

MEDIA RELEASE

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LOW YIELD 'LIGHT' CIGARETTES ARE NO SAFE OPTION

Ruth Forrest MLC welcomes the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission's launch of a \$9 million consumer awareness campaign to be launched on 26 December 2005. This campaign will advise smokers that 'light' and 'mild' cigarettes are not a healthier option.

According to the ACCC, the claimed health benefits of low yield cigarettes compared to high yield cigarettes were misleading and likely to breach section 52 of the Trade Practices Act 1974. When compared to high yield cigarettes, low yield cigarettes do not provide a safer alternative, nor are they less addictive or reduce the risk of smoking-related diseases including lung cancer, cardio vascular diseases and emphysema. They don't reduce the risk of exacerbating asthma and respiratory disease nor do they assist a smoker to quit smoking cigarettes or assist the smoker in reducing the number of cigarettes consumed.

"Many smokers have been misinformed that low yield cigarettes, often referred to as 'light' or 'mild', are a safer alternative with fewer health risks. This is clearly not the case", Ms Forrest stated.

"This is further demonstrated in scientific studies that indicate that smokers are likely to compensate when smoking so called '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" Ms Forrest said.

The launch of this campaign will compliment the recently launched "Nobody Smokes Here Anymore" campaign that informs the public that from 1st January 2006, it is unlawful to smoke in pubs and clubs in Tasmania. "These campaigns will hopefully have a positive effect in reducing the number of smokers in Tasmania and also reducing the costs to the community not only financial but the high personal and health costs to all Tasmanians" Ms Forrest stated.

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For further information, please phone 0419 879 524.