

## **Question on Notice**

**No. 120**

**Asked on 5 March 2024**

**MR J MCDONALD** ASKED MINISTER FOR HEALTH, MENTAL HEALTH AND AMBULANCE SERVICES AND MINISTER FOR WOMEN (HON S FENTIMAN)—

### **QUESTION**

With reference to legislative changes in 2023 regarding the sale of illicit tobacco—Will the Minister provide (reported separately for the period 1 July 2023 to 31 December 2023) (a) the number of monitoring and enforcement activities undertaken by Queensland Health Environmental Health Officers in the Lockyer State Electorate (Lockyer Valley Regional Council and Somerset Regional Council area including Lowood and Fernvale) and (b) the number of specific breaches, warnings and on-the-spot fines issued in each jurisdiction?

### **ANSWER**

a)

Compliance and enforcement activity is recorded by Public Health Units and reported as aggregate data by Hospital and Health Service boundaries, which differ from Council boundaries.

Nineteen retailers suspected of supplying illicit tobacco have been identified in the West Moreton Hospital and Health Service area, which includes the Lockyer State Electorate area. West Moreton Public Health Unit undertook a total of 10 inspections of these and other retailers between July and December 2023.

Five on-the-spot fines for possession/storage of illicit tobacco were issued. Illicit tobacco was seized from seven retailers, totalling 231,436 cigarettes and 107kg loose tobacco with a value of \$260,500. Written warnings and six on-the-spot fines were also issued for other offences, including display and advertising of smoking products, bongs and hookahs, and failure to display the mandatory sign. Preparation to take forward a prosecution for supply of illicit tobacco by one retailer also commenced in this period.

All seven of West Moreton Public Health Unit's authorised officers were involved in the Australian Border Force-led Harvesthome operation at the Gold Coast and the Crime and Corruption Commission-led operations: Aberdeen and Radius in the Greater Brisbane area.

On 8 August 2023, approximately 2.2 million illicit cigarettes, 366 kilos of loose-leaf tobacco and 44,000 vapes with a total value of \$4.5 million were seized from properties on the Gold Coast. On 29 August 2023, 15 residential, retail and commercial locations in Logan, Redlands and Ipswich were raided. More than 8 million illicit cigarettes and 3.74 tonnes of loose-leaf tobacco with a total excise value of more than \$14 million were seized.

b)

Between July and December 2023, Queensland Health identified 315 retailers suspected of supplying illicit tobacco across Queensland.

Over the same period, 206 on-the-spot fines for supplying or possessing illicit tobacco, displaying and advertising smoking products and failure to display mandatory signage were issued. There were 87 seizures of illicit tobacco, bongs, and vapes. Five written warnings and five improvement notices were also issued for breaches of retailers supplying or possessing illicit tobacco.