

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Additional Estimates 2011-2012, 15 February 2012

Question: E12-388

OUTCOME 8: Indigenous Health

Topic: REDUCTION IN INDIGENOUS SMOKING RATES

Written Question on Notice

Senator Boyce asked:

The Government has claimed that slight reductions in Indigenous smoking rates are due to the Tackling Indigenous Smoking Initiative.

- a) Can the Department confirm that the data collected as part of the ATSI (*sic*) Health Performance Framework is the latest data on Indigenous smoking rates?
- b) When was this data collected, and what period does it pertain to?
- c) How is this rate calculated?

Answer

- a) The Indigenous Australian smoking data for 2008 reported in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Performance Framework Report 2010 (HPF) is the most up to date data available. The data source for the HPF is the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2008 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey (NATSISS).

The 2010 National Drug Strategy Household Survey (NDSHS) reported smoking prevalence by Indigenous status, however this data cannot be compared to the 2008 data due to survey methodological issues and the small sample sizes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the NDSHS.

The next update on Indigenous Australian smoking statistics will be collected as part of the ABS National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey (NATSIHS) which will be in the field from mid 2012, with results due for release in 2013-14.

- b) The 2008 Indigenous smoking data was collected from the 2008 NATSISS. The 2008 NATSISS was conducted during August 2008 to April 2009.
- c) The Indigenous smoking statistic reported in the HPF is the proportion of Indigenous Australians aged 15 years and over who currently smoke at least once a week.

The HPF reports the crude rate for people aged 15 years and over who currently smoke at least once a week. The HPF reports crude rates but uses age standardisation to derive a ratio when comparing the non-Indigenous and Indigenous populations. Due to the different age profiles of the Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations age standardisation is a data adjustment used to enable comparison between the populations.