps.

The Government will continue to work with affected stakeholders to ensure they are aware of the timing and implications of ratification and minimise potential impacts to service provision.