

Office of Tobacco Control

National Tobacco Retail Audit – 2009 Monitoring Report

Compliance with Sales
to Minors Legislation
Tobacco Advertising
at Point-of-Sale



Office of
**TOBACCO
CONTROL**

Contents

*The Tobacco Retail Environment in Ireland –
Retailer Behaviour and Public Attitudes*

Introduction	1
Background	4
Executive Summary	5
Research Objectives	7
Retail Audit Part One: Compliance with Sales to Minors Legislation	8
Retail Audit Part Two: Retail Advertising and display at Point-of-Sale (POS)	21
Conclusions	26
Appendix 1 – Methodology: National Tobacco Retail Audit	30

Office of Tobacco Control

Willow House,
Millennium Park,
Naas, Co. Kildare.
Tel: +353 45 852 700
Fax: +353 45 852 799
Email: info@otc.ie
Website: www.otc.ie

© November 2009
ISBN 978-0-9564420

TNS mrbi

Temple House, Temple Road,
Blackrock, Co. Dublin.
Tel: +353 1 278 1011
Fax: +353 1 278 1022
Email: mrbi@tns-global.com
Website: www.tnsmrbi.ie



Introduction

This 2009 monitoring report examines the extent to which compliance levels with sales to minors legislation have changed over a 12 month period. Changes in the level of point-of-sale and display of tobacco advertising and removal of tobacco products from view are also measured since the new regulations came into force on 1 July 2009.

Research shows that the younger a person starts to smoke, the more likely they are to develop long-term nicotine addiction. Also, the earlier a child becomes a regular smoker and continues to smoke as an adult the greater the risk of developing lung cancer and heart disease. Half of all smokers will die of a smoking related disease. Given that almost 80% of Irish smokers started smoking before they were 18 years old, and that three out of every four have tried to quit but failed, the implications for the long term health of many smokers in this country are clear and stark.

As dependence most often begins during adolescence, with the most serious consequences usually occurring in later life, it therefore becomes important to prevent dependence in the first place. To achieve this, it is internationally accepted that a comprehensive and coherent youth tobacco control strategy is required. While increasing the price of tobacco products is seen as a critical component of such a strategy, greater societal intervention is also required. In particular, the introduction and enforcement of relevant legislation can limit the supply and promotion of tobacco products to adolescents.

In 2001, it became an offence to sell tobacco products in Ireland to those under-18 years. For such a policy to be effective it is critical that the vast majority of retailers comply with the legislation and that, where non compliance occurs, enforcement measures are employed. International best practice recommends a minimum compliance level of 90% plus. It is at these levels of compliance that the numbers of young people starting to smoke can be successfully reduced. This is because refusal rates in excess of 90% ensure minors encounter real difficulty in accessing tobacco products.

With the introduction of further provisions of the Public Health (Tobacco) Acts, 2002 and 2004, Ireland became the first country in the EU to introduce a complete ban on retail tobacco advertising and display. This became law on 1 July 2009.

The international code of advertising practice condemns all forms of advertising that could have the effect of harming children and young people, or of bringing them into unsafe situations that seriously threaten their health.

Key measures introduced under the Public Health (Tobacco) Acts, 2002 and 2004 are:

- No advertising or display of tobacco products will be permitted in a retail premises that sells tobacco products;
- Retailers must ensure that their tobacco products are stored out of view, within a closed container or dispenser only accessible by the retailer and retail staff;
- The retailer may use a pictorial list (in accordance with regulations) to inform a member of the public aged 18 years and older who intends to purchase a tobacco product as to the products that are available;
- Retailers must display a sign at their premises informing the public that tobacco products may be sold at those premises to persons aged 18 years and over;
- Self-service vending machines are prohibited except in licensed premises and registered clubs and must be operated in accordance with Regulations;
- All retailers of tobacco products must register with the Office of Tobacco Control (OTC).

Ongoing, independent monitoring and evaluation of programmes is necessary to assess the effectiveness of existing measures, identify new measures to be considered, and to ensure best use of available recourses.

In August 2009, the OTC commissioned TNS mrbi to conduct research on the tobacco retailing environment in Ireland. This report presents the findings of this study which has two distinct parts:

- **Performance in respect of sales to minors legislation (Section 45 of the Public Health (Tobacco) Act, 2002) among retail outlets and licensed premises**
- **Presence and extent of tobacco advertising and display at point-of-sale**

This 2009 monitoring report compares the baseline with findings from 2007 and 2008 reports on tobacco and the retail environment.

“Reversing this entirely preventable epidemic must now rank as a top priority for public health and for political leaders in every country of the world.”
Dr. Margaret Chan,
WHO Director-General

Background

Legislation has controlled the sale of tobacco on age grounds since 1988. In 2001, the legal age for the sale of tobacco was raised from 16 years to 18 years. This restriction remains under Section 45 of the Public Health (Tobacco) Act, 2002, which was commenced in April 2007.

Legislation was also introduced over a number of decades to remove the promotion and advertising of tobacco products through mainstream media while the sponsorship of cultural and sporting events by the tobacco industry was also ended.

In addition, the Public Health (Tobacco) Acts, 2002 and 2004 have strengthened existing tobacco control laws by introducing the highly successful smoke-free workplace legislation (commenced 29 March 2004) and by providing for a comprehensive ban on all tobacco advertising in retail environments. The ban on tobacco advertising at the retail point-of-sale, encompassing the removal of tobacco product display, took effect from 1 July 2009.

In Ireland tobacco use causes in excess of 6000 deaths each year. Globally, the World Health Organisation (WHO) advises that unless urgent action is taken that by 2030, there will be more than eight million deaths every year caused by the tobacco epidemic. The WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, which has now been signed by 167 states provides a global response to the tobacco epidemic and urges a comprehensive ban on all forms of tobacco advertising.

The public health initiatives introduced in Ireland in July of this year are strategic in design and will protect young people and children, in particular, from the pernicious effects of tobacco advertising.

Executive Summary

This monitoring report presents the results from an independent audit of 1,209 Irish retail and licensed premises conducted by TNS mrbi during summer 2009. The results of the audit are also compared to baseline findings from summer 2007 and 2008. Part One examines performance with respect to tobacco sales to minors legislation as set out in the Public Health (Tobacco) Act, 2002. Part Two examines the presence and extent of tobacco advertising and display at point-of-sale.

Section 45 of the Act states that it is an offence to sell a tobacco product to a person that has not attained the age of 18 years. The findings of Part One of this survey provide a national overview of compliance among tobacco retailers with respect to sales to minors legislation for a third consecutive year.

This appraisal of retailer performance results in the establishment of annual benchmarks against which future progress can be measured and compared. Such data will contribute significantly to the implementation of a comprehensive youth protection programme.

Part Two: The survey provides a summary of the level of point-of-sale tobacco advertising and display across the retail environment in Ireland post the 1 July 2009 deadline. The findings in this report show that 98% of all store types are compliant with the new legislation regarding cigarette advertising while 97% of all store types are complying with legislation regarding the display of cigarettes in store.

Key Findings – Part One

Retail behaviour in relation to sales to minors legislation:

- The percentage of retailers refusing to sell cigarettes to minors has increased by eight points to 68%. This compares to a 60% refusal rate in 2008 and 52% in 2007;
- 94% of 14 year olds, 88% of 15 year olds, 61% of 16 year olds and 52% of 17 year olds were refused cigarettes;
- An increase in compliance was recorded across all store types with the exception of Groups. Multiples were most compliant with an 82% refusal rate;
- Regionally, refusal rates were again highest in HSE West;
- In licensed premises, 65% of underage youth were prevented from purchasing cigarettes, an improvement on 2008;
- In 2007 and 2008 the proportion of token operated machines surveyed was 16% and 24% respectively. Whereas in 2009 the presence of disc/ card activated or token operated machines was 73%;
- The correlation between the willingness of retailers to ask for ID and their refusal to sell is direct and clear. 97% of minors who were asked for ID in retail outlets were refused the sale.

