Industry Perspective and Approach to Nanosafety

Presentation to Platform Technologies Research Institute
2009 Annual Symposium Program

July 14 2009
Australian Nanotechnology Companies

- pSivida: a global nanotechnology company
- cap-XX
- ANTARIA: an advanced materials world
- Digital power for the NEXT MOBILE GENERATION
- Universal Biosensors
- Starpharma: ...leading in nanomedicine
- nanochem: Wastewater Treatment
Australian Companies: a Prudent Approach

Major Australian construction materials manufacturer explored use of carbon nanotubes 2004-2008

- Performed literature search on OH&S issues and safety best practice prior to any development work
- Performed audit of materials handling procedures, and sought detailed information from materials suppliers
- Ultimately used nanotubes only when dispersed in solvent; kept all dry materials at arms’ length

Large Australian research facility developed laminate using carbon nanotube-encrusted mats

- Performed rigorous internal audits; held work up for over 12 months
- Redesigned facility to ensure no exposure of R&D team to nanotubes
- Ensured nanotubes were locked into resin structure
Summary: Australian Industry Approach

Australian industry is aware of the issues and adopting a pragmatic approach which protects employees and consumers.

- OH&S for nanomaterials is an immediate issue, but needs to be properly handled. In most areas, existing mechanisms are suitable. Most nanotechnologies for medical applications pose no threat, and are well governed by the TGA.

- It is appropriate to treat certain nanomaterials – carbon nanotubes for example – as new materials, and be very cautious in using these.

- Even with novel materials in industries not governed by the TGA, there are materials handling approaches which eliminate the risk by avoiding exposure.