



PRESS RELEASE

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Ministerial Direction to the Business Licensing Authority on the Issue of Business Licences Relating to Trade in Tobacco

Her Majesty's Government of Gibraltar is firmly of the view that to issue new business licences to trade in tobacco, by way of wholesale and/or retail, may pose a serious reputational risk to Gibraltar and may have a negative impact on the day to day lives of those living and working in Gibraltar. In keeping with this policy, the Chief Minister issued a Direction to the Trade Licensing Authority on 24 June 2014 whereby the Trade Licensing Authority was strongly discouraged from issuing any new trade licences for retail and wholesale of tobacco unless an existing licence was surrendered, terminated or otherwise rendered permanently inactive. An exemption was made for cigarette packets sold by vending machines and for large supermarkets. This Ministerial Direction was not applied to suspended trade licences in residential areas that were being relocated to other areas by direction from the Collector of Customs (although the Direction has been applied once these licences were relocated). The Trade Licensing Authority was also strongly discouraged from allowing any movement from a residential area, (including the Town area), to an alternative location not being a designated Special Zone under the Tobacco Act.

With the commencement of the Fair Trading Act 2015 (the "Act"), the functions of the Trade Licensing Authority were transferred to the Business Licensing Authority. As a result, the Hon. Neil F Costa MP as Minister for Business and Employment, has issued a new Direction under Section 79(3) of the Act, which mirrors the Chief Minister's Direction, to direct the Business Licensing Authority in the exercise of its functions under the Act when considering business licence applications relating to tobacco. The purpose of the Direction is to assist and guide the Business Licensing Authority on the position that Her Majesty's Government of Gibraltar takes on this issue in the public interest.

For further information please contact the Office of Fair Trading on 20071700 or via e-mail at oft@gibraltar.gov.gi.