

## Senate Standing Committee on Community Affairs

### ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Australian Bureau of Statistics

Supplementary Budget Estimates

21 October 2011

Question No: 2

Topic: ABS – National Indigenous Health Equality Council

Hansard Page: 21/10/2011, page 31

Senator Scullion asked:

Senator SCULLION: Ms Van Halderen, you would be aware of the other issues that these advisory groups have provided to you.

Ms Van Halderen: I would have to take that on notice and provide you with more information on that, Senator. The only thing I would like to add is that the ABS also takes into account for all of its surveys what we call provider load and whether the load that we place on these members of the public is to be providing information. They are already being asked to provide information for the main survey. They are also involved in the physical activity and nutrition part of the survey, and the biomedical component—the blood and urine—is the third component of the survey. In addition to what my colleagues at health have said, we were concerned about the response rates and the load that we may get from that segment and therefore would we get meaningful results?

**Answer:**

Concerns regarding potential sensitivities and associated poor response were first raised by members of the National Indigenous Health Equity Council (NIHEC) during a presentation to the Council on 10 December 2009 as part of the first round of stakeholder engagement on the survey. The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) subsequently tested the feedback provided by NIHEC with the National Advisory Group on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Information and Data (NAGATSIHID), the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO) and the AATSIHS Indigenous Technical Panel (ITP) before making a final methodological decision. No additional issues impacting on the potential participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander were identified by these groups.