Australian Government
Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water

IChEMS

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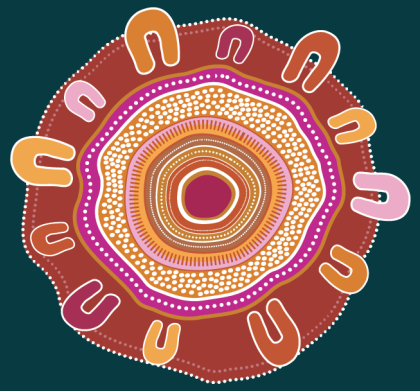

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of country throughout Australia and recognise their continuing connection to land, waters and culture. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present.

Overview

- Introducing IChEMS
  - What is IChEMS?
  - What chemicals can be scheduled?
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  - What activities does IChEMS cover?
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  - How are standards regulated?
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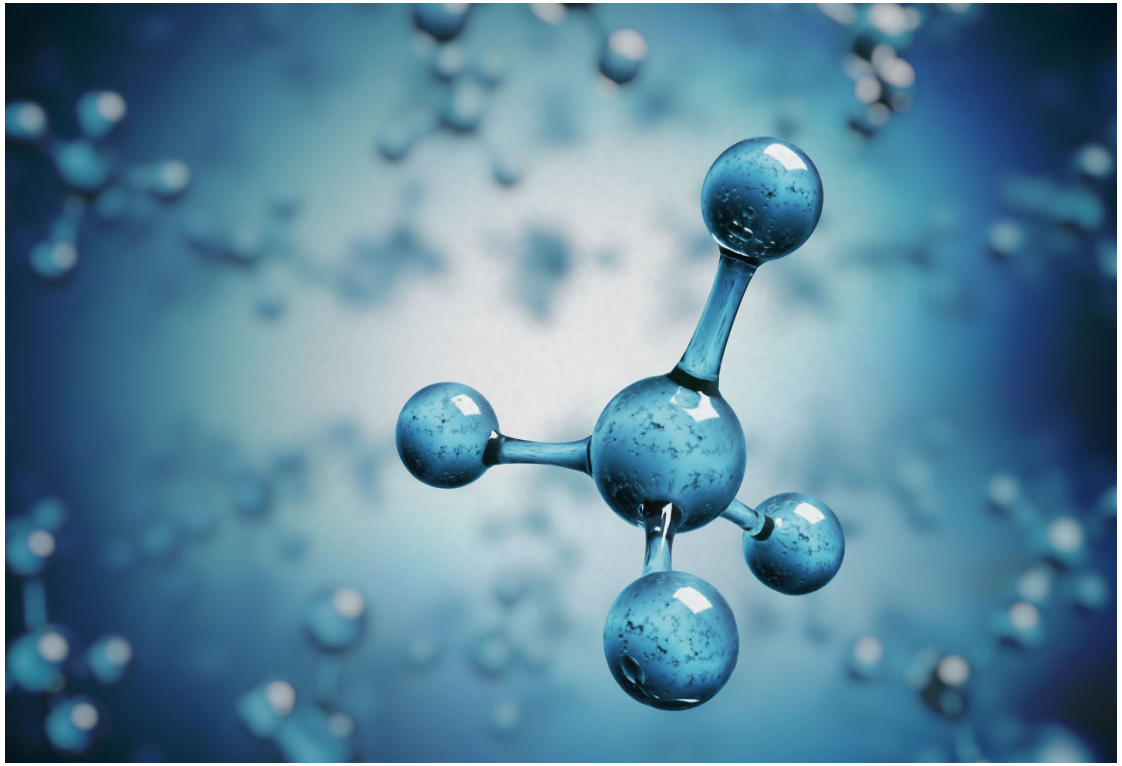
- Q&A

Introducing IChEMS

What is IChEMS?

IChEMS establishes nationally consistent standards for environmental risk management, by:

- categorising industrial chemicals in one of seven schedules based on their risk to the environment
- assigning measures for safe use, handling, and disposal.



