

Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE Additional Estimates 2015 - 2016

Agency - Safe Work Australia

Department of Employment Question No. EMSQ16-000201

Senator Leyonhjelm provided in writing.

Question

SWA - GHS hazard and precautionary statements on APVMA-approved labels

1. In the Senate Estimates hearing of 22 October, SWA confirmed that there weren't any specific instances where the lack of GHS hazard and precautionary statements on APVMA-approved labels directly led to a worker health and safety incident [Hansard reference: 22 Oct pg. 49-50]. Can SWA confirm that no worker incident prompted its regulation imposing additional labelling on AgVet chemicals?

Answer

In their response to the 2006 Consultation Regulatory Impact Statement for the hazardous chemicals framework, WorkCover NSW highlighted several agricultural chemical incidents where APVMA approved labels were identified as not communicating the hazard which resulted in the incident, including a fatality caused by the use of carbon disulphide as a grain fumigant. The APVMA label contained no information about the flammability of this chemical.

A recent incident involving a herbicide called 'Hotshot' has also highlighted inadequate labelling. The health hazards which resulted in the hospitalisation of a bystander were not communicated on the APVMA label. These hazards would have been communicated on a GHS label.