

Chris Ogden, Director TMA, comments...

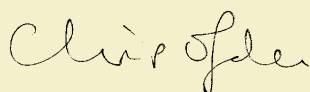


May I take this opportunity to introduce myself as the new Director of the TMA. Tim Lord left for pastures new at the end of March after serving over 5 years and I am happy to take the TMA forward.

As we highlight in this Briefing, restrictions on public place smoking are being imposed throughout the UK with Wales earlier this month, Northern Ireland at the end of April and England at the beginning of July.

Meanwhile public opinion is still not convinced that there should be complete bans on smoking in pubs and bars and the opinion polls highlighted in this newsletter show that the majority of people think the restrictions have gone far enough. At the same time independent economic research shows that pubs and bars are either going out of business or laying off staff because of the bans.

We are continuing to produce this Briefing on a quarterly basis and hope you will continue to read it. As ever, if you wish further information on any topic, please contact us.



Chris Ogden, Director

FOCUS POINT: STATUS OF SMOKING BANS

SCOTLAND

26 March 2007 marked the first anniversary of the public smoking ban. A TMA poll by Populus highlighted below, shows that most people think the restrictions have gone far enough. A study published by Oxford University Press in January and undertaken by the International Epidemiological Association of the effect of the smoking ban in Scotland found a 10% decrease in sales and a 14% fall in customers in public houses.

TMA poll, February 2007 – nine out of ten people in Scotland believe current restrictions go far enough. There is little public support for extending the ban to include private homes, private cars, open-air parks, and outside pubs and clubs. Opposition to further restrictions has increased based on comparison with a similar poll conducted by Populus last November.

FOREST questions, February 2007 – three quarters of adults in Scotland support designated smoking rooms in private clubs and bingo halls. 74% of adults in Scotland believe private clubs, including working men's clubs, should be allowed to provide a well-ventilated designated smoking room to accommodate smokers.

WALES

The public smoking ban in Wales came into force on 2 April.

NORTHERN IRELAND

The smoking ban in N Ireland will come into force on 30 April.

ENGLAND

The English public smoking ban will come into force on 1 July. The final set of regulations was published in January. Caroline Flint, the Public Health Minister, has started the 100 day countdown to the commencement of the ban and she has said that final information on the ban will be sent out to businesses after Easter.

SLTA SURVEY

A survey of SLTA members in January/February 2007 showed that one third of Scottish pubs have laid off staff as a result of the smoking ban. Drink sales remain at 11% below pre-ban levels and food is down 3%. Regulars who smoke are spending less time in the pub. 56% of licensees reported fewer visits by regulars with 30% noting fewer new customer visits – once the novelty had worn off. 81% thought their local authorities had not been helpful in assisting them in preparing for the ban.



The
Scottish
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Association

WORKING MEN'S CLUBS SURVEY

A BBC poll of 560 working men's clubs in March found a belief that 20% will be forced to close following the smoking ban. 83% thought they would lose money. 25% thought enforcement would be difficult. The smoking ban could be the "last straw" for many clubs said Kevin Smyth, the General Secretary of the Club and Institute Union.



OTHER ISSUES

ANTI-COUNTERFEIT TECHNOLOGY

The TMA welcomed the Chancellor's announcement in the Budget this year that, following extensive consultation between its member companies and HMRC, the tobacco sector's offer to incorporate anti-counterfeit technology in UK cigarette packs has been approved by Government. Covert features to be included in UK cigarette packs will allow Customs' officers with hand-held readers to establish immediately whether product is genuine or counterfeit.



In addition we have supplied posters, which warn against the purchase of counterfeit tobacco products, to tens of thousands of retailers across the UK.

RAISING THE AGE

The Government has decided that the age of sale for tobacco should be raised from 16 to 18 on 1 October this year. This legislation, which forms part of the Health Act 2006, will come into force in England and Wales. The Scottish Executive is still deciding whether to raise the age or not, though press reports say that it is likely they will follow suit. The Minister for Northern Ireland, Peter Hain, has decided not to raise the age there for the moment.



Tobacco retailers would still like to see proof of age cards made compulsory to help them identify the age of customers.

The TMA supports CitizenCard, the most widely used proof of age card in England and Wales and would like to see this encouraged by the Government together with the accompanying No ID No Sale (NINS) campaign. Over 1,500,000 CitizenCards have now been issued.



From June onwards updated NINS packs, together with a revised statutory notice that has been agreed with government, will be distributed to retailers in preparation for the raising of the age of sale. We have, and will be, contributing significantly to this exercise as a clear demonstration of our corporate social responsibility in doing all that is possible to prevent youth access to tobacco products.

LITTER

Litter is a serious problem and an unintended consequence of the smoking ban is a potential increase in cigarette litter on our streets. We believe adults who smoke should not be discriminated against. However we expect smokers, like all members of the public, to accept their responsibilities to keep our environment clean and tidy. We are looking at engaging with relevant stakeholders to develop solutions that address both our consumer and society's needs.



The TMA member companies take the issue seriously and as responsible businesses try to influence the public's behaviour via on-pack messages and the promotion of good practice. The industry supports the AIR initiative (www.airinitiative.com) which encourages the hospitality trade to provide ashtrays and other solutions on their premises. Tobacco companies have proposed the encouragement of responsible behaviour through consumer education campaigns and by providing solutions to assist in the responsible disposal of smoking-related litter.

THE MONTHS AHEAD

- **30 April** - Northern Ireland public smoking ban commences.
- **1 July** - English public smoking ban commences.
- **1 October** - The age of sale for tobacco rises from 16 to 18 in England and Wales.

Did you know?

- In 2004/05 revenue loss from all non-UK duty paid tobacco was about £4 billion.
- As at January 2007 a packet of the most popular cigarette brand in the UK cost £5.23 compared with 99 pence in Poland.
- As at January 2007 a 50g pack of hand-rolling tobacco in the UK cost £10.80 compared with £1.28 in Poland.

Who to contact at the TMA

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