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NT WINS DIRTY ASHTRAY AWARD - AGAIN

**AMA/ACOSH DIRTY ASHTRAY AWARD
 AMA NATIONAL CONFERENCE 2017 #amanatcon**

The Northern Territory, a serial offender in failing to improve tobacco control, has been announced as the recipient of the AMA/ACOSH *Dirty Ashtray Award* for putting in the least effort to reduce smoking over the past 12 months.

It is the second year in a row that the Northern Territory Government has earned the dubious title, and its 11th “win” since the Award was first given in 1994.

Announcing the Award at the AMA National Conference 2017 in Melbourne tonight, AMA President, Dr Michael Gannon, said that it is disappointing that so little progress has been made in the Northern Territory over the past year.

“More than 22 per cent of Northern Territorians smoke daily, according to the latest National Drug Strategy Household Survey, well above the national average of 13.3 per cent,” Dr Gannon said.

“Smoking will kill two-thirds of current smokers, meaning that 1.8 million Australian smokers now alive will be killed by their habit.

“But it seems that the Northern Territory Government still does not see reducing the death toll from smoking as a priority. Smoking is still permitted in pubs, clubs, dining areas, and – unbelievably – in schools.

“The Government has not allocated funding for effective public education, and is still investing superannuation funds in tobacco companies.”

Victoria and Tasmania were runners-up for the Award.

“While the Victorian Government divested from tobacco companies in 2014, and has made good progress in making its prisons smoke-free, its investment in public education campaigns has fallen to well below recommended levels, and it still allows price boards, vending machines, and promotions including multi-pack discounts and specials,” Dr Gannon said.

“It must end the smoking exemption at outdoor drinking areas and the smoking-designated areas in high roller rooms at the casino.

“Tasmania has ended the smoking exemption for licensed premises, gaming rooms and high roller rooms in casinos, but still allows smoking in outdoor drinking areas.

“While Tasmania has the second highest prevalence of smoking in Australia, the Tasmanian Government has not provided adequate funding to support tobacco control public education campaigns to the evidence-based level. It should provide consistent funding to the level required to achieve reductions in smoking.”

Tasmania should also ban price boards, retailer incentives and vending machines, and divest the resources of the Retirement Benefits Fund (RBF) from tobacco companies, limit government's interactions with the tobacco industry and ban all political donations, ACOSH said.

It should also ban all e-cigarette sale, use, promotion and marketing in the absence of any approvals by the Therapeutic Goods Administration.

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