

**PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY QUESTION ON NOTICE**

**Department of Health**

**Senate Select Committee on COVID-19**

**Australian Government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic**

**13 May 2020**

**PDR Number: IQ20-000226**

**Question Subject:** PPE shortages

**Type of Question:** Written

**Questioner:** Senator Gallagher

**Question:**

Are you aware of any PPE shortages?

**Answer:**

The Department of Health is aware of national and international shortages of personal protective equipment (PPE) due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As per IQ20-000020 the Department is not aware of instances where safety has been compromised.

The Department believes that the most significant initial concern in relation to PPE, the provision of masks, has now been satisfactorily addressed with substantial purchases by the National Medical Stockpile, states and territories and the private market. Remaining pressure on the supply of gloves and disposable gowns is being addressed with orders expected to arrive in coming weeks.

The Australian Government has invested up to \$3.2 billion since March 2020 to secure essential additional PPE stocks and other medical equipment and supplies to help in preventing the transmission of COVID-19. The Department of Health has also been working with the Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources to build onshore manufacturing capability of PPE.

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**13 May 2020**

**PDR Number:** IQ20-000227

**Question Subject:** Tasmanian Governments access to PPE National Stockpile

**Type of Question:** Written

**Senator :** Katy Gallagher

**Question:**

When did the Tasmanian Government seek access to the PPE national stockpile?

**Answer:**

The Tasmanian Government requested access to the National Medical Stockpile (for the purposes of COVID-19) on 24 March 2020, 17 April 2020, 4 May 2020 and 12 May 2020.

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**Department of Health**

**Senate Select Committee on COVID-19**

**Australian Government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic**

**13 May 2020**

**PDR Number: IQ20-000230**

**Question Subject:** Outbreak in NW Tasmania

**Type of Question:** Written

**Senator:** Katy Gallagher

**Question:**

Did the Federal Government have any concerns with the infection control measures in NW Tasmania at any time during this outbreak?

Was the outbreak in Northern Tasmania discussed at AHPPC meetings?

**Answer:**

The Australian Government was not involved in infection control measures in NW Tasmania. The Australian Government provided support for Australian Medical Assistance Teams (AUSMAT) and Defence medical assistance teams to manage the hospital while regular staff were in quarantine.

The Tasmanian Chief Health Officer provided regular updates on the NW Tasmania outbreak at AHPPC meetings.