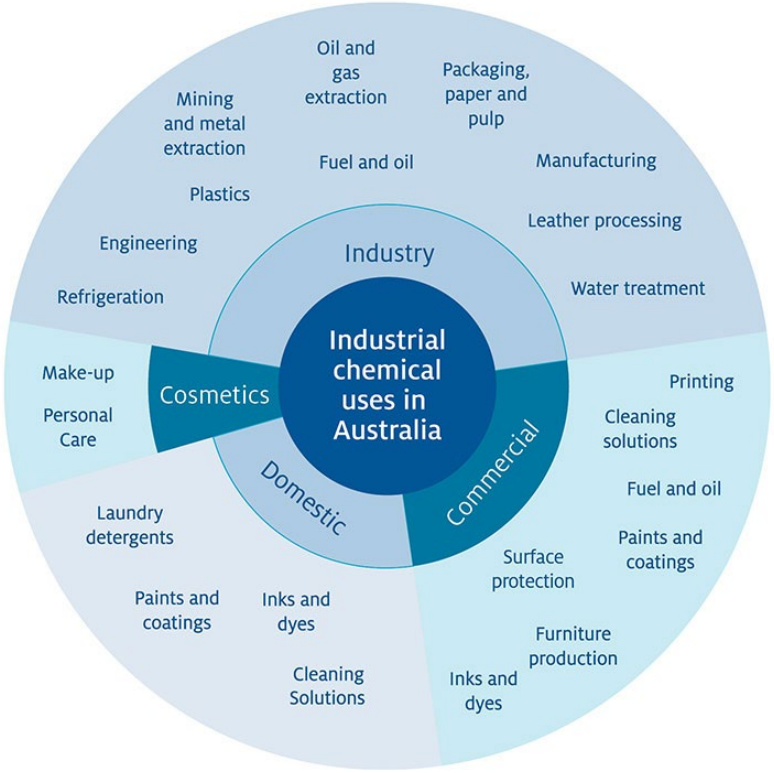
What chemicals can be scheduled?

IChEMS only applies to industrial chemicals.

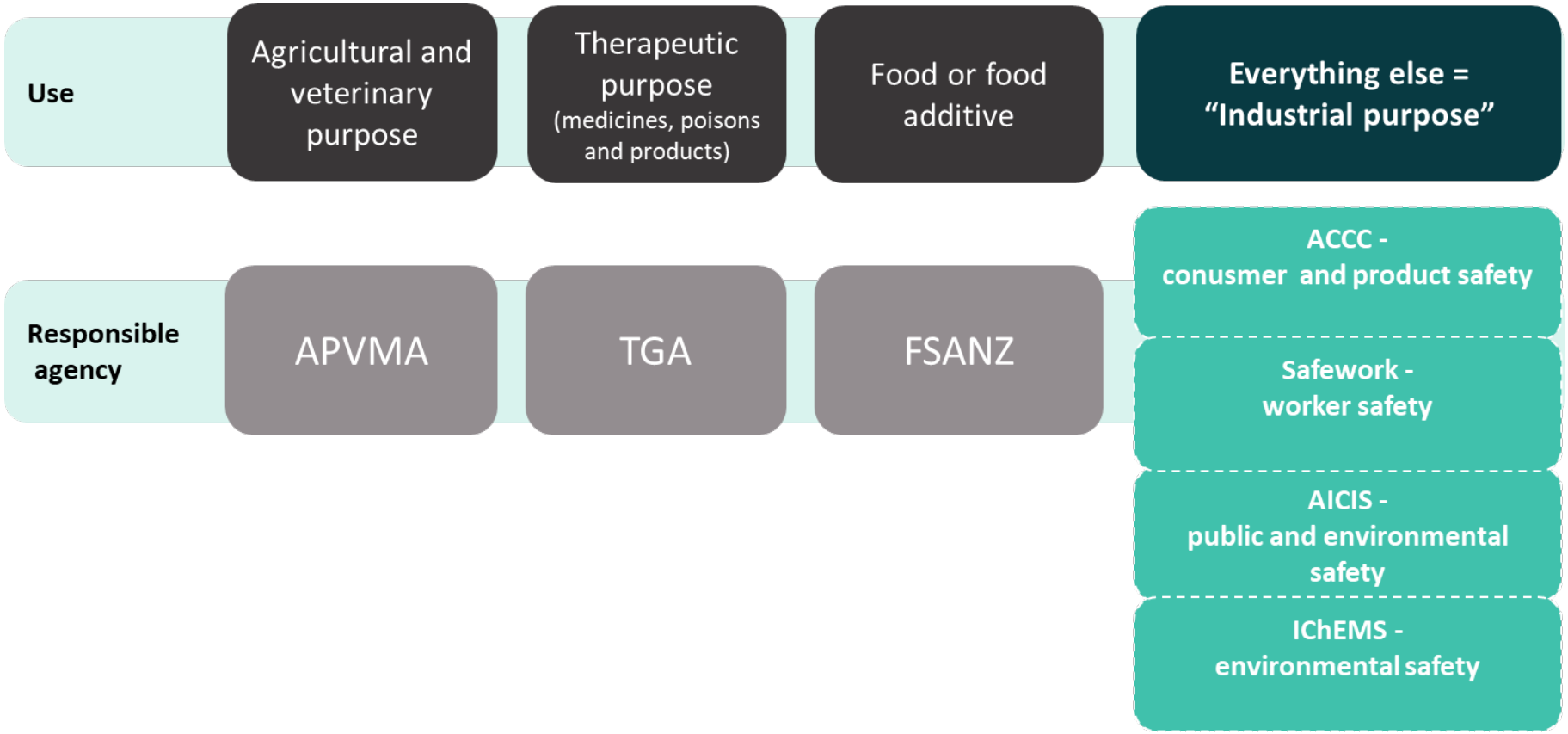
An industrial chemical has the same meaning as in the *Industrial Chemicals Act 2019*, i.e. a chemical with an industrial use.

