

**Subcommittee on
Smoking (Public Health) (Notices) (Amendment) Order 2017**

**Government's Response to
Amendments proposed by Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung**

We note that the amendments proposed by Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung seeks to expand the coverage of the health warnings on the two largest surfaces of cigarette packet or retail container and retail container of pipe tobacco or cigarette tobacco from 85% to 90%, on the front of a retail container of cigars from 70% to 75%, and on the curved surface of a container in the shape of a cylindrical drum from 85% to 90%.

2. As stated in our response LC paper No. CB(2)1494/16-17(02), the World Health Organization (WHO) has appealed to all countries to prepare for the adoption of plain packaging (standardised packaging, i.e., 100% coverage of designated design with health warnings) for tobacco products in 2016¹. More and more countries have adopted or are working to adopt plain packaging². International experience and evidence demonstrate that the effectiveness of graphic health warnings increases with their prominence. In many countries, more smokers reported getting information about the health risks of smoking from health warnings than most other means. Studies carried out after the implementation of graphic health warnings in Brazil, Canada, Singapore and Thailand consistently showed that health warnings significantly increase people's awareness or knowledge of the harm of tobacco use.

3. Having said that, the Hong Kong Government has been adopting a multi-pronged and progressive approach on tobacco control. We have considered WHO's recommendation and the views of the trade. Our proposal has been discussed at the Panel on Health Services, with views of the trade and stakeholders collected through various channels and meetings since May 2015. Majority of the views supported the proposal of increasing the size of the health warnings to cover 85% of two largest surfaces of the packet or retail container

¹ According to paragraph 46 of the Guidelines of Article 11 of the World Health Organization Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, "plain packaging" is defined as "measures to restrict or prohibit the use of logos, colours, brand images or promotional information on packaging other than brand names and product names displayed in a standard colour and font style".

² Australia has implemented plain packaging since 2012. France, United Kingdom, Hungary, Ireland and New Zealand have also passed relevant legislations.

of cigarettes and tobacco products. Details of the process of collecting stakeholders' views are set out in LC paper no. CB(2)859/16-17(12)(Revised).

4. In view of the technical concerns expressed by the trade, we have adjusted our proposal to facilitate the trade's compliance. We consider our proposal on the coverage of health warning on the packet or retail container of various tobacco products practical and appropriate.

Food and Health Bureau
Department of Health
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