

## Senate Committee: Community Affairs Committee

### QUESTION ON NOTICE

**Supplementary Budget Estimates 2022-2023**  
**Outcome: 1 - Health Policy, Access and Support**

**PDR Number:** SQ23-000077

**Question Subject:** Climate active tick correspondence

**Type of Question:** Spoken, Hansard page 85, 16 February 2023

**Senator:** Hollie Hughes

#### **Question:**

Senator HUGHES:

The department acknowledged a letter came from the department of health suggesting that by giving a legal company a tick, just because part of their business is a tobacco business—not even their whole business now, but part of their business is a tobacco business—regardless of them reaching the emission standards and climate action, the department of health suggested the tick be removed.

Prof. Kelly: As I said, it's my area of the department which is working with climate change. The one thing I do know is we are involved and engaged with the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and water in relation to assessing our own climate impact as a department. That's what I thought you were referring to.

Senator HUGHES: No.

Prof. Kelly: In terms of writing to private companies, and particularly private tobacco companies—

Senator HUGHES: No, writing to fellow departments. It wasn't written to British American Tobacco. It was written to the Climate Active tick agency, through the department of climate change and energy. I would like the letter from the department of health that went to DCCEEW telling them to remove the Climate Active tick from British American Tobacco, which has occurred despite them complying with all conditions required for the tick. I would like tabled a copy of the letter—I appreciate you managed to take it on notice—that was sent from the department of health to DCCEEW, telling them to remove or advising them it would be beneficial to remove British American Tobacco from the program.

Prof. Kelly: I will take that on notice.

Prof. Murphy: We'll take that on notice.

Senator HUGHES: And perhaps take notice, whichever part of the department of health took it upon itself to write this letter, do they plan to further these letters across industries that perhaps the department of health does not deem worthy of being endorsed? Perhaps fast food, the sugar industry, the alcohol industry.

Prof. Kelly: We'll take that on notice.

**Answer:**

In August 2022, officials from the Department of Health and Aged Care (the department) raised Climate Active's certification of British American Tobacco with officials from the Department of Climate Change, Energy Efficiency and Water (DCCEEW) in response to correspondence from a member of the public.

The department provided advice to DCCEEW regarding Australia's international obligations as a party to the World Health Organization Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC) including the requirements of Article 5.3 of the WHO FCTC, and the guidance published by the department on Article 5.3 of the WHO FCTC (the Article 5.3 Guide).<sup>1</sup>

For further information see DCCEEW response to SQ23-000522 and SQ23-000657 (Senate Environment and Communications Committee).

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<sup>1</sup> Available at: [Guidance for Public Officials on Interacting with the Tobacco Industry \(health.gov.au\):  
www.health.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/2019/11/guidance-for-public-officials-on-interacting-with-the-tobacco-industry.pdf](https://www.health.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/2019/11/guidance-for-public-officials-on-interacting-with-the-tobacco-industry.pdf)