

Business Action to Stop Counterfeiting and Piracy (BASCAP), an initiative of the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), welcomes the opportunity to respond to the U.K. Department of Health (DH) on its consultation on the future of tobacco control. We support the protection of public health as an underlying principle. Our response to the consultation concentrates on the plain packaging of tobacco products and the wider implications this has for other industries.

BASCAP unites the global business community across all product sectors to address issues associated with intellectual property theft and to petition for greater commitments by local, national and international officials in the enforcement and protection of intellectual property rights.

IP rights are "a cornerstone of economic activity", hence both their significant value to their owners and the wider economy and the need for them effectively to be protected at both the domestic and international levels.

BASCAP is concerned that plain packaging requirements would increase the prevalence of counterfeit goods in the market and reduce brand owners' ability to take action against such activity, besides undermining the ability of consumers to make informed purchasing decisions. Trademarks serve these important functions in the market for all branded goods. Plain packaging requirements also are likely to increase rather than decrease burdens on already overstretched public agencies working to enforce intellectual property protections in the face of escalating counterfeiting and piracy in the United Kingdom and worldwide.

BASCAP urges the UK government to carefully consider its plain packaging proposals within the wider context of IP protection policies, laws and enforcement regimes and impacts on business and government's ability to effectively fight against the problems of counterfeiting and piracy.

For further information, please contact:

Jeffrey Hardy
BASCAP Coordinator
International Chamber of Commerce
38, Cours Albert 1e
75008 Paris, France
jhd@iccwbo.org
+33.1.4953.2827

International Chamber of Commerce

38 Cours Albert 1er, 75008 Paris, France
Tel +33 (0)1 49 53 28 28 Fax +33 (0)1 49 53 28 59
E-mail icc@iccwbo.org Website www.iccwbo.org