

MEDIA RELEASE

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Tobacco study showed passive smoke is retained longer

The Cancer Council Tasmania says a study from the early 1990s by UK researchers*, recently discovered in a library of British American Tobacco documents, confirms that secondhand smoke tar stayed longer in the airways.

Findings by some of the same authors cited in the report said while tar from mainstream smoke remained in the airways for 1-2 hours, secondhand smoke tar stayed for over nine hours.

Cancer Council CEO, Lawson Ride, said the report is suggesting that ETS penetrated more deeply into the lung, reaching much smaller airways, and taking longer to disappear from the exhaled breath. Deeper penetration was made possible by the smaller particle size of secondhand smoke.

“These findings add to the urgency of implementing total indoor smoke bans in all workplaces, including pubs and clubs.

“They also raise the question of what, if any, action BAT has taken to make these findings widely known. Where are the warnings from tobacco companies about the harm caused by secondhand smoke?

“Studies published just in the past few months show second hand smoke is killing a large number of Australian bar workers every year; that it causes twice the risk of heart disease previously thought; and that it raises the overall death risk by up to 15%.

“This information reinforces the LMHU’s concern that delays will just lead to unnecessary exposure – and increase the risk of expensive lawsuits against smoky venues.

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For comment please call Lawson Ride 6233 2030 or 0418 129 757

** Black A, McAughey JJ, Knight DA, Dickens CJ, Srong JC. Aerosol Science Centre, AEA Technology, Harwell. Oxfordshire, UK. (circa 1992-93) “Estimation of ETS retention in volunteers from measurements of exhaled smoke composition.” Bates no. 500831661. Online at <http://bat.library.ucsf.edu/data/w/l/h/wlh10a99/wlh10a99.pdf>*

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