

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Supplementary Budget Estimates 2015 - 2016, 21 October 2015

Ref No: SQ15-000930

OUTCOME: 1 - Population Health

Topic: Smoking Trends and Taxation

Type of Question: Hansard Page 115, 21 October 2015

Senator: McLucas, Jan

Question:

Senator McLUCAS: Fantastic. Thank you. In terms of the trend for the 14-plus and the 18-plus cohorts, I am trying to get an understanding of how the trend is going compared to particular points in time. I take your point about the cumulative effect of a number of measures, Dr Studdert, but is there some way you can provide us with a time series, perhaps that goes from about 2009 through to now?

Mr Bowles: We could probably even go back a bit earlier on some of this. There are some good graphs that show the decline over the last 15 or 20 years, and it is quite steady. So we could take that on notice.

Senator McLUCAS: Thank you. Speaking of international comparisons, the level of tax charged on tobacco in Australia compared with other countries, how do we fare there?

Dr Southern: The rates are within the advisory band, if you like, from the World Health Organization, through the framework convention on tobacco control. But we would have to take on notice the actual comparison with other countries.

Mr Bowles: I think we are equivalent to some, and better than others. But we will take it on notice.

Answer:

The following table shows the declining trend in smoking prevalence for those aged 14 years and older and 18 years and older from 1991 to 2013¹.

	1991	1993	1995	1998	2001	2004	2007	2010	2013
14+ years	24.3	25.0	23.8	21.8	19.4	17.5	16.6	15.1	12.8
18+ years	25.0	26.1*	25.0	22.7	20.0	18.2	17.5	15.9	13.3

* Data is for the 20+ age group as it was recorded by age range (14-19, 20-24, etc) in 1993.

Please refer to the response provided to Question on Notice SQ15-000819 in relation to international comparisons on the level of tax charged on tobacco products.

¹ AIHW National Drug Strategy Household Survey data from 1991 to 2013.