



LC Paper No. CB(2)1502/05-06(01)

Independently Ventilated Smoking Room Showcase Report
Demonstrating Ventilation as an Alternative to Blanket Smoking Ban

BACKGROUND

Against the background of the Government's proposal to implement a total smoking ban in Hong Kong, British American Tobacco Hong Kong ("BATHK") and the Hong Kong Bars and Karaoke Rights Advocacy ("the Advocacy") have been working together over the past few months in undertaking ventilation projects to demonstrate that ventilation is a viable alternative to banning smoking in bars by creating a comfortable environment for smokers and non-smokers. We are delighted that the two ventilation projects have been successfully completed.

The World Health Organization and various other public health bodies have reported that exposure to secondhand smoke is a cause of various diseases. The risks they report are far lower than those associated with active smoking, but are said to be large enough to make public smoking an important public health issue.

The science on secondhand smoke and chronic diseases, such as lung cancer and heart disease, is in our view not definitive and at most suggests that if there is a risk from secondhand smoke exposure, it is too small to measure with any certainty. In fact, the largest study on secondhand smoke and lung cancer, undertaken by the World Health Organization (*Biennial Report 1996-1997, International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), World Health Organisation*) found no meaningful increase in lung cancer risk for growing up, living, working, traveling or socializing with a smoker. As such, the showcases reported herein have the unique intention of creating a comfortable environment for smokers and non-smokers and creating conditions to avoid unintended exposure to environmental tobacco smoke (ETS).

While we understand and support measures to reduce unintended exposure to ETS, we do not believe that blanket bans are desired or necessary, as there are more practical solutions – one of which being setting up effective ventilation systems in public places. Even in the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, which serves as the foundation of the Government's proposed smoking ban, there is no specific guideline on the types of venues that smoking should be banned. Due to the unique commercial and economic environment in Hong Kong, the Government's implementation of a total smoking ban in bars and other entertainment premises would not only jeopardize local business and create unemployment, but also create serious enforcement difficulties, resulting in an un-enforceable regulation.

Riding on BAT's global experience in the arena of ventilation, we have taken a very stringent approach in every step of these two showcase projects, involving both overseas indoor air quality expert and an independent qualified engineering consultant in Hong Kong. While one showcase features an independently ventilated "smoking room" that can effectively prevent tobacco smoke from "leaking" into the non-smoking area of the bar, so that non-smoking customers and staff can be protected from unintended exposure to secondhand smoke; another showcase projects aims at improving the air quality of an entire bar venue, making every corner of the premise comfortable for staff and customers even when smoking takes place. We are pleased to inform the Legislative Council that both projects have achieved satisfactory results.