IChEMS does not apply to chemicals used for:

- Agricultural or veterinary chemical purposes
- Therapeutic purposes
- Food, or food additives, intended for consumption by humans or animals.



How does IChEMS work with other schemes?



* * Where a chemical has a dual purpose the IChEMS only applies to the extent of its industrial use **

Managing industrial chemicals without IChEMS

Risk assessment
The Australian Government has performed risk assessments that identify chemicals of concern to the environment.

Without a national framework to manage the environmental risks, jurisdictions managed chemicals in different ways.

Compliance and enforcement
Jurisdictions manage industrial chemicals in different ways.

Managing industrial chemicals with IChEMS

Risk assessment
The Australian Government has performed risk assessments that identify chemicals of concern to the environment.
IChEMS uses existing and future risk assessments to schedule industrial chemicals.

Risk Management Standards
IChEMS uses risk assessments to define standards for managing environmental risks.

Compliance and enforcement
Jurisdictions use the same national standard to consistently manage industrial chemicals through regulation.

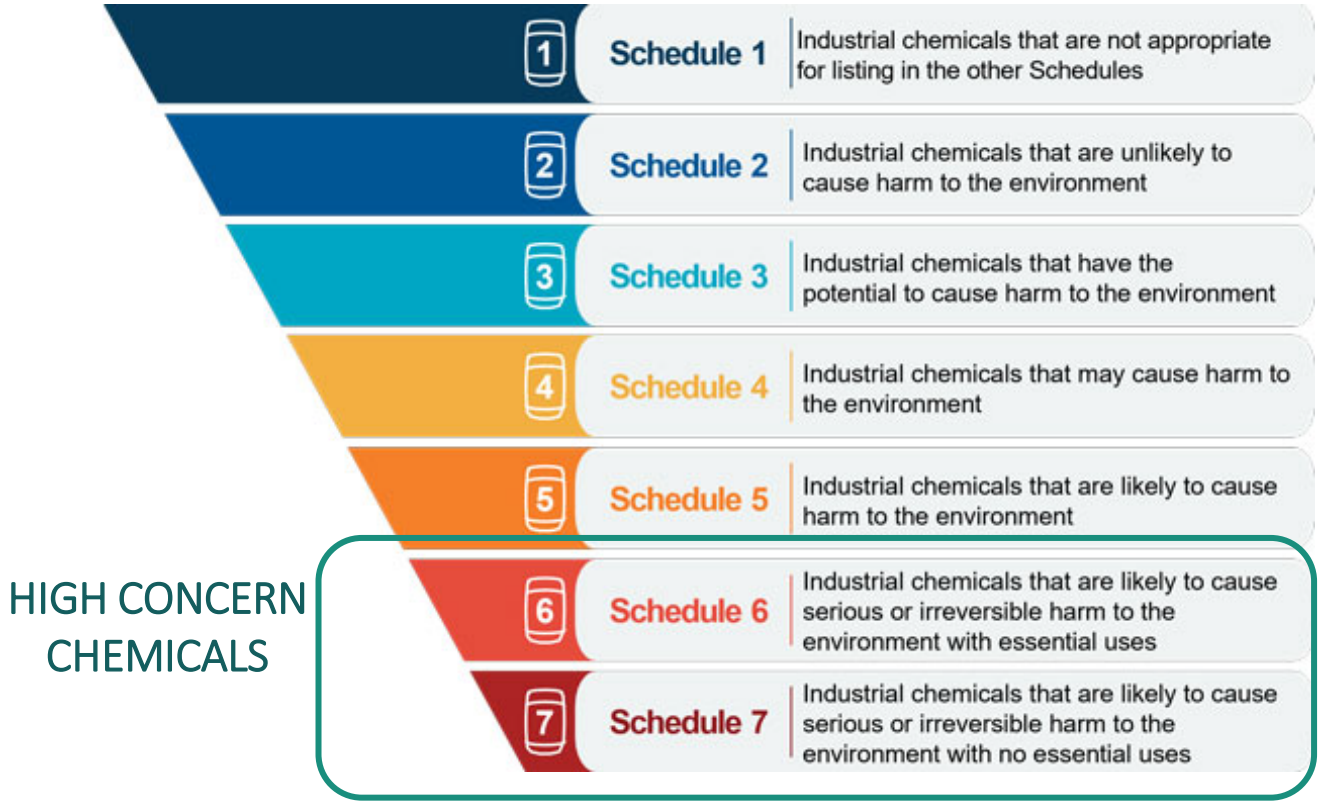
How does IChEMS apply to specific chemicals?

The IChEMS applies to industrial chemicals:

- on their own
- in mixtures (also known as products)
- in some circumstances in articles (finished goods such as consumer items and packaging).

Most chemicals are lower-risk and are listed in **Schedules 1-4**.

The chemicals of highest concern are listed in **Schedules 6 and 7**.

