

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Budget Estimates 2017–2018, 29 & 30 May 2017

Ref No: SQ17-000730

OUTCOME: 2 – Health Access and Support Services

Topic: Nanomaterials in food

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Senator: Janet Rice

Question:

In its January 2017 online response to Fairfax media FSANZ stated it would review a peer-reviewed French study on titanium dioxide. FSANZ has reviewed the study and concluded that its design has a number of “limitations which restrict its relevance to humans.”

(<http://www.foodstandards.gov.au/consumer/foodtech/nanotech/Pages/Sydney-Morning-Herald-nanotechnology-response.aspx>)

- (a) Could you outline these limitations and the scientific evidence that they limit the relevance of the study to humans?
- (b) Can you table the analysis that supports the findings of FSANZ’s review?

Answer:

- (a) FSANZ concluded that the main limitations of the French study that restricts its relevance to humans were related to general study design considerations such as the appropriateness of the test material and method of administration, and the biological significance of reported changes in immune cell numbers and aberrant crypt foci.

These limitations have also been explicitly recognised by ANSES which has concluded that the existing risk assessment undertaken by EFSA in 2016 does not need to be reconsidered.

- (b) FSANZ intends to publish more details of the main conclusions of our review on our website.