

# Tobacco

# FACTS

For MPs

## Smokefree pubs and clubs: time to end the ten years of talk

### BAR WORKERS DYING FOR CLEAN AIR

2004 marks the end of a decade of delay in which powerful tobacco-friendly vested interests have successfully lobbied the NSW Government to delay the basic health rights of bar workers – and patrons – to be protected from tobacco smoke toxins in licensed venues.

Last year, the ALP state conference unanimously passed a resolution that all pubs and clubs should be smokefree indoors by no later than the end of 2005. Even this would not be soon enough - it's time for bipartisan action to end the ten years of talk by ensuring bar workers, who are most at risk from secondhand smoke, have the same rights to clean safe air that all other workers have had for years.

Cancer Minister Frank Sartor is to be congratulated for demanding from the government's Joint Working Group by end-May 2004, a deadline for a total indoor smoke ban.



Cartoon by Marty © 2004

Find latest health and economic research at [www.ashaust.org.au/SF'03/summary.htm](http://www.ashaust.org.au/SF'03/summary.htm)

#### NEW REPORT:

#### 70 NSW BAR WORKERS A YEAR DYING FROM SMOKY WORKPLACES

A new study estimates more than 70 NSW bar workers are dying each year (more than five a month) from smoky workplaces. The report, by international secondhand smoke expert Professor James Repace, is based on conservative risk assessment analysis of research on measured smoke content in licensed venues. The report estimates annual deaths at between 73 and 97 – including 59 non-smokers. And this includes only heart and cancer deaths (not stroke and respiratory disease).

Repace, JL (April 2004), "Estimated mortality from secondhand smoke among club, pub, tavern and bar workers in NSW, Australia", report for The Cancer Council NSW at [www.cancercouncil.com.au/editorial.asp?pageid=1020](http://www.cancercouncil.com.au/editorial.asp?pageid=1020)



Barman Steve Kane won an undisclosed settlement from the Moama Bowls Club, NSW after being sacked for wearing a respirator mask to work when the club returned to smoky operation after ending a trial smoke ban. "If they can ban smoking in Parliament", Steve asks, "why can't they ban it at the local pub or RSL?"

See bar workers' campaign at [www.cancervic.org.au/prevent/smokeFreePubs](http://www.cancervic.org.au/prevent/smokeFreePubs)

### Secondhand smoke's deadly harm

Tobacco smoke, whether inhaled directly or secondhand, kills. It contains 133 known toxic substances including more than 40 known carcinogens. It causes cancer, heart disease, emphysema, asthma and many other diseases in non-smokers as well as smokers.

See Cancer Council Australia position statement at [www.cancer.org.au/documents/Position%20Statement%20Passive%20Smoking.pdf](http://www.cancer.org.au/documents/Position%20Statement%20Passive%20Smoking.pdf)

### May 2004

#### Manager survey: PUB, CLUB BOSSES ACCEPT SMOKE BAN LAWS AS INEVITABLE

Pub and club licensees and managers are worried about health dangers of smoky venues – and accept that laws banning indoor smoking are inevitable, says a new Heart Foundation survey.

- 83% of managers and licensees say restrictions on smoking are best achieved through legislation.
- 72% of managers say legislation for a total ban is inevitable.
- 80% of managers believe cigarette smoke can damage the health of their workers.
- 80% of managers believe cigarette smoke can damage the health of their patrons.

National heart Foundation of Australia survey at [www.heartfoundation.com.au/media/media\\_release\\_attitudes\\_smoke\\_free.pdf](http://www.heartfoundation.com.au/media/media_release_attitudes_smoke_free.pdf)

#### VESTED INTERESTS AND POLITICAL INFLUENCE

For the past decade there has been very powerful opposition to smokefree policies from tobacco companies as well as the Australian Hotels Association and Clubs NSW. Tobacco companies have sponsored the AHA and Clubs, and all three donate to political parties.