SHOWCASE ONE – Independently Ventilated Smoking Room at a Bar Venue

1. Venue

EDGE, G/F, The Centrium, 60 Wyndham Street, Central

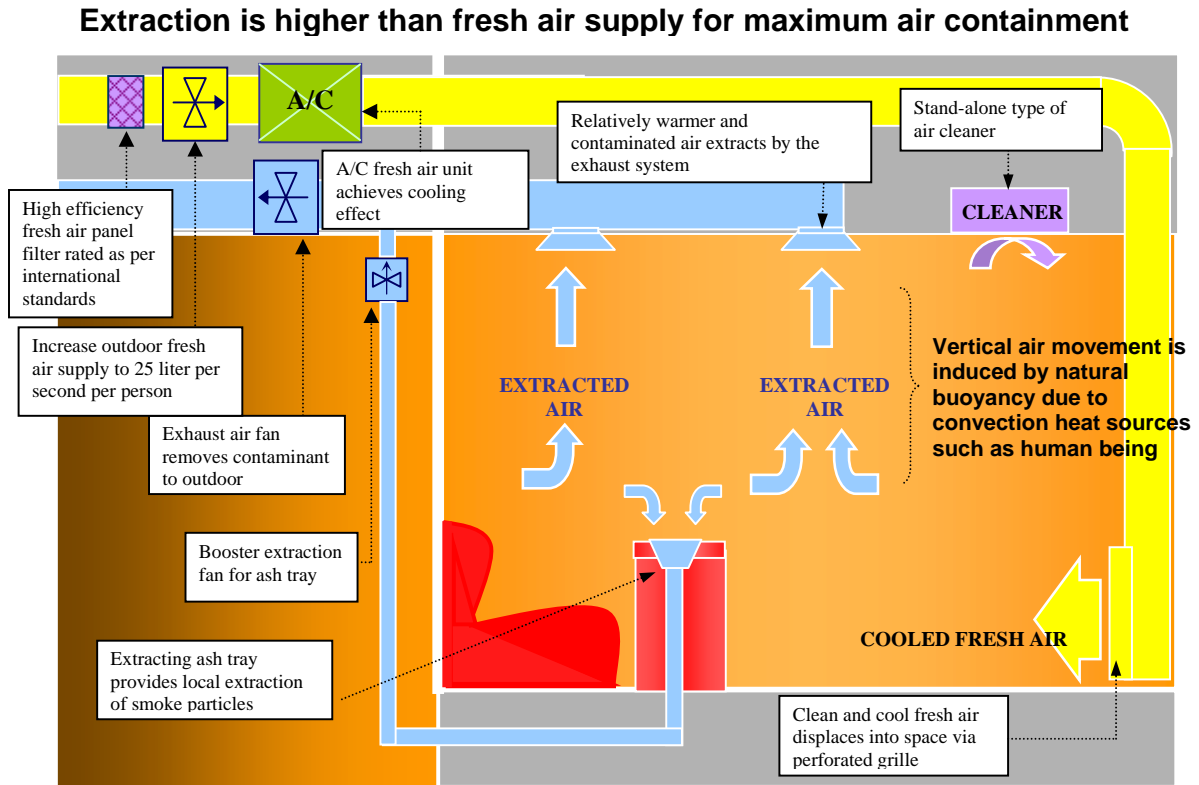
2. Objective

This independently-ventilated smoking room has been proven effective in preventing secondhand smoke drift to other areas of the bar venue and as such avoid unintended exposure to ETS. Ten minutes after smoking is interrupted the ventilation system is able to resume the indoor air quality to the levels before smoking started in the smoking room. Besides, it creates a comfortable environment for smokers with a satisfactory indoor air quality that all gases measured meet either the "Excellent Class" or "Good Class" grading of the Environmental Protection Department's "Indoor Air Quality Objectives for Offices and Public Places".

3. Key Technical Specifications

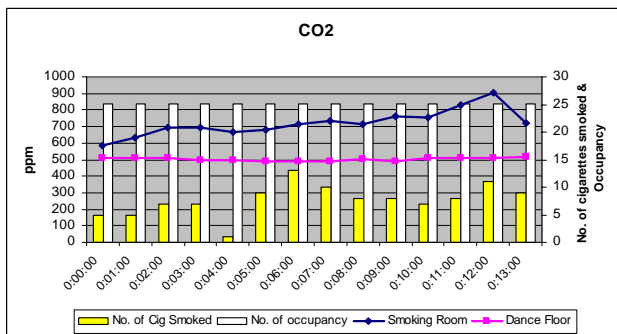
Fresh air supply:	25 litre / person / second x 30 person = 750 litre / second
Exhaust :	900 litre / second
Air change :	50 changes / hour

