

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Budget Estimates 2012-2013, 31 May 2012

Question: E12-037

OUTCOME 1: Population Health

Topic: NICNAS – Industry dissatisfaction – Cost to industry

Type of Question: Hansard Page 89, 31 May 2012

Number of pages: 1

Senator: Senator Smith

Question:

- a) Why did NICNAS commence advertising for several new positions in early April this year, when the Better Regulation Ministerial Partnership review of the agency was still underway?
- b) Was there any concern or suggestion that this might pre-empt the outcomes of the review by government?

Answer:

Please refer to Hansard Page 89 with Dr Healy's response. The National Industrial Chemicals Notification & Assessment Scheme (NICNAS) wishes to add further comments as follows:

- a) NICNAS advertised for assessment staff, as NICNAS has an ongoing need to conduct chemical assessments as part of the current statutory function. From 1 July 2012 NICNAS will be undertaking a new program which will be an acceleration of the assessment and prioritisation of existing chemicals on the Australian Inventory of Chemical Substances. The majority of the staff that are expected to be recruited through the recent process will be working on the accelerated assessment and prioritisation of existing chemicals.
- b) No. The Government had decided separately, and announced on 6 August 2011 at the same time the review was also announced, that this accelerated assessment and prioritisation program would be implemented.