



CARBON MONOXIDE IN FISH

PURPOSE

This document provides general advice to fish processors and importers in interpreting and applying the requirements on the use of carbon monoxide in accordance with the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code (the Food Standards Code).

WHAT IS THE CONCERN?

It has been reported that some fish processors are using carbon monoxide during fish processing operations.

Carbon monoxide treatment of fish is of concern because of its potential to mislead consumers by hiding the age and condition of fish.

AMENDMENT TO THE FOOD STANDARDS CODE

A recent amendment to the Food Standards Code expressly prohibits the use of carbon monoxide in the processing of fish where its use results in a change or fixes the colour of fish flesh.

This amendment takes effect on **5 June 2014** with no stock in trade provisions.

CARBON MONOXIDE PROHIBITION PROVISIONS FOR FISH IN THE FOOD STANDARDS CODE

STANDARD 1.3.3 PROCESSING AIDS CLAUSE 3A expressly prohibits the use of carbon monoxide in the processing of fish where a change or fixing the colour of fish flesh would occur.

STANDARD 1.3.1 FOOD ADDITIVES, which regulates the use colours and colour fixatives in food, does not permit the use of carbon monoxide in fish.

WHAT CARBON MONOXIDE IS PERMITTED TO BE PRESENT IN FISH IN THE FOOD STANDARDS CODE?

Residual carbon monoxide that is present in fish as a result of being present in smoke that is used to process fish as a food is permitted.

Carbon monoxide that is naturally present in fish is permitted.

LABELLING

All fish that has been smoked must be labelled to identify that it has undergone a smoking process.

STANDARD 1.2.2 FOOD IDENTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS requires that the name or description of the food must accurately describe the food, and must not be misleading.

If the food is not normally required to be labelled, then the name of the food must be displayed on or close to the food at point of sale or be provided to the purchaser when requested.