

COMPARISON OF TOBACCO SMOKING PROPOSALS

MINIMUM LEGAL SMOKING AGE (MLSA) *VERSUS* TOBACCO-FREE GENERATION AMENDMENT (TFG)

Effects	MLSA Raise legal smoking age to 21 or 25	TFG Maintain no sale of tobacco to any person born from year 2000 (reviewed in 2021, 2025)
“Rite of passage”	Reinforces smoking as a “badge of coming of age” (Imperial Tobacco).	Eliminates rite of passage effects – smoking no longer “for adults”.
Acceptability messaging effect	Tobacco <u>not</u> so dangerous that it needs to be eradicated; allows industry “legal product” defence.	Tobacco so dangerous that it needs to be eradicated.
Penalizes smokers	Yes	No – smokers not penalized if found smoking.
Penalizes informal family, peer supply	Unclear	No – smokers can “bot” cigarettes from mates and family.
Complexity	Difficult for retailers to implement as they will have to do arithmetic to calculate the age of customers from their IDs.	Easy to implement as retailers only have to look at ID to see if a person was born before or after 2000.
Transition	Complicated and confusing. “Cold turkey” can be avoided only by going from MLSA(18) to TFG during transition, then MLSA(21/25).	Seamless (midnight 31/12/2017).
Reviews	Unclear – Director of Public Health said this would be onerous for him.	Reviews required in 2021 and 2025, to see whether changes need to be made; enforcement staff already available.
Community advice and education	Would be necessary – costs associated with advising retailers and community. Minimal costs of advising retailers – a letter with their annual license advice.	Would be necessary – however, as a world first (if announced soon), this would attract much free media attention raising awareness.
Effectiveness in reducing smoking rates overall.	Some initial reduction in uptake – similar to Needham in USA.	Better initial reduction in uptake because of messaging effects. Eventually eliminating smoking in all age groups, as occurred for opium smoking.
Emphasis on purveyors of harm	No. Condone industry’s denial of harming others.	Yes.
Victim-blaming	Yes – smoker made to feel at fault for their addiction.	No – emphasizes the responsibility of sellers of tobacco and industry for promoting the smoking tragedy.
Compatibility with cessation efforts	No – admission of law-breaking deters sub-21/25 addicts from seeking quit advice.	Yes – message “too dangerous at any age” encourages quitting.
What would tobacco industry prefer to maintain their sales?	BAT: “company policy worldwide is not to market to anyone under 18 years old, or more if the law in a particular country sets the age higher.” Imperial Tobacco: “we support the enforcement of legal minimum age restrictions”	Vigorously opposed by the tobacco industry – attempts to mobilize retailers, threats made (legal action, smuggling). Passes the “scream” test.
Positioning Tasmania	Follows on from other jurisdictions.	If announced soon, world first with clean Tasmania publicity globally – others to follow us.

The TFG Amendment would be far more effective in reducing smoking rates in Tasmania.