

MEDIA RELEASE

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Tobacco company report discredited.

The Cancer Society and Hāpai Te Hauora are concerned about the erroneous use of the KPMG report to indicate the size of the illicit tobacco market in New Zealand and the use of this information to exaggerate loss of excise revenue.

The Cancer Society of New Zealand Chief Executive Mike Kernaghan said “We support evidence based measures underpinned by rigorous research methodology, a standard that this report does not achieve”

For example, the tobacco company-funded report primarily relies on surveys of 2000 discarded cigarette packs (on streets and in rubbish bins) to estimate the size of the illicit tobacco market in New Zealand. Both organisations question this method as it is likely to provide a poor estimate of all packs used by New Zealand smokers and is very inconsistent with the findings of studies not commissioned by the tobacco industry. The total market for illicit tobacco in New Zealand is likely to be much smaller than is suggested in the KPMG report.

The Cancer Society and Hāpai are also concerned how this research was utilised - it was reported widely in the media. But the report’s own authors from KPMG state that their data should not be used by those who monitor the tobacco industry or public health sectors.

Mihi Blair, General Manager National Tobacco Control Advocacy Service, Hapai adds “It is hard to support research that is funded by the tobacco industry, especially when it conspicuously goes against the general trend of research in a particular area. It makes it pretty obvious that the purpose of the report is for their own benefit and not the public. It is disappointing to see how much exposure this had in the national media”

Cancer Society and Hāpai Te Hauora both welcome the governments review of the tobacco excise tax due at the end of the year and recommend that more investment from the revenue collected from tobacco tax should be spent on minimising smoking uptake and supporting smokers to quit as we work towards Smokefree 2025.





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