

**Senate Community Affairs Committee**

**ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**HEALTH PORTFOLIO**

**Additional Estimates 2014 - 2015, 25 February 2015**

**Ref No: SQ15-000082**

**OUTCOME:** 1 - Population Health

**Topic:** Alcohol Policy

**Type of Question:** Written Question on Notice

**Senator:** Di Natale, Richard

**Question:**

In 2013-14 the budget for DoH's Drug Strategy Program was \$258.8 million. For 2014-15 the budget was reduced to \$160.98 million, with further reductions forecast at approximately \$130 million for 2015-16 to 2017-18. This has resulted in almost half a billion dollars of cuts over 4 years. Why is the Government cutting half a billion dollars of funding from the alcohol and other drug services and programs across the country over the next 4 years?

**Answer:**

The Australian Government remains committed to building safe and healthy communities by minimising alcohol and other drug related harms among individuals, families and communities.

The Machinery of Government changes in late 2013 resulted in the transfer of Commonwealth Indigenous policies and programmes, and associated appropriations, to the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C).

Through this process, responsibilities and funding associated with priority areas 2, 3, and 4 of the Substance Misuse Service Delivery Grants Fund under the Department of Health Drug Strategy Programme were transferred to PM&C, resulting in a reduced budget for this Health Programme, but not a reduction in the overall total funding.

Budget appropriations for funding under the Department of Health Drug Strategy Programme from 2015-16 to 2017-18 and beyond are yet to be determined by the Government.