

Submission

No 8

**INQUIRY INTO TOBACCO SMOKING IN
NEW SOUTH WALES**

Organisation:

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Theme:

Summary

To: "heathcote@parliament.nsw.gov.au" <heathcote@parliament.nsw.gov.au>
Date: Monday, 27 March 2006 4:52
Subject: Smoking - Parliamentary Committee

Hi Paul,

Its good to see that you are on this new group. I'd like to make a few comments as a submission on this subject. I work in the health sector

and have chaired several site Smoke-free Workplace/Environment committees since 1999.

I have come to realise that smoking is by far the most hazardous to health and addictive drug, legal or otherwise, that there is. This, combined with its availability and relative cheapness (still), in my opinion makes it one of the most pressing public health issues of all.

Apart from single-type use of tobacco throughout the addicted persons waking hours, many people use a number of drugs in various quantities and combinations to achieve an altered state of mind. The one almost ubiquitous drug amongst these combinations is tobacco. People will use pot, hard drugs, alcohol, amphetamines etc etc, in different combinations, but it appears that the most common co-drug is tobacco.

As an ex-smoker some years ago, I know too well the cravings that come with tobacco use. Now as a non-smoker, I realise that the effects of passive smoking are just as hazardous. Another characteristic of smoking tobacco is that, often, the damage to health is long term and unobtrusive until its too late and the damage has been done, eg emphysema.

My recommendations?

1/ Establish a plan and timeframe in legislation to enforce a total ban on smoking in public, ANYWHERE.

2/ Enforce current legislation to ban smoking in pubs and clubs and don't cave in to insidious industry lobbyists.

3/ Target parliamentary and staff smokers, and enforcers of laws, (how many bouncers, security officers, police etc etc smoke?!!) and encourage them to show leadership in giving up this terrible habit. Think what PR this could provide!

4/ Take an initiative and lead the way in our electorate. I for one would be more than happy to volunteer my ideas, time and effort.

5/ Ban smoking in vehicles without delay. It may seem hard to enforce but its not really - if its easy for us to spot smokers in cars, how easy is it for police.

6/ Introduce BIG fines for people smoking next to children. They are killing them as well as themselves.

7/ I have no problem with increased tax on tobacco, as long as its used to minimise use and harm.

8/ Crack down on illegal black market chop-chop tobacco, as implementing item 7 will lead people to seek out cheap tobacco, which is often even more hazardous than legal.

9/ Examine the number of AHA board members who are associated with the tobacco industry. They are evil! Hello Nick Greiner and friends.

Good luck.

Peter Mason

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