



Australian Government
**Australian Pesticides and
Veterinary Medicines Authority**

Ref: A1819531

30 June 2020

Ms Jeanette Radcliffe
Committee Secretary
Standing Committee on Community Affairs
References Committee
By email: community.affairs.sen@aph.gov.au

Dear Ms Radcliffe

INQUIRY INTO POSSIBLE CANCER CLUSTER ON THE BELLARINE PENINSULA, VICTORIA

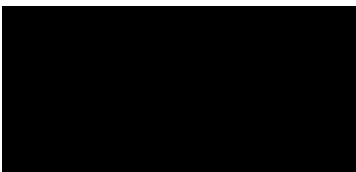
Thank you for your letter of 22 June 2020 inviting the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) to respond to 'Discovery 3227's' submission to the Senate Standing Committee on Community Affairs, References Committee's inquiry into investigations into a possible cancer cluster on the Bellarine Peninsula, Victoria.

Please find enclosed the APVMA's submission, which outlines the APVMA's role, particularly in relation to control of use of agricultural and veterinary chemicals, and provides the status of certain chemicals mentioned in Discovery 3227's submission.

I consent to the publication of this letter and the enclosure.

Please contact me if you require anything further.

Yours sincerely



Dr Chris Parker
Chief Executive Officer
Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority

Tel: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

Enclosure

1 – APVMA submission to the Standing Committee on Community Affairs, References Committee's inquiry into a possible cancer cluster on the Bellarine Peninsula, Victoria



Australian Government
**Australian Pesticides and
Veterinary Medicines Authority**



**Submission to the
Standing Committee on Community Affairs
References Committee**

Inquiry into investigations into a possible cancer cluster on the Bellarine
Peninsula in Victoria

June 2020

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This publication is available from the [APVMA website](#).

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1 ROLE OF THE APVMA

1.1 Purpose

The Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) is the independent statutory authority responsible for assessment, registration and regulation of agricultural and veterinary (agvet) chemicals in Australia. Agvet chemical products must be evaluated and registered by the APVMA before they can be legally sold, supplied or used in Australia.

The APVMA takes a systematic, scientific, evidence-based approach to decision-making and operations. We evaluate the safety and performance of chemicals intended for sale in Australia to protect the health and safety of people, animals, crops and the environment. Registered products must not jeopardise Australia's trade with other countries.

The APVMA also licenses and audits veterinary medicine manufacturers, manages an Adverse Experience Reporting Program to ensure early detection of unforeseen problems with registered products, monitors the market for compliance and reviews and take regulatory action on products within the scheme when required.

1.2 Legislation

The constitutional responsibility for the regulation of agvet chemicals resides with Australia's state and territory governments. However, the Commonwealth and the state and territory governments have signed an intergovernmental agreement (IGA) to establish the National Registration Scheme for Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals (NRS). Under the IGA, the states and territories have handed powers to the Commonwealth under their legislation for regulating agvet chemicals up to the point of sale. The states and territories have retained responsibility for controlling the use of relevant chemicals.

The *Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals (Administration) Act 1992* (Administration Act) established the NRS. The Administration Act also established the National Registration Authority for Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals (NRA) on 15 June 1993, to manage the Australian Government's regulatory responsibilities under the NRS.

The Administration Act amended the *Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals Act 1988* to transfer the powers and functions of the outgoing Australian Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals Council to the NRA, now known as the APVMA.

The *Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals Code Act 1994* gave operational effect to the NRS in 1995, and details the provisions for the registration of products and provides the APVMA with its powers.

1.3 Independence

The APVMA is an independent statutory authority, and a corporate Commonwealth entity under the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*. A corporate Commonwealth entity is a corporate body that is legally separate from the Commonwealth.

2 CONTROL OF USE OF AGVET CHEMICALS

The APVMA is responsible for regulating agvet chemicals up to—and including—the point of retail sale.

State and territory governments are responsible for controlling the use of pesticides and veterinary medicines beyond the point of retail sale.

The product registration process includes the scientific assessment of potential risks to people's health associated with the use of chemicals. The APVMA reviews applicants' proposed safety and use directions as part of the relevant particulars of a product label assessment. The APVMA will approve the safety and use directions if they are deemed to effectively minimise the user's risk of exposure to the chemical.

Once registered chemical products are sold or supplied to an end-user, use of the product is regulated by state and territory governments through legislative initiatives, codes of practice manuals, and/or standard operating procedures.

3 APVMA CHEMICAL RECONSIDERATION (REVIEW)

New scientific information may emerge after an active constituent has been approved or a product has been registered, which suggests a change in the risks to human health, the environment, animal or crop safety, or trade. The Chemical Review program has been active since the introduction of the NRS in 1995.

On occasion, credible new scientific information may be generated after a product has been registered that suggests the existence of previously unknown risks to human health, animal or crop safety, the environment or trade, or that suggests product ineffectiveness.

The reconsideration process incorporates legislative, administrative and scientific elements that contribute to the final decision to affirm, vary, suspend or cancel an approval or registration.

3.1 Chemicals named in submission from 'Discovery 3227'

Table 1 summarises the APVMA status of temephos, malathion, bioresmethrin and fenthion. More information about current and prior registrations and approvals is available on the [Public Chemical Registration Information System Search](#) (PubCRIS).

Table 1: Chemicals named in submission from 'Discovery 3227'

Chemical
<p>Temephos</p> <p>Temephos is a non-systemic organophosphorus insecticide and acaricide used to control ectoparasites on food-producing animals and mosquito larvae in waterways.</p> <p>Temephos is currently registered for supply/use in a number of sheep dip products, and mosquito larvicides.</p> <p>The APVMA concluded a reconsideration of temephos in 2008. Further information is available on the APVMA website.</p>
<p>Malathion (maldison)</p> <p>Malathion is an organophosphorus insecticide used to control a wide range of insect pests of agricultural crops and animals. It is also used for outdoor home use. It is a broad-spectrum, non-systemic insecticide and acaricide with contact, stomach and respiratory action.</p> <p>Malathion is currently registered for supply/use in a number of insecticide and parasiticide products.</p> <p>The APVMA is currently reconsidering the approval of malathion. Further information is available on the APVMA website.</p>
<p>Bioresmethrin</p> <p>Bioresmethrin is a synthetic pyrethroid insecticide that was formerly used as a grain protectant but is now only registered in Australia for use in the home and garden as an insecticide.</p> <p>Bioresmethrin is currently registered for use/supply in a number of insecticide products.</p> <p>The APVMA discontinued a reconsideration of bioresmethrin in 2003. Further information is available on the APVMA website.</p>

Chemical

Fenthion

Fenthion is a broad-spectrum organophosphorus insecticide. Fenthion was used to control insect pests in agricultural, commercial and domestic situations and external parasites on cattle. Fenthion was also used to control pest birds in and around buildings.

The APVMA concluded a reconsideration of fenthion in 2015, after which the chemical was no longer registered for supply or use in Australia. Further information is available on the [APVMA website](#).
