



Senator the Hon Anthony Chisholm
Assistant Minister for Resources
Assistant Minister for Regional Development
Assistant Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Ref: MS25-900068

Dr Catherine Ainsworth
Chair
Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority
GPO Box 3262
SYDNEY NSW 2001

via: APVMABoard@apvma.gov.au

Dear Dr Ainsworth

I am writing to acknowledge the important work of the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) to lead the Australian Government's efforts to appropriately regulate agricultural and veterinary (agvet) chemicals to protect the health and safety of Australia's people, animals, environment and trade.

As outlined in the *Regulator Performance Resource Management Guide 128* (RMG 128)¹, the APVMA is accountable to the Parliament, including through Senate Estimates and the Australian National Audit Office, for scrutiny of its regulatory operations. Clear expectations from government to regulators help drive better regulator performance through best practice.

Consistent with RMG 128, I have enclosed the Ministerial Statement of Expectations (SOE) which outlines my expectations for the delivery of regulatory functions by the APVMA, and the principles I expect the APVMA to demonstrate through its regulatory operations. As having recently taken responsibility for agvet chemicals policy and the APVMA, my expectations build on those set out by the Hon Julie Collins MP, the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, in her letter dated 29 January 2025.

I would appreciate your response to this letter, as soon as practicable in 2026, in the form of a Statement of Intent (SOI) outlining how these expectations will be delivered by the APVMA. To ensure transparency and accountability, the SOE and the SOI should be made publicly available on your website. The statements should also be integrated into your performance processes as required under the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* as part of your corporate planning and reporting processes.

¹ Available on the Department of Finance's website, Regulator Performance (RMG 128)

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Chisholm', with a stylized, cursive flourish at the end.

Anthony Chisholm

22/12/2025

Enc Ministerial Statement of Expectations

Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority Statement of Expectations

This Statement of Expectations (SOE) reflects the government's commitment to best practice regulation, as outlined in Regulator Performance Resource Management Guide 128 (RMG 128), and the policy objective for Commonwealth regulators to strengthen productivity in Australia by better balancing risk mitigation with efficiency, growth and dynamism.

This SOE is informed by the *Regulatory Policy, Practice and Performance Framework*², the Australian Public Service (APS) Reform Agenda, and the outcomes of the Economic Reform Roundtable (August 2025). It complements the APVMA's obligations under the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act) and aligns with the government's broader regulatory reform and productivity agenda.

Regulatory responsibilities

I recognise the APVMA is the independent statutory authority responsible, in partnership with the states and territories under the *National Registration Scheme for Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals*, for the regulation of agricultural and veterinary (agvet) chemicals in Australia. The APVMA performs a vital role in ensuring that agvet chemicals used in Australia are safe and effective through a range of assessment, advisory, consultation, administrative, investigatory, and enforcement functions.

The APVMA should operate as a regulator, focused on delivering its full suite of regulatory functions in accordance with its legislative obligations. I expect that the APVMA will:

- take regulatory decisions and actions that are consistent, predictable and based on the best available science, using risk assessment approaches that are data-driven and evidence-based
- act swiftly and proportionately in response to evidence of non-compliance with agvet chemical legislation, and
- routinely and clearly communicate on its regulatory decisions and actions, and (as appropriate) enforcement outcomes to regulated entities, the Australian community and Australia's trading partners.

Regulatory reform and productivity agenda

The *Detailed response to the final report on future structure and governance arrangements for the APVMA* (detailed response), released on 4 November 2024, outlines a pathway for the government's agvet regulatory reform agenda. I expect the APVMA to continue to focus on implementing commitments arising out of the detailed response. My department will work closely with the APVMA to progress regulatory reforms to ensure proposals are practical and efficient to implement,

² Available on the Department of Finance's [website](#), Whole-of-government Regulatory Policy, Practice & Performance Framework

with minimal burden on stakeholders. I expect the APVMA to work with my department to regularly update me about progress implementing the detailed response.

Improving Australia's productivity performance is a key priority for the Australian Government. In an increasingly complex and interconnected environment, regulation and regulators play a critical role in supporting Australia's productivity through the effective management of risk, enabling innovation, and ensuring protections for Australians.