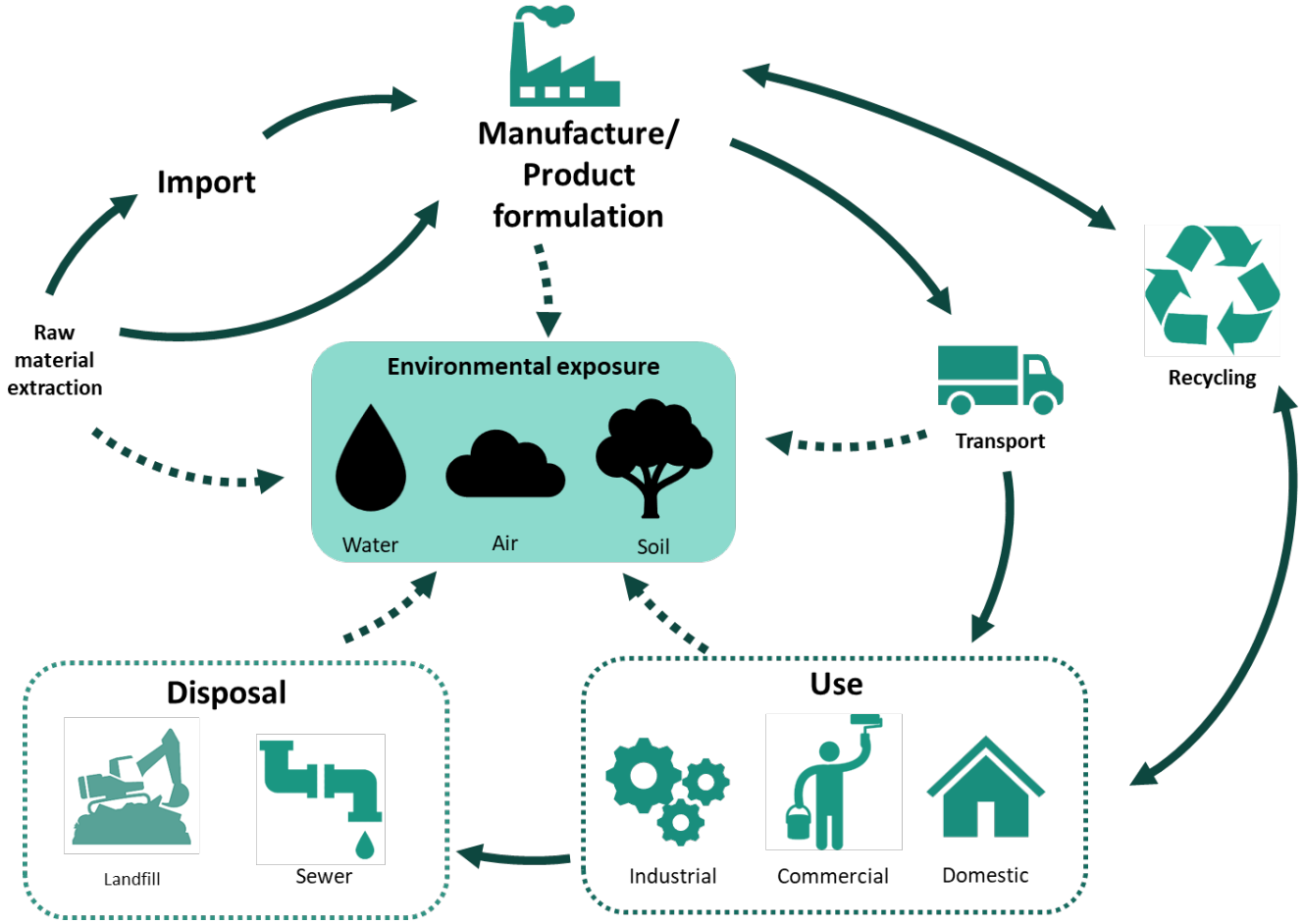


What activities does IChEMS cover?

The Risk Management Measures prescribed in a standard may apply to the following activities:

