

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Additional Estimates 2011-2012, 15 February 2012

Question: E12-179

OUTCOME 14: Biosecurity and Emergency Response

Topic: TORRES STRAIT TB CLINICS

Written Question on Notice

Senator Boyce asked:

- a) Has DoHA conducted any risk assessments or any analysis in relation to the increased risk to Torres Strait Island residents of exposure to PNG nationals carrying TB into the islands in the absence of TB screening and TB clinics?
- b) What was the result of such an assessment?
- c) If no such work has been conducted, why hasn't it?

Answers:

- a) A report (Torres Strait Treaty Zone Health Partnership Review) was completed for the Department of Health and Ageing in November 2007. This built on reports provided to AusAID in June and November 2004 which were provided to the Torres Strait Joint Advisory Council. These reports examined, inter alia, the communicable disease (including tuberculosis) risks in the Torres Strait.
- b) In 2008 the 18th Papua New Guinea-Australia Joint Ministerial Forum commissioned the Torres Strait Health Issues Committee to develop a Joint Package of Measures to address cross border health concerns identified in the 2007 report. The Australian component of the Joint Package of Measures was funded in the 2009-10 Budget.
- c) Not applicable.