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NATIONAL TOBACCO CONTROL SCOREBOARD 2017
EMBARGOED UNTIL 6PM AEST FRIDAY, 26 MAY

AMA/ACOSH AWARD – JUDGES’ COMMENTS
AMA NATIONAL CONFERENCE 2017 #amanatcon

Just ahead of World No Tobacco Day 2017, it is timely to reflect on the state of tobacco control in Australia.

Australia has implemented pioneering tobacco control legislation, including plain packaging (which is now being implemented by many other countries) and strong fiscal policies. These have been significant achievements, with very welcome bipartisan support.

There is, however, increasing cause for concern that complacency appears to have set in, while the tobacco industry continues to undermine and oppose measures that will reduce smoking.

Authoritative Australian research shows that smoking is likely to cause the deaths of two-thirds of current Australian smokers. This means that 1.8 million Australians now alive will die because they smoked. It is of utmost importance that Governments avoid complacency, keep up with tobacco industry tactics, and continue to implement strong, evidence-based tobacco control measures.

At the national level, while the Australian Government deserves praise for maintaining strong policy positions, it is very disappointing that it has done so little else.

The failure to run major national media campaigns over several years is a particular concern. Australia used to be a pioneer and world leader in this crucial area, but the latest Federal Budget provides no new funding, although the Government anticipates raising more than \$11 billion from tobacco revenue in 2017-18.

Similarly, while the recent Budget at last aligns tax on roll-your-own tobacco with that on cigarettes, there has been little further action to counter tobacco industry approaches to undermining the impact of tax increases and plain packaging.

We call on the Australian Government and jurisdictions to implement the following recommendations:

- allocate adequate funding from the \$11 billion tobacco revenue to ensure strong television-led mass media campaigns at evidence-based levels, and related programs;
- ensure consistent funding for programs that will decrease smoking among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and other groups with high smoking prevalence;
- implement comprehensive action, including legislation, in line with Article 5.3 of the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) to protect public health policy from direct and indirect tobacco industry interference, and to ban tobacco industry political donations;
- ban all remaining forms of tobacco marketing and promotion and legislate to keep up with innovative tobacco industry strategies;
- positive licensing schemes for all jurisdictions; and

- Ensure further protection for the community from the harms of second-hand smoke.

Results

This year the Northern Territory is the winner of the ‘**Dirty Ashtray**’ Award, and Victoria and Tasmania are the runners up – all with an E grading.

The Northern Territory has won the award 11 times since its inception in 1994.

This year, there was no “A” rating, consistent with the reality that governments across Australia need to step up action and avoid complacency.

However, the **Queensland Government** wins the ‘**Achievement Award**’ in recognition of strong commitment to tobacco control with exceptional leadership in protecting Queenslanders from exposure to second-hand smoke.

Grade B (70 – 79 points)

Queensland

PRAISE

Outstanding leadership in protecting Queenslanders from second-hand smoke, with recent expansions of smoke free areas at major sports and events facilities, public transport waiting areas, national parks, skate parks, public swimming facilities, and pedestrian shopping malls, among other venues.

Commitment to reducing smoking among Indigenous communities with the inclusion of Indigenous people and acknowledging the role of inequity in the Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2015–2020, and three-year funding for the delivery of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Brief Intervention Training program.

Action to address smoking among high prevalence groups by supporting intensive quit smoking programs for blue collar workers, pregnant women and their partners, and people experiencing mental health issues, homelessness and unemployment.

QIC is tobacco free and Qsuper no longer owns shares in companies involved in manufacturing tobacco products.

Good progress in implementing comprehensive smoke free legislation at correctional facilities.

ACTION NEEDED/CONCERN

Allocate funding for public education campaigns at evidence-based levels for effectively reducing smoking.

Ban the exemption for high roller rooms at casinos.

Establish a simple process to implement smoke free by-laws at multi-unit strata housing.

Implement a positive licence scheme with appropriate licence fees.

Ban retailer incentives for promoting new products.

Ban employees under 18 from selling tobacco products.

Ban all electronic cigarette sales in the absence of any approvals by the Therapeutic Goods Administration.

Implement legislation in line with FCTC Article 5.3 to protect public health policy from the interference of the tobacco industry and front groups and to ban political donations.

New South Wales

PRAISE

The New South Wales Government has demonstrated a commitment to reducing smoking among Indigenous communities with the inclusion of a framework for action in the NSW Tobacco Strategy 2012–2017, and funding for interventions for pregnant women.

The Government has addressed smoking among groups with high prevalence, such as people with mental health issues, and cultural and linguistically diverse (CALD) groups.

The Government has implemented a comprehensive smoke free policy for corrective services.

