



Ministry of Trade & Industry,
Singapore

8 June 2020

Dear Sir

I was referred to you by Mr Norman Chong of Health Sciences Authority. I write on behalf of the Asia Pacific Travel Retail Association (APTRA), an industry association that represents the interests of the Duty Free and Travel Retail industry in Asia Pacific. I write appealing on behalf of our members for an extension of the deadline for compliance with Singapore's regulations on the plain packaging of tobacco products gazetted to come into force on 1 July 2020.

Since the COVID-19 crisis began, our industry has come to a standstill. The Asia Pacific region had to that point been leading global duty free and travel retail revenue, accounting for 45% of global duty free sales. This constituted US\$14.7 billion in GDP and supported an estimated 320,200 jobs. Singapore contributed significantly to this as a major global travel hub.¹

With the border restrictions in effect since February 2020, stock we had planned to sell by the date of compliance remains unsold. Our members are facing the prospect of having to destroy a significant amount of stock which also represents a massive loss of revenue, compounding the impact of this crisis on our industry.

As we navigate this crisis together, we remain fully committed to complying with the regulations. We had previously written to the Health Sciences Authority and were informed by the Ministry of Health that there would be no change to the deadline for compliance. However, in order to help our members mitigate the impact from being unable to sell a significant volume of stock, we humbly request your assistance to consider granting an extension of the deadline for compliance by six months from the date of the resumption of normal operations at all travel retail channels (air and maritime). We also the coexistence of tobacco products (plain and older packaging) at all travel retail channels be allowed and finally, that retailers not be penalised for selling non-plain packaging compliant tobacco products during the timeframe specified by the extension. Our members view this as a pragmatic and fair solution and we request your support in this. We remain at your disposal to answer any questions you might have or should you want to discuss this further.

We thank you for your time and attention to this request

Yours Sincerely

Sunil Tuli, President
Asia Pacific Travel Retail Association

¹ Duty Free World Council and Asia Pacific Travel Retail Association, Economic Impact Report of Duty Free and Travel Retail in Asia Pacific, October 2019