

TOBACCO COMPANIES FUND EDUCATION CAMPAIGN

AUSTRALIA'S THREE MAJOR TOBACCO COMPANIES HAVE FUNDED A \$9 MILLION ACCC CONSUMER INFORMATION CAMPAIGN TO TELL CONSUMERS THAT LOW-YIELD CIGARETTE BRANDS ARE UNLIKELY TO BE HEALTHIER THAN HIGH-YIELD BRANDS.



**Cigarettes may appear to be different,
but there is no healthier choice.**

Cigarette packs use different names, numbers and colours so they all appear to be different. But what you should know is that even though light, mild and low tar cigarettes feel smoother on the throat and easier on the chest, they can deliver the same amount of toxins as full strength cigarettes. The fact is, whatever the pack colour, whatever the number, whatever they are called – all cigarettes are toxic and they all cause serious damage.

**All cigarettes
are toxic**

**Quitline®
131 848**
www.quitnow.info.au

Authorised by the Australian Government, Capital Hill, Canberra.


Australian Government

The contributions are part of court enforceable undertakings given by the companies after the ACCC considered that advertising of low-yield cigarettes was likely to have breached the misleading and deceptive conduct provision, and other sections, of the Trade Practices Act. The ACCC concluded that claims, including that low-yield cigarettes are less addictive and will reduce the risk of various smoking-related diseases, are unlikely to be true. Smokers are likely to compensate for such 'light' cigarettes by inhaling more deeply, holding smoke in the lungs for longer, covering manufactured cigarette ventilation holes with the fingers or mouth, or smoking more frequently. The smokers then obtain higher yields of tar, nicotine and carbon monoxide than indicated on the packets.

On 12 May 2005 British American Tobacco and Philip Morris provided court enforceable undertakings to the ACCC to:

- > remove 'light' and 'mild' descriptors and related numbers from all cigarettes produced for Australian consumers
- > not make claims about the health benefits of low-yield cigarettes when compared with high-yield cigarettes
- > pay \$4 million each to the ACCC to fund anti-smoking information campaigns and programs on low-yield cigarettes.

The s. 87B undertakings are available from the ACCC's public register and its website at www.accc.gov.au.

On 7 November 2005 the ACCC obtained a similar court enforceable undertaking from Imperial Tobacco Australia Limited to remove its 'light', 'mild' and similar descriptors from its products and to pay \$1 million to the ACCC towards the consumer education campaign.

The ACCC is one of the first regulators in the world to seek the specific removal of 'light' and 'mild' descriptors, which goes further than a 2001 European Directive on descriptors and the World Health Organisation's Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, which was ratified by Australia in late February 2005.

The consumer awareness campaign was launched nationally on 26 December 2005. The campaign messages extend to almost all forms of media, including all major television channels, SBS and pay TV, radio, print, internet and billboards (paper and electronic).