Key Findings – Part Two

Tobacco advertising and display at point-of-sale:

- 98% of stores visited are compliant with the new legislation regarding the display of cigarette advertising in store. Multiples recorded the highest level of compliance at 100%;
- 97% of stores are compliant with the new legislation regarding the display of cigarettes for sale in store. Again Multiples recorded a 100% compliance rate, Independent Grocers had the highest level of non-compliance at 5%.

Research Objectives

The report, *Towards a Tobacco Free Society* (2000), outlines a national action plan to tackle tobacco use in Ireland.

Protecting children, by preventing youth uptake of smoking is a key pillar of the report, which has been adopted as Government policy. Building and maintaining compliance with tobacco legislation is equally important, requiring dedicated resources and commitment from all stakeholders.

The OTC's key objective in commissioning this research is to maintain and enhance the health of young people in Ireland. The data collected is strictly for information purposes and has not been commissioned for purposes of enforcement. Ongoing monitoring of performance on an annual basis will inform education and awareness programmes designed to increase sales to minors compliance among retailers and licensed premises. In addition, it will contribute to effective enforcement programmes.

The primary objective of the study is to measure the compliance of retailers and licensed premises with regard to the sale of cigarettes to minors.

Other objectives include:

- Measure the impact of buyer profile on ability to purchase e.g. age and gender;
- Measuring the impact of staff profile on ability to purchase e.g. age, gender and nationality;
- Measuring compliance with new legislation regarding cigarette advertising and the display of cigarettes and other tobacco products for sale in stores.

Retail Audit Part One: Compliance with Sales to Minors Legislation

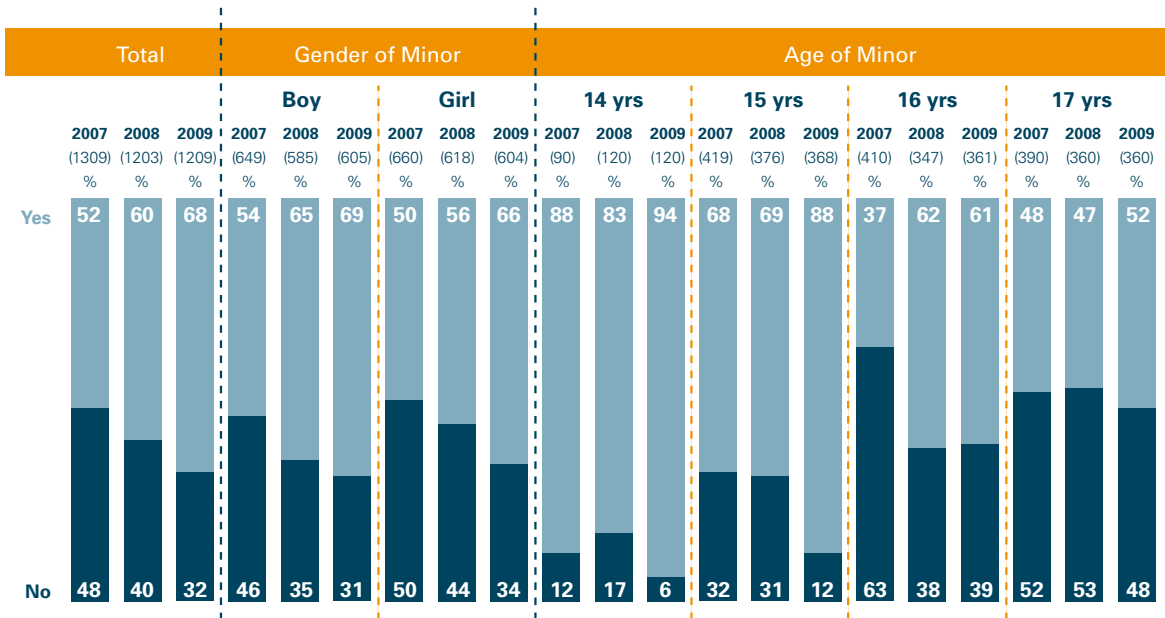
Findings

Outcome of Purchase Attempt: Retail Premises

Nationally, the percentage of retailers who refused to sell cigarettes to minors was 68%. This compares to a compliance level of 60% in 2008. Boys were marginally more likely to be refused than girls (69% v 66%). Retailers willingness to sell to minors was greatest among 17 years olds with almost half (48%) not refused cigarettes.

Did Staff Member Refuse To Sell Cigarettes To The Minor? BY GENDER AND AGE OF MINOR

Base: All Stores: 1,209



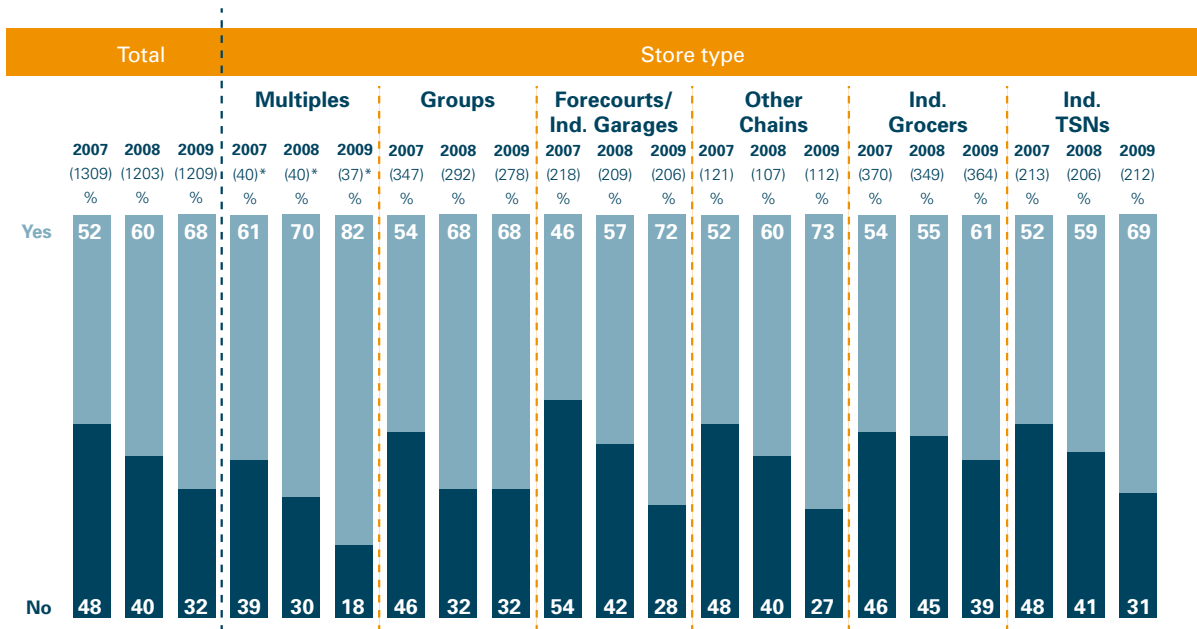
Retailer compliance increased by eight percentage points in 2009.

94% of 14 year olds were refused cigarettes. However almost half (48%) of 17 year olds were not refused cigarettes.

There was an increase in refusal rates across all store types, apart from groups where refusal rates year on year were static. The most significant rise in refusal rates was among Forecourts/ Garages with an increase of 15 percentage points. Multiples were found to have the highest refusal rate of 82%.

