



24 August 2023

The Hon Ged Kearney MP
Assistant Minister for Health and Aged Care
PO Box 6022
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Assistant Minister

Thank you for your correspondence of 20 July 2023 outlining your expectations of how the Australian Industrial Chemicals Introduction Scheme (AICIS) will achieve its regulatory objectives, carry out its regulatory functions, and exercise its powers. I appreciate your acknowledgement of my independence as Executive Director of AICIS and the responsibility conferred on me by the *Industrial Chemicals Act 2019* (IC Act) to aid in the protection of Australians and their environment from the harmful effects of industrial chemicals.

I am pleased to provide you with this Statement of Intent, which sets out how I will meet the expectations you have outlined.

FUNCTION AND PURPOSE

AICIS is a relatively new scheme established by the IC Act which commenced 1 July 2020. I will lead AICIS to achieve the objects of the IC Act, and the Government's relevant policy priorities and objectives. Consistent with the policy intent and legal framework set out in the IC Act, AICIS is a risk-proportionate regulatory scheme that aids in the protection of the Australian people and their environment, while promoting safer innovation by encouraging the introduction of lower risk chemicals.

PRIORITIES AND OBJECTIVES

Under my direction, AICIS will achieve its regulatory objectives through risk-proportionate chemical assessments and evaluations, compliance monitoring and enforcement. In administering the scheme, AICIS staff will continue to work collaboratively within the Commonwealth Health portfolio, as well as with other Commonwealth, state, territory, industry and community stakeholders.

Regulatory Reform Agenda

I acknowledge the Government's plan to boost Australia's productivity and lower the cost of living for Australians through its Regulatory Reform Agenda. Under my direction, AICIS will ensure a fit for purpose regulatory environment by:

- Actively working to minimise duplication and streamline processes through appropriate international harmonisation. I and my staff will maintain our strong, cooperative relationships with international regulators and government agencies through bilateral and multilateral mechanisms.
- Exercising regulator best practice in our decision-making, policies, processes and communications, to minimise regulatory burden and compliance costs, and maximise transparency of operations.
- Applying the *Resource Management Guide 128 Regulator Performance* to our regulatory functions to assess our performance and engagement with stakeholders.

- Supporting greater transparency and accountability of regulator performance, by incorporating regulator performance reporting into our processes, as required by *Resource Management Guide 128 Regulator Performance* under the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act) and *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014*.
- Administering cost recovery consistent with the Australian Government Charging Framework.

Principles of regulator best practice

Under my direction, AICIS will exercise its functions and powers in accordance with the following three principles of regulator best practice:

1. Continuous improvement and building trust:

We will:

- use qualitative and quantitative analysis tools for assessing and reporting on performance, and to support continuous improvement.
- promote a work culture that builds public confidence in our work and trust in government decision-making.

2. Risk-based and data-driven:

We will:

- actively understand, engage with and effectively mitigate strategic risks to successfully manage our regulatory functions without unnecessarily impeding the operations of regulated entities.
- use data sources that meet relevant data assurance standards for assessing and reporting on the quality of statistical information.

3. Collaboration and engagement:

We will:

- seek opportunities to engage and consult genuinely with stakeholders.
- be receptive to feedback and diverse stakeholder views.
- seek to increase transparency in decision-making processes.
- provide up-to-date, clear and accessible guidance and information to assist regulated entities with compliance.
- maintain productive working relationships with relevant jurisdictional and Commonwealth regulators and international bodies.

These principles of regulator best practice have informed and supported our organisational vision: *“AICIS is a trusted regulator that encourages safe and sustainable use of industrial chemicals.”*

They will each guide our organisational strategies in the achievement of our Vision:



Innovation and regulatory change

AICIS will continue to monitor the environment in which it operates to ensure that our regulatory approaches keep pace with changes in technology, industry practices, international regulation, and community expectations. AICIS will keep up to date with alternative test methodologies and their appropriateness for determining risks to human health and the environment, including through our engagement with international organisations and government agencies.

Under my direction, AICIS will, as the Scheme matures, regularly review and, where necessary, adjust its regulatory approach to respond appropriately to changing social, technological and international regulatory environment and commercial context in which the scheme operates. AICIS will continue to explore opportunities to streamline chemical introducer obligations while maintaining critical safeguards to protect human health and the environment.

Relationship with Minister and portfolio

I acknowledge that I am primarily accountable to you as the responsible portfolio Minister. AICIS will assist you and the Government to respond promptly to issues that may arise in relation to industrial chemicals regulation. I undertake to provide accurate and timely advice on significant issues related to the regulatory functions of AICIS. This will include matters for which the Government is likely to be accountable in Parliament, as well as important operational or budgetary issues.

Under my direction, AICIS staff will continue to maintain a close working relationship with other relevant areas within the Department of Health and Aged Care. I will consult with you, as the responsible Minister and other areas of the Department as specific initiatives and strategies are prepared, considered and where necessary, agreed by Government.

Relationship with Secretary of the Department

I acknowledge my role to support the Secretary of the Department in meeting their obligations with regards to the PGPA Act. As required under the IC Act, a report on the operation of AICIS will be included in the annual report prepared by the Secretary of the Department of Health and Aged Care and given to the Minister for Health under section 46 of the PGPA Act. Copies of this report will be provided to you as the Minister responsible for the IC Act, as well as to the Minister for Finance. I will report to the Deputy Secretary, Health Product Regulation Group on delegated administrative matters and maintain an association with the Secretary of the Department.

Your Statement of Expectations and my response through this Statement of Intent will be published on the AICIS website.

Yours sincerely



Mr Graeme Barden
Executive Director
Australian Industrial Chemicals Introduction Scheme (AICIS)

cc: The Hon Mark Butler MP, Minister for Health and Aged Care