

Question on Notice
No. 104
Asked on 24 February 2005

MR PURCELL asked the Minister for Health (Mr NUTTALL)-

QUESTION:

As the grace period for tobacco laws ends on 30 March, will he advise on the level of compliance with the new legislation since 1 January 2005?

ANSWER:

On 1 January 2005, smoking bans commenced at a range of outdoor public places across Queensland. Smoking is now banned at patrolled beaches, children's playgrounds, non-residential building entrances and at major sports stadiums. These are the toughest outdoor smoking bans in the nation and match the Government's commitment to indoor smoking bans for pubs and clubs.

So far, the new indoor smoking bans include at least one third of the enclosed area of liquor licensed premises, and one third of poker machines. The 100% indoor smoking ban starts on 1 July 2006.

Queenslanders have been encouraged to report incidents of possible breaches of the new laws, by either calling the toll-free Tobacco Hotline, or completing an online form on the Queensland Health website.

Every valid possible breach is being followed-up by Queensland Health officers across the State.

During the eight week period 1 January to 25 February 2005, a total of 220 possible breaches were recorded on Queensland Health's enforcement database.

Of the 220 possible breaches, so far 145 have been fully investigated. There is a maximum 10 working day turnaround on an investigation, which during the grace period includes premise visits, verbal advice, directions, and warnings.

Of those breaches investigated, 102 (70%) were found to be compliant at the time of inspection, and 43 were found to be non-compliant. The businesses and locations which were non-compliant are currently being re-visited.

Most possible breaches are for smoking within 4 metres of a non-residential building entrance, making up 67% of all reports. Reports of smoking in enclosed places are the next most common possible breach, making up 27% of all reports.

The majority of reports of possible breaches come from the south-east corner of Queensland, with only a small minority of reports coming from northern and regional centres.

Just over 60% of all reports of possible breaches have been made via the Tobacco Hotline. The remaining reports have been made directly via the online form on the Queensland Health website.