

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Budget Estimates 2017 - 2018, 29 & 30 May 2017

Ref No: SQ17-000825

OUTCOME: 5 - Regulation, Safety and Protection

Topic: Seed Production Technology

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Senator: Rice, Janet

Question:

A review by the Austrian Environmental Agency concluded that “Seed production technology can result in undetected secondary insertions of GM materials that may be retained during segregation; changes to the expression of the target genes which may be preserved in subsequent generations; and unintentional changes to the regulation of other genes.” *

a) Does the OGTR disagree with this analysis?

b) If yes, on what basis?

c) If no, does the OGTR think it is appropriate that organisms produced using this technique not be regulated as GMOs given these potential unintended effects?

* Eckerstorfer, M., Miklau, M. & Gaugitsch, H. (2014) New plant breeding techniques: risks associated with their application, Austrian Environment Agency, pp. 48-49,

http://www.ekah.admin.ch/fileadmin/ekah-dateien/New_Plant_Breeding_Techniques_UBA_Vienna_2014_2.pdf

Answer:

The referenced report does not contain the statement as quoted.

The Gene Technology Regulator has not expressed a view in relation to the conclusions of the report by the Austrian Environmental Agency and the material on which these conclusions are based.

It is the Gene Technology Regulator’s view that subject to paragraphs (d) and (e) of the definition of ‘genetically modified organism’ in section 10 of the *Gene Technology Act 2000*, organisms that inherit traits that occurred because of gene technology, including traits related to secondary insertions, are GMOs and dealings with these GMOs are subject to regulation under the *Gene Technology Act 2000*.