Did Staff Member Refuse To Sell Cigarettes To The Minor? BY STORE TYPE

Base: All Stores: 1,209



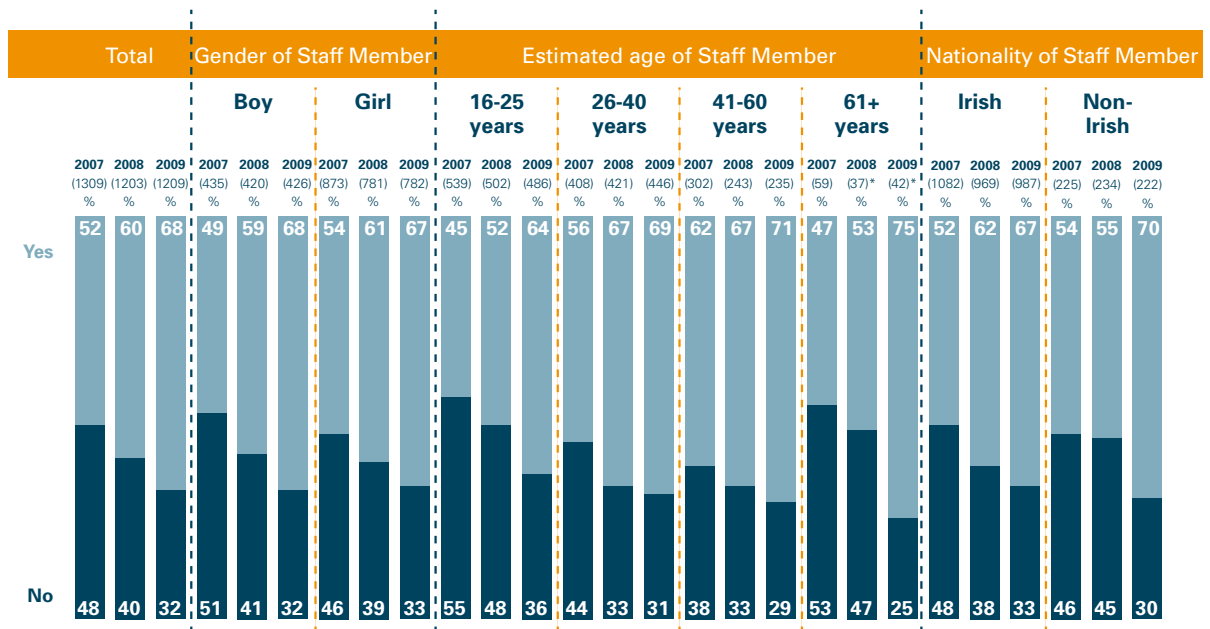
* Caution: small base size

An increase in compliance was recorded across all store types, with the exception of Groups, for the second time since the study began. Multiples were most compliant with an 82% refusal rate.

Age appeared to be a more discriminating characteristic than gender or nationality of staff member in refusing to sell cigarettes to minors. Staff aged 61+ were more likely to refuse a sale than those under 25. Overall refusal rates in all staff demographics saw an increase in compliance in 2009.

Did Staff Member Refuse To Sell Cigarettes To The Minor? BY GENDER, AGE AND NATIONALITY OF STAFF MEMBER

Base: All Stores: 1,209



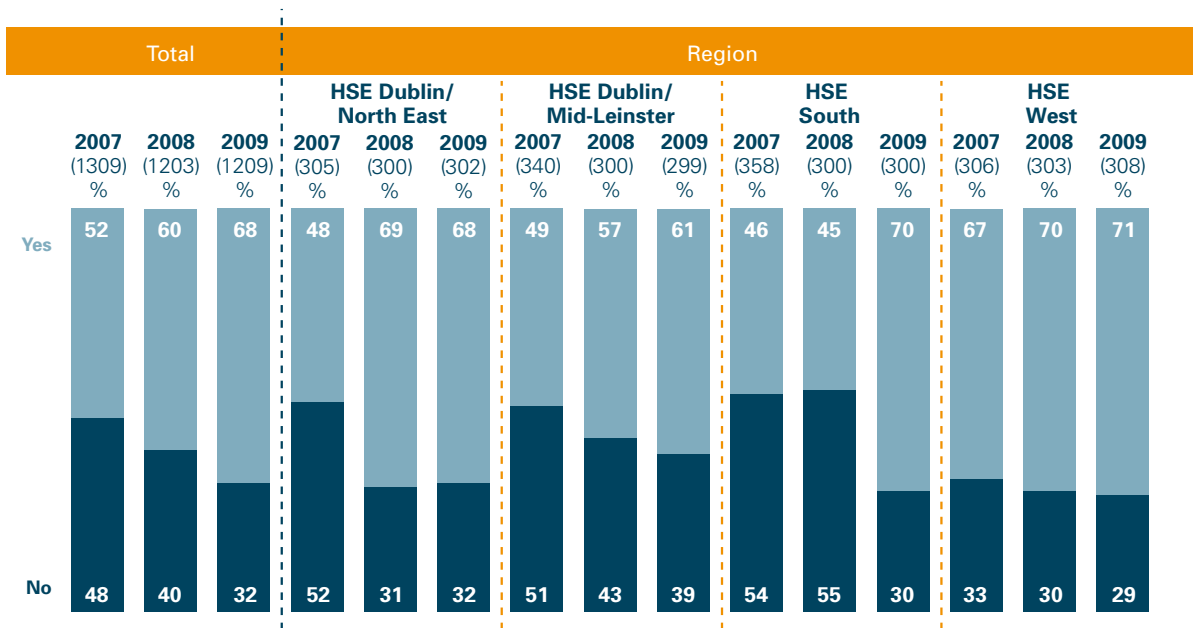
* Caution: small base size

Improvements in compliance recorded across all staff demographics.

On a regional basis, compliance levels were again highest in HSE West (71%). HSE South witnessed the largest rise in compliance levels improving by 25 percentage points to 70% during the past 12 months.

Did Staff Member Refuse To Sell Cigarettes To The Minor? BY REGION

Base: All Stores: 1,209



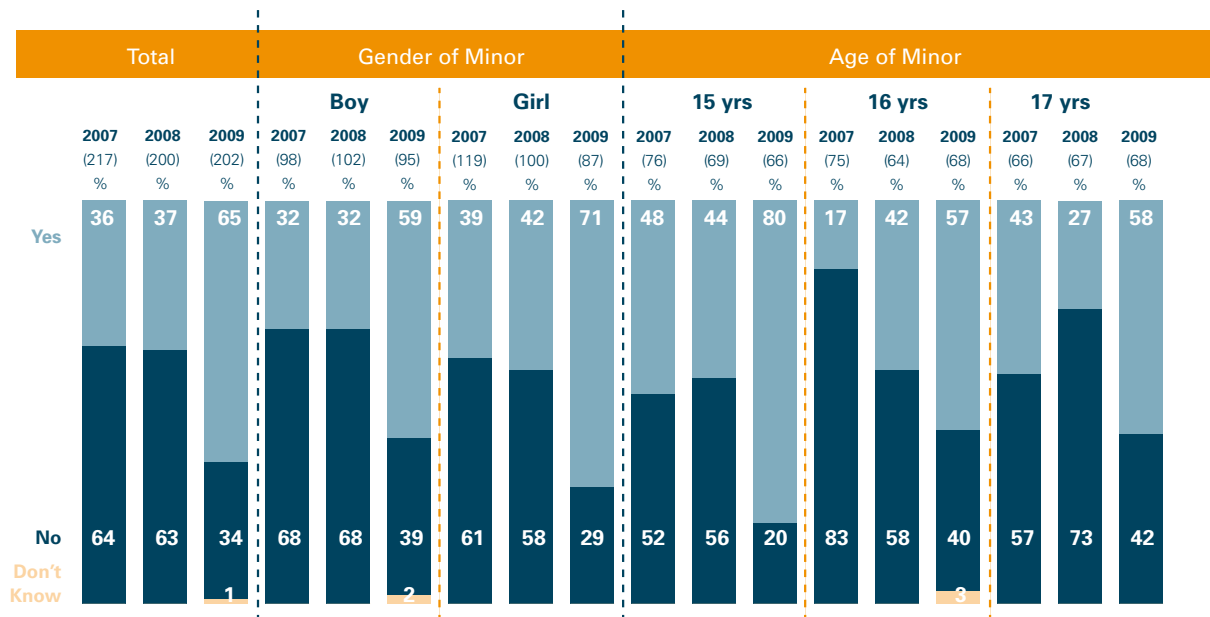
As was found in 2007 and 2008, outlets in HSE West are the most likely to refuse sale. HSE South has experienced the largest increase in compliance to 70%.

