

**Senate Community Affairs Committee**

**ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**HEALTH PORTFOLIO**

**Supplementary Budget Estimates 2014 - 2015, 22 October 2014**

**Ref No:** SQ14-001125

**OUTCOME:** 7 - Health Infrastructure, Regulation, Safety and Quality

**Topic:** Cosmetics Testing

**Type of Question:** Written Question on Notice

**Senator:** Rhiannon, Lee

**Question:**

In Feb 2013 I was provided advice from NICNAS (Question E13-018) that: "For health effects which have validated non-animal tests, such as skin and eye irritation, NICNAS currently accepts this information in lieu of animal testing results." In view of this, what plans are in place to update the relevant Schedule/s of the Industrial Chemicals Notification Act to confirm that in-vitro data are acceptable for the assessment of skin and eye irritation and that in-vitro tests must be used instead of animal test methods to assess these endpoints if new testing is carried out?

**Answer:**

The relevant schedule to the *Industrial Chemicals (Notification and Assessment) Act 1989* does not specify a requirement for animal tests for the health endpoints of skin and eye irritation, and the guidance provided on the National Industrial Chemicals Notification and Assessment Scheme (NICNAS) website confirms the acceptance of validated in vitro tests.

The NICNAS guidance refers notifiers to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) test guidelines for eye and skin irritation, which include a requirement to consider all other available data before conducting the animal test. For example, the OECD TG 405 for acute eye irritation/corrosion includes the following:

*In the interest of both sound science and animal welfare, in vivo testing should not be considered until all available data relevant to the potential eye corrosivity/irritation of the substance have been evaluated in a weight-of-the-evidence analysis. Such data include evidence from existing studies in humans and/or laboratory animals, evidence of eye corrosivity/irritation of one or more structurally related substances or mixtures of such substances, data demonstrating high acidity or alkalinity of the substance, and results from validated and accepted in vitro or ex vivo tests for skin corrosion and eye corrosion/irritation.*