Taxpayers' money is not invested in tobacco companies and there is legislation to ban tobacco industry political donations.

Smoke drift is regarded as a cause of nuisance or hazard and there are smoke-free model by-laws that can be implemented at multi-unit strata housing.

ACTION NEEDED/CONCERN

Increase funding to evidence-based levels for strong public education programs.

Action to end smoking in all outdoor dining and drinking areas. Eliminate the exemption of smoking in high roller rooms in casinos and address loopholes in legislation on VIP lounges in licensed venues.

Implement a positive licence scheme with appropriate fees.

Ban retailer incentives, price boards, and employees under 18 from selling tobacco products in retail outlets.

Ban all electronic cigarette sales in the absence of approvals by the Therapeutic Goods Administration.

Implement measures to protect public health policy from the interference of the tobacco industry and front groups in line with FCTC Article 5.3.

South Australia

PRAISE

Leadership through strong and robust mass media programs at evidence-based levels.

Commitment to address smoking among Indigenous communities through implementation of a comprehensive framework for action for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, targeted social marketing programs, tailored communication strategies and culturally secure Quitline services.

The South Australian Government does not directly invest taxpayers' money in tobacco companies and Funds SA is currently tobacco-free.

ACTION NEEDED/CONCERN

Maintain investment in strong public education campaigns.

Further protection from second-hand smoke by banning smoking in outdoor drinking areas, entrances and exits to public buildings and areas adjacent to ventilation ducts.

Strengthen restrictions on tobacco sales and marketing by banning price boards, retailer incentives, vending machines and employees under 18 from selling tobacco products in retail outlets.

While the South Australian Tobacco Control Strategy 2017–2020 has committed to implementing a smoke-free policy in all South Australian prisons by 2020, only one prison is currently smoke-free.

Implement legislation consistent with the FCTC Article 5.3 to ban political donations and to limit the interactions of Government with the tobacco industry, lobbyists and front groups.

Implement a comprehensive ban of all electronic cigarette sales, use, promotion and marketing in the absence of any approvals by the Therapeutic Goods Administration.

Grade C (60 – 69 points)

Australian Capital Territory

PRAISE

The ACT Government has shown leadership in protecting the community from exposure to second-hand smoke with comprehensive smoke-free policies at outdoor dining and drinking areas, gaming rooms and high-roller rooms in casinos.

Strong restrictions on tobacco sales and marketing, including positive licence scheme and bans on point of sale display of tobacco products, price boards, vending machines and retailer incentives.

The ACT was the first government to divest from the tobacco industry and implemented a responsible investment policy.

The ACT Government has demonstrated commitment with the FCTC Article 5.3 as ACT Health has implemented a procedure for managing submissions from the tobacco industry in relation to public consultations.

ACTION NEEDED/CONCERNS

Allocate consistent funding to evidence-based levels for strong public education programs.

Implement smoke-free policies at public transport waiting areas and outdoor pedestrian shopping malls.

While detainees and staff are only permitted to smoke in designated outdoor areas, a comprehensive smoke-free policy at correctional facilities should be implemented.

Provide additional funds to support quitting in groups with high smoking prevalence, such as people experiencing mental health issues and disadvantaged communities.

Ban the sale of all electronic cigarettes in the absence of any approvals by the Therapeutic Goods Administration.

Ban employees under 18 from selling tobacco products.

Ban political parties from receiving donations from the tobacco industry, lobbyists and front groups.

Australian Government

PRAISE

Strong and continuing bipartisan commitment to tobacco control with support for plain packaging legislation, and provision of exemplar role and guidance to other countries.

Strong fiscal policies, with an annual 12.5 per cent increase in tobacco excise and the recent announcement of tax alignment increase for roll-your-own tobacco.

Appropriate evidence-based decision by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) in relation to scheduling liquid nicotine. Clear, evidence-based position statement from the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) reflecting a commitment to reducing the potential risks of electronic nicotine and non-nicotine delivery systems.

Continuing commitment to tackling Indigenous smoking.

ACTION NEEDED/CONCERNS

Despite excellent tobacco tax policies, and anticipated revenue of \$11.6 billion in 2017/18, it is disappointing that there has been no significant further investment in tobacco control.

Reintroduce funding for sustained national media campaigns at evidence-based levels.

Update plain packaging, graphic health warnings and legislation on all forms of tobacco promotion to keep up with tobacco industry developments and introduce new legislation where needed.

Ensure continuing support for disadvantaged groups, including funding for the Tackling Indigenous Smoking Program.

Implement robust legislation to ban political donations and limit interactions with the tobacco industry and front groups in line with FCTC Article 5.3.