4. Ventilation Design Layout

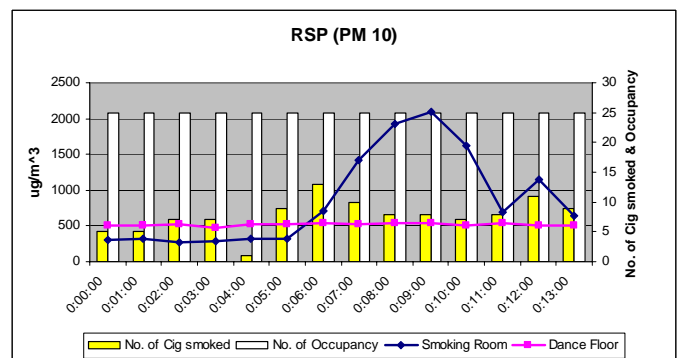


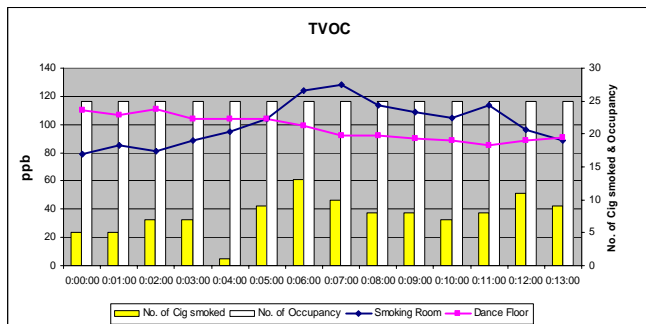
5. Preliminary Findings

a) On-site demonstration was conducted during legislators' visit to the venue on 9 March, when one of them smoked cigar which releases ETS comparable to about 20 cigarettes. Results of the real-time indoor air quality test proved effectiveness of the smoking room in preventing ETS drift to other areas of the venue and as such avoiding unintended exposure to ETS. Highlighted below are the measures of three key parameters, namely Carbon Dioxide, Respirable Suspended Particulates and Total Volatile Organic Compound, largely affected by smoking activity. No correlation can be established between the two measurements inside and outside the smoking room.



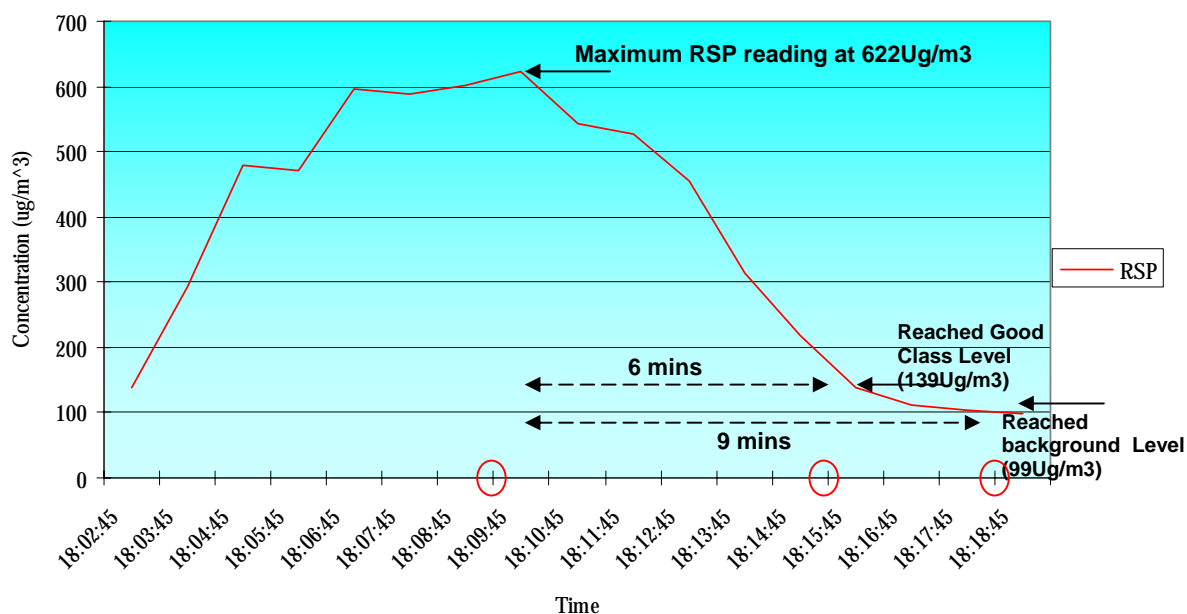
3





b) An earlier IAQ test conducted by the same EPD recommended laboratory showed that 10 minutes after smoking is interrupted the ventilation system is able to resume the indoor air quality to the levels before smoking started in the smoking room.

