

media release

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For Immediate Release:

CAUTION URGED ON UNPROVEN PLAIN PACKAGING

British American Tobacco New Zealand (BATNZ) notes the news that the Government will be undertaking consultation on the draft regulations under the Smoke-free Environments (Tobacco Plain Packaging) Amendment Bill.

BATNZ hopes that the Government will review all the evidence and be cautious about progressing a measure that has failed in Australia. We believe it would be wise for the Government to await the outcome of legal challenges on plain packaging by four countries at the World Trade Organisation, before introducing plain packaging here. Indeed that has been the Government's approach to date.

"We remain strongly opposed to the plain packaging proposal in New Zealand and will await details of the regulations to be released before we explore any legal options, to defend the intellectual property of the BAT Group" says Mr Saul Derber, Head of Legal and External Affairs.

"Alternatives like the removal of the personal tobacco growing exemption as part of the Customs & Excise Act Review and introducing far tougher penalties (as in Australia) should be considered. The tobacco black market costs the Government tens of millions of dollars annually while undermining the Government's 2025 health objectives," said Mr Derber.

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