

Media Statement

Sunscreen, Science & Public Confidence: Accord Australasia responds to SPF testing coverage

24 June 2025. Sydney, Australia. In response to recent media coverage questioning sunscreen SPF claims, Accord Australasia, the peak national body representing the sunscreen and personal care industry, has reaffirmed the strong regulatory framework governing sunscreens in Australia and the industry's ongoing commitment to public health.

'Australians take sun protection seriously, and rightly so,' said Damian Mitsch, Executive Director of Accord Australasia. 'With some of the highest UV levels in the world, sunscreen is an essential part of our collective health defence. Consumers deserve confidence in the quality, safety and effectiveness of the products they rely on.'

Sunscreens in Australia: Among the most regulated globally

All primary sunscreens supplied in Australia are classified as therapeutic goods and are regulated by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA). This means:

- Products must undergo validated SPF testing to the Australian/New Zealand Standard (AS/NZS 2604), aligned with international ISO methods
- Sponsors (the legal entity responsible for the product) must retain robust, scientific evidence supporting all claims
- There are clear regulatory consequences for non-compliance, including fines, recalls and market withdrawal

'This is one of the most comprehensive regulatory systems in the world,' Mr Mitsch said. 'Consumers can have strong confidence that Australian sunscreens are tested, proven and continually monitored for performance.'

SPF testing: a complex scientific process

The CHOICE article referenced in vivo SPF testing conducted by a third-party laboratory. While internationally recognised, this method is well known for its inherent variability. Results can be affected by factors such as:

- Differences in skin types and UV response
- Subjective assessment of skin redness
- Variability in lighting and calibration conditions

Further, SPF outcomes may also be influenced by real-world factors prior to testing, such as decanting products into new containers, extended air exposure, temperature changes during transport, or storage conditions. These can all impact the stability of delicate formulations, particularly those relying on emulsions or stabilised UV filters.

'Testing sunscreen is an imprecise science with many variables,' said Mr Mitsch. 'That's why the TGA requires testing to Australian Standards to validate SPF claims.'

Industry commitment to consumer safety

Sunscreen brands and sponsors operating in Australia are committed to product safety, compliance and public trust. Accord members:

- Invest in high-quality formulation and testing
- Work with experienced testing laboratories
- Maintain full technical documentation to support SPF

‘These companies are deeply committed to consumer safety and product integrity,’ Mr Mitsch added. ‘They operate under strict regulatory obligations and take those responsibilities very seriously.’

Supporting informed, sun-safe choices

‘Sunscreen remains an essential public health tool,’ said Mr Mitsch. ‘When used properly, it plays a critical role in reducing the risk of skin cancer—one of Australia’s most preventable diseases.’

Accord encourages Australians to:

- Use SPF products daily
- Reapply regularly, especially after swimming or sweating
- Combine sunscreen with other protective measures such as hats, shade and sunglasses

About Accord Australasia

Accord Australasia is the peak national industry association representing manufacturers and sponsors of personal care, cosmetic, hygiene and specialty products, including primary sunscreens. The association works with regulators, stakeholders and the public to support science-based policy, product safety and consumer confidence.

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For media inquiries—Dr Jennifer Semple, 0433 171 796, jsemple@accord.asn.au