

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Supplementary Budget Estimates 2014 - 2015, 22 October 2014

Ref No: SQ14-001300

OUTCOME: 1 – Population Health

Topic: Nanotechnology Testing Methodology

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Senator: Siewert, Rachel

Question:

In a previous question SQ14-000573, FSANZ noted that “there is no standard methodology for testing nanomaterials in food” and that the process for determining the presence and quantity of nanomaterials in food is “highly complex.”

- a) What effect does this have on the capacity of FSANZ to track nanomaterials through the food chain?
- b) What effect does this have in the event that health effects are detected and nanomaterials are suspected?

Answer:

- a) Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) does not have analytical laboratories. If an analytical survey to measure a specific nanoscale material in food were to be commissioned by FSANZ, the work would be contracted to a commercial analytical testing laboratory.
- b) FSANZ and other international food regulatory agencies have not identified any health effect known to be associated with new or novel nanoscale materials, following oral ingestion in foods.