

**Don't let the taxpayer  
foot the bill for a bad Bill**

**PlainPack.com**

# **MEDIA RELEASE**

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## **No Senate vote means no legal cigarettes next year**

As the Senate failed to vote on the Tobacco Plain Packaging Bill and the Trade Mark Amendment Bill this week British American Tobacco Australia (BATA) warned there could be no legal tobacco on retailer shelves from 1 July 2012.

Minister Roxon has set such tight timeframes for plain packaging she has made it impossible for the industry to comply with the legislation stuck in the parliamentary process.

BATA has stated since June that we would struggle to comply with timings and CEO David Crow has made it clear we won't sell tobacco illegally. We have to start making plain packaged cigarettes from 20 May 2012 and have no branded packs on shelves by 1 July 2012.

BATA spokesperson Scott McIntyre said the industry had only been given details for around 70 per cent of the regulations needed to make plain packs with no detail at all on the remaining 30 per cent.

"We're a tobacco company so we've never expected favours from anyone but we're also a legal company selling a legal product and we should be treated as such," Mr McIntyre said.

"BATA will need to invest over \$30 million dollars to change machines and products to legally comply with plain packaging. A number of these machines and products need to be made and imported from Europe meaning long lead times.

"How are we meant to outlay that amount of money when plain packaging hasn't even passed through parliament? There's still so much up in the air and unclear, it's a shambles.

"We've been very clear from the start that we need 12 months to implement changes to the factory to make plain packs and another six months for them to flush through the retail outlets.

"Minister Roxon is putting immense pressure on over 30,000 retailers to sell their tobacco stock in time or face massive fines. If she doesn't shift the current timelines before the bill is eventually passed then retailers will need to take all branded tobacco off the shelves by 1 July meaning no legal cigarettes.

"No legal cigarettes will mean organised crime gangs fill the void and flood the black market with their counterfeit packs to cater for the three million smokers in Australia who will be seeking tobacco elsewhere if their local servo or shopkeeper can't provide it.

"Taxpayers will miss out on billions of dollars in tobacco excise; retailer's families will go without 30 per cent of their income while criminals will line their pockets with huge profits."

**For media inquiries:** Scott McIntyre on 02 9370 1222 or follow on Twitter @ Scott\_BATA

