



Office of Hon Peter Dunne

MP for Ohariu

Minister of Internal Affairs

Associate Minister of Health

Associate Minister of Conservation

16 DEC 2015

Mr Mark Allen

fyi-request-2980-6a86241d@requests.fyi.org.nz

Ref. 1530276

Dear Mr Allen

Thank you for your further email of 17 November 2015 to the Minister of Health, Hon Dr Jonathan Coleman, about the safety of hydrofluorosilicic acid (HFA) used to fluoridate community water supplies. I am responding as the matters you raise fall within my portfolio responsibilities as Associate Minister of Health. I appreciate that there are strongly held views on water fluoridation and that this can be a controversial issue for some people.

I understand that the Ministry of Health has responded to you twice on this matter. The Ministry's position on community water fluoridation is determined by a body of scientific evidence and reviews, and by the position of international bodies such as the World Health Organization.

I am advised that in its letter of 23 September 2015 to you, the Ministry referred you to the August 2014 report *Health effects of water fluoridation: A review of the scientific evidence*, published on behalf of the Royal Society of New Zealand and the Office of the Prime Minister's Chief Science Advisor.

In particular, sources cited on pp. 22-24 of this report discuss the safety of fluorine containing compounds, including HFA. As you will see, HFA is effectively 100 percent dissociated to form fluoride ions under water treatment conditions. The report notes that fluoride ions in solution in water are identical regardless of their source.

Fluoride compounds, including HFA, used in water treatment in New Zealand are purchased from chemical supply companies and conform to industry standards for quality and purity. The Ministry has already advised you how to access the industry standards, which are part of the guidelines supporting the *Drinking-Water Standards for New Zealand 1995 (Revised 2008)*.

I can add nothing further to the advice and information you have received both from me and the Ministry and feel that our correspondence has canvassed this issue as thoroughly as possible.

Yours sincerely

Hon Peter Dunne

Associate Minister of Health