Western Australia

PRAISE

The Western Australian Government has demonstrated strong leadership in implementing consistent funding for public education programs at evidence-based levels.

Strong stance on electronic nicotine and non-nicotine delivery systems, with sales not permitted under existing legislation.

Good progress in the implementation of programs to reduce smoking among Indigenous communities and people experiencing mental health issues and disadvantage.

ACTION NEEDED/CONCERNS

Ensure further protection for Western Australians from the harms of second-hand smoke by removing the exemptions in beer gardens in licensed premises and the high-roller international room at the Crown Casino.

Implement restrictions on tobacco sales and marketing, including banning the exemption of product display by specialist tobacconists, price boards and vending machines in restricted areas.

Ban employees under 18 from selling tobacco products.

Implement a comprehensive smoking ban at correctional facilities and implement a simple process to adopt smoke-free by-laws at multi-unit strata housing.

Provide strong support for action to reduce smoking among people with mental health issues and protect patients and staff from passive smoking.

Implement reform of the Tobacco Products Control Act WA (2006) following the 2011 review.

Implement robust legislation to ban political donations and limit interactions with the tobacco industry and front groups consistent with the FCTC Article 5.3.

Ban all electronic cigarette use in public places where smoking tobacco is prohibited, in the absence of any approvals by the Therapeutic Goods Administration.

Grade E (<50 points)

Tasmania

PRAISE

Good progress in protecting the community from exposure to second-hand smoke with smoke free outdoor dining, pedestrian and bus malls, and no exemptions for licensed premises, gaming rooms and high roller rooms in casinos.

A comprehensive smoke free policy implemented at correctional facilities with education programs and resources to support prisoners and staff to quit smoking.

ACTION NEEDED/CONCERNS

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.

Eliminate smoking designated zones in outdoor drinking areas.

Implement restrictions on tobacco sales and marketing, including bans on price boards, retailer incentives and vending machines.

While the Tasmanian Government provides funding to support pregnant women and prisoners to quit smoking, consistent funding to address smoking among Indigenous communities and people experiencing mental health issues should be allocated at evidence-based levels.

Update the 2015 Tasmania Tobacco Action Plan.

Consistent with the FCTC Article 5.3, the Tasmanian Government should 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.

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

Victoria

PRAISE

The Victorian Government taxpayers' resources and superannuation funds run by Victorian Funds Management Corporation (VFMC) have been tobacco free since 2014.

Good progress in implementing comprehensive smoke free legislation at correctional facilities.

ACTION NEEDED/CONCERNS

Investment by the Victorian Government in public education campaigns is now well below recommended levels. The Victorian Government should increase the funding to consistent and evidence-based levels for strong public education programs to produce declines in tobacco use.

Strengthen restrictions on tobacco sales by implementing a positive licence scheme with appropriate licence fees.

Ban price boards, vending machines, retailer incentives and promotional schemes for consumers including multi-pack discounts and specials.

Eliminate the exemption of specialist tobacconists and e-cigarette specialist retailers from point of sale display bans.

Consistent funding at evidence-based levels to address smoking among Indigenous communities and other high priority groups.

End the smoking exemption at outdoor drinking areas and the smoking-designated areas in high roller rooms at the casino.

The Victorian Labor and Liberal parties have stated that they will no longer accept tobacco company donations. This should be complemented by legislation to ban political donations and limit interactions with the tobacco industry and front groups consistent with the FCTC Article 5.3.

Implement comprehensive legislation to ban all electronic cigarette sales, promotion and marketing in the absence of any approvals by the Therapeutic Goods Administration.

The Northern Territory

PRAISE

The Northern Territory was the first State in Australia to implement a comprehensive smoking ban at correctional facilities.

Commitment demonstrated by the City of Darwin to protect the community from exposure to second-hand smoke by introducing a smoke-free policy at Smith Street Mall.

ACTION NEEDED/CONCERNS

The NT is the only jurisdiction that does not provide funding for public education programs. Funding should be allocated at evidence-based levels.

Eliminate smoking-designated areas at schools, government-sponsored events and music festivals, drinking areas and the exemption at the high rollers area at the casino.

Restrict tobacco sales and marketing by banning point of sale display of tobacco products, price boards, retailer incentives, vending machines and mobile and temporary outlets.

Ban the sale of tobacco products by employees under 18 and allocate resources to improve monitoring and enforcement of retailer sales to minors.

Divest taxpayers' resources from tobacco companies.

Implement robust legislation to ban political donations and limit interactions with the tobacco industry and front groups in line with the FCTC Article 5.3.

Ban all electronic cigarette sales, use, promotion and marketing in the absence of any approvals by the Therapeutic Goods Administration.

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