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Oceania

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Australia

The regulation of industrial chemicals in Australia is governed by the Industrial Chemicals Act 2019 (IC Act), which came into force on March 12, 2019. This Act established the Australian Industrial Chemicals Introduction Scheme (AICIS) and its Executive Director and provides the regulatory framework for the importation and manufacture (referred to as "introduction") of industrial chemicals into the country. The IC Act is further supported by the Industrial Chemicals (General) Rules and the Industrial Chemicals Categorisation Guidelines, which provide technical and operational details for compliance. The AICIS, which replaced the National Industrial Chemicals Notification and Assessment Scheme (NICNAS) on July 1, 2020, operates under the Office of Chemical Safety (OCS) within the Department of Health and Aged Care. Its primary objective is to protect human health and the environment by regulating, assessing, and managing the risks associated with the introduction of industrial chemicals.

At the national level, chemicals are regulated according to their intended use, with four main authorities overseeing different sectors. The AICIS regulates industrial chemicals, including those found in paints, adhesives, inks, plastics, soaps, and cosmetics. The Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (AVPMA) regulates agricultural and veterinary chemicals, such as pesticides, insect repellents, and veterinary medicines. The Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) is responsible for medicinal and therapeutic products, including skin-whitening lotions, complementary medicines, and blood products. Finally, Food Standards Australia and New Zealand (FSANZ) regulates food ingredients and additives, ensuring the safety of processing aids, colourings, vitamins, and minerals. These regulatory bodies work together to ensure that chemicals introduced into Australia meet safety, health, and environmental standards.

Key News from 2024

Australia and New Zealand Adopt Updated Sunscreen Standard

On April 11, 2024, the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) announced the adoption of the new Australian/New Zealand Sunscreen Standard: AS/NZS 2604:2021. The update aims to align sunscreen regulations in both countries, ensuring higher standards of safety and efficacy for consumers. Key changes include improved UV protection, stricter testing requirements, updated labelling guidelines, and regulatory harmonization to facilitate smoother cross-border trade. Transitional arrangements are in place, with all new sunscreen products registered after July 1, 2024, being required to comply with the new standard. Existing products have been granted transition periods to meet the updated requirements. These changes are expected to improve public health by ensuring that only high quality sunscreen products are available on the market. Read more [here](#).

AICIS Implements New Categorisation, Reporting, and Record-Keeping Requirements

Effective April 24, 2024, the Australian Industrial Chemicals Introduction Scheme (AICIS) implemented new categorization, reporting, and record-keeping requirements. These updates are designed to streamline compliance processes and enhance regulatory oversight. Introducers of industrial chemicals must now ensure adherence to the revised requirements in order to remain in compliance. The changes reflect the AICIS's ongoing efforts to improve chemical regulation in Australia. Read more [here](#).

Key News from 2024

AICIS Releases Version 3 of Industrial Chemicals Categorisation Guidelines

On September 24, 2024, the Australian Industrial Chemicals Introduction Scheme (AICIS) released Version 3 of its Industrial Chemicals Categorisation Guidelines. The major update includes a significantly expanded list of high hazard chemicals, adding nearly 600 unique entries. The revised list consolidates chemicals recognized as highly hazardous by trusted national and international bodies, such as the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) and Japan's Chemical Substances Control Law (CSCL). This expansion is designed to assist introducers in accurately categorizing chemicals as exempted, reported, or assessed, ensuring compliance with current hazard assessment standards and aligning with recent regulatory changes. Read more [here](#).

Australia Updates IChEMS Register with New Substances and Amendments

On December 5, 2024, Australia updated the Industrial Chemicals Environmental Management Standard (IChEMS) Register, with changes taking effect on July 1, 2025. Five substances, including polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), hexachlorobenzene, and polychlorinated terphenyls (PCTs), were added to Schedule 7 (banned use), while certain surfactants were added to Schedule 3 (controlled use). Amendments were also made to existing listings, including perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and pentachlorobenzene. These updates aim to strengthen environmental protection and align with global chemical management standards. Read more [here](#).

New Zealand

The regulation of chemicals in New Zealand is governed by the Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act (HSNO), which was enacted in 1996. Since its implementation, 22 regulations have been published covering various categories of chemicals, including industrial chemicals, detergents, cosmetics, agrochemicals, food additives, veterinary medicines, and bulk medicines. The Ministry for the Environment (MfE) oversees the New Organisms aspect of the HSNO Act, while the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) is responsible for the management of hazardous substances. In addition, WorkSafe New Zealand manages hazardous substances in the workplace to ensure safety and compliance.

New Zealand maintains a chemical inventory known as the New Zealand Inventory of Chemicals (NZIoC), which contains a variety of substances, including hazardous and non-hazardous chemicals known to be present in the country. While the NZIoC is not a list of approvals, it does provide information on whether a chemical falls under a Group Standard, which is a regulatory approval for substances of similar nature, hazard, or use. All Group Standards require compliance with EPA Notices. Hazardous chemicals in New Zealand are defined based on intrinsic properties such as explosiveness, flammability, oxidation capacity, corrosiveness, toxicity, and ecotoxicity. Substances listed in the NZIoC receive specific HSNO approval codes or are assigned to Group Standard approvals for use in chemical products. However, impurities, by-products, and certain manufactured articles are not included in the inventory and do not require notification under the HSNO Act.

Key News from 2024

New Zealand Bans PFAS in Cosmetics Effective December 31, 2026

On January 30, 2024, the New Zealand Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) announced a ban on the use of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in cosmetic products, effective December 31, 2026. The decision is part of a comprehensive update to the Cosmetic Products Group Standard, which aims to align regulations with global developments and enhance consumer safety. EPA has also strengthened regulations to cover non-hazardous cosmetic products that contain hazardous ingredients to ensure effective enforcement of banned and restricted substance regulations. Read more [here](#).

New Zealand Amends Requirements for Importers and Manufacturers of Hazardous Substances

On June 12, 2024, the New Zealand Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) published the Hazardous Substances (Importers and Manufacturers) Amendment Notice 2024 under the Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act 1996. The amendment introduces new obligations for importers and manufacturers of hazardous substances, including the provision of New Zealand Business Numbers (NZBN), annual reporting of quantities imported or manufactured, and specific details for certain explosives. The Notice comes into effect in two phases: clauses 13, 14, and 15 came into effect on January 1, 2025, while the remaining provisions will come into force on January 1, 2026. These changes aim to enhance the management and oversight of hazardous substances in New Zealand. Read more [here](#).

Key News from 2024

New Zealand EPA Proposes Ban on Chlorpyrifos Following Reassessment

On November 25, 2024, the New Zealand Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) announced a proposal to revoke all approvals for chlorpyrifos, an organophosphate insecticide widely used in agriculture. The decision follows a comprehensive reassessment that found significant risks to human health and the environment, including threats to birds, bees, and aquatic ecosystems. If implemented, the ban would bring New Zealand in line with international action taken by Canada, the European Union, and Australia. Read more [here](#).

Key Dates for 2025

The Hazardous Substances Notices provided a 4-year transitional period to allow stakeholders to make the necessary changes to labels and SDSs. Therefore, from **April 30, 2025** labels and SDSs must be prepared in accordance with the GHS 7 standards. .