The most vocal opponent of smokefree workplaces is John Thorpe, President of the AHA NSW, who on ABC's Stateline (20/2/04) when, asked if AHA donations had helped secure favourable government decisions on the regulation of alcohol sales, accepted that political influence had a price – or as he put it: "Democracy is not cheap." Mr Thorpe boasts weekly access to NSW ministers.

An information bulletin for MPs from Australia's leading health organisations:



# Tobacco Facts for MPs

## SHARING THE POISON DOESN'T WORK



Cartoon by "Polly", © Hobart Mercury (by permission)

A similar "dotted line" is now in place in NSW under present "Share the Air" arrangements.

## COMPLAINT OVER WORKCOVER'S BLIND EYE TO SMOKE DANGER

Allegations of political interference in work safety authorities are about to come under scrutiny with a complaint to the NSW Ombudsman about WorkCover's inadequate response to secondhand smoke complaints in licensed venues. WorkCover NSW has powers to issue improvement notices but when it comes to bars, the complaints are sent onto NSW Health where the voluntary agreement over "Share the Air" does little to protect bar workers – and should not legally override OH&S obligations.

## HOT NEWS

### NSW LAGS BEHIND WORLD TREND

The growing world trend is for total indoor smoke bans to protect occupational and public health by making licensed venues indoor-smokefree.

Irish Republic, Norway, India, Uganda, Bhutan: **already in force**

New Zealand: **by end 2004**

Sweden: **by mid 2005**

Scotland, Netherlands, Philippines: **moving towards bans**

USA: **6 states have legislated total bans – 5 more on the way**

Bans popular, good for business:

- In New York, after more than a year of smokefree venues, trade and jobs are booming.

See official figures at [www.ashaust.org.au/SF'03/files/NYbiz0310.htm](http://www.ashaust.org.au/SF'03/files/NYbiz0310.htm)

- In the Irish Republic, bans introduced in March 2004 have been readily accepted, opposition has fallen away, and research predicts no harm to business.

See reports at [www.ashaust.org.au/SF'03/news.htm](http://www.ashaust.org.au/SF'03/news.htm) under INTERNATIONAL

## SLIM'S WIDOW AND OTHER MUSOS CALL FOR END TO DELAYS

"[Slim Dusty] had a great interest in the advancement of young artists. But he knew young people don't have the clout to get that smokefree environment. The only way you can fix it is by asking the Government to fix the law."

Country musician (and Slim's widow) Joy McKean



Joy McKean and Melinda Schneider – photo courtesy Go SmokeFree campaign

(More at [www.cancercouncil.com.au/editorial.asp?pageid=1441](http://www.cancercouncil.com.au/editorial.asp?pageid=1441))

"There is a real need to make pubs and clubs smokefree, if not for the health of bar workers and music artists, then for the thousands of Australians who endanger their health each time they get together with friends at the local pub."

Country singer Melinda Schneider

"Pubs and clubs are the workplaces for thousands of Australian workers, from bar-tenders to musicians to comedians, and it really is a gross discrimination to these people that compulsory smoking bans are not yet in place."

Jazz singer Vince Jones

ARIA award-winning Brisbane band George and popular US musician Cody Chesnutt have recently asked the audience to refrain from lighting up during their performances in licensed venues.

## GOOD NEWS



## NSW CANCER PLAN LAUNCHED

The NSW Cancer Plan launched on April 5 by the Cancer Institute NSW was welcomed by health leaders as an opportunity for a fresh effort to prevent cancer. Chief Cancer Officer of the Cancer Institute, Prof Jim Bishop, has promised to make tobacco prevention a major priority under the plan – which aims for a 1%pa reduction in smoking prevalence in NSW. The Institute supports total indoor smoke bans in all workplaces. More at the Cancer Institute website, [www.cancerinstitute.org.au](http://www.cancerinstitute.org.au)

More information: [www.ashaust.org.au/SF'03](http://www.ashaust.org.au/SF'03) or phone: (02) 9334-1823