

Inquiry into the Public Health (Tobacco and Other Products) Bill 2023, and the Public Health (Tobacco and Other Products) (Consequential Amendments and Transitional Provisions) Bill 2023

Canberra hearing – 2 November 2023

Questions on Notice from Senator David Pocock

Answer due COB Thursday, 9 November 2023

Australian Association of Convenience Stores

1. Please provide a breakdown of how much funding has been received from each company in the tobacco and the e-cigarette industries over the past five years?

We note that AACS was not advised prior to appearing at the Senate Inquiry that it would be required, if it appeared voluntarily, to disclose its commercially confidential information or membership arrangements. This information is not relevant to the submission that AACS has made to the Senate Inquiry or Mr Foukkare's appearance as a witness at that Inquiry.

AACS can disclose that all members contribute membership fees.

AACS members expect that any information provided to AACS will be held in the utmost of confidence, unless expressly provided for otherwise. Due to confidentiality, AACS is unable to disclose the details of its membership arrangements.

2. Please provide a breakdown of any financial contributions from the tobacco and e-cigarette industries that were received in addition to membership fees over the past five years.

AACS members expect that any information provided to AACS will be held in the utmost of confidence, unless expressly provided for otherwise. Due to confidentiality, AACS is unable to disclose the details of its membership arrangements.

3. Has AACS ever employed anyone who has previously worked for either the tobacco or the e-cigarette industries in the past five years?

As an industry association representing the convenience store channel, AACS has consistently sought to employ staff who have experience working within the industry. This includes staff that have previously worked at retail and supplier member organisations that sell legal tobacco products.

From May 2021 to April 2023, AACS engaged as a consultant Mr Ben Meredith as a strategy and policy advisor.

4. If so, what role did that person or those persons perform at AACS?

In his role as strategy and policy advisor, Mr Meredith's responsibility was to help AACS develop and deliver its strategic plan.

5. Was the salary of that person or those persons provided for by the tobacco or e-cigarette industries, either directly or through AACS via increased contributions or an agreement to use contributions to fund the salary of that person or those persons?

AACS has not entered arrangements with any member that requires it to use membership fees in any specific way. All membership fees are utilised to support the advocacy, connection & knowledge of members in the best interests of the convenience retail industry.

6. Do any employees of AACS have a sponsored pass to access Parliament House?

No

7. If yes, who are the sponsors of those passes?

N/A

8. Has AACS made any political donations in the past three years?

Information relating to political donations is publicly available by the Australian Electoral Commission.

9. If so, to which parties or individuals did AACS make donations and what is the total value of those donations?

Information relating to political donations is publicly available by the Australian Electoral Commission.