

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Additional Estimates 2013 - 2014, 26 February 2014

Ref No: SQ14-000265

OUTCOME: 1 Population Health

Topic: Assessment of Chemicals Used in Hydraulic Fracturing.

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Senator: McLucas

Question:

How many hydraulic fracturing chemicals have been assessed as part of the prioritised group of chemicals? When will the remaining chemicals likely to be assessed and finalised? How many hydraulic fracturing chemicals remain to be assessed?

Answer:

The National Industrial Chemicals Notification and Assessment Scheme (NICNAS) is currently participating in a project, initiated in July 2012, to examine human health and environmental risks from chemicals used in drilling and hydraulic fracturing for coal seam gas extraction. This project, funded by the Department of the Environment, is a collaboration between NICNAS, the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation, and the Department of the Environment, with Geoscience Australia in an advisory role.

Assessment of the human health and environmental risks of these chemicals is about to commence, and is expected to be completed in 2014.