

Outcome 1

Population Health

The incidence of preventable mortality, illness and injury in Australians is minimised

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OUTCOME SUMMARY

Outcome 1 aims to minimise the incidence of preventable mortality, illness and injury in Australians. The Australian Government is committed to achieving this outcome through the development of national population health initiatives, regulatory policy for radiation protection and nuclear safety, and the regulation of therapeutic goods, industrial chemicals and gene technology.

Outcome 1 is the responsibility of the Population Health Division, the Regulatory Policy and Governance Division, the Therapeutic Goods Administration, the Office of Chemical Safety, the National Industrial Chemicals Notification and Assessment Scheme, and the Office of the Gene Technology Regulator.

The Year Ahead

In 2007-08, the Australian Government will continue to manage, prevent and respond to health risks faced by the Australian community. The focus will be on promoting healthy lifestyles to avoid preventable chronic disease, including type 2 diabetes, and addressing smoking, drinking and illicit drug use issues. The Government will target the increase in sexually transmitted diseases such as Chlamydia and HIV/AIDS. Screening for cancer and vaccinating girls and young women against human papillomavirus will also be priorities.

During the year, the Government will work to establish the Australia New Zealand Therapeutic Products Authority, and enhance the regulation of gene technology. It will also improve the responsiveness of the regulatory scheme for industrial chemicals, and identify options for developing a regulatory framework for an expanded nuclear industry.

Key Strategic Directions for 2007-08

During 2007-08, the Australian Government will:

- encourage the Australian community to adopt healthy lifestyle choices to help prevent chronic disease;
- support targeted disease prevention and protection through screening and immunisation initiatives;
- continue to implement strategies to reduce the demand, supply and harm caused by illicit drug use;
- address maternal, child and youth health issues;
- identify steps to develop a regulatory framework for an expanded nuclear industry;

- work with the New Zealand Government to establish the Australia New Zealand Therapeutic Products Authority;
- enhance gene technology regulation by implementing the outcomes of the all-of-Governments' response to the *Statutory Review of the Gene Technology Act 2000* and the *Gene Technology Agreement 2001*; and
- work to ensure a responsive regulatory scheme for industrial chemicals; and provide high quality public health advice.

Major Activities

Promotion of Healthy Lifestyle Choices

In 2007-08, the Government will work with the states and territories to implement the Australian Better Health Initiative. The initiative aims to encourage healthy people to avoid chronic disease through healthy lifestyle choices; and to help 'at risk' people reduce their likelihood of developing chronic disease, through lifestyle modification programs.

Under the initiative, the Government will work with states and territories on a social marketing campaign promoting healthy food choices and increased physical activity and implement nationally consistent school canteen guidelines. The Government will also implement a community and school grants program to facilitate healthy lifestyle changes. The Department will oversee the development of information and training programs for health professionals to support patients in modifying lifestyles to reduce chronic disease risk factors.

This work, under the Australian Better Health Initiative, will complement the Australian Government's priorities under the National Chronic Disease Strategy, and the five National Service Improvement Frameworks in the strategy.

The Government will also provide funding for a national package under the Council of Australian Governments which will provide for improved detection of type 2 diabetes and reduction in the risks of acquiring the disease. The package will include a risk assessment 'tick test' to help people assess their own risk of developing diabetes. It will subsidise access to lifestyle modification programs for 40 to 49 year olds assessed as being at high risk and referred by their general practitioner. National standards and accreditation will be put in place for these programs to ensure they are safe and effective in reducing the risk of type 2 diabetes.

The Healthy Living Ministerial Taskforce will work to achieve a whole-of-government approach to reducing overweight and obesity in the Australian population.

The Government will also continue to invest in the National Tobacco Youth Campaign to address youth smoking rates, and launch an awareness campaign to promote more responsible drinking. The campaign will follow a review of the *Australian Alcohol Guidelines* by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC), to help people make informed and responsible decisions about their alcohol consumption.

