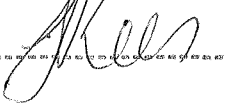


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Submission 2  
TT 11 September 2007

**Questions Taken on Notice Regarding Withdrawal of Australia's exemption for the use of mirex under Article 4 of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants**

Question 1 – How long has Australia been using mirex for controlling giant termites?

Historical registration of the use of mirex has been difficult to determine, because it pre-dates the creation of the National Registration Scheme in 1993 administered by the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA). However, advice received from the Northern Territory government is that mirex was in use from sometime in the early 1980s, with Mirant provisionally registered for use in 1989. We understand the historical usage in Western Australia would have had approximately the same timeframe.

Question 2 – What technology will be used to destroy the stockpile of mirex?

As advised in the NIA and at the JSCOT hearing on 17 September 2007, the stockpile of mirex will be destroyed at a specialist facility in Brisbane called BCD Technologies. BCD will utilise plasma arc technology to destroy the stockpile. BCD operates under relevant Queensland licensing arrangements.

In a brief technical description, the technology uses a liquid or gaseous waste stream together with argon injected directly into a plasma arc, which provides plasma/waste mixing temperatures in excess of 3000°C. At these temperatures organic material is pyrolysed – that is, the organics in the waste dissociate into elemental ions and atoms and recombine in the cooler area of the reaction chamber prior to a rapid, alkaline quench to form simple molecules. The resulting end products include gases consisting of argon, carbon dioxide and water vapour and an aqueous solution of inorganic sodium salts. Further treatment of the end product is then not required. This technology is considered to be environmentally sound, and is used to safely treat a wide range of chemical wastes.

Question 3 – How was the mirex transported to BCD Technologies in Brisbane?

Road transport was used for the transfer from the Northern Territory to Brisbane.