

40th Anniversary 1971 - 2011

ACOSH

Australian Council on Smoking and Health



21 November 2011

PLAIN PACKAGING LEGISLATION FINALLY THROUGH LANDMARK LEGISLATION FOR PUBLIC HEALTH

Health organisations have celebrated the passage through the Federal Parliament of tobacco plain packaging legislation. The legislation had previously passed through both Houses of Parliament, but had to return to the House of Representatives for some minor amendments about timing of implementation. That has now occurred, and the Tobacco Plain Packaging Bill will now become law, requiring full implementation for all tobacco products by the end of 2012.

The President of the Australian Council on Smoking and Health (ACOSH), Professor Mike Daube, said: "This is a historic day. Plain packaging is a triumph for public health, and a catastrophe for tobacco companies.

"The Health Minister, Nicola Roxon, deserves the highest praise for sticking with plain packaging despite all the lobbying, slurs and threats of the tobacco lobby. She has rightly received all party support for a measure that will be crucial in reducing smoking in both children and adults.

"There could be no clearer signal about the dangers of smoking – which is why tobacco companies have opposed it so ferociously. They are desperately worried that the plain packaging epidemic will spread to other countries – and with good reason. They will continue to bluster and threaten legal action, but the truth is that we now have landmark legislation, and they will have to comply."

The CEO of the Public Health Association of Australia (PHAA), Michael Moore, said "We congratulate Minister Roxon and all those who have supported her on a remarkable achievement. Australia is now the undoubted world leader in action to reduce smoking, and in taking on ruthless opposition from the world's most lethal industry.

"This legislation also sends out a signal loud and clear that we can act to prevent deaths and disease, even if it offends major global industries.

"We should not forget that every year smoking still kills some 15,000 Australians – and 6 million people globally. That is why we need action – to help save the lives of hundreds of thousands of adults and children now alive."

For further information/comment

Professor Mike Daube, President, ACOSH

0409 933 933

Michael Moore, CEO, PHAA

0417 249 731

Melanie Walker, Deputy CEO, PHAA

0438 430 963