Outcome of Purchase Attempt: Licensed Premises

Compliance for licensed premises increased by 28 percentage points to 65% from 37% in 2008. 80% of 15 year olds were prevented a sale. Girls again were more likely to fail in their purchase attempt than boys (71% v 59%). Although these figures demonstrate an upward trend in compliance levels the fact remains that just over one third of minors were able to purchase cigarettes in licensed premises.

Was Sale of Cigarettes To Minor Prevented By Staff Member? BY GENDER AND AGE OF MINOR

Base: All Licensed Premises: 202

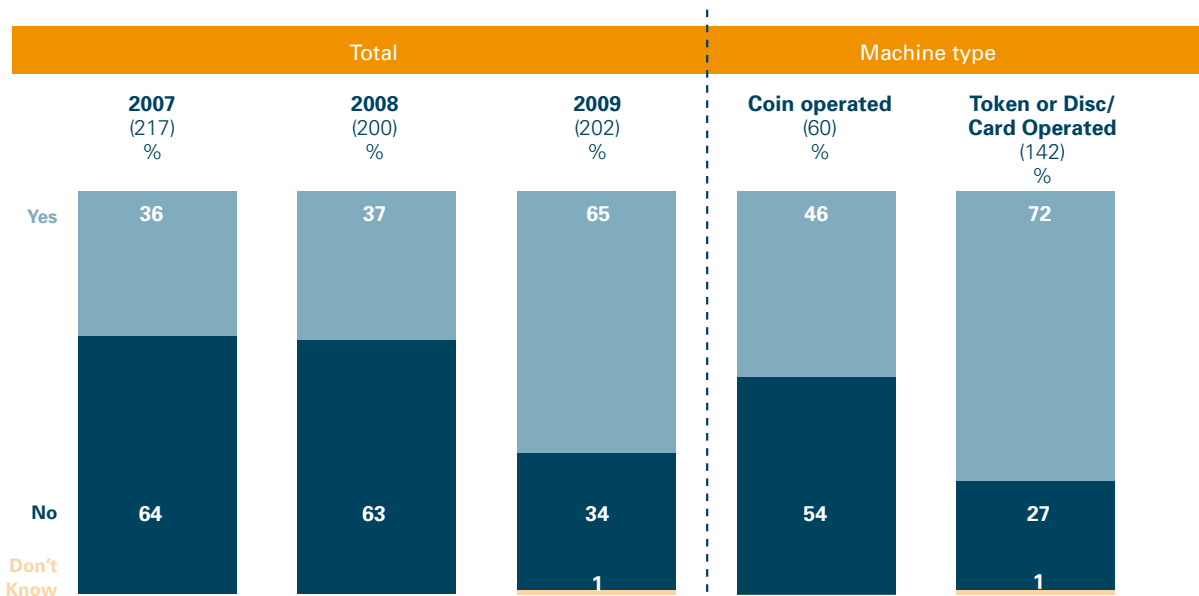


Compliance for licensed premises has increased to 65% from 37% last year. Although this increase is positive, 34% of minors were still able to access cigarettes in licensed premises.

2009 saw a significant improvement in minors being refused sale of cigarettes from 37% in 2008 to 65% in 2009. Token operated machines, compared to coin operated machines appear to add an extra level of vigilance. The sale of cigarettes was prevented in 72% of premises with token operated machines, against 46% of premises with coin operated machines.

Was Sale of Cigarettes To Minor Prevented By Staff Member? BY COIN AND DISC/CARD OR TOKEN OPERATED MACHINES

Base: All Licensed Premises: 202



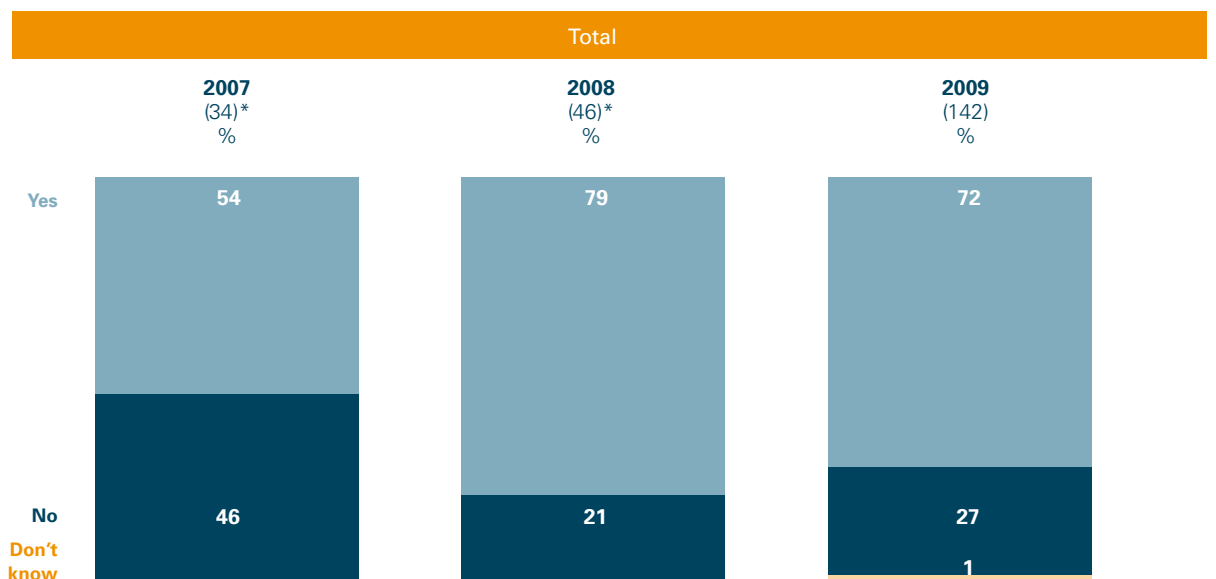
As one would expect compliance is higher for token operated machines than for coin operated machines.

Whilst the increased number of disc/card or token operated machines will have helped licensed premises compliance figures. Overall, looking at disc/card and token operated separately compliance has declined to 72% in 2009.

Did the Staff Member Refuse to Give a Token for the Cigarette Machine to the Minor?

BY DISC/CARD OR TOKEN OPERATED MACHINES

Base: All Licensed Premises with disc/card or token operated machine: 142



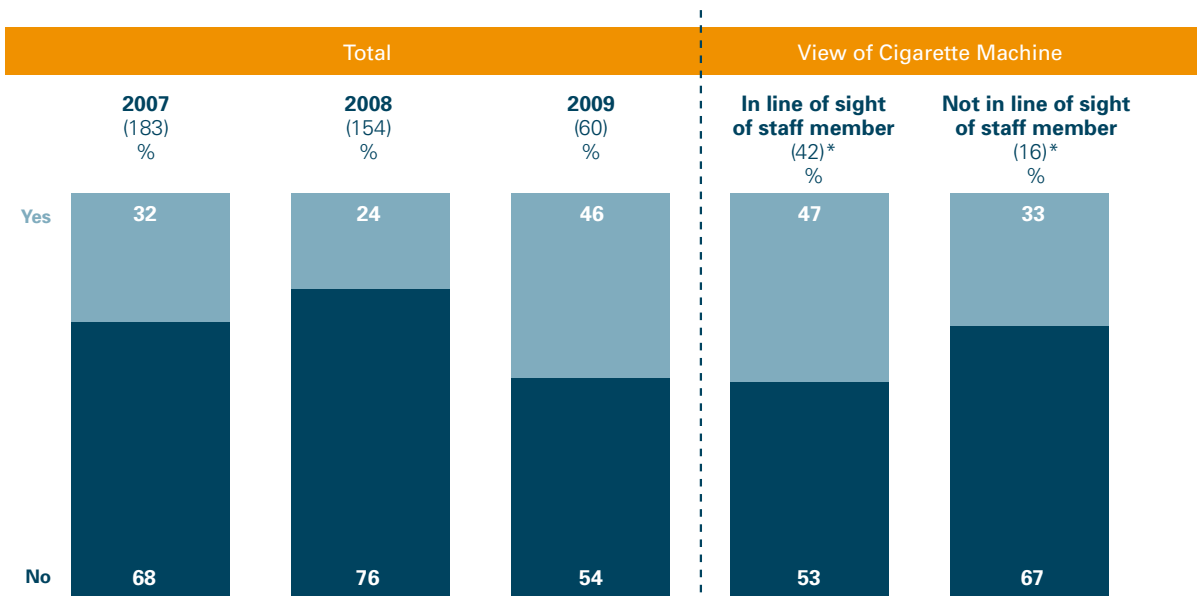
* Caution: small base size

Whilst the increased number of disc/card or token operated machines will have helped licensed premises compliance figures overall, looking at disc/card and token operated separately compliance has declined to 72% in 2009.

