

Submission from the Manawātū District Council – Proposals for the Smoked Tobacco Regulatory Regime

Responses to the questions within the Simple Submission template:

8. We are interested in understanding the needs of different areas of Aotearoa.

What is your area?

Manawātū-Whanganui

If you have any comments on the number of retailers in your area, or in another specific area please write them here.

MDC agrees with the concept that urban and rural areas should be treated differently. MDC agrees that it is important that retailers are spread throughout a region and are not clustered in lower socio-economic areas.

Do you agree with the map for your area? (Yes or No)

Any comments?

MDC understands that the maps are indicative only and not based on existing store locations. The regional map for the Manawātū-Whanganui Region provides for up to 50 retail premises. MDC supports the intention to spread retailers evenly throughout the region to meet the needs of each rural and urban area.

The indicative map suggests provision for two stores in Feilding, one on State Highway 54 just north-east of Feilding, one store near Kimbolton, one in or near Halcombe, and several stores within the Rangitikei District that are close to the boundary with the Manawātū District. However, MDC is aware that the exact location of retailers will be dependent on the outcome of the application process. MDC agrees with the submission of Te Whatu Ora that no retailers be approved in areas where there are currently no retailers.

MDC is concerned about the financial impact on current retailers that will no longer be able to sell tobacco products. For this reason, MDC seeks assurance that the Ministry is working with current retail premises to ensure that they are aware of the new requirements and the process and deadlines for becoming an approved smoked tobacco retailer.

9. What is the most important thing to consider when deciding which stores should sell smoked tobacco?

MDC considers that the most important thing to take into account when assessing an application is the proximity of the tobacco retailer to sensitive locations such as educational facilities, recreational facilities and marae. Secondly, training of employees involved in sales of smoked tobacco is also very important, particularly for preventing sales to minors and the smokefree generation.

Questions about Vaping

10. Do you agree with restricting vaping product flavour names to minimise their appeal to youth?

Yes.

11. Do you agree with extending product safety requirements for disposable vaping products.

Yes.

12. Do you agree with the proposal to restrict where Specialist Vape Retailers can be located?

Yes.

Any other comments?

13. If you have any more ideas or comments on any of the regulatory proposals, please write them here.

The Manawatū District Council (MDC) thanks the Ministry for the opportunity to provide feedback on proposals for the Smoked Tobacco Regulatory Regime (the “regulatory regime”). MDC supports the establishment of a proposed regulatory regime to oversee and monitor the import, manufacture, sale and supply of smoked tobacco products in New Zealand. MDC also supports the proposals to tighten current restrictions on vaping product safety requirements and packaging, and to consider restrictions on the location of Specialist Vape Retailers.

MDC adopted a Smokefree Policy in July 2022. The purpose of this policy is to:

- support the New Zealand Government’s goal of Smokefree Aotearoa 2025; and*
- to encourage the community to refrain from smoking in public spaces, Council facilities and public outdoor areas.*

Regulating smoked tobacco products to reduce their availability and appeal will help with the achievement of Government’s Smokefree Aotearoa 2025 goal and is therefore supported by MDC.

MDC supports information sharing on upcoming changes to the availability and appeal of smoked tobacco products. While MDC does not oppose the inclusion of an insert into all smoked tobacco product packs, this should be accompanied by a broader educational campaign by Manatū Hauora Ministry of Health.

MDC does not agree with the proposal that distributors and general retailers be required to re-register annually. MDC suggests that a re-registration frequency of 2-5 years would be more reasonable.

MDC questions how the regulatory proposals will apply to Duty Free tobacco brought into the country.

MDC supports stronger controls around vaping, particularly given their appeal to youth. MDC recommends a complete ban on disposable vapes on account of their high level of nicotine salts, health risk of lithium batteries to young children, environmental impact and because their low cost means they are more likely to appeal to young people.

Yours sincerely

Helen Worboys
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