In addition, the Government will consider the outcomes of a review on the streamlining of Australia's food regulations and developing a more nationally consistent approach to food regulation.

Targeted Prevention

Screening for cancer will continue to be a high priority in 2007-08. The Australian Government aims to improve the rates of early detection, and reduce the number of bowel cancer-related deaths each year through the National Bowel Cancer Screening Program. Ongoing delivery of the program will provide screening for nearly one million people turning 55 or 65 years of age between 1 May 2006 and 30 June 2008.

Immunisation will also be a priority, as the Government continues the rollout of vaccination for girls and young women against the two strains of human papillomavirus which cause 70 per cent of cervical cancer. The community-based catch-up program for young women aged 18-26 years will commence in July 2007. In addition, from July 2007, vaccines against rotavirus gastroenteritis will be available under the National Immunisation Program, to prevent the cause of annual epidemics of severe diarrhoea in infants.

The Government will launch stage 2 of a pilot program under the National Sexually Transmissible Infections Strategy 2005-08, to conduct testing and improve awareness and surveillance of Chlamydia. The program will target pregnant women, young people aged 16-25 years, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and homosexually active men. The program will take place in general practice pilot sites.

The Department will continue to implement initiatives focused on specific high risk areas through the first National Sexually Transmissible Infections Strategy 2005-08, the fifth National HIV/AIDS Strategy 2005-09, the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sexual Health and Blood Borne Virus Strategy 2005-2008, and the National Hepatitis C Strategy 2005-2008.

Illicit Drugs Strategy

In 2007-08, the Australian Government will continue to address illicit drug use through new and existing initiatives targeting the use of cannabis and amphetamine-type stimulants, including crystal methamphetamine (also known as Ice).

As a priority, the Government will focus on communicating the harms of illicit drugs to young people, parents and families. In the third phase of the National Drugs Campaign, the Government will provide every Australian household with an update of the parent's booklet *Talking With Your Kids About Drugs*. The Department will also develop Australia's first national campaign to inform the community of the connections between illicit drug use and the development of mental illness.

The Australian Government will continue to support treatment through the non-government organisation sector, to improve coverage and increase services for amphetamine-type stimulant users, with a focus on families and youth. This will include improving the capacity of the alcohol and drug workforce in the non-government sector, so it can better respond to people with coexisting illicit drug use and mental illness. The Government will continue to work closely with the Australian National Council on Drugs in the rollout of these initiatives.

Maternal, Child and Youth Health

In 2007-08, the Australian Government, in conjunction with State and Territory governments, will develop antenatal care guidelines in-line with NHMRC processes, and progress the introduction of key indicators for child health and well-being. The Government

will also provide funding to encourage breastfeeding, and advice and support for mothers who may wish to breastfeed.

The Australian Government will monitor quality of service and usage of the National Pregnancy Support Helpline. The helpline commenced operation on 1 May 2007 and aims to provide counselling and support to women, their partners and family members who are experiencing an unplanned pregnancy and/or who are uncertain about continuing with a pregnancy.

Regulatory Arrangements for Nuclear Related Activities

In 2007-08, the Department, in conjunction with the Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency, will assist the Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources (DITR) with developing options for regulating an expanded nuclear industry. The Department will do this by contributing to the development of DITR work plans.

This activity is in response to the findings of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet's *Uranium Mining, Processing and Nuclear Energy Opportunities for Australia* report; the House of Representative's *Australia's Uranium – Greenhouse Friendly Fuel for an Energy Hungry World* report; and the Uranium Industry Framework Steering Group Report.

Establishment of the Australia New Zealand Therapeutic Products Authority

In 2007-08, the Australian Government will continue to work with the New Zealand Government to establish the Australia New Zealand Therapeutic Products Authority (ANZTPA) – a trans Tasman agency focused on the regulation of the quality, safety and effectiveness of therapeutic products, and of their manufacture, supply, import, export and promotion.

