



## Media Release

13 October 2004

### CANCER JOURNALISM AWARD ANNOUNCED

The Cancer Council Tasmania today announced The Mercury newspaper as winner of the annual Athol Meyer Award for the best media reporting of an issue in cancer control. The Award honours the memory of the distinguished Tasmanian journalist and parliamentarian who died of cancer in 1998 and is open to journalists, media professionals and health promotion professionals.

The Mercury has won this year's Award for its series "Tassie's Silent Killer" which was launched in June to draw Tasmanians' attention to the evils of smoking and its significance as a major public health issue, as well as to promote public debate on the Smoke-free legislation currently before State Parliament.

Cancer Council CEO Lawson Ride said the Mercury articles had seen a massive upsurge in public interest on this important issue which had been reflected in a major shift in political consideration.

"We congratulate the Mercury on the quality of its coverage and the impact this series has made both in the community as well as in the political arena.

"Only last week, research released in Victoria revealed that 28% of smokers were somewhat or very likely to quit smoking altogether if smoking is banned in pubs, clubs and gambling venues.

"A further 43% of smokers reported that it was somewhat or very likely that they would smoke less if smoking were banned in pubs and clubs.

"These results show that bans will help many smokers, particularly the young, to quit and reduce their risk of contracting this most insidious of cancers."

West Tamar Health and Community Service received a special Award commendation for their cancer support group promotional brochure "C" Change.

The Award was presented today in the President's Suite at the Legislative Council by Mrs Pat Meyer.

**ENDS**

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**For further information: Lawson Ride, Chief Executive Officer,  
The Cancer Council Tasmania  
Tel: 6233 2101 / 0418 129 757**