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TOBACCO TAX HIKES MAY PUT RETAIL WORKERS AT RISK

Retail NZ is concerned that the tobacco tax hike announced in yesterday's budget may make tobacco more attractive to thieves and put retail workers at risk.

“Retail crime is increasing, and it is becoming increasingly more violent,” Retail NZ General Manager Public Affairs Greg Harford said today. “Tobacco is already a key target for thieves, and we are concerned that making it even more expensive through tax hikes will make it even more attractive to criminals.

“While I understand the Government's desire to reduce smoking rates, it would be unfortunate if the tax hikes had the unintended consequence of increasing violent crime in retail stores, potentially putting owners and staff at risk of injury or worse. While any retail store selling tobacco is a potential target, the risk is particularly great in small stores such as corner dairies, which play an important part in keeping our communities vibrant.

“We expect retailers will need to look at their security arrangements as a result of the tax hike”.

For further information, please contact:

Greg Harford
General Manager, Public Affairs
Retail NZ
027 243 2842
greg.harford@retail.kiwi