

CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL SECRETARIAT: SURVEY OF CHEMICAL INDUSTRY

1. Introduction

At the Government-Industry Conference against Chemical Weapons, held in Canberra in September 1989, the Australian Foreign Minister announced that the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade was proceeding to establish a National Secretariat to act as a nucleus for the future National Authority of the CWC. The Minister stated that the Secretariat, in consultation with appropriate Federal and State Government departments, would be responsible for reviewing existing laws and regulations covering the activities of the Australian chemical industry, and looking for ways to introduce and adapt the prospective requirements of the CWC to the current regulatory matrix.

The first task of the Secretariat was to develop a strategy to prepare Australia for national implementation of a CWC. The strategy comprises a program of consultation and research leading to the development of a package of implementation measures which will be considered by the Australian Government at the appropriate time. A document entitled "Strategy for Preparing for the Implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention in Australia" was presented to the Conference on Disarmament in February 1991 (CD/1055).