Looking at coin operated machines only, the visibility of the vending machine to the staff member reduces the likelihood of a minor being able to purchase cigarettes. Where the vending machine was visible to the staff member, 47% prevented the sale of cigarettes to the minor. The prevention rate fell to 33% where the vending machine was not visible to the staff member.

Did Staff Member Prevent Sale of Cigarettes to Minor? BY VIEW OF CIGARETTE MACHINE

Base: All Licensed Premises with coin operated machine: 60



* Caution: small base size

Visibility of vending machine to staff member is important in reducing the likelihood of a minor being able to purchase cigarettes.

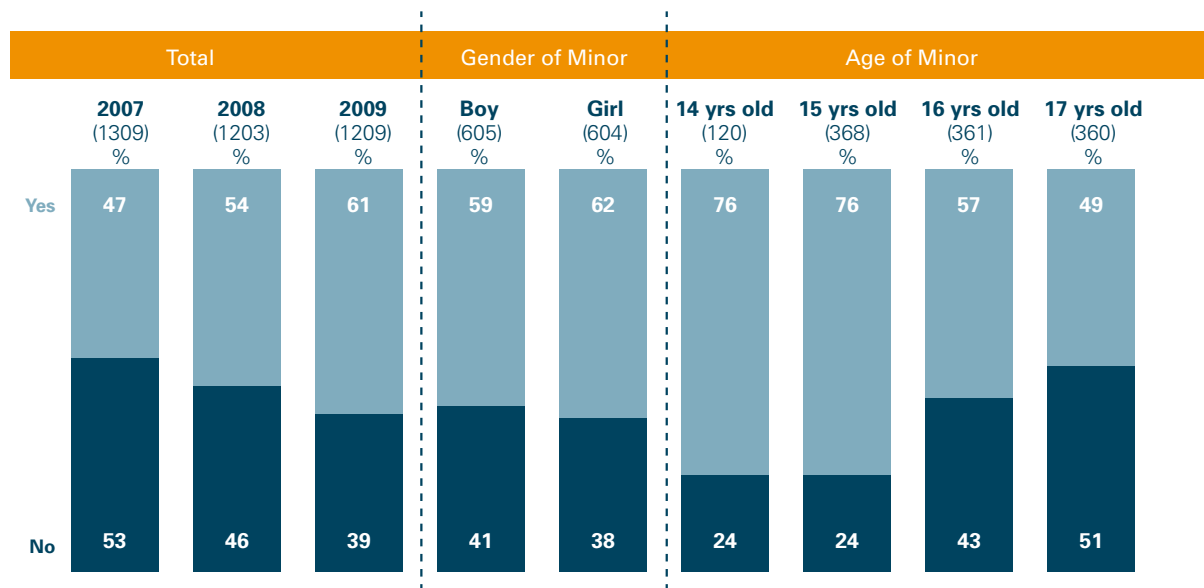
ID Check

Retail Stores

In 2009 the proportion of teenagers being asked for ID has increased to 61% from 54% in 2008. However just over half of all 17 year olds were not asked for ID. Girls were more likely to be asked for ID compared to boys (62% v 59%). As regards age, the younger the minor, the more likely they were to be asked for ID. 76% of all 14 and 15 year olds were asked for ID, compared to 57% for 16 year olds and 49% for 17 year olds.

Was Minor Asked For ID When Attempting To Purchase Cigarettes? BY GENDER AND AGE OF MINOR

Base: All Stores: 1,209

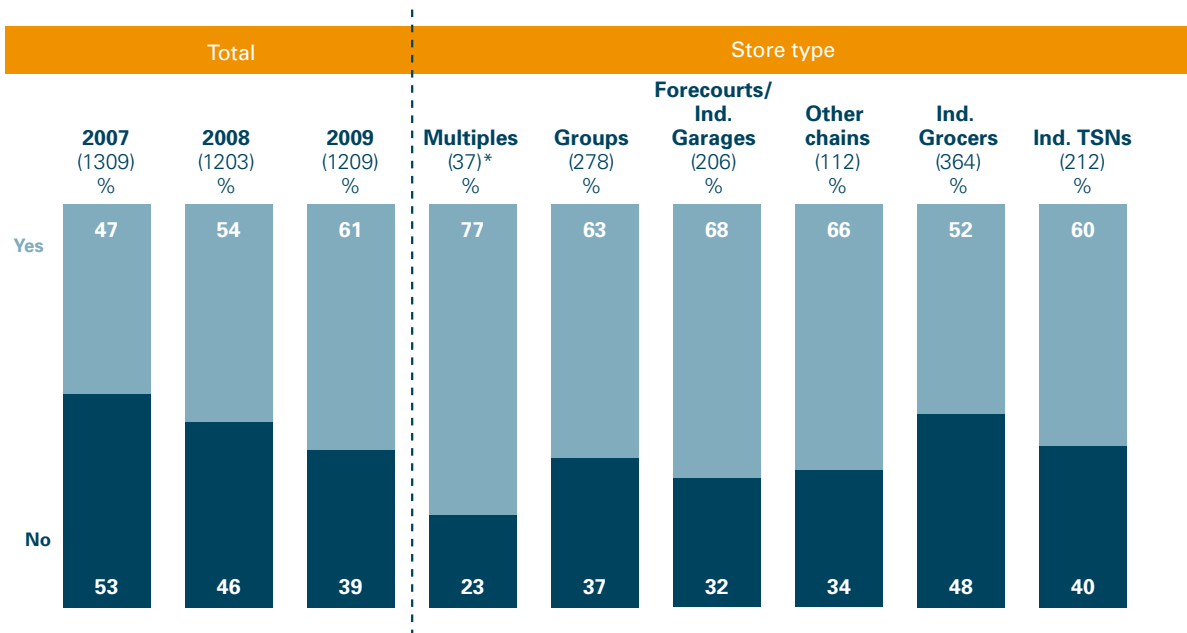


Positively, the proportion of teenagers being asked for ID has increased to 61% from 54% in 2008. However just over half of all 17 year olds (51%) were not asked for ID.

Across all store types, as in 2008, minors were least likely to be asked for ID in Independent Grocers (52%). Minors were most likely to be asked for ID in Multiples (77%). Forecourts/Independent Garages saw the most significant rise in asking for ID at 68% up from 51% in 2008. All store types were more likely to ask for ID in 2009 compared to 2008.

