

Submission to the Vaporised Nicotine Products Bill 2017

I would like to thank the committee for the opportunity to comment on the proposed bill.

I am a 52 year old male from western Sydney. I was a “pack-a-day” smoker for over 30 years. I tried and failed to give up smoking many times using traditional methods. I gave up smoking in 2013 within days of receiving my first personal vapouriser with e-liquid containing nicotine.

I have some concerns with limiting the availability of liquid nicotine for use in personal vapourisers to 20mg/ml. I gave up smoking with a personal vapouriser using liquid nicotine at a concentration of 24mg/ml. Whether I would have had the same success using 20mg/ml I do not know.

I remained at this strength for about a year before reducing to 18mg/ml. The need to reduce happened naturally, it wasn't a planned strategy. I have slowly reduced my nicotine intake and am now at 9mg/ml.

I have recommended 24mg/ml to friends trying to give up smoking, and for some of them it has not been enough. I also know vapers who have been vaping for years who still use concentrations as high as 48mg/ml.

Heavy smokers, who are at the greatest risk of smoking related diseases, are the ones who would benefit most from higher strength nicotine liquid. The more you limit the strength, the more you limit the benefits, and the more smokers fail to give up.

It has also been reported that around 6% of vapers in the UK use concentrations higher than 20mg/ml.

Limiting the concentration of liquid nicotine would also exclude some very good beginners' devices that have proven very successful at assisting smokers to give up. These devices, for example The Juul, include a “pod” system, containing liquid nicotine in much higher strengths in excess of 45mg/ml. The “pod” style of device has the benefit of being easy to use and virtually leak free. I believe Australian smokers should have access to these types of devices.

It is also important to consider the fact that vapers “self-regulate” their nicotine levels. Forcing the use of lower strength e-liquid will only result in increased consumption to reach the nicotine dose needed. Increasing the amount of e-liquid consumed increases the risk posed by the secondary chemicals found in e-liquid.

In the UK prior to the TPD, nicotine liquid up to 72mg/ml was widely available and not classified as a poison. Despite this, very few poisonings occurred, all of which were minor, most lasting less than 4 hours.

In my opinion the increased risks posed by higher strength nicotine liquid is vastly outweighed by the potential benefits to be gained by Australian Smokers.

In conclusion, I believe low strength nicotine liquid should be removed from Schedule 7 and made available for use in personal vapourisers. I also believe that the more you limit the strength of the nicotine liquid available, the more you reduce the number of smokers who could potentially benefit from its availability.

I implore the committee to conduct its own research on this subject before making a decision. It would not be wise to make an arbitrary decision based solely on the decision made by the EU with the TPD.

Thank you again for this opportunity to comment on the proposed bill.