

## McCABE RULING —A HEALTH POINT OF VIEW

“From a health point of view the tactics taken by British American Tobacco, including the destruction of thousands of documents to deliberately hide potential evidence is unacceptable behaviour,” said Dr Rob Moodie, CEO of VicHealth.

The verdict delivered in this landmark case against British America Tobacco Australia in the Supreme Court is a strong move—the opening of the floodgates—to make tobacco companies responsible for the death and destruction caused by their product and their conduct.

“This court decision once again reinforces the escalating evidence backing moves to tighten controls on this industry. There’s no destroying this evidence.”

“And we’ll keep looking for every opportunity to add more support for these controls and highlight the need for tighter controls.”

“That they have deliberately destroyed documents to keep this information from the public, and the courts, and that they continue to shamelessly promote their products, and in particular to our young people— it’s about time that they were called to account,” Dr Moodie said.

“The fact that one in every two lifetime smokers die of a tobacco-caused disease and nearly **19,000** Australians die each year from the harmful effects caused by smoking continually needs emphasis. We know this has a huge social and human cost,” says Dr Moodie.

The social and economic costs of this product are far in excess of the tobacco industry’s tax contribution and are estimated to be some \$12.7billion.

“And yet year after year, tobacco companies continue to bankroll millions and millions of dollars in profits and continue to find new ways to market these products to our young people.”

“It’s about time tobacco companies pay for the health damages (and the deaths) their products have caused.”

“From a health point of view we can no longer afford to stand by and allow these companies to continue these unhealthy behaviours.”

We can only imagine the contents of those documents and we will never know the full extent of the details in those documents. These actions could deny any plaintiffs, whose health and lives have been jeopardised, and who are in the same situation as Rolah McCabe, a fair and just trial.

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