The Australian Government is working to lift national productivity, remove administrative red tape, and improve outcomes for all Australians. The government has set a whole-of-government objective for Commonwealth regulators to better balance risk mitigation with efficiency, growth and dynamism. The APVMA plays a critical role in protecting the health and safety of people, animals and the environment, and supporting the productivity of primary industries. Improving the performance of the APVMA can unlock significant productivity gains.

The APVMA is expected to actively contribute to the government's regulatory reform and productivity agenda by:

- regularly reviewing its regulatory posture. The APVMA should continue to ensure agvet chemical products meet the statutory criteria and, where appropriate, foster a regulatory environment that supports innovation in agvet chemical products, small business and new market entrants.
- achieving its regulatory objectives efficiently and effectively, minimising the cost recovery burden on industry.
- aligning its approach with the 6 principles of the Department of Finance's *Regulatory Policy, Practice and Performance Framework* for the APVMA's role, regulatory posture, specific legislative objectives, functions, and environment.

I appreciate the start the APVMA has already made, through initiatives outlined in its corporate plan, to identify how to make its practices more efficient and streamlined. This will support the growth and dynamism of the agvet chemical product industry in Australia.

I ask that the APVMA pursue the proposals it made in response to the joint letter from the Treasurer and the Minister for Finance sent 4 July 2025 about reducing red tape and easing the burden on businesses. This includes making approvals and processes faster and applying digital solutions to work more efficiently. I expect the APVMA to work with industry to develop the standards and processes necessary to support more agvet chemical products gaining access to low burden pathways. I also expect the APVMA to inform me of how it will track and report progress on these ideas.

Long-term performance, sustainability and integrity

The Australian Government and I are committed to the long-term performance, sustainability and integrity of the APVMA and Australia's agvet chemicals regulatory system. To achieve this, I expect the APVMA to:

- maintain high standards of public governance
- ensure it operates on a financially sustainable basis across the long-term business cycle, and
- maintain a workplace culture based on the Australian Public Service Values, Code of Conduct and Employment Principles.

I expect the APVMA to comply with the requirements of the whole-of-government resource management framework under the PGPA Act. It is also expected the APVMA will be efficient in its operations and demonstrate value for money in performing its functions.

The APVMA Board, through the APVMA senior executive, will be accountable for the long-term performance, sustainability and integrity of the APVMA. Where significant risks and issues are identified, I expect the APVMA Board will advise me at the earliest opportunity.

The APVMA is ultimately accountable to the Australian public and to the Parliament for the performance of its regulatory functions and its governance and operations as a Commonwealth entity. I expect that it conducts itself in a transparent, accountable and responsive manner. It should ensure it is focused on delivering firm and fair regulatory outcomes for all Australians.

Engagement

Trust in the APVMA by the Australian community is critical to maintaining confidence in Australian agvet chemicals. I expect the APVMA to engage with its external stakeholders to ensure it is regarded as a trusted, transparent and fair regulator. I expect that the APVMA will keep me informed of significant risks and issues on matters of concern to its external stakeholders.

I expect the APVMA will maintain robust, effective and collaborative working partnerships with other Commonwealth, state and territory agencies, as well as counterpart regulators in international jurisdictions, to ensure the proper functioning of Australia's regulatory framework.

To maintain robust, effective and collaborative working partnerships, I expect the APVMA will continue to engage in key communities of practice, participate in regulatory education activities, and collaborate with relevant Australian Government working groups.

I also expect the APVMA to continue to engage actively with relevant international counterpart regulators and monitor the global regulatory operating environment. This will assist the APVMA to identify opportunities for leveraging cooperation and more efficient approaches to ensuring agvet chemicals remain safe and effective that can lead to less burden on users and industry.

Relationship with the Assistant Minister and portfolio

As the responsible Minister, I will work with my department to ensure policy and legislation governing agvet chemicals and the APVMA remain effective and fit for

purpose. I expect the APVMA to continue to provide timely advice to government and my department regarding the legislative and policy framework, including scope for reform and improvement. I expect this advice to be informed by ongoing consultation and collaboration with industry and other stakeholders. As an independent statutory authority, I expect the APVMA to work closely with the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, as well as the remaining portfolio regulators to ensure a joined-up approach, while advancing and sharing best practice regulation.

I look forward to regular meetings with the APVMA Chair and CEO, and expect that the APVMA CEO and other senior executives will routinely engage with my department.