

Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Amendment Bill 2023

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Committee Secretary
Health and Environment Committee
Parliament House
George Street
Brisbane QLD 4000

31 March 2023

Dear Chair

**SUBMISSION TO TOBACCO AND OTHER SMOKING PRODUCTS
AMENDMENT BILL 2023**

Drug ARM is a specialist non-government organisation working to reduce the harms of alcohol and other drugs in Queensland and Australia through the provision of quality, evidence informed awareness, rehabilitation and management programs.

We welcome the opportunity to comment on the *Tobacco and Other Smoking Product Amendment Bill 2023*. While we do not have specific comments on the new legislation, Drug ARM does take this opportunity to express our support for the introduction of these public health measures and caution against any claims that the measures will significantly increase the illicit tobacco trade.

Meaningful progress to reduce the harm of smoking has been made in Queensland, with smoking rates halving over the past 25 years due to successful preventative health measuresⁱⁱⁱ. This is a positive shift, however there is more work to be done to achieve the reduction in smoking rates noted in the National Preventative Health Strategyⁱⁱⁱ.

Smoking tobacco remains the number one preventable cause of death and disease in Queensland and contributed to 8.5% of the disease burden across Australia in 2018^{iv}. Smoking harms nearly every organ of the body and lifelong smokers lose, on average, a decade of life^{vivii}. For non-smokers, exposure to second-hand smoke causes cardiovascular and respiratory diseases, cancers and adverse effects to infants and children^{viii}.

Proposed Legislation

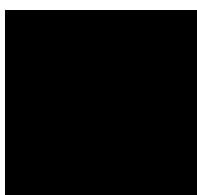
Because of the harm that tobacco causes and its potential to cause harm particularly to children and people exposed to second-hand smoke, Drug ARM recognises that the proposed measures are an appropriate part of Queensland's response to managing tobacco.

Illicit Tobacco Trade

Drug ARM cautions against claims that increasing public health measures will fuel the illicit tobacco market. A recent study from Aotearoa/New Zealand found that despite industry claims, illicit tobacco trade did not increase following a steep rise in the tobacco excise tax and the introduction of plain packaging^{ix}. In Australia, the illicit tobacco trade is also relatively low. A recent Australian Government survey found that the proportion of people who smoke without plain packaging (4.9%) has not changed between 2010 and 2019^{xi}. Further, the Australian Taxation Office estimating the net tax gap on tobacco excise and customs duty at 6.2%

Thank you once again for the opportunity to raise these issues with you.

Yours sincerely



Jody Wright
Executive Director

ⁱ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. (2014) National Drug Strategy Household Survey detailed report: 2013. Available from: <http://www.aihw.gov.au/publication-detail?id=60129549469&tab=3>

ⁱⁱ Public Health Association of Australia. (2018). Top 10 public health successes over the last 20 years. Available from: <https://www.phaa.net.au/documents/item/3241>

ⁱⁱⁱ Australian Government Department of Health. (2021) National Preventative Health Strategy 2021 – 2030. Available from: https://www.health.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/2021/12/national-preventive-health-strategy-2021-2030_1.pdf

^{iv} Greenhalgh, EM & Winnall, W. 3.30 Total burden of death and disease attributable to tobacco by disease category. In Greenhalgh, EM, Scollo, MM and Winstanley, MH [editors]. Tobacco in Australia: Facts and issues. Melbourne: Cancer Council Victoria; 2021. Available from <https://www.tobaccoinaustralia.org.au/chapter-3-health-effects/3-30-total-burden-of-death-and-disease-attributable-to-tobacco-by-disease-category>

^v US Department of Health and Human Services. The health consequences of smoking: A report of the Surgeon General. Atlanta, Georgia: US Department of Health and Human Services, Public Health Service, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 2004. Available from: http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/sgr/index.htm.

^{vi} Jha P, Ramasundarahettige C, Landsman V, Rostron B, Thun M, et al. 21st-century hazards of smoking and benefits of cessation in the United States. 2013; 368(4):341-50. Available from: <https://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMsa1211128>

^{vii} Banks E, Joshy G, Weber MF, Liu B, Grenfell R, et al. Tobacco smoking and all-cause mortality in a large Australian cohort study: Findings from a mature epidemic with current low smoking prevalence. BMC Medicine, 2015; 13(1):38. Available from: <http://www.biomedcentral.com/1741-7015/13/38>

^{viii} US Department of Health and Human Services. The health consequences of smoking - 50 years of progress. Atlanta, GA: US Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 2014. Available from: <http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/reports/50-years-of-progress/>.

^{ix} Wilson, N., Carter, R., Heath, D., Wei, Z., Martinez, E., Robertson, L., Zhangmo, P., Bloomfield, S., Thomson, G. W., Hoek, J., & Edwards, R. (2022). Assessing cigarette smuggling at a time of border closure to international tourists: survey of littered packs in New Zealand. *Tobacco Control*, tc-2022-057603-. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.1136/tc-2022-057603>

^x Wilson, N. & Edwards, R. (2022, October 19). Smoke and mirrors: why claims that NZ's smokefree policy could fuel and illicit tobacco trade don't stack up. *The Conversation*. Available from: <https://theconversation.com/smoke-and-mirrors-why-claims-that-nzs-smokefree-policy-could-fuel-an-illicit-tobacco-trade-dont-stack-up-191753>

^{xi} Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. (2020). National Drug Strategy Household Survey 2019. Available from: <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/illicit-use-of-drugs/national-drug-strategy-household-survey-2019>