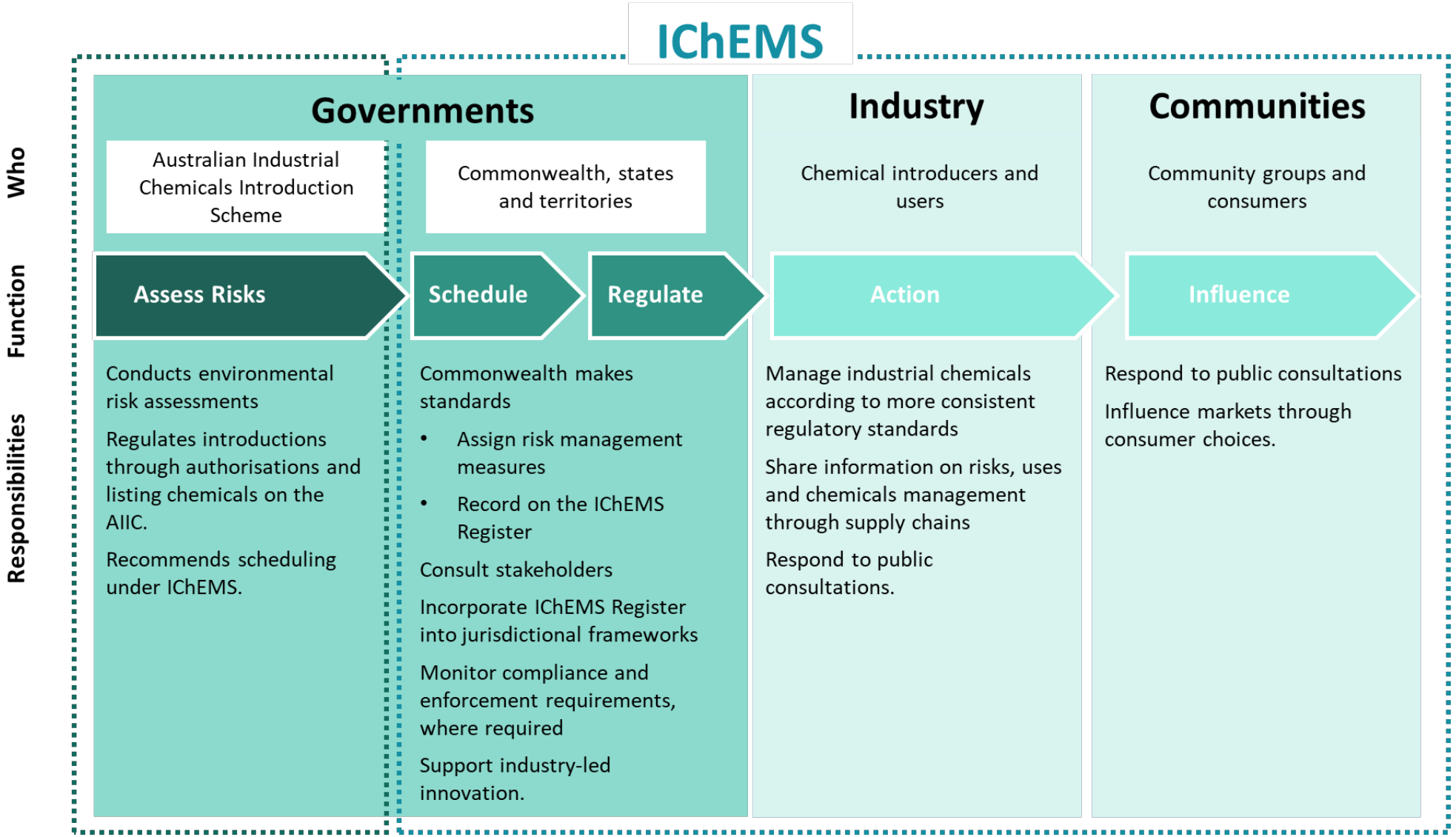
- Import
- Export
- Manufacture
- Use
- Disposal.

‘Use’ has a similar interpretation as under the *Industrial Chemicals Act 2019*.



A shared responsibilty

What are our responsibilities?



How are standards regulated?

The ICEMR Act has no regulatory powers.

Regulatory adoption of the IChEMS by all Australian jurisdictions ensures:

- comparable protections across Australia
- greater consistency for business
- a national approach to dealing with chemicals internationally recognised as high-risk to the environment.

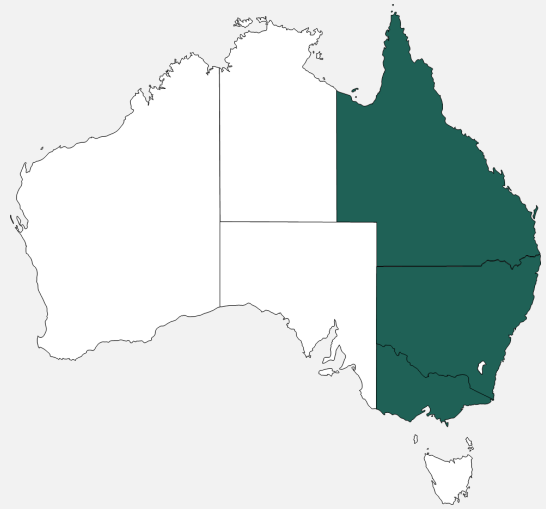
Jurisdictions are at various stages of incorporating the IChEMS into their own regulatory frameworks.

Status of IChEMS regulation

The Commonwealth is responsible for regulating:

- imports and exports
- manufacturing
- use in commonwealth areas, including 6 national parks, 21 Commonwealth airports, 65 defence bases.