The establishment of the ANZTPA is subject to the passage of legislation and ratification of the treaty with the New Zealand Government. The Therapeutic Products Ministerial Council will appoint the Board of the ANZTPA, including the Managing Director. In the establishment period that follows, the subordinate legislation for the joint regulatory scheme, in the form of Ministerial Council Rules and Managing Director's Orders, will be tabled in the Parliaments of both countries. The joint regulatory scheme will come into effect following the completion of these parliamentary processes. At that time, the ANZTPA will replace the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) and the Medicines and Medical Devices Safety Authority (Medsafe) in New Zealand.

The Department will ensure that Australia's interests are protected in the development of the joint scheme, and will work on the policy aspects associated with the agency's creation.

The Department will also investigate the feasibility of establishing a national legislative approach to the governance of non-blood human tissue based therapies. This will be undertaken in conjunction with the states and territories.

Enhancing Gene Technology Regulation

In 2007-08, the Australian Government, through the Office of the Gene Technology Regulator (OGTR), will enhance the regulatory system for gene technology. This will be achieved by implementing changes agreed to by the all-of-Governments' response to the *Statutory Review of the Gene Technology Act 2000* and the *Gene Technology*

Agreement 2001. The changes will provide an efficient and effective regulatory system that ensures regulatory burden is commensurate with risks, and is based on a scientific assessment of risks undertaken by an independent Regulator.

The OGTR will deliver training on these changes to the Institutional Biosafety Committees and will also convene a Regulators' Forum. In addition, the OGTR will develop a framework for the monitoring and review of genetically modified organisms post release, and guidance on adverse effects reporting for licence holders and third parties. The OGTR will also complete the Review of the Certification Guidelines for Contained Facilities in consultation with stakeholders and other regulatory agencies.

Regulating Chemicals

In 2007-08, the Australian Government will continue to manage the potential risks posed by chemicals in the community. The National Industrial Chemicals Notification and Assessment Scheme (NICNAS) will continue to regulate industrial chemicals for the protection of human health and the environment, to deliver the safe and sustainable use of chemicals. The Office of Chemical Safety (OCS) will assess the human health risks of pesticides and veterinary medicines for the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority. It will also set human health standards for chemicals and provide pre-product public health advice to the OGTR.

The Government will fund the OCS to continue its contribution to Australia's National Drug Strategy, as the coordinating body for Project Cohesion, an interdepartmental initiative to track drug precursors, to prevent diversion to illicit use. The OCS will also support the National Drugs and Poisons Schedule Committee to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of promulgating drugs and poisons schedules into the *Standard for the Uniform Scheduling of Drugs and Poisons*.

In 2007-08, the Australian Government will focus on protecting people and the environment from the harmful effects of industrial chemicals through the work of the NICNAS. This will include further developing bilateral arrangements for industrial chemicals with major trading partners.

NICNAS will also implement regulatory reforms resulting from the review of its Existing Chemicals Program and a review of disinfectants.

Outcome 1 Resourcing

Table 3.1.1 shows how the 2007-08 Budget appropriations translate to total resourcing for Outcome 1, including administered expenses, revenue from government (appropriation), revenue from other sources, and the total price of outputs.

