

TASKFORCESUBMISSION: submission

NAME: John Leonard

POSITION: citizen

ORGANISATION: none

SUBMISSION1: I support everything in the Discussion papers and think that they are a good range of policies that should see vast improvements in population health. However, I think there is one crucial action that should form part of the anti-Tobacco strategy which is not mentioned at all.

This is regulating tobacco additives. Tobacco on its own is only mildly addictive and very difficult to smoke (sore throat, headache, smell &c). Tobacco companies have for the past 150 years added substances to palliate the effects of tobacco smoking and to make tobacco more addictive by getting nicotine to the brain more quickly. The Government is well aware of what these additives are as a recent advertising campaign made clear ("benzene-a chemical found in paint strippers..").

What should happen is the Government require the tobacco companies to list all the additives in their products and the tobacco industry and the Government come to an agreement that over the next ten years additives will be progressively phased out, starting with the additives which increase the addictive nature of nicotine. At the end of ten years tobacco in tobacco products should be pretty much in its raw state, and the products would then be much less attractive to consumers, particularly children experimenting with smoking. This would complement all the other measures of tobacco-control proposed.

I don't think there is much danger in this proposal of underground tobacco producers springing up selling products with additives when the mainstream producers are forced to cut out the additives. I think the chemical sophistication required to treat the products with these additives would be beyond the reach of underground operators.

It's over 50 years since the links between Lung Cancer and smoking were demonstrated, and I think that the Government has a moral duty to act in every possible way to ensure that tobacco use is reduced as far as possible as fast as possible. It seems to me incomprehensible that you can't sell a tin of paint, for example, that contains poisonous substances, but that if you are a tobacco company you are allowed to sell a toxic product that contains additional highly toxic substances that increase its addictive appeal.

Reference (amongst many others): Chapter 8 Cigarette Science: Addiction by Design Jeff Fowles and Denis Shusterman in ed Peter Boyle et al, Tobacco: Science, Policy and Public Health OUP 2004

PRIVACY: yes

SUBMIT: Submit