

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Additional Estimates 2010-2011, 23 February 2011

Question: E11-051

OUTCOME 1: Population Health

Topic: PLAIN PACKAGING

Written Question on Notice

Senator Ryan asked:

- a) Prior to the Government's announcement of 29 April 2010, did the Department conduct any consultations with small retailers about the impact of plain packaging for tobacco products on their business?
- b) Who did the Department consult with and when?
- c) What advice did the Department receive?
- d) Was the Department consulted before the announcement of the 29 April concerning plain packaging of tobacco products? If so, when? If not, why not?
- e) Was the Minister consulted before the announcement of the 29 April concerning plain packaging of tobacco products? If so, when? If not, why not?

Answer:

- a) Prior to the Government's announcement of 29 April 2010, consultation on tobacco control reforms, including plain packaging of tobacco products, was undertaken by the Preventative Health Taskforce.
- b) The dates of consultations and the list of organisations and individuals who provided submissions to the Preventative Health Taskforce are set out at Appendices 3 and 4 to the 'National Preventative Health Strategy – the roadmap for action' available at [www.preventativehealth.org.au](http://www.preventativehealth.org.au)

Since April 2010, the Department has conducted targeted consultations with organisations representing small retailers about the implementation of plain packaging, particularly handling issues in a retail setting, as follows:

<b>DATE</b>	<b>ORGANISATION CONSULTED</b>
20 January 2011	Council of Small Business of Organisations of Australia
20 January 2011	Australian Newsagents' Association
21 January 2011	Master Grocers Association
21 January 2011	Service Stations Association
21 January 2011	Tobacco Station Group
8 February 2011	National Independent Retailers Association

- c) Publicly available submissions from small business to the Preventive Health Taskforce indicated concerns about possible commodification of cigarettes, counterfeiting and the financial impact of a reduction in tobacco consumption on small businesses for whom tobacco is a core product.

Subsequent public communications and direct communications from small business organisations to the Department have reiterated these concerns. In addition, concerns about the handling of generic product in a retail setting and interactions with state and territory retail display restrictions have been raised.

- d) Yes. The Department was consulted on an iterative basis in the lead up to the Government taking a decision.
- e) The Department is not able to answer this question on behalf of the Minister.