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**BRITISH AMERICAN  
TOBACCO**  
AUSTRALASIA

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## **BATA congratulates illegal tobacco crackdown**

British American Tobacco Australia (BATA) today congratulated the Minister Immigration and Border Protection Peter Dutton for announcing a dedicated Australian Border Force (ABF) strike team to target illegal tobacco.

BATA also welcomed the largest ever seizure of illegal tobacco yesterday by the taskforce.

BATA spokesperson Scott McIntyre said the recent large scale chop-chop and illegal cigarette seizures are testament to the professionalism, dedication and commitment of Australia's law enforcement agencies.

"Australian taxpayers are losing more than \$1.35 billion in excise revenue each year from illegal tobacco and retailers and small businesses who are trying to do the right thing are losing their hard earned profits," said Mr McIntyre.

"Illegal tobacco makes up 14.5 per cent of all tobacco consumed in this country and is smuggled into the country by organised crime.

"We applaud the work of enforcement agencies and hope they can continue to stamp out the problem on a much larger scale than ever before.

"With over 2.5 million tonnes of chop-chop and illegal cigarettes being smuggled into the country from Asia and the Middle East, there's plenty more to be done.

"We fully support the ABF and we're looking forward to seeing many more seizures of illegal tobacco in the future.

"BATA will continue to work with government and enforcement agencies to help where it can as well as ensure its retailers and partners understand that it will not tolerate any illegal tobacco activity.

"We are concerned of the link between illegal tobacco and other organised crime activities but pleased to know that the government is taking action," said Mr McIntyre.

**Media contact:** Scott McIntyre on 02 9370 1222 or follow on Twitter @ BATA\_Media