Table 3.1.1: Total Resources for Outcome 1

	Estimated actual 2006-07 \$'000	Budget estimate 2007-08 \$'000
Administered appropriations		
Program 1.1: Chronic Disease - Early Detection and Prevention		
Appropriation Bill 1	30,973	32,221
	30,973	32,221
Program 1.2: Communicable Disease Control		
Appropriation Bill 1	19,074	19,759
Appropriation Bill 2	2,561	2,320
	21,635	22,079
Program 1.3: Drug Strategy		
to Department of Health and Ageing	89,643	137,368
to Services for Other Govts and Non-Depts Bodies (Special Account) - <i>FMA Act 1997, s20</i> ⁽¹⁾⁽²⁾	375	375
Total Appropriation Bill 1	90,018	137,743
Appropriation Bill 2	62,095	60,959
	152,113	198,702
Program 1.4: Food and Regulatory Policy		
to Department of Health and Ageing	421	475
to Services for Other Govts and Non-Depts Bodies (Special Account) - <i>FMA Act 1997, s20</i> ⁽¹⁾⁽²⁾	-	-
Total Appropriation Bill 1	421	475
	421	475
Program 1.5: Immunisation		
to Department of Health and Ageing	22,220	26,912
to Australian Childhood Immunisation Register (Special Account) - <i>FMA Act 1997, s20</i> ⁽¹⁾⁽²⁾	3,401	3,223
Total Appropriation Bill 1	25,621	30,135
Appropriation Bill 2	17,064	19,648
<i>National Health Act 1953</i> - Essential Vaccines	283,021	443,208
Total Special Appropriations	283,021	443,208
	325,706	492,991
Program 1.6: Public Health		
Appropriation Bill 1	27,816	54,312
Appropriation Bill 2	166,445	171,003
	194,261	225,315
Total Administered Appropriations	725,109	971,783

Section 3 – Department Outcomes – 1 Population Health

Table 3.1.1: Total Resources for Outcome 1

	Estimated actual 2006-07 \$'000	Budget estimate 2007-08 \$'000
Departmental appropriations		
<i>Health and Ageing</i>		
Output Group 1 - Policy Advice	23,687	26,225
Output Group 2 - Program Management	39,103	43,293
Total price of departmental outputs <i>(Total revenue from government and from other sources)</i>	62,790	69,518
Total revenue from government (appropriations) contributing to price of departmental outputs	57,863	64,434
Total revenue from other sources	4,927	5,084
Total price of departmental outputs <i>(Total revenue from government and from other sources)</i>	62,790	69,518
Department Regulators		
<i>Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA)</i>		
Output Group 2 - Program Management	82,350	82,182
<i>Office of Gene Technology Regulator (OGTR)</i>		
Output Group 2 - Program Management	7,920	7,998
<i>National Industrial Chemicals Notification and Assessment Scheme (NICNAS)</i>		
Output Group 2 - Program Management	8,008	8,401
Total price of outputs <i>(Total revenue from government and from other sources)</i>	98,278	98,581
Total revenue from government (appropriations) contributing to price of departmental outputs	11,892	9,451
Total revenue from other sources	86,386	89,130
Total price of outputs <i>(Total revenue from government and from other sources)</i>	98,278	98,581
to Department of Health and Ageing	57,863	64,434
to NICNAS Special Account ⁽¹⁾	521	411
to OGTR Special Account ⁽¹⁾	7,920	7,998
to TGA Special Account ⁽¹⁾	3,451	1,042
Total revenue from government (appropriations) contributing to price of departmental outputs	69,755	73,885
Total revenue from other sources	91,313	94,214
Total Price of Outputs for Outcome 1 <i>(Total Revenue from Government and from other sources)</i>	161,068	168,099
Total estimated resourcing for Outcome 1 <i>(Total price of outputs and administered appropriations)</i>	886,177	1,139,882
	2006-07	2007-08
Average Staffing Level (number)		
Department	922	951

¹ Appropriation flows into Special Accounts are also shown in the receipts column of the Special Accounts table in Table 2.6.

² Where names of Acts have been abbreviated, the full name of the Act can be found in the Acts Glossary at the end of Table 2.6.

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Measures Affecting Outcome 1

A summary of measures affecting this outcome is provided at Table 2.2, Section 2. Measure descriptions are published in full in *Budget Paper No. 2, Budget Measures 2007-08*, available on the Australian Government website at: <www.budget.gov.au>.

Contribution of Administered Programs to Outcome 1

Program 1.1: Chronic Disease – Early Detection and Prevention

The Chronic Disease – Early Detection and Prevention program provides funding for governments, health professionals and community based organisations to promote and support the prevention of chronic disease, through the adoption of healthy lifestyles. The program also provides funding to improve the early detection of breast, cervical and bowel cancer. The contribution to this outcome is measured by participation in programs and improvements in healthy living habits.

