

Hi,

My name is [REDACTED], I have worked in the Tobacco Industry for over 17 years, with British American Tobacco and now as a Tobacco Retailer.

I would like for you to read this submission, and think about the business implications, for both current Retailers, Tobacco Manufacturers, and the Government, as a business interest as the Government raises and enormous amount of revenue from the sale of Tobacco products.

Firstly, That our Government has to have a lengthy and costly enquiry into the legalisation of E-cigs/Vapes I find amazing, considering how many Western Governments have already done this, and come to the scientific conclusion, that these products are the lesser of 2 evils, and are harm reduction products, is amazing.

I can't believe we don't seek all the scientific documents from the English Parliament, review them and then make sound business decisions that benefit our country, in a timely cost effective manner.

As a Tobacco Retailer, I get asked multiple times a day for Vaping machines, and nicotine E-liquids, and have to advise my customers that at this time, it is illegal to sell nicotine E-liquids in Australia.

Many customers advise me that they already purchase these products online, from both reputable overseas dealers, and local backyard operators.

Some of the more reputable companies, actually stockpile this in warehouses in Australia, and mail from Australia to their online customers, yet, I see no action from our government agencies to prevent this.

The drive to E-Cigs/Vapes is driven for the most part by the greed of our Federal Government, who see fit to forever increase the excise twice a year, in effect, over taxing the Australian public to fill their coffers.

At least our Government is honest in saying they are doing this to raise more revenue.

These policies however, have fuelled the illicit tobacco market, and if you ever went to a market in Sydney or Melbourne, you would find this illicit product with ease, which is costing honest Retailers/Manufacturers, and the Federal Government untold hundreds of millions of dollars in lost revenue.

If the Federal Government was a Business, they would have plugged this revenue leakage a long time ago, or the shareholders would have bailed on their shares, or had the board removed for incompetent trading.

The Federal Government really needs to look at this from a business/revenue point of view, and the answers are simple.

Get their skates on, and create simple national legislation, don't let this become a state based issue.

Remove the backyard operators from the market place, and crack down NOW on the online sites who are flouting the laws of this country, and storing this product in Australia, and posting internally to consumers.

If you don't, then there is a very high potential for badly mixed products to flood the market and create future health issues.

Think Creatively!!

What will happen when these products are legalised. What revenue base should the Federal Government be looking at by way of taxes on these products.

Who can best guarantee quality supply, and supply lines, that would bring the greatest level of transparency in the quality of product, and Tax collection on these products.

These products are now exploding in popularity, with a majority of consumers, switching between Vaping and traditional combustible products.

YOU ARE MISSING OUT ON REVENUE FOR THE FEDERAL COFFERS!

Overseas Governments are benefiting from your delay in doing something, by collecting taxes from our purchases overseas!

For what it is worth, here are some simple ideas, that would take such little time to bring to market as most of this infrastructure is already in place.

Legislate for the supply of the e-liquids.

Only allow the 3 main Tobacco Manufacturers to source and sell these through their existing supply lines, hereby guaranteeing the quality of the product, and the continued Excise revenue each Friday from the tobacco companies, as you can have them pay the excise as it moves from Bond to Market.

Leave the technology of the vaping devices to the open market, to allow smaller companies to drive technologies, while being oversighted by the relevant authorities, similar to what happens now with the Tobacco Manufacturers.

Set a realistic excise rate for the e-liquids, as many consumers will switch, or alternate between them. Many ex-smokers will take up Vaping, which will bring more revenue in the future and create a solid consumer base for these products.

SLOWLY raise the excise on these products to increase the revenue from them, as the combustible tobacco market starts to decrease in volume due to the uptake of these products due to the OVER TAXATION our Federal Government has imposed on these products.

IF you don't, then as the Tobacco market continues to shrink, the uptake of illicit tobacco, and off shore Vaping products will continue to grow, and it will be too late to regulate, or recapture the lost revenue.

Yes, there needs to be legislation put in place for all this, but as they say in the Business World, "Speed to Market" is essential for the evolution of any company to keep it ahead in the revenue curve.

Yours Sincerely