20 Cigarettes



SHOWCASE TWO – Full Ventilation at a Bar Venue

1. Venue

Census Bar, 19/F, Henry House, 42 Yun Ping Road, Causeway Bay

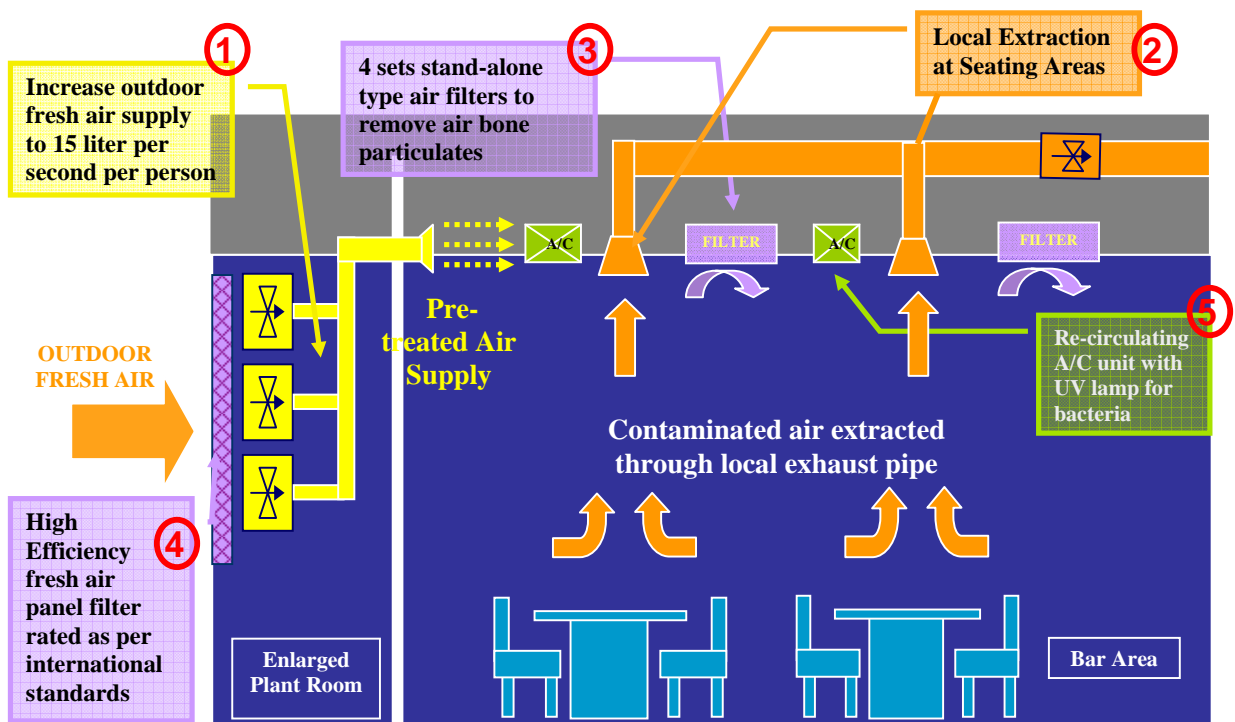
2. Objective

In this ventilation project, we have chosen a small bar venue located on the upper level of a commercial building, in which large amount of fresh air in-take could not be easily obtained. The purpose of such a choice was to test whether ventilation, under unfavorable conditions, can still reduce secondhand smoke to a comfortable level. The preliminary results indicate that an effective ventilation system can provide a comfortable environment for customers and staff.

3. Key Technical Specifications

Fresh air supply:	15 litre / person / second x 50 person = 750 litre / second
Exhaust :	900 litre / second
Air change rate :	9 changes / hour

4. Ventilation Design Layout



5. Preliminary Findings

Based on preliminary test results, this ventilation project shows that the installation of an effective ventilation system has significantly improved the bar's indoor air quality. Even in the event when heavy smoking takes place, all gases measured meet either the "Excellent Class" or "Good Class" grading of the EPD's "Indoor Air Quality Objectives for Offices and Public Places". In particular, the levels of carbon dioxide and carbon monoxide have been greatly reduced to meet the "Excellent Class" grading, indicating the efficiency of the ventilation system. The speed at which contaminants decrease when effective ventilation equipment is in use is exponential. A gas mixture behaves in exactly the same fashion as a pure gas (Dalton's Law). Therefore, any gases in ETS will behave exactly the same as carbon monoxide or carbon dioxide.

CONCLUSION

Based on the satisfactory results of the two ventilation projects, we urge the Legislative Council and the Government to revisit the currently proposed smoking arrangement in entertainment premises and take into serious consideration ventilation solution as a feasible alternative to implementing a total smoking ban. We also welcome legislators to pay visits to the two ventilation showcase venues to gain first-hand experience of the effectiveness of ventilation.

###

For further information, please contact:

Philip Ho
Head of Corporate and Regulatory Affairs, Hong Kong / Macau
British American Tobacco Hong Kong
Telephone: 3656-1283
Email: philip_ho@bat.com