

Submission No. 156

(Inq into Obesity)

JE 4/10/09.

6 January 2009

Mr Steve Georganas M.P.
Chair
House Standing Committee on Health and Ageing
Inquiry into Obesity in Australia
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Mr Georganas,

Submission to the Inquiry into Obesity in Australia

I respond to the invitation to provide submissions to the Inquiry into Obesity in Australia.

In relation to your terms of reference, I offer the following suggestions:

- Greater emphasis to be given to fast food (junk food) being made healthier, especially by reducing the salt, the sugar and the saturated fat content.
- Labelling of fast food products to be improved and prominently displayed in fast food (junk food) outlets, including McDonalds, Hungry Jacks, KFC, Red Rooster, Krispy Kreme Doughnuts, bakeries, fish and chip shops and supermarkets.
- Nutrition Information Panels in Australia be made easier to read and understand. At the moment, unlike the United States, they may be printed on coloured, glossy backgrounds.
- Introduction of pack labelling, such as the Traffic Light Labelling system as used in the United Kingdom, to provide the consumer with simple, clear information on nutrients such as sugar, salt and fat content.
- More participation in, and promotion of, physical activity and sport across all age sectors.
- Regular health screening in schools, as conducted in previous years, as a preventative measure or early diagnostic tool to achieve a healthy weight and other positive health objectives in children.
- *In situ* workplace health screening should be promoted to foster greater awareness of preventative health issues. Some councils and larger

private employers have already implemented such schemes. The assessment can include assistance regarding weight control and lifestyle issues.

If these measures were introduced to lower the level of chronic ill-health, the load on and cost of the medical and hospital systems would be reduced and individuals' quality of life improved.

I have also forwarded an electronic copy of my submission to The Secretary of the Committee.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "R B Such". The letters are cursive and connected.

Bob Such MP JP
Member for Fisher