

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Supplementary Budget Estimates 2015 - 2016, 21 October 2015

Ref No: SQ15-000928

OUTCOME: 1 - Population Health

Topic: Professor Davidson Report on Tobacco Plain Packaging

Type of Question: Hansard Page 113, 21 October 2015

Senator: Leyonhjelm, David

Question:

Senator LEYONHJELM: Well, Professor Sinclair Davidson from RMIT University in Melbourne has. He has taken the rolling 12 months, if you like, from 1 December, and he calculates that the change from one period to the next, following the introduction of plain packaging, was a reduction in tobacco clearances of 0.8 per cent. Can I put on notice a request for you to please look at that result and get back to us?

Dr Studdert: Is Professor Davidson's report available, Senator?

Senator LEYONHJELM: Yes, it is. It was not in a peer-reviewed journal, on the other hand. All he did was analyse the data, so it is not really subject to—well, you can analyse the data yourself, if you like. But I am more than happy to provide you with the source of that information.

Dr Studdert: Thank you.

Senator LEYONHJELM: Now, that has certain consequences in terms of the Tobacco Refund Scheme operated by Customs. Obviously, there are also issues in relation to refunds that occurred around that time. Because I have seen the paper by Professor Sinclair Davidson and you have not, I will not question you any further about that. But, if I give you this paper and the background to it, can I please ask you to take on notice questions in relation to the reliability of the 3.4 per cent reduction that you have quoted on your website?

Answer:

The specifics of this analysis are a matter for the Department of Treasury.