



**HM GOVERNMENT OF GIBRALTAR  
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<b>PRESS RELEASE</b>
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**GOVERNMENT CLAMPS DOWN FURTHER ON TOBACCO ABUSE**

Her Majesty's Government of Gibraltar is increasing the powers available to officers of the HM Customs and the Royal Gibraltar Police to combat anti-social behaviour linked to the trade in tobacco.

The measures will include changes to the powers contained in the Tobacco Act and will principally be designed to curb anti-social behaviour generally and in residential areas in particular.

The principal measure in this respect will be the designation of residential estates as "Red Zones" under the Tobacco Act in respect of all individuals who are not residents of each estate. This will give officers enhanced powers of stop and search and the power to move people on that are associated with such zones. These changes will greatly assist in dealing with any instances of anti-social behaviour that may arise in any estate or area.

Moreover, in order to curtail the periods in which such behaviour might arise, the Collector of Customs is immediately introducing, throughout Gibraltar, a limitation on the hours in which retailer establishments can sell tobacco. The restriction, which will be a new condition on retail tobacco licences, will mean that shops can sell tobacco only in the twelve hour period from 8am to 8pm. The new hours come into effect as from midnight tonight; but they will NOT apply to supermarkets and petrol stations. A further condition that will be introduced by the Collector of Customs into retail licences will be the requirement that the total amount of cigarettes kept in any retail establishment shall be limited to 30 boxes of tobacco (ie 300,000 cigarettes or 30 Master Cases).

Retail licencees have been receiving letters delivered by hand this afternoon from the Collector setting out these new conditions on their licences.

The Government will also shortly be publishing a Bill to amend the Tobacco Act to reduce the maximum possible number of cigarettes that can be sold to any individual at any one time to 200 from the current 1,000. The Bill will also stop any changes being effected in the shareholding or directorships of companies that hold tobacco licences once anybody associated with the company has been charged with an offence contrary to the Tobacco Act. It will be proposed that the changes to the Act should also allow the Collector of Customs to suspend the operation of any tobacco licence (after having given the licencee

an opportunity to be heard) where the holder of a licence or their servant or agent has been charged with an offence relating to tobacco.

Chief Minister, Hon Fabian Picardo MP, said: "It is intolerable to me and to the Government that there should be scenes of anti-social behaviour, of people stuffing themselves with tobacco and of small "pateras" being loaded with tobacco. The Government will continue to put resources and powers at the disposal of law enforcement officers to ensure that they can control this trade and ensure that it has no repercussions on law-abiding citizens. We have made the biggest increases to the duty added to each packet of cigarettes, we have provided new vehicles for Customs, we are already working on even further measures to adequately control the tobacco trade and, in addition, the Collector has added extra restrictions on retail licences. I have solved the problem that plagued Laguna and Glacis and I am sure that with these powers our excellent law enforcement agencies will be better able to ensure that anti-social behaviour associated with tobacco sales will not blight any other residential estate in the future. If a problem were to arise, law enforcement now has the powers and the resources to deal with it - and will have such powers further boosted by the proposed changes to the Tobacco Act that I will shortly be taking to Parliament."