

Senate Community Affairs Committee
ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
FAMILIES, HOUSING, COMMUNITY SERVICES AND
INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS PORTFOLIO
2011-12 Budget Estimates Hearings

Outcome Number: 7

Question No: 206

Topic: Assessing Linkages Between Program Activities and Improved Health

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Marise Payne asked: The ANAO audit of the Fixing Houses for Better Health Program identified the lack of development of effective monitoring procedures to measure the impact that achievement of the program objectives actually had on health outcomes. The ANAO recommended this be taken into account in making assessments of the contribution to improved environmental health by the housing investments made under the National Partnership Agreement on Remote Indigenous Housing. FAHCSIA agreed, 'with qualification'.

What were the qualifications?

Answer:

The qualification outlined in the FaHCSIA response to the recommendation is set out under the ANAO Section 19 Report, and is copied below:

"The Department considers it to be ineffective for the relatively small scale FHBH program to attempt to measure overall health improvements within Indigenous communities, as community health improvements are impacted by many external factors outside of the FHBH program."

As set in response to Question on Notice 207, the National Partnership Agreement on Remote Indigenous Housing (NPARIH) established a ten year remote Indigenous housing strategy. The NPARIH includes agreed performance indicators that will be used to measure progress against the objectives of the agreement. Many of the performance indicators cover key contributors to improved health outcomes, for example through measuring reductions to overcrowding, effectiveness of tenancy management and repairs and maintenance systems.

In addition, health outcomes are assessed annually by the Council of Australian Governments Reform Council as part of the performance report on the *National Indigenous Reform Agreement (Closing the Gap)*.