

Industry welcomes release of NICNAS Discussion Paper and hopes it leads to a rebalanced regulatory scheme that supports innovation and lightens the load for low-risk products

Sydney, Thursday 31 May 2012. Accord – the national hygiene, cosmetic and specialty products industry body – welcomes the Government’s release today of the Discussion Paper for the Review of the National Industrial Chemicals Notification and Assessment Scheme (NICNAS).

“As an industry that relies heavily on innovation to meet evolving consumer and environmental needs, it is essential Australian regulation facilitates the ready introduction of new ingredients, products and technologies,” Accord Executive Director Bronwyn Capanna said.

“Over the last few years it has been the experience of businesses in our sector that NICNAS regulation and operations have been stifling innovation and product development.

“It is in no one’s interest for Australia to become an innovation backwater, so the Government’s announcement in September last year of a wide-ranging review of NICNAS was both timely and welcome.

“While we are yet to fully consider the details and impacts of the Discussion Paper’s options, we note Minister Bradbury’s comments that the reforms will enhance competitiveness, reduce costs to business and improve the overall efficiency of the system.”

“We are also pleased to note Parliamentary Secretary King’s comments that the reforms seek to extend a lighter touch to low-risk chemicals.

“This is an area where Australia has fallen behind international best practice in advanced economies like the EU, Canada, the USA and even New Zealand.

“It is good news that the Government is seeking to reduce costs to business and improve competitiveness. There is strong support within industry for streamlining of the existing regulatory system.

“Accord looks forward to commenting on the Discussion Paper proposals in detail.

“This focus on NICNAS arrangements will hopefully extend to the agency’s day-to-day operations, which businesses report as having become excessively bureaucratic and unresponsive.

“Hopefully this important review will also build momentum for the entire suite of productivity enhancing reforms promised for our sector,” Ms Capanna said

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