Was Minor Asked For ID When Attempting To Purchase Cigarettes? BY STORE TYPE

Base: All Stores: 1,209



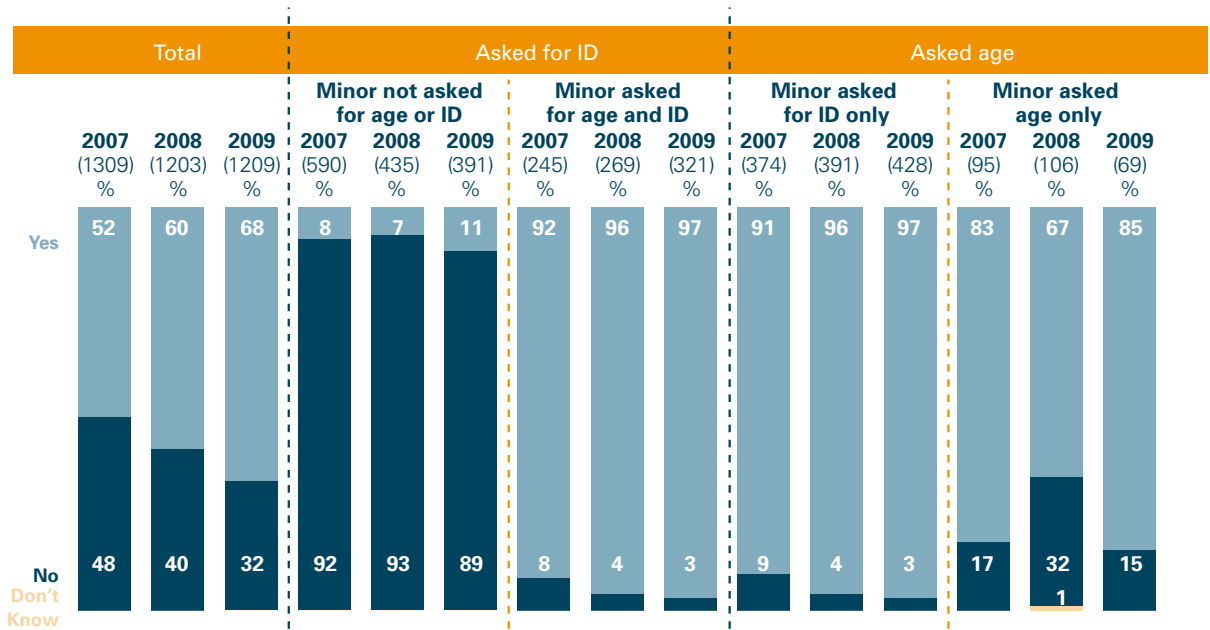
* Caution: small base size

Multiples are most likely to ask for ID (77%). Independent Grocers are least likely to ask for ID, as was found in 2008.

In 97% of cases where the minor was asked for ID, the sale was refused. In contrast, where no request for ID was made, only 11% were refused sale.

Did Staff Member Refuse To Sell Cigarettes To The Minor?

Base: All Respondents: 1,209



Asking for ID, either on its own or combined with age, leads to higher proportion of refusals. Where the minor was not asked for age or ID the compliance level was just 11%.

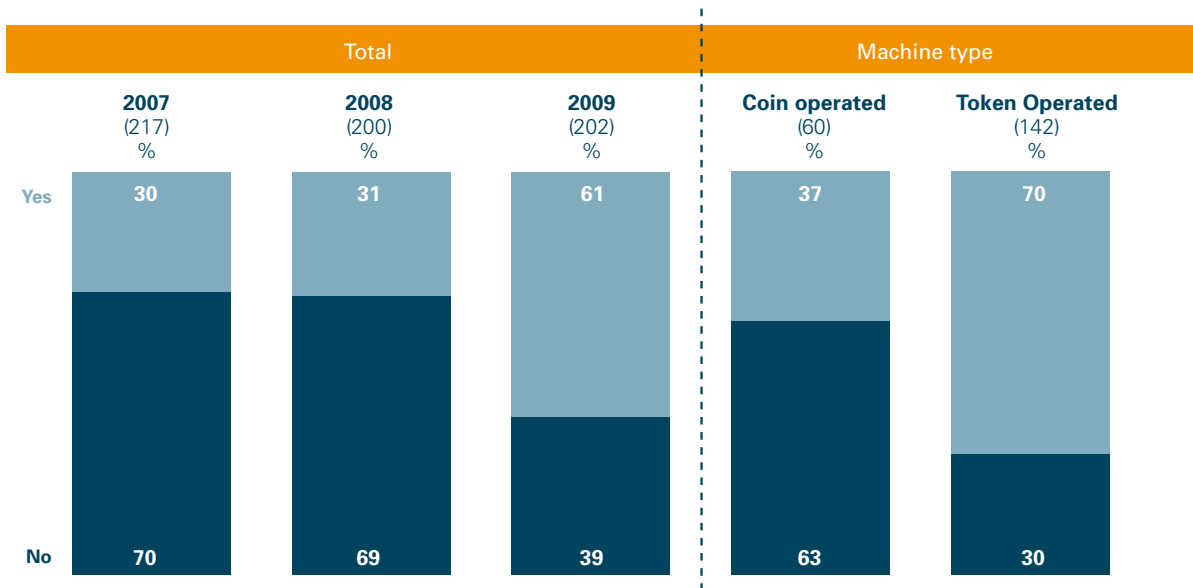
Licensed Premises

Minors were less likely to be asked for ID in licensed premises than in retail environments. In coin operated machines just over one third of minors were asked for ID, whereas in token operated machines 70% of minors were asked for ID.

Was The Minor Asked For ID When Attempting To Purchase Cigarettes?

BY COIN AND DISC/CARD OR TOKEN OPERATED MACHINE

Base: All Licensed Premises: 202



As one would expect, those purchasing from a token operated machine are more likely to be asked for ID.

Retail Audit Part Two:
Retail Advertising at
Point-of-Sale (POS)

Findings

Retail Point-of-Sale

Provisions concerning removal of POS, as contained in the Public Health (Tobacco) Acts, 2002 and 2004, were commenced on 1 July 2009. These included:

- A ban on all in-store/ point-of-sale advertising of tobacco products;
- A ban on the display of tobacco products in retail premises;
- The introduction of a closed container/ dispenser for tobacco products.

The information summarised in this section is based on the presence of advertising bearing printed trademarks, logos or brand names of tobacco products in retail stores only. The extent of advertising present was measured in July and August 2009, after the 1 July 2009 deadline came into effect.

Nationally, 98% of retail stores are compliant with the new legislation regarding cigarette advertising. Multiples are the most compliant (100%) with no observations of cigarette advertising recorded. Independent Grocers recorded a compliance level of 97% with all other retail stores 98% compliant with the legislation.

Cigarette Or Tobacco Signage/Advertising Observed In Store

BY TYPE OF ADVERTISING AND STORE TYPE

Base: All Stores: 1,209

	Total					Store Type			
	2007	2008	2009	Multiples	Groups	Forecourts/ Ind. Garages	Other Chains	Ind. Grocers	Ind. TSN's
	(1309)	(1203)	(1209)	(37)*	(278)	(206)	(112)	(364)	(212)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Cigarette branded gantry	87	88	*	-	*	-	2	1	-
Cigarette branded counter-mats	14	7	*	-	-	1	-	1	1
Cigarette branded danglers	6	1	*	-	*	-	-	*	1
Cigarette branded clocks	2	*	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Cigarette branded till covers	8	5	*	-	-	-	-	*	1
Small poster	13	10	*	-	*	1	1	*	1
Large poster	4	5	*	-	-	-	-	*	1
Cigarette branded price card	8	4	*	-	-	*	-	*	-
Other	1	1	*	-	1	-	-	1	-
None	8	11	98	100	98	98	98	97	98
Observed any advertising - %	92	89	2	-	2	2	2	3	2
Average no. of media observed	1.43	1.37	1.34	-	1.26	1.00	1.60	1.36	1.57
Observed any advertising - not gantry	38	27	2	-	1	2	1	2	2

