BAC-BR-18471

Professor Euan M Wallace AM

Secretary
Department of Health

50 Lonsdale Street
MELBOURNE VIC 3000

Dear Secretary

**STATEMENT OF EXPECTATIONS FOR TOBACCO AND E-CIGARETTES TEAM**

I am pleased to provide you with my expectations for the Department of Health’s (the department) Tobacco and E-cigarettes team to guide the regulator’s business planning processes.

In my portfolio as Minister for Health, I administer a range of Acts and regulations designed to promote wellbeing and to protect the health of the Victorian community. I am committed to improving the health and wellbeing of all Victorians. This includes reducing the harm from smoking, and potential harms from the emergence of e-cigarette use.

As Minister for Health, I am responsible for administering the *Tobacco Act 1987* (the Act) and this guidance should be read in the context of the objectives, obligations and functions outlined in this Act. This guidance should also be read in the context of any other legislative and on-legislative obligations on the Tobacco and E-cigarettes team.

Based on consultation with the department about the government’s priorities and emerging risks, my expectations for on the Tobacco and E-cigarettes team are as follows.

* Review the regulatory framework governing the sale of tobacco and e-cigarette products in Victoria and identify opportunities to strengthen regulation of tobacco and e-cigarette products.
* Build understanding of the businesses currently operating in the tobacco and e-cigarette market to enable targeted, risk-based compliance and enforcement activity.
* Build the capabilities of local council inspectors to be able to respond to tobacco and e-cigarette compliance issues.
* Ensure departmental documentation is accurate and reflects current laws and that accurate information about tobacco and e-cigarettes is easily accessible online.
* Improve the understanding in the community that vaping is also prohibited in smoke-free areas under the *Tobacco Act 1987* and of the dangers associated with vaping*.*
* Strengthen compliance with laws prohibiting retailers from selling e-cigarette products to young people under the age of 18.
* Engage and partner with key stakeholders and other states and territories to enable a collaborative and co-ordinated response to tobacco control related issues.

In addition, I expect all regulators in the health portfolio to commit to and action:

* Contributing to health, wellbeing, and safety outcomes for Aboriginal people and the advancement of Aboriginal self-determination.
* Climate change adaptation and enhancing health system resilience through the improvement of environmental sustainability.

I request the department’s Tobacco and E-cigarettes team to incorporate these expectations into their business plans and include milestones for when the section will meet these expectations, and report on progress. The business plans should also include appropriate milestones to review the content of this letter and to advise me when it needs to be updated or renewed. At any time, I may request that you report on meeting my expectations or issue a new statement of expectations letter.

I further request the department’s Tobacco and E-cigarettes team to undertake a light touch review of the expectations in this letter as part of their annual reporting obligations and to advise me if there are any refinements they would recommend.

I look forward to the Tobacco and E-cigarettes team working continuously towards achieving best practice in the administration and enforcement of regulation.

Yours sincerely

**The Hon Mary-Anne Thomas MP**

 1 / 7 / 2023