

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Additional Estimates 2010-2011, 23 February 2011

Question: E11-031

OUTCOME 1: Population Health

Topic: PLAIN PACKAGING

Written Question on Notice

Senator Bernardi asked:

- a) Can the Department rule out the possibility that plain packaging might increase dangerous illicit or counterfeit tobacco consumption and the risk it poses to consumers of tobacco products? (12 percent of tobacco is currently being illegally purchased and counterfeited, according to Price Waterhouse Coopers, 2009)
- b) What studies have been conducted, by whom and can you please make that report available?
- c) What risks does illicit tobacco pose to minors who are trying to access illicit or counterfeited cigarettes?
- d) What studies have been conducted, by whom and can you please make that report available?

Answer:

- a) The Department does not accept the validity of the 2009 PriceWaterhouse Coopers report commissioned by the tobacco industry, which does not include a detailed or transparent methodology.
- b) The Department is not aware of any published studies on plain packagings impact on the illicit trade in tobacco products.
- c) The smoking of any tobacco product, licit or illicit, is harmful to the health of the smoker and those around them.

If the question relates to the personal safety of minors seeking to buy illicit tobacco products, this question should be directed to a law enforcement agency.

- d) The Department is not aware of any peer-reviewed studies on this issue.