

(6)

From Anne Milton MP
Minister of State for Public Health

Richmond House
79 Whitehall
London
SW1A 2NS
Tel: 020 7210 4850

Director of Corporate Affairs UK & Ireland
Philip Morris Ltd
No.1 Parkshot
Richmond upon Thames
TW9 2RD

Thank you for your email of 9 August about the cigarette packaging consultation.

I have contacted officials in the consultation team who have confirmed that your submission has been received and it will be considered as part of the consultation on cigarette packaging.

More generally, as you are aware, the UK-wide *Consultation on the standardised packaging of tobacco products* ran from 16 April to 10 August 2012. The consultation has now closed and we are carefully considering all the responses that have been received.

We want to make it easier for people to make healthy choices. To do this, we need to understand whether there is evidence to demonstrate that the plain packaging of tobacco products would have an additional health benefit, over and above existing tobacco control initiatives. The consultation asked whether standardised packaging could improve public health by:

- reducing the appeal of tobacco products to consumers;
- increasing the effectiveness of health warnings on the packaging of tobacco products;
- reducing the ability of tobacco packaging to mislead consumers about the harmful effects of smoking; and

- having a positive effect on smoking-related attitudes, beliefs, intentions and behaviours, particularly among children and young people.

To inform responses to this consultation and any subsequent policy-making, the Department commissioned *Plain tobacco packaging: A systematic review*. The review was supported through the Public Health Research Consortium (PHRC), a network of researchers funded by the Department's Policy Research Programme. The review was undertaken by academics at the University of Stirling, the University of Nottingham and the Institute of Education, London. The resulting report has been peer-reviewed in accordance with the Department's Research Governance Framework and is available on the PHRC's website at <http://phrc.lshtm.ac.uk> (click on the 'Projects' tab, followed by the 'By theme' tab and then the 'Smoking' tab and follow the link to the publication).

I would like to clarify that the Government has not made any proposals to change cigarette packaging. The Government has an open mind on this issue and any decisions to take further policy action on tobacco packaging will only be taken after consideration has been given to the consultation responses, evidence and other relevant information.

Please do contact me again if there are any further concerns.

Best wishes,



ANNE MILTON

This reply has been approved by the Minister and signed electronically in her absence to avoid delay

PS. Please do let me know if there is anything further I can do to help.