



**Australian Government**  
**Department of Health**

Ref No: MC19-000342

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Dear

I refer to your correspondence of 31 December 2018 to the Minister for Regional Services, Sport, Local Government and Decentralisation, Senator the Hon Bridget McKenzie, regarding pill testing. Your letter has been referred to the Minister for Health, the Hon Greg Hunt MP. The Minister has asked me to reply.

The Government's concern first and foremost is the safety, health and wellbeing of Australians. The Australian Government's approach to preventing and reducing the harms associated with illicit drugs is consistent with the overarching framework set out in the National Drug Strategy.

The Government does not support the use of illicit drugs, and does not in-principle support pill testing as it could imply that illicit drugs are safe. All illicit drug use contains inherent risks and even taking a known substance can result in unintended harm. Pill testing may not be able to identify all components in an illicit substance and does not take into account any underlying health conditions a person may have, or interactions with any other substances or medications a person may have taken.

Decisions around the use of pill testing at events is largely a matter for state and territory governments to determine as drug laws concerning the possession, supply and manufacture of illicit drugs are within their remit.

I trust this information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'DL', written over a large diagonal watermark.

David Laffan  
A/g First Assistant Secretary,  
Population Health and Sport Division

27 February 2019