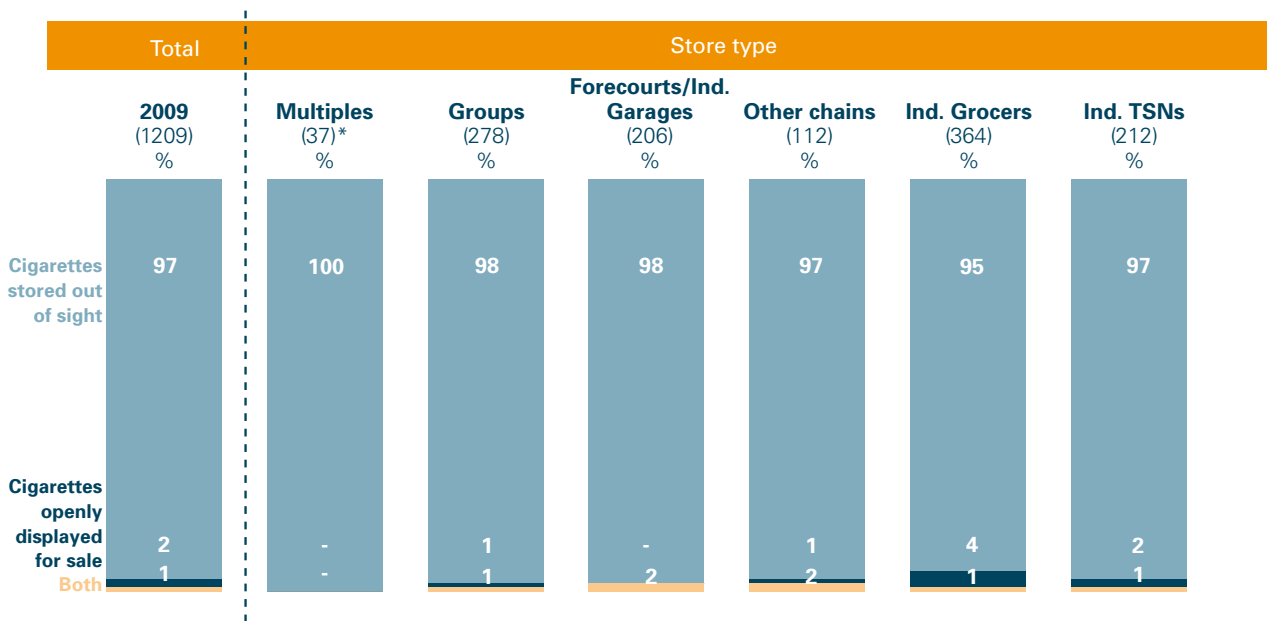
* Caution: Small base size

98% of stores are compliant with the new legislation regarding cigarette advertising. Multiples are the most compliant with no observations of cigarette advertising recorded. Independent Grocers at 97% are least compliant.

As regards cigarette displays, 97% of retail stores were found to be storing cigarettes out of sight. Multiples are the most compliant with 100% storing cigarettes out of sight. Independent Grocers recorded the lowest compliance level at 95%.

In-Store Display Of Cigarettes BY STORE TYPE

Base: All Stores: 1,209



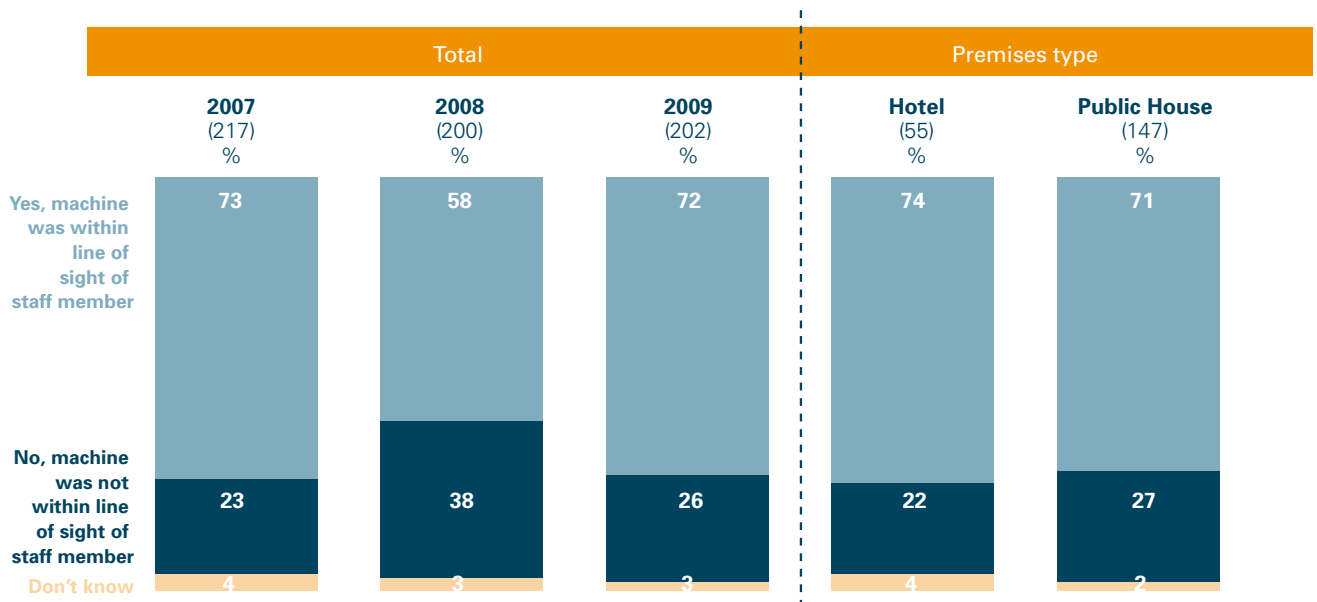
* Caution: small base size

97% of stores found to be storing cigarettes out of sight. Multiples are most compliant with 100% storing cigarettes out of sight. Independent Grocers have the lowest compliance level at 95%.

As previously mentioned in part one of this report, the location of a cigarette machine, in conjunction with staff vigilance are significant factors in reducing the incidence of youth smoking.

Location Of Cigarette Machine WITHIN LINE OF SIGHT OF STAFF MEMBER

Base: All Licensed Premises: 202



Machines located in hallways are least likely to be visible to staff. Just over one quarter (26%) of machines are not in the line of sight of staff members.

Conclusions

Independent monitoring and evaluation is necessary to assess the effectiveness of existing measures, identify new measures for consideration and to ensure best use of available resources.

Since August 2001, it has been illegal to sell tobacco products to children aged under-18 years. This 2009 research report summarises results from the latest independent survey of retailer compliance with respect to sales to minors legislation. The study also measures the extent of tobacco advertising and display post the 1 July 2009 ban.

The 2009 report is the third National Tobacco Retail Audit in respect of tobacco control measures. The information contained herein is compared to data from 2007 and 2008.

Part One: Compliance with Sales to Minors Legislation

The findings in this report show that continuous progress is being made in the area of compliance with sales to minors legislation. The upward trend is encouraging, with 68% of minors being refused a sale, this compares to 60% in 2008 and 52% in 2007. Over the three years measured there has been a 16 percentage point improvement. However, one third of minors (32%) were still able to access cigarettes in retail outlets in 2009. This is not acceptable. While the upward trend is encouraging, current compliance rates in retail stores and licensed premises are still well below an acceptable level.

In licensed premises overall compliance levels have increased from 37% in 2008 to 65% in 2009. Although this is a positive development, more than one third of minors (34%) were able to access cigarettes in licensed premises. In 2009 licensed premises saw a significant increase in the number of disc/card or token operated machines as a result of the introduction of further legislative measures governing the sale of tobacco products by means of self-service vending machines in licensed premises or registered clubs. This research shows that a disc/card or token operated machine generally leads to higher compliance levels than a coin operated machine. However this still does not guarantee compliance. **Staff vigilance is still a key element of compliance within licensed premises.**

The OTC has developed initiatives aimed at raising compliance with the law, including:

- Provision of information resources and training materials to retailers;
- Radio, print and trade campaigns informing retailers, publicans and the public of the law, in particular the ban on advertising and display of cigarettes which came into effect on 1 July 2009;
- Active engagement with representative organisations of the retail trade;
- The provision of a lo-call compliance line (1890 333 100) for the public to register complaints about retailers/ licensed premises selling to under 18 year olds.