Jurisdiction	IChEMS regulatory adoption
Qld	Yes
NSW	Yes
ACT	Partial
Victoria	Yes
Tasmania	Partial
South Australia	Partial
Western Australia	No
Northern Territory	No
Commonwealth	No

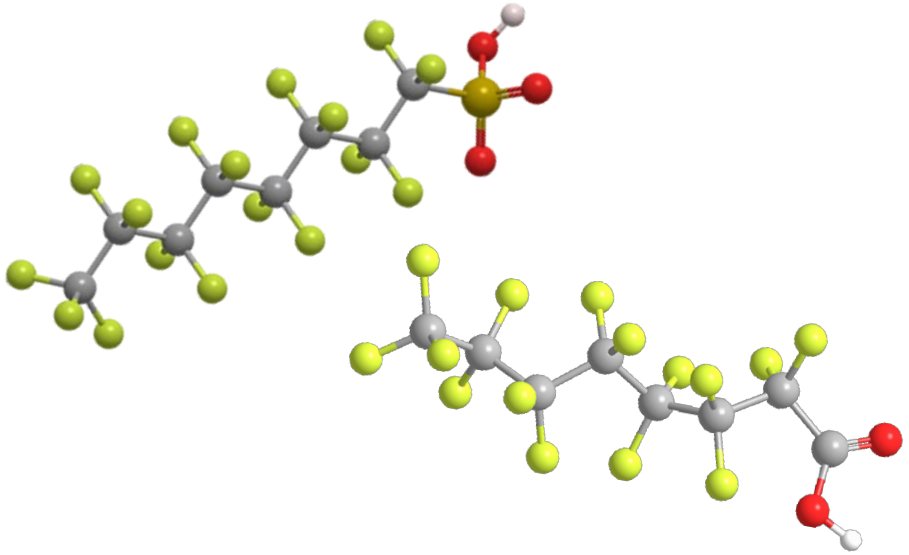


PFAS Standards

PFAS

Per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are a family of over 4,700 synthetic chemicals that resist heat, stains, grease, and water.

In Australia, PFAS have been used for a long time in a wide range of consumer products and industrial applications.

