

Australia



Key Links

- [Australian information portal on PFAS](#)
- [Regulations and work on PFAS in Australia](#)
- [Search for IMAP Assessments \(Inventory Multi-tiered Assessment and Prioritisation \(IMAP\) Framework\) of PFASs](#)
- [Alerts issued since 2002 with information on manufacture, import and use of PFASs](#)

Recent Initiatives

Australian governments have developed regulatory, policy and voluntary approaches for responding to PFAS contamination and have published a Position Statement that sets out agreed objectives for phasing out the use of PFAS.

Australia has assessed the risks of more than 200 PFAS chemicals available for use in Australia, focusing on PFOS and PFOA and their direct and indirect precursors (other chemicals that break down in the environment to form PFOS and PFOA). The risks of related chemicals, including shorter chain PFAS that may be used as replacements for PFOS and PFOA, have also been assessed (see information [here](#)).

Australia has also undertaken [monitoring of some PFASs consistent](#) with the Global Monitoring Plan under the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants.

In July 2020, the National Industrial Chemicals Notification and Assessment Scheme (NICNAS) was replaced by the Australian Industrial Chemicals Introduction Scheme (AICIS).

Overview of risk reduction approaches

Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFASs) are not manufactured in Australia. Australia's approach to risk reduction is a combination of regulatory, policy and voluntary approaches focused on reducing the use and import of some PFASs (e.g. long-chain non-polymer PFASs) and on preventing and responding to PFAS contamination consistently, using best practices.

Overview of risk reduction approaches

Regulatory approaches focus on import, use, and PFAS contamination and waste disposal.

Import and Use: In Australia, importers and manufacturers (introducers) of PFAS must comply with legal obligations under the Industrial Chemicals Act 2019 (IC Act), which came into force from 1 July 2020. This includes registering their business with the Australian Industrial Chemicals Introduction Scheme (AICIS) and categorising any new PFAS chemicals before they can lawfully introduce these chemicals into Australia, and meeting applicable regulatory requirements for the specific category of introduction.

AICIS also enforces import and export controls on PFOS and specified PFOS precursors that are subject to the Prior Informed Consent (PIC) procedure under the Rotterdam Convention. Importers and exporters must obtain approval from the Executive Director, AICIS, prior to introducing or exporting these chemicals.

The Industrial Chemicals (General) Rules 2019 set out the requirements for the importation and manufacture of industrial chemicals in Australia under AICIS. The requirements for import and export of PFAS subject to the Rotterdam Convention are described in section 71 of the General Rules.

Under the IC Act, if the Executive Director is not satisfied that the risks to human health or the environment can be managed a certificate allowing introduction of the chemical can be refused. The Executive Director can also cancel a certificate if after an evaluation he/she determines that the risks to human health or the environment cannot be managed. Similarly, a chemical listed on the Inventory can be removed following an evaluation if the risks from its use cannot be managed.

Two jurisdictions ([South Australia](#) and [Queensland](#)) have restricted the use of certain PFASs in firefighting foams.

Contamination and waste disposal: The PFAS National Environmental Management Plan sets out nationally developed and agreed standards and guidance, which includes nationally agreed investigation guideline values. The PFAS NEMP is implemented by jurisdictions through their legislation. The plan has been developed by all jurisdictions and recognises the need for flexible implementation of best practice through each jurisdiction's environmental regulation frameworks. It is a practical how-to guide for the investigation and management of PFAS contamination, including waste management, storage and disposal. The plan is also an appendix to the Intergovernmental Agreement (see below).

Policy Approaches

In 2018, Australian governments developed the *Intergovernmental Agreement on a National Framework for Responding to PFAS Contamination*. This is an agreement between the Australian Government and state and territory governments to respond consistently to PFAS contamination to protect the environment and, as a precaution, protect human health. The agreement includes several appendices that establish protocols for responding to PFAS contamination – including the PFAS National Environmental Management Plan.

One of the appendices is a 'National PFAS Position Statement' (the Position Statement). The Position Statement sets out the shared view of Australian governments that future PFAS use in Australia should be reduced to the greatest extent practicable. It lists a set of nationally agreed objectives for phasing-out the use of PFASs of concern in Australia, including in articles. The Australian Government is working with industry groups to achieve the objectives set out in the Position Statement.

Voluntary Approaches

The voluntary approaches include raising industry awareness of the hazards of PFASs and monitoring their manufacture, import, and use. At the Commonwealth level, the Department of Defence and Airservices Australia (a government-owned corporation that provides aviation services including aviation rescue firefighting) are transitioning away from firefighting foams containing long-chain PFASs to short-chain or fluorine-free products – including the destruction of remaining stockpiles.

