

## National Campaign Headquarters

### Friends of the Earth Nanotechnology Project

**1. Does your party have a policy on nanotechnology? (please send)**

The Australian Government Approach to the Responsible Management of Nanotechnology sets out a high level framework for research into and the application of nanotechnology.

A copy of the framework is available at:

<http://www.innovation.gov.au/industry/nanotechnology/NationalEnablingTechnologiesStrategy/Documents/ObjectivesPaper.pdf>

**Will your party, in opposition or government, advocate and vote to:**

**2. Treat nanomaterials as new chemicals, requiring them to face nano-specific safety assessment before being permitted for use in commercial products, as recommended by the United Kingdom's Royal Society?**

Federal Labor supports ongoing work by the National Industrial Chemicals Notification and Assessment Scheme (NICNAS) regarding regulatory reform of industrial nanomaterials.

NICNAS regulates industrial nanomaterials that are used in products such as paints, dyes, inks and surface coatings, plastics, cosmetics and consumer goods.

Since January 2011, administrative arrangements for the regulation of nano-forms of new chemicals mean that:

- Introduction of nanomaterials that are 'new chemicals' are no longer exempt from notification to NICNAS for exemption categories where human or environmental exposure can reasonably be anticipated.
- Self-assessments by industry are no longer permitted.
- Additional annual reporting requirements apply for nanomaterials introduced under the research and development exemption.
- A declaration confirming whether or not the notified substance is a nano-form (according to the NICNAS working definition) is required by all introducers of new chemicals under exemption, certificate and permit categories.

### **3. Base safety assessments on the precautionary principle?**

Federal Labor's position on nanotechnology is based on three high level objectives:

- Protect the health and safety of humans and the environment.
- Foster informed community debate.
- Achieve economic and social benefits.

### **4. Establish a mandatory register of all commercially available manufactured nanomaterials?**

Federal Labor will consider the issue of a mandatory register in the context of other initiatives by regulators relating to information about nanomaterials.

Federal Labor has provided funding for the National Measurement Institute to establish nanotechnology measurement standards for regulators and industry.

### **5. Ensure that Material Safety Data Sheets provide relevant, nano-specific safety information to workers?**

Federal Labor has been implementing a program of work to examine the potential environmental, health and safety impacts of nanotechnologies and take appropriate action. We support ongoing work by Safe Work Australia regarding information about nanomaterials.

### **6. Introduce mandatory labelling of all nano-ingredients in food, food packaging, sunscreens and cosmetics, industrial and agricultural chemicals, and substances used in workplaces?**

Under existing regulations, manufacturers, producers, suppliers and importers of goods and services are already required to provide appropriate information to consumers about the safety of certain products.

For example, current labelling requirements for workplace chemical require that specific hazards and risks of the material are identified on the label, irrespective of the size and form of the material.

### **7. Support greater funding for nanotechnology risk research?**

In February 2010, Federal Labor released the National Enabling Technologies Strategy – a framework for the responsible development of nanotechnology, biotechnology and other emerging technologies. The Strategy was designed to create the framework for the responsible uptake of enabling technologies such as nanotechnology and biotechnology.

The Strategy has provided many successful initiatives and will leave Australia well placed for the future. The critical task of coordinating a whole of government approach to policy and regulatory development is ongoing.

**8. Support greater funding for nanotechnology social research, including ethical, socio-economic, human rights aspects?**

The development of these technologies will continue to be supported through the wide range of innovation and research programs offered by the government such as Australian Research Council grants and Commercialisation Australia.

**9. Support a greater role for public participation in decision making about nanotechnology research, development and governance?**

Federal Labor will continue to encourage public participation in decision making and consultations on government policy making processes.

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