Program 1.2: Communicable Disease Control

The Communicable Disease Control program provides funding for governments and a range of non-government organisations to develop and deliver programs that reduce and control the spread of HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis C and sexually transmissible infections. Programs include workforce development and targeted health education programs. The contribution to this outcome is measured by the notification rates of relevant communicable diseases.

Program 1.3: Drug Strategy

The Drug Strategy program provides funding for research to monitor emerging trends in drug use and supports best practice in regard to prevention and treatment. It funds public awareness initiatives to raise community understanding of drug-related issues and their impact on mental health. The program also funds non-government organisations for initiatives that complement state and territory programs. The contribution to this outcome is measured by the monitoring of drug usage trends and data on the cost and social burden of drugs.

Program 1.4: Food and Regulatory Policy

The Food and Regulatory Policy program provides direction and leadership in food policy issues. The program provides funding for high level support to the Australia and New Zealand Food Regulation Ministerial Council and its supporting committees. Funding also supports a national stakeholder communications forum. The contribution to this outcome is measured by Ministerial Council satisfaction and legislative compliance on notifications on food standards.

Program 1.5: Immunisation

The Immunisation program provides vaccines and immunisation advice to the Australian community, to protect against major vaccine preventable diseases. The contribution to this outcome is measured by the assessment of vaccination coverage and disease rates in the targeted age groups, including children and older Australians.

Program 1.6: Public Health

The Public Health program leads and coordinates the chronic disease prevention agenda in Australia. This program contributes to the development and maintenance of national population health infrastructure and workforce capacity. It also strengthens the evidence base for prevention. The program includes funding to evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of public health activities through the Priority Setting Mechanism. The contribution to this outcome is measured through the program's ability to inform the prevention agenda.

Contribution of Departmental Outputs to Outcome 1

The Department describes its core activities in terms of two output groups: policy advice and program management. Outcome 1 reports on both output groups. Refer to Section 3.1 for more information on output groups.

Performance Information for Outcome 1

Performance information for administered programs, individual outputs and output groups relating to Outcome 1 are summarised in Table 3.2.1.

Table 3.2.1: Key Performance Information for Outcome 1**Performance Information for Administered Programs**

Indicator	Measured by	Reference Point or Target
Administered Funding – Population Health Programs		
Effective screening programs delivered in accordance with a sound evidence base and with responsiveness to new and emerging trends.	Breast cancer and cervical screening rates for women in the target age groups, and participation rates in the National Bowel Cancer Screening Program.	Participation rates in breast cancer and cervical screening programs increase; and participation rates for bowel cancer screening.
Improved knowledge, attitude and behaviours in relation to diseases and health risks through targeted health promotion and disease prevention campaigns, including social marketing.	Levels of awareness of healthy lifestyles and health risks, and modified behaviours in relation to risk, in specific target populations. Initiatives targeting nutrition, physical activity, obesity, overweight and injury.	Improvements in knowledge, attitudes and behaviours in relation to disease and health risks. Australian Better Health Initiative measures developed and implemented.
Effective communicable disease prevention and detection in accordance with a sound evidence base and with responsiveness to new and emerging trends.	Improved notification rates of HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis C, and Sexually Transmissible Infections.	A positive impact on notification rates of HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis C and Sexually Transmissible Infections.