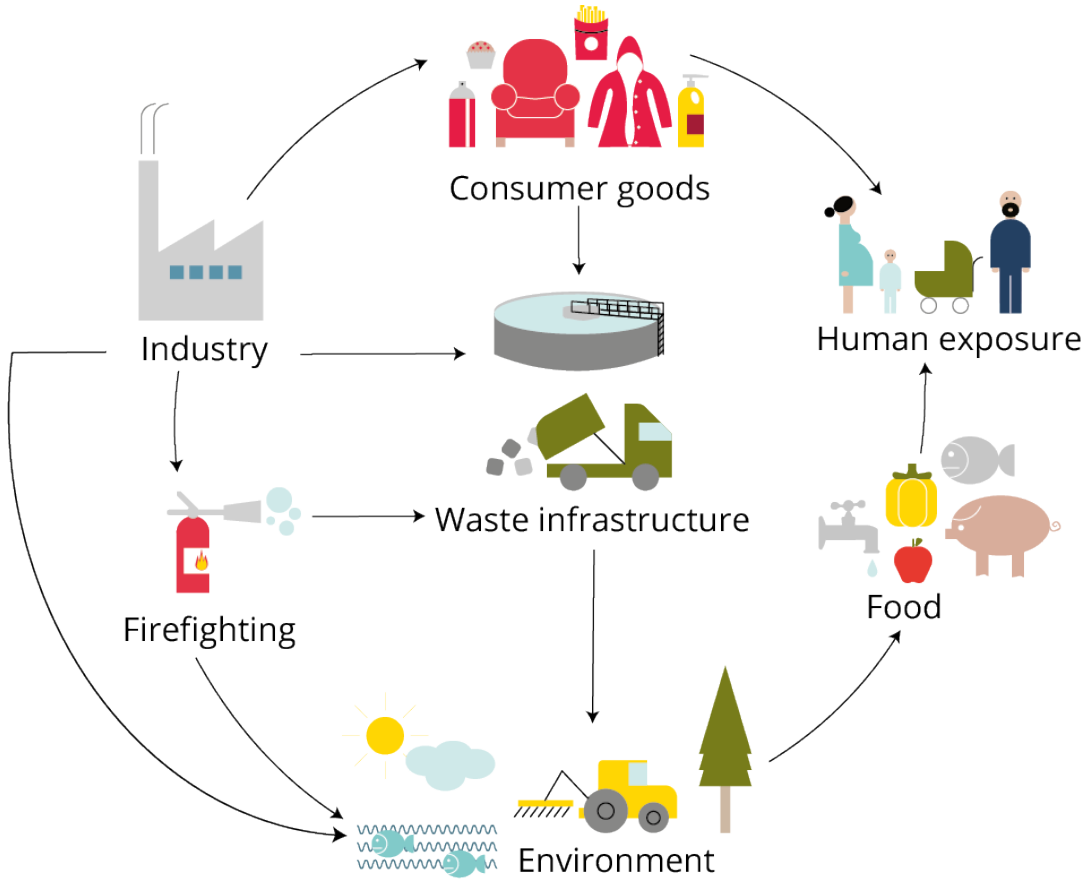


PFAS

PFAS are found everywhere in the environment due to decades of global use and their ability to travel long distances and not break down.

Some PFAS can also be toxic to plants and animals and bioaccumulate.

We are not aware of recent manufacture of PFAS in Australia. Releases into the environment have mostly been from use of products containing PFAS.



PFOS, PFOA, PFHxS Standards

Three groups of PFAS will be banned or severely restricted from **1 July 2025**, these are:

Perfluorooctanesulfonic acid (PFOS): wide variety of consumer and industrial applications including hard and decorative chromium plating, medical imaging, and fire-fighting.

Perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA): wide variety of consumer and industrial applications including fire-fighting foams, fabric treatments for stain and water resistance, paint, textiles and carpets.

Perfluorohexanesulfonic acid (PFHxS): have been used in Australia in the metal plating industry and in firefighting foams.

These standards will apply to over 500 individual PFAS.

What are the proposed risk management measures?

From **1 July 2025**:

- The manufacture, import and export, and use of these chemicals (whether on their own, in mixtures or in articles) would be prohibited, except:
    - in circumstances where the chemical is present as unintentional trace contamination
    - for research or laboratory purposes
    - for environmentally sound disposal
    - in circumstances where an article is already in use on or before 1 July 2025.
- Producers and holders of waste must undertake all reasonably practicable measures to avoid cross-contamination of waste.
- Disposal must not lead to recovery, recycling, reclamation or re-use of the chemical.
- Holders of stockpiles must provide relevant agencies with prescribed information.

Chemical form	Activity	Threshold mg/kg (ppm)
PFOA/PFOS/PFHxS and its salts	import, export, manufacture and use are prohibited except at …	… a level equal to or below 0.025 mg/kg (0.025ppm)
