

*Non-Smokers' Health Act*

sustained in order to avoid situations which could create confrontation and conflict.

Exposure of non-smokers to tobacco smoke varies greatly depending on the size of a room or other indoor areas, the number of smokers, the amount of ventilation and other factors which determine the concentration of tobacco smoke in a given location. There is, however, no doubt that exposure should and must be controlled.

In proceeding with control of smoking in the workplace there is a need to recognize that smoking is considered an addiction by smokers themselves; that smokers still constitute approximately 30 per cent of the workforce; and that the support of smokers is necessary to achieve the objective of controlling smoking in the workplace.

The approach used to achieve this objective must be carefully considered to ensure a successful voluntary compliance with such a policy on smoking in the workplace. Recognized authorities in health, education and psychology all agree that voluntary compliance based on the full co-operation of all concerned is the assured method of achieving the successful application of any new practice, behaviour or policy.

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The Department of National Health and Welfare and Labour Canada support this approach and the recent U.S. Surgeon General's report states that creating a smoke-free workplace is successfully achieved when such a policy is jointly developed by management, employees and employee organizations; is instituted in phases and is accompanied by support and assistance for smokers to quit smoking.

It is apparent that the only two ways to meet the intent of the proposed legislation are, first, to totally ban smoking everywhere federal employees are located or, second, to provide a separately ventilated smoking room at each federal worksite. Let us review each option in turn. As defined in the proposed legislation, a totally smoke-free environment would have to be provided in worksites which include federal buildings, airports, railway stations, rented or shared accommodation with employers not under federal jurisdiction and with members of the general public, penitentiaries, buildings and ships in which employees work and live 24 hours a day, and in a number of other varied work locations.

Notwithstanding these differences in worksites, work situations and employee populations, employers under federal jurisdiction would have to ensure a smoke-free environment in situations over which they have a minimum of control.

Let us now review the second option to establish separately ventilated smoking rooms in each federal worksite. Costs for establishing such rooms would vary greatly and would depend on the extent of the renovations required to each building's existing structure and ventilation systems. A recent survey indicated that public service departments are located in 30,000 worksites across Canada—I repeat, 30,000 worksites. There

are tens of thousands of other worksites under federal jurisdiction to which this legislation would also apply. The establishment of a separately ventilated room in each of these thousands of worksites, plus the ongoing expense of maintaining or renting the space required for these rooms, would result in astronomical costs to the Canadian taxpayer.

Apart from cost considerations, establishing these rooms would encourage the continuation of a habit which is recognized as harmful by all and which society is increasingly trying to discourage. The Vancouver by-law on smoking in the workplace, which is viewed by many as a most progressive approach, allows for more flexibility in establishing smoking areas. These areas can be established where agreed upon by all employees and are not limited to separately ventilated smoking rooms.

It is apparent that there are problems with these two options. Other measures must, therefore, be considered which will resolve the general issue of smoking in the workplace in a fair and responsible manner. The Government is aware of and is closely monitoring the rapidly evolving changes which are taking place in employee and public attitudes and in other employer practices and experiences on smoking in the workplace. The Minister of Labour (Mr. Cadieux) has recently issued interim guidelines to assist Labour Canada safety officers in their investigations and response to complaints regarding smoking in worksites under federal jurisdictions. These Labour Canada safety officers are responsible for the application of occupational safety and health regulations to prevent accidents and injury to health arising out of, linked with or occurring in the course of employment.

Changes are also occurring rapidly with respect to smoking in the Public Service. In 1985, the Treasury Board issued guidelines on minimizing the effects of tobacco smoke. These guidelines were jointly developed and approved by the Public Service Unions represented in the National Joint Council. It was agreed that these guidelines were an important first step in addressing the issue of smoking in the workplace and it was also agreed they would be upgraded to a more stringent standard by 1988.

In early 1986, a survey of Public Service Departments indicated that over half of the departments surveyed had developed departmental policies on smoking. The Department of National Health and Welfare, Statistics Canada and the Department of Regional Industrial Expansion were the first to implement smoking bans in the workplace. These measures have resulted in many employees quitting smoking.

In less than two years since the issuance of the Treasury Board guidelines on smoking, there has been much progress made in controlling smoking and continued progress is anticipated. I believe that such initiative should be encouraged.

I further believe that introducing legislation which imposes behavioural changes on employers and employees, without due consideration of the special and varied circumstances, and situations of which people in the workplace are aware, should