Budget Statements – Department of Health and Ageing

Indicator	Measured by	Reference Point or Target
Administered Funding – Population Health Programs		
Reduced community harm caused by licit and illicit drugs.	Number of Australians using tobacco or illicit drugs and/or consuming alcohol at harmful levels.	Continued reduction in the population using tobacco or illicit drugs, and/or consuming alcohol at harmful levels.
High rates of immunisation coverage for vaccines funded through the National Immunisation Program.	a) Immunisation rates in the target age groups. b) Notification rates of Vaccine Preventable Diseases.	a) Increase from previous year. b) A positive impact on notification rates of Vaccine Preventable Diseases.
Health economic evaluations of investments in disease prevention and health promotion.	The number of evaluations undertaken.	All programs scheduled for evaluation are assessed through the Priority Setting Mechanism for Prevention.
Reform of the Public Health Education and Research Program in accordance with the recommendations of the 2005 Public Health Education and Research Program review (Phase 3).	Extent of implementation of the review recommendations and stakeholder satisfaction.	Comprehensive implementation of review recommendations to satisfaction of stakeholders.
Cost: \$971.783m		

Performance Information for Departmental Outputs

Indicator	Measured by	Reference Point or Target
Output Group 1 – Policy Advice		
Quality, relevant and timely advice for Australian Government decision-making.	Ministerial satisfaction.	Maintain or increase from previous year.
Relevant and timely evidence-based policy research.	Production of relevant and timely evidence-based policy research.	Relevant evidence-based policy research produced in a timely manner.
Price: \$26.225m		

Section 3 – Department Outcomes – 1 Population Health

Indicator	Measured by	Reference Point or Target
Output Group 2 – Program Management		
Administered budget predictions are met and actual expenses vary less than 0.5% from budgeted expenses.	Percentage that actual expenses vary from budgeted expenses.	0.5% variance from budgeted expenses.
Stakeholders to participate in program development.	Opportunities for stakeholder participation through a range of avenues, such as surveys, conferences and meetings.	Stakeholders participate in program development through consultation mechanisms and submissions on Departmental discussion papers.
Price: \$43.293m		

Performance Information for Regulatory Activities

Indicator	Measured by	Reference Point or Target
Output Group 2 – Program Management		
Timeliness of evaluations and appeals of decisions on applications in relation to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> entry of products onto the Australian Register of Therapeutic Goods; dealings with genetically modified organisms; and industrial chemicals. 	Evaluations and appeals of decisions made within legislated timeframes, where applicable.	100% of evaluations are made within legislated timeframes. 100% of appeals of decisions are considered within legislated timeframes.
Timeliness of evaluations of applications on human health aspects of pesticides and veterinary medicines and setting human health standards for chemicals and pesticides.	Evaluations are made within agreed timeframes.	97% of evaluations and 100% of standards on human health safety are made within agreed time frames.
Timeliness of licensing and surveillance audits of Australian and overseas manufacturers.	Audits performed within target timeframes.	100% of audits are performed within target timeframes.
Efficient post-marketing surveillance testing of therapeutic products.	Number of therapeutic products tested.	Minimum of 800 therapeutic products tested.

Indicator	Measured by	Reference Point or Target
Output Group 2 – Program Management		
Compliance with conditions in licences to undertake dealing with genetically modified organisms.	Percentage of field trials inspected.	Minimum of 20% of field trials inspected.
Efficient issuing and reporting of permits and licences for controlled and other substances.	Timeliness of permits and licences issued and reported.	97% of permits and licences completed within agreed targets.
High level of compliance with the <i>Therapeutic Goods Act 1989</i> , the <i>Gene Technology Act 2000</i> and the <i>Industrial Chemicals (Notification and Assessment) Act 1989</i> .	Breaches of the <i>Therapeutic Goods Act 1989</i> , the <i>Gene Technology Act 2000</i> and the <i>Industrial Chemicals (Notification and Assessment) Act 1989</i> are investigated and appropriate action taken.	Reports of alleged breaches are assessed within 10 working days and appropriate response initiated.
Consultation with stakeholders on regulatory change in relation to therapeutic products, genetically modified organisms, industrial chemicals, pesticides and veterinary medicines.	Timeliness and thoroughness of consultation.	Stakeholders affected by regulatory change are effectively consulted.
International relationships facilitate cooperation and harmonisation in the implementation of regulatory controls for therapeutic products, genetically modified organisms and industrial chemicals.	a) cooperative arrangements in place with key international regulatory agencies; and b) active participation in key international forums.	High degree of cooperation with key international regulatory agencies.
Price: \$98.581m		

