PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY QUESTION ON NOTICE

Department of Health

Senate Select Committee on COVID-19

Australian Government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic

02 June 2020

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Question Subject: Performance of the App

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Senator: Rex Patrick

Question:

Senator PATRICK: Just to be clear: there are state leaders that are pushing for the download, and that's part of the take-up campaign as opposed to the very narrow question I'm asking, which is about performance as measured by health officials—not by politicians but by health officials—as to its actual use. Maybe you could take on notice whether you've had any feedback at all—not from the DTA but from state health authorities—as to the performance of the application?
Ms Edwards: I can certainly take it on notice, but, as I said, there is no real data from lots of jurisdictions because they haven't had any cases. Victoria in particular put out public information, and we've had nothing but positive views about it from the bureaucrats in the health departments and from the medical officers who are involved in it. I don't think there'd be much more to come back to you on because of the happy situation we're in, with so few infections.

Answer:

The Commonwealth is constrained with respect to its ability to access COVIDSafe data to assess the performance of the App. The *Privacy Amendment (Public Health Contact Information) Act 2020* provides that the data store administrator (which the Secretary has determined to be the Digital Transformation Agency) may only produce de-identified statistical information about the total number of registrations through COVIDSafe.

The Department of Health receives occasional feedback from the state and territory health authorities on the performance of the COVIDSafe App. NSW, Victoria and Tasmania have confirmed that they have made use of the App.

The Department of Health is in discussions with the state and territory public health authorities on developing a common reporting platform that will provide feedback on the App's performance.