As the authorised officers under the Public Health (Tobacco) Acts, 2002 and 2004, Environmental Health Officers (EHOs) are critical to the enforcement of sales to minors legislation. The HSE has committed to focussing its efforts on sales to minors with more intensive test purchasing programmes across all regions. Active enforcement by EHOs plays a hugely important role in building compliance. Overall, the findings from the 2009 Monitoring Report again clearly show that retailers who request ID are significantly more likely to comply with the law. **It is therefore imperative that retailers act responsibly and ask all young people for proof of age and ID.**

In licensed premises, a sale to an underage youth is more likely to be refused where a token is required to purchase cigarettes and where the vending machine is within line of sight of staff.

As and from 1 July 2009 self-service vending machines are prohibited except in registered clubs and licensed premises. They must be located adjacent or in close proximity to the part of the registered club/ licensed premises generally attended by a member of staff. In addition, vending machines must at all times be located within line of sight of a staff member. A customer cannot purchase a tobacco product without first obtaining a disc or card from the staff member which is then used to activate the vending machine. Alternatively, a device controlled by the staff member can also be used to activate the vending machine. Finally, the customer deposits money to complete the transaction.

Best practice shows that very high compliance rates are necessary to impact sales to minors, and ultimately, youth smoking levels. It is therefore important that we strive for 90% plus compliance nationally. Canada, a world leader in tobacco control has successfully reduced youth smoking rates (15 to 17 years old) to 10%¹. The reduction in Canada has been achieved through a sustained comprehensive tobacco control programme that incorporates a strong target driven national agenda. With regard to compliance rates with sales to minors legislation, 86%² of retailers refused to sell cigarettes to underage Canadians in 2007. This is the highest recorded compliance level since measuring retailer behaviour began in 1995.

1 Canadian Tobacco Use Monitoring Survey (CTUMS) 2007, Summary of Annual Results for 2007, Health Canada

2 Evaluation of Retailers Behaviour Towards Certain Youth Access-to-Tobacco Restrictions 2007, Health Canada

Part Two: Retail Advertising at Point-of-Sale (POS) and Display of Tobacco

On 1 July 2009 Ireland became the first country in the EU to ban all tobacco advertising and display of tobacco products from retail and licensed premises outlets. Comprehensive legislation underpins effective tobacco control policy. Advertising bans are universally recognised as one of the most effective measures available to governments in addressing the tobacco epidemic. This is reflected in Article 2 of the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) which requires countries to undertake a comprehensive ban of all tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship.

In many countries, including Ireland, there are already bans on tobacco advertising in national press and on TV and radio. Tobacco sponsorship of cultural and sporting events is also no longer permitted.

A number of Canadian provinces, along with Iceland and Thailand have already implemented bans on retail advertising and this measure is currently under consideration in many other countries including the UK. The removal of tobacco advertising from the retail environment has been an important strategic measure to prevent smoking initiation by young people in particular.

The retail environment is an integral part of young people's lives. The frequency of youth visits to shops, coupled with an ever increasing purchasing power, highlight the fact that under 18 year olds were exposed routinely to retail advertising messages.

Appendix 1

Methodology: National Tobacco Retail Audit

Teams made up of two researchers, one a minor (fourteen, fifteen, sixteen or seventeen years of age) and the other an adult, visited a sample of 1,209 retail establishments and 202 licensed premises across the four Health Service Executive (HSE) areas. Premises were visited over a five week period during late July and August 2009. Team members entered premises at different times. They gave no indication of being together. Each carried out specifically assigned tasks:

- The responsibility of the minor was to test the willingness of retailers to sell him/her tobacco by attempting to buy a pack of branded cigarettes. The minor did not carry identification. If asked their age during the attempted transaction, the young person claimed to be 18 years old. Under no circumstances did the minor make a purchase. Instead, the minor was given clear instructions to withdraw from any sale, once it became clear that the attempt to purchase cigarettes would be completed.
- 14 year olds did not participate in the licensed premises audit. Two types of licensed premises were included in the research; hotels and public houses.
- The adult member of the research team was responsible for supervising the minor and for carrying out a visual inspection of the retailer's place of business, for the purpose of observing and recording of information on in-store tobacco advertising and promotion. These adults were also responsible for collecting information on the postage of underage signage stating that it is illegal to sell tobacco products to children aged under 18.

In order to measure the influence of age and gender on retailers' propensity to comply with sales to minors legislation, visits were organised to ensure the following minimum national requirements:

- Store visits were conducted by a mix of both male and female minors in roughly equal proportions;
- Approximately two-thirds of all store visits were completed by a minor sixteen or seventeen years of age, with the rest of the sample being completed by fourteen or fifteen year olds.

Table One National Sample Dispersion by Age and Gender of Teenage Member – Retail Outlets

Male	49%
Female	51%
14 year olds	9%
15 year olds	25%
16 year olds	33%
17 year olds	33%

Sample

In designing the sampling methodology, TNS mrbi focused on ensuring key segments were represented in correct proportions within the sample. These key segments included:

- Age of minor;
- Gender of minor;
- Geographic region;
- Store type.

To build a robust sample, the following steps were taken:

- A first level geographic stratification was used to select the sampling points;
- Within each sampling point, quotas were set by store type to ensure store types were widely dispersed geographically, while at the same time ensuring the correct proportional representation of store type within the overall sample. Some 360 Independent Grocers and 270 Groups were included. The balance made up between 4 other store types. Within each point, premises were selected at random within quota requirements;
- And finally, researchers of differing age and genders were randomly distributed across the selection of sampling points.

To ensure subsequent analysis by HSE region was possible, quotas were set by HSE region to guarantee a minimum number of visits per region. Surveying was spread across time of day and day of week to avoid any time-of-week bias. In total, 1,209 retail premises were visited during the 2009 survey.

Table Two Store profile at national level (weighted data)

	%
Multiples – Dunnes Stores, Superquinn or Tesco	3
Groups – Centra, Londis, Mace, Spar or SuperValu	23
Forecourts/Garages – Independent Garages and Garages part of a Group	17
Other Chains – Costcutter, Gala, Quickpick, Vivo, XL Stop Shop	9
Independent Grocers – not part of any group	30
Independent TSNs – newsagents, do not sell groceries, not part of a Group	17

Sample Weighting

Table Three provides the sample profile at the national level (weighted data). To further align the sample with the national distribution of outlets and the preferred profile of teenage surveyors, minor weights were applied to the raw level data at the analysis stage.

Table Three Sample Weighting

	Sample (Unweighted)	Sample (Weighted)
Region		
Dublin	331	326
Rest of Leinster	315	314
Munster	333	339
Connacht/Ulster	230	230
Age		
14/15 years	488	411
16/17 years	721	798

Unless otherwise stated, all the percentages quoted in this report are results after weightings have been applied.

Licensed Trade

The methodology in the licensed trade survey was similar to the retail sector but with some minor differences. Fourteen year olds did not participate in this part of the survey. The role of the minor was to attempt to purchase cigarettes from a cigarette vending machine or to purchase a token for the cigarette vending machine from a staff member where token operated machines were in place. The role of the adult member was to record the outcome of the purchase attempt.

A nationally representative sample of licensed premises was selected, with quota controls by HSE region and age of minor employed. Data weighting to realign the sample by region and age of teenage member was also used. Two types of licensed premises were included in the research - hotels (28%) and public houses (72%). Only those licensed premises with cigarette vending machines were included in the research. 202 licensed premises were visited in total.

Table Four National Sample Dispersion by Age and Gender of Teenage Member – Licensed premises

Male	49%
Female	51%
15 year olds	34%
16 year olds	32%
17 year olds	34%

Office of Tobacco Control

Willow House
Millennium Park
Naas
Co. Kildare
Ireland

E-mail: info@otc.ie
Tel: +353 45 852700
Fax: +353 45 852799
Lo-call compliance line:
1890 333 100



www.otc.ie

© November 2009
ISBN 978-0-9564420