PFOA/PFOS/PFHxS related compounds	import, export, manufacture and use are prohibited except at …	… a level equal to or below 1 mg/kg (1ppm)
PFOA/PFOS in fire-fighting foams when already installed in systems	import, export, manufacture and use are prohibited except at …	… a level equal to or below 0.8 mg/kg (0.8ppm)
PFHxS in fire-fighting foams when already installed in systems	import, export, manufacture and use are prohibited except at …	… a level equal to or below 0.1 mg/kg (0.1ppm)
Waste consisting of PFOA/PFOS/PFHxS and its salts	must be destroyed or irreversibly transformed; or managed or disposed of as authorised at ...	… a level equal to or greater than 1 mg/kg (1ppm)
Waste consisting of the sum of PFOA/PFOS/PFHxS-related compounds	must be destroyed or irreversibly transformed; or managed or disposed of as authorised …	… a level equal to or greater than 40 mg/kg (40pm)

National PFAS Position Statement

DCCEEW undertakes its responsibilities in line with the National PFAS Position Statement.

- Further release of PFAS into the environment from ongoing use should be prevented where practicable
- Actions to reduce or phase out the use of PFAS should be nationally consistent.

The Position Statement is designed to encourage discussion between government, industry and other stakeholders to identify options for achieving these objectives.

National PFAS Position Statement agreed objectives:

- Ongoing sale or use of products and articles that contain long-chain PFAS, for any industrial or commercial application, should be phased out.
- Transitioning away from the use of chemicals that cause irreversible or long-term contamination of Australia's environment should be the ultimate goal for all users of PFAS in Australia.
- Importers, sellers and users of chemicals should inform themselves about the presence of PFAS in products and articles, due to their potential negative environmental, health and socioeconomic impacts.

Q&A

Thank you for your time today

Contact us

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