Evaluations

Evaluation of the Council of Australian Governments Illicit Drug Diversion Initiative

In 2007-08, the Department will continue to participate in the evaluation of the Council of Australian Government Illicit Drug Diversion Initiative. Overseen by members from the Intergovernmental Committee on Drugs and the Australian National Council on Drugs, the evaluation will examine the initiative's impact in rural and remote Australia. It will also include a cost benefit analysis, and assess the effectiveness of police diverting drug

offenders possessing small amounts of illicit drugs away from the criminal justice system to education, counselling or treatment.

The outcomes of this and previously conducted research will contribute to a broader assessment of the initiative. Findings of the evaluation will inform future directions for beyond 30 June 2008.

Evaluation of the Non-Government Organisation Treatment Grants Program

The Department will evaluate the Non-Government Organisation Treatment Grants Program in 2007, to inform its future design. The evaluation will take into account the cessation of current funding agreements in June 2008 and the recent expansion to respond to amphetamine-type stimulant issues. The Department expects to complete the evaluation in December 2007.

Evaluation and Monitoring of the National Drug Strategy 2004-09

The Department will oversee a project to evaluate and monitor the National Drug Strategy 2004-09. Directed by the Ministerial Council on Drug Strategy and the Intergovernmental Committee on Drugs, the project will evaluate the strategy as a policy framework to help stakeholders in the development of their own drug-related policies and programs.

The project will also assess the outcomes of programs under the strategy; and evaluate the roles and workings of the advisory structures, to inform the development and implementation of the strategy. In addition, the project will monitor the strategy's performance with regard to actual and potential drug issues and drug trends in Australia.

The Department expects to complete the project by 2008-09.

Evaluation of the Three National Research Centres of Excellence

In 2007-08, the Department will evaluate the three National Research Centres of Excellence to which it provides core funding: the National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre at the University of New South Wales; the National Drug Research Institute at Curtin University; and the National Centre for Education and Training on Addiction at Flinders University.

The evaluation will examine the centres' effectiveness in providing quality evidence-based research and products that inform health, law enforcement and education services to address drug-related harms. It will recommend potential mechanisms for enhancing the provision of this research.

In addition, the review will establish whether findings from the 2003 evaluation have been progressed; and determine the appropriateness and funding of the infrastructure arrangements for each centre.

Evaluation of Australian Better Health Initiative

The Department will work with the states and territories in 2007-08 to design a monitoring and evaluation framework for the Australian Better Health Initiative. The Department expects to complete the framework this financial year. The initiative is to be evaluated in 2009-10.

Evaluation of BreastScreen Australia

On 1 March 2007, the Australian Health Ministers' Advisory Council (AHMAC) endorsed the evaluation of the BreastScreen Australia Program, to assess its appropriateness, efficiency and effectiveness.

The evaluation will examine the health, process and economic outcomes achieved by the program to date. It will also establish and address issues impacting on the program, and identify opportunities for overall improvement.

The Department will contribute to the evaluation in 2007-08 by providing secretariat services and support to the Evaluation Advisory Committee. The Department will also manage evaluation projects. It is anticipated that the outcomes of the evaluation will be reported to AHMAC in the second half of 2008.

Major Reviews

Review of the Australian Alcohol Guidelines Health Risks and Benefits 2001

In 2007-08, the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) will continue to review the Australian Alcohol Guidelines Health Risks and Benefits 2001.

The review commenced in July 2006, and involves the development of a revision document by an expert working party, based on a systematic review of literature. The NHMRC expects to release the document for public comment in late 2007, and finalise the review by December 2007.

Review Public Health Outcome Funding Agreements

The Department will examine the operation of the Public Health Outcome Funding Agreements in 2007-08, in accordance with the Agreement's requirements.

The review will examine performance indicator requirements under the Agreements and inform bilateral negotiations with states and territories for the next round commencing in 2009-10.