

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Budget Estimates 2012-2013, 30 & 31 May and 1 June 2012

Question: E12-391

OUTCOME 1: Population Health

Topic: Cigarette Plain Packaging

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Number of pages: 1

Senator: Senator Bushby

Question:

Can the Department please state the following in regards to the newly implemented plain-packaging on cigarettes:

- Whether it has received any representations from small business retail associations on concerns that they have on the government's implementation timeframe for plain packaging
- What the Department's response was to these concerns
- Whether the Department has provided any advice to the health minister or small business minister in regards to this?
- If so, on what date was this advice given?

Answer:

The Government is aware of the concerns of small business retailers and is working to ensure that the tobacco plain packaging legislation is effectively implemented whilst minimising the impact on retailers and small businesses.

The Department of Health and Ageing consulted with a number of stakeholders during the development of the legislation and has received submissions and correspondence from retailers and peak body organisations on the plain packaging implementation timeframes. The concerns raised were considered by the Department when it developed the legislation.

In the Senate, the Government introduced amendments to allow a longer lead time for implementation and to extend the sell-through period from six weeks to two months. This will assist retailers to plan for the commencement of plain packaging and will allow them a longer time to sell non-compliant stock. The Government does not intend to further extend the timeframes for the implementation of the legislation.

The Department has provided advice on a number of occasions to both the Minister for Health, the Hon Tanya Plibersek MP and the Minister for Small Business, the Hon Brendan O'Connor MP on the plain packaging implementation timeframes.