

Hello,

Firstly thanks for giving myself and others the opportunity to engage with yourselves.

I am a 67 years of age retired male who resides in the UK(more of that later), who started smoking at age 15 and consumed on average 40 cigarettes per day for a period of 44 years. Maybe for the last 10-15 I had made a series of attempts to stop smoking, some more successful than others, but all ultimately failed. I had tried these methods, cold turkey, acupuncture, hypnotherapy, Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT), Varenicline(Champix) Alen Carr 'book' , some worked better than others in my case, but all failed. I had reached the point that my belief was that nothing would work for me, and had basically 'given up on giving up'. In late 2012 by pure chance I was reading one man's account of using e-cigarettes contained within an online Pedelec Forum, this I found to be instructional and inspirational and subsequently joined a number of UK e-cigarette forums prior to taking the plunge, gathered much information and asked many questions from the willing and knowledgeable forum members. I was sceptical, but willing to try the method, lo and behold within 2 days I had stopped smoking completely, and felt completely satisfied with the devices(2), chosen flavours and nicotine strength.

This was my experience of transitioning away from cigarettes to Vaping under early 2013 UK conditions, and but for purchased bottle size and nicotine strength conditions imposed by the EU in its Tobacco Products Directive, little has changed from 2013 regarding the ease of access to products.

A number of benefits experienced over the ensuing years include

- 1) Vastly better bank account, ~savings between my wife and I are of the order of £10,000 pa. Due to not smoking and replacing with diy. E-liquids
- 2) Health benefits most immediately observed, improved breathing capacity and much reduced catarrh that caused regular sleep disturbance. Improved appetite as sense of taste was regained, skin-tone also improved from a crinkly flaky variety to something close to 'normal'

It is all too easy to forget these benefits, and for others to dismiss as fanciful and imagined, but I maintain and believe that my health was deteriorating at such a pace I wouldn't be writing this submission to you now. It is this belief that makes Vapers passionate, possibly bores, but at the end of the day they are not Smoking and fully realise the implications of a return. This also accounts for my submission to yourselves, I have empathy for my fellow Australian Vapers, as I couldn't envisage what they have had to endure, or what is proposed in Australia in the coming months.

I do not presume to know sufficient about what policies should be introduced, but simply they should allow nicotine Vaping to be made readily available for adults, without prohibitive penalties for possession or overly restrictive barriers to availability.

Simple safeguards such as childproof bottle caps and advertisement restrictions are probably all that are required .

Following my transition to a safer form of consuming nicotine in early 2013 I have followed the Politics and Scientific debate very closely, not only from a UK standpoint, this is purely out of interest to keep me as informed as is possible(although malicious opponents suggest

that such interest by Vapers must be of the paid variety). My interest has no commercial benefit for myself.

As a final comment I have largely concentrated upon Vaping in my submission, but HnB and Snus products should also come under consideration as I have experience with these also and believe they could be a valuable addition to reducing Smoking rates in Australia. I add again that I have zero connection with any tobacco company, but simply can testify that these products would definitely assist Smokers.

I have read a comment 'We are the most successful nation at reducing Smoking rates, why do we need anything else'? - this is paraphrased, but no doubt you will receive a submission along these lines from organisations who are more than happy with the status quo. Maybe from 2010-12 or so that argument may have held some water, but as smoking rates have largely stagnated in Australia since then, a far more radical, open minded approach is called for .

Gordon