

Plain Packaging: Exposing tobacco for what it is (or What, Why and When!)



Janet Hoek, Louise Marsh and Richard Edwards

Overview

- Role of tobacco packaging
 - Evolution of plain packaging
- What we expect from plain packaging
 - How will it affect smokers and non-smokers?
- When should we implement the policy?
 - Is it logical to wait for the outcome of Australian litigation?

Why is packaging important?

Packaging used to protect products

- But now has a key role in promoting them
 - “Silent salesperson”



Countering marketing

Plain packaging - a logical response to marketing undertaken via tobacco packs

- Not a new idea (first raised in 1989)
- Discussed in Canada in early 1990s

Emerged in Australia when a political champion (Nicola Roxon) led the process

- Minister Turia NZ's counterpart



What is plain packaging?

NOT generic packaging:



What is plain packaging?

It is **dissuasive** packaging

- Designed to reduce the appeal of smoking (among other aims)



What can we expect of plain packaging?

Australian government set three aims:

- Reduced misperceptions about the risks of smoking



What can we expect of plain packaging?

- Increased prominence of health messages



What can we expect of plain packaging?

- Reduced appeal of smoking



Key outcomes from plain packaging

Higher awareness of risks and enhanced warning impact

- Larger format with fewer distractions will increase knowledge

Reduced initiation

- Non-smokers (young people) will not be enticed to experiment with tobacco
 - Key measure will be tracking trends in youth prevalence
- Trigger that will prompt some smokers to make a quit attempt
 - **But cessation is a benefit, not the primary goal**

Why act now

Government has stated implementation will occur *after* Australian litigation determined

THIS IS A PROBLEM

- Uncertain timeline (and every incentive for the tobacco industry to delay)



Why act now?

We have a very clear evidence base

- Diverse study locations, methodologies and research teams
- Strikingly consistent findings

Logic of plain packaging well established

We need to avoid industry arguments about behavioural effects

- Effects will be seen in medium term, not short-term

We cannot evaluate before we implement

In summary

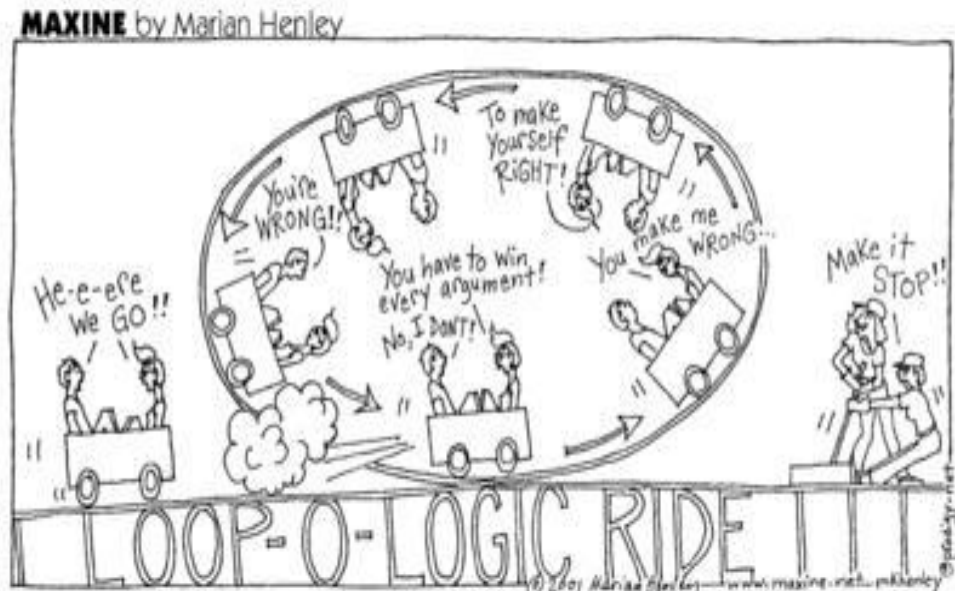
Plain packaging has a very clear evidence base

Its main effect will be deterring youth initiation

- Evidence will arise over medium-term

Industry strategy of delay and threat

- Needs to be challenged
- We have the evidence to do this!



For further information on plain packaging, please visit our website:

www.aspire2025.org.nz