Certain domestic industries, including the surface finishing industry and the carpets industry, have undertaken voluntary measures to transition away from using PFASs of concern

Table with key elements of risk reduction approaches

Action	Path taken	BEPs Implemented	Category of PFASs addressed	Articles covered?	Life cycle stage(s) addressed	Method of approach	Public-private partnership encouraged?	Level of constraint
Six alerts issued since 2002 containing information on manufacture, import and use of PFASs in Australia, as well as regulatory information on PFCAs and PFASs	Increase awareness for industry and public	Minimisation of PFASs used	Long-chain PFASs; PFCAs and related substances	No, except for releases from articles	Import, fomulation, and use	Voluntary	No	None
Recommendations for re-assessed PFASs identified as persistent as part of a replacement strategy to phase out longer chain PFASs	Manage the import of new PFASs that have improved risk profiles, but are still persistent	Minimisation/optimisation of PFASs used	PFASs with 4 or more perfluorinated carbons	No	Chemical introduction; product introduction; product use	Voluntary	No	Reporting obligation regarding changes in use, volume or availability of new information
Additional data requirements for pre-market entry	Assess the risks of new PFASs prior to introduction	Minimisation/optimisation of PFASs used	PFASs with between 4 and 20	No	Manufacture, use, sale, and import	Regulatory	No	Application requirements for companies

applications for new PFASs

perfluorinated carbons

Transition from operational long chain fluorinated firefighting foam to short-chain or non-fluorinated foam, including destruction of remaining stockpiles, in the aviation industry	Encourage phase-out	Minimisation/optimisation of PFASs used	PFASs in current generation AFFF (including PFOS and PFOA as by-products)	No	Product use; waste stream	Voluntary	No	None
Publication of National PFAS Position Statement – and associated industry consultation	Increase industry awareness and encourage phase-outs	Minimisation/optimisation of PFASs used	Long-chain and short-chain PFASs	Yes	Manufacture, use, sale, import, export and disposal	Policy	Yes	None
PFAS National Environmental Management Plan 2.0 published in 2018	Sets out national standards and approaches to assessing and managing contamination	Emissions reduction and waste management	All PFASs with a focus on PFOS, PFOA and PFHxS	No, except for articles that are waste	Disposal, waste streams	Policy and regulatory	Yes	Informs requirements set by regulators

Additional resources: IMAP Assessment of Perfluorochemicals

Perfluorobutanesulfonate (PFBS) and its direct precursors	Human health tier II assessment	Environment tier II assessment
Indirect Precursors of Perfluorobutanesulfonate (PFBS)	Human health tier II assessment	Environment tier II assessment
Perfluorooctanoic Acid (PFOA) and its Direct Precursors	Human health tier II assessment	Environment tier II assessment
Perfluorooctanoic sulfonate (PFOS) and its Direct Precursors	Human health tier II assessment	Environment tier II assessment
Perfluoroalkyl sulfonates (PFAS) (>C8) and their direct precursors	Human health tier II assessment	Environment tier II assessment
Perfluoroalkane sulfonates (PFSA) (C5-C7) and their direct precursors	Human health tier II assessment	Environment tier II assessment
Short chain perfluorocarboxylic acids and their direct precursors	Human health tier II assessment	Environment tier II assessment
Indirect Precursors of Perfluorooctane Sulfonate (PFOS)	Human health tier II assessment	Environment tier II assessment
Indirect Precursors of Perfluorooctanoic Acid (PFOA)	Human health tier II assessment	Environment tier II assessment
Perfluoroheptanoic acid and its direct precursors	Human health tier II assessment	Environment tier II assessment
Indirect precursors of long-chain perfluorocarboxylic acids (PFCAs)	Human health tier II assessment	Environment tier II assessment
Indirect precursors of short chain perfluorocarboxylic acids (PFCAs)	Human health tier II assessment	Environment tier II assessment
Indirect precursors of perfluoroalkane sulfonic acids (PFSA) (C5-C7)	Human health tier II assessment	Environment tier II assessment
Direct Precursors to Perfluorocyclohexane Sulfonate and Related Perfluoroalkylcyclohexane Sulfonates	Human health tier II assessment	Environment tier II assessment
Perfluorinated derivatives of phosphonic and phosphinic acids	Human health tier II assessment	Environment tier II assessment
6:2 Fluorotelomer siloxanes and silicones	Human health tier II assessment	Environment tier II assessment
6:2 Fluorotelomer sulfonate derivatives	Human health tier II assessment	Environment tier II assessment

Carbamic acid, [2-(sulfothio)ethyl]-, C-(.gamma.-.omega.-perfluoro-C6-9-alkyl) esters, monosodium salts (95370-51-7)

[Human health tier II assessment](#)

[Environment tier II assessment](#)