

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY QUESTION ON NOTICE

Department of Health, Disability and Ageing

Select Committee on PFAS (per and polyfluoroalkyl substances)

Inquiry into the extent, regulation and management of PFAS

5 September 2025

PDR Number: IQ25-000114

Monitoring now of firefighters given the exposure to PFAS

Spoken

Senator: Ross Cadell

Question:

Mr Bouwhuis: There is a lot of monitoring now of firefighters given the exposure to PFAS, so you would expect that, if there were issues with the oncoming uses of other types of chemicals, they would be picked up in those studies as well. Certainly, no-one puts out a product that they think is unsafe. People are required to meet—

Senator CADELL: Yes—best endeavours, though. I remember building chook houses out of asbestos because it was safe and easy, and PFAS was considered safe and easy. I want to make sure we're not creating the same mistake with this stuff. So there's nothing specific, but you are monitoring?

Mr Singh: Not that I'm aware of.

Mr Bouwhuis: I think we're better taking it on notice

Answer:

- Australian regulators assess risks, monitor scientific literature and cooperate with each other and other relevant regulators nationally and internationally to maintain an up-to-date understanding of the status of research on harmful chemicals.
- These regulators include the Australian Industrial Chemicals Introduction Scheme, which regulates the importation and manufacture (introduction) of industrial chemicals in Australia. Their assessment process requires companies to submit safety data as an element of their application for registration of a chemical for use in Australia.