

MINUTES *forming* ENCLOSURE to

24MPO0658
MLO0900/24

**TO: HON MINISTER FOR POLICE, EMERGENCY SERVICES AND
CORRECTIONAL SERVICES**

**RE: ILLICIT TOBACCO AND VAPING—CONSUMER AND BUSINESS
SERVICES**

I refer to your correspondence dated 27 September 2024 regarding illicit tobacco and vaping.

South Australia Police (SAPOL) is investigating the involvement of organised criminal entities in the illicit tobacco trade in South Australia. This type of criminal activity has resulted in numerous acts of violence in Victoria being investigated by Victoria Police (VICPOL). SAPOL and VICPOL are working collaboratively in this regard.

Since May 2024 there have been several criminal offences reported or detected by police which are suspected to be linked to the sale of illicit tobacco and vapes in South Australia including.

- arson of vehicles
- serious criminal trespass and/or arson to business premises
- money laundering
- other acts of violence.

SAPOL, in collaboration with South Australia Consumer and Business Service (CBS) have identified 37 tobacco retail outlets across South Australia that are suspected, to be linked to illicit tobacco and vapes sales.

SAPOL commenced Operation Eclipse on 15 September 2024 to investigate serious criminal offending related to the trade in illicit tobacco and vapes in South Australia, involving extortion, arson, assaults, violence and money laundering. Operation Eclipse is working in collaboration with CBS, VICPOL, Australia Border Force (ABF) and other agencies.

SAPOL is focussed on public safety and state based criminal offending where there are links to organised criminal entities. SAPOL has identified several persons of interest who are actively being monitored with a view of effecting their arrest and prosecution. Operation Eclipse includes a public facing and overt police presence at or near tobacco stores to detect and disrupt serious criminal offending. The Serious and Organised Crime Branch is coordinating the use of statewide police assets and resources to create and maintain a hostile business environment toward the persons of interest.

SAPOL police officers are authorised officers under the *Tobacco and E-Cigarette Products Act 1997* however CBS have primary responsibility for the enforcement of this Act. This includes responsibility for any seizure and subsequent disposal or destruction of illicit tobacco and vapes.



Grant Stevens APM LEM
COMMISSIONER OF POLICE

⚡ October 2024

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Recommendation(s)	Minister's Response MLO0900/24
That the Minister Notes the contents of this Briefing.	Noted
Comments	Hon Dan Cregan MP Minister for Police, Emergency Services and Correctional Services / / 2024