

2 November 2007

Smokefree England

AWARENESS, ATTITUDES AND COMPLIANCE THREE MONTHS AFTER THE COMMENCEMENT OF SMOKEFREE LEGISLATION – A SUMMARY REPORT

On July 1st 2007, England introduced new laws to make virtually all enclosed public places and workplaces in England smokefree. Tracking research undertaken before and after July 1st confirms extremely high levels of public and business awareness of the legislation, together with good levels of understanding and support. Data indicates there has been a smooth transition to smokefree public places and workplaces in England, with very high, and increasing, levels of compliance with the law in the first three months.

Public awareness and support

- General awareness of the legislation increased from 93% in February to 95% in April and 98% in mid-July (BMRB).
- Prior to the law being introduced, unprompted awareness of the date for the introduction of the smokefree law rose from 33% in February to 55% in April and 83% in June (ICM).
- The latest results show 75% of adults support the smokefree law, including 84% of non-smokers. A greater proportion of smokers (47%) support the new law than oppose it (37%) (mid-July, BMRB).
- 79% of people (including 59% of smokers and 86% of non-smokers) think that the law will have a positive effect on people's health (mid-July, BMRB).
- The most frequently mentioned benefits that respondents had experienced as a result of England becoming smokefree, were:
 - 14% said clothes/hair don't smell of smoke after visit to pub/club
 - 12% said more pleasant/better atmosphere in pubs/clubs/restaurants
 - 9% said cleaner air
 - 6% said better for health (mid-July, BMRB).

Business awareness and support

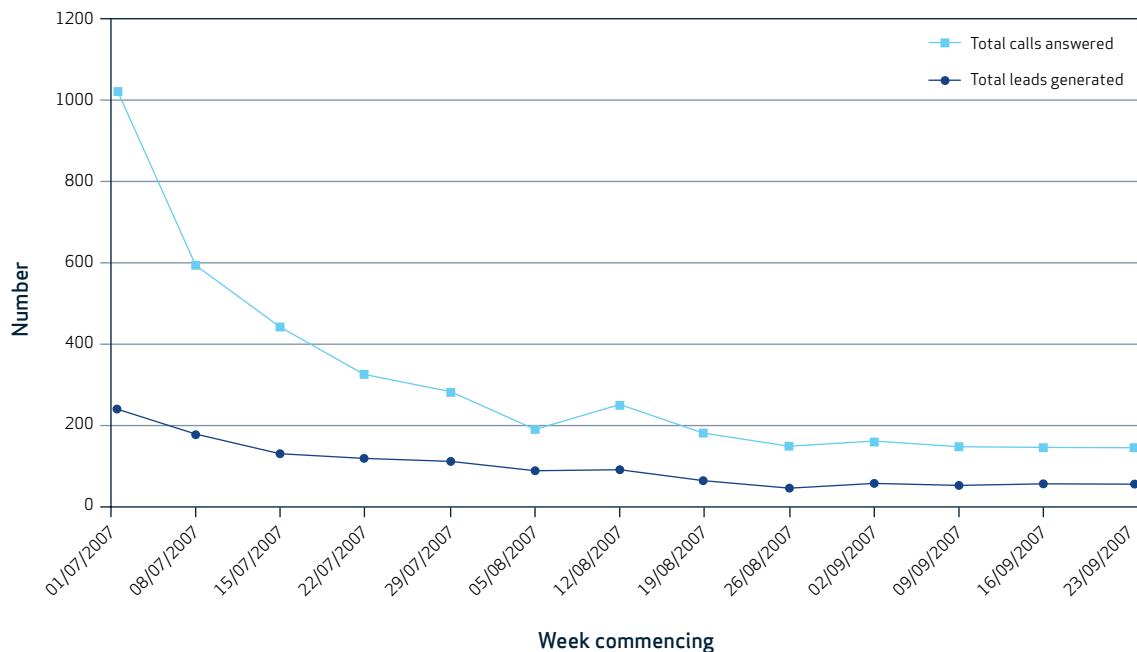
- Almost all businesses are aware of the smokefree legislation (96% in June 2007 – Continental Research).
- Over three quarters of businesses say they have taken specific action to comply with the legislation, with over half saying they have informed or trained staff (August, Continental Research).
- 97% of businesses with work vehicles and 95% with company cars said that either all their work vehicles, or those used by more than one person, are smokefree (August, Continental Research).
- Over three-quarters of businesses (78%) think that the legislation is a good idea, whilst 87% think the implementation went well and 91% believe the law will be obeyed (August, Continental Research).

Compliance line

Members of the public can call the smokefree compliance line on 0800 587 166 7 to report possible breaches of the law. This information is passed to local councils to follow up as appropriate.

The graph below shows the number of calls to the smokefree compliance line and the number of leads that were generated and passed to local authorities for investigation as a result.

3 month smokefree compliance calls data



A total of 3,945 calls were answered in the three months July-September, which led to 1,187 leads. By the end of September the number of calls levelled out at around 20 a day, leading to an average of seven leads passed to local authorities each day.

Compliance levels

Local authorities inspected a total of 275,993 premises and vehicles in the three months July-September, of which 98.0% were compliant in terms of no-smoking (defined as no evidence of management knowingly permitting smoking).

By September the compliance rate had risen to 98.7%, with little variation by region: from 98.1% in the East Midlands and London to 99.0% in the North East, North West, and Yorkshire & Humberside.

Of those premises inspected in September, 88.2% of premises and vehicles were compliant in terms of displaying required no-smoking signs (defined as the required no-smoking signage being displayed prominently), varying between 81.2% in London and 95.5% in the North East.

July – September (cumulative)					
	Total number inspected	Identified as compliant – no smoking		Identified as compliant – signage	
		Number	%	Number	%
East Midlands	20,176	19,637	97.3%	17,147	85.0%
East of England	27,650	27,109	98.0%	23,157	83.8%
London	37,889	37,431	98.8%	32,345	85.4%
North East	18,432	18,165	98.6%	16,979	92.1%
North West	48,879	47,654	97.5%	43,231	88.4%
South East	41,767	41,041	98.3%	34,254	82.0%
South West	32,410	31,445	97.0%	25,957	80.1%
West Midlands	20,797	20,569	98.9%	16,909	81.3%
Yorkshire & Humberside	27,993	27,311	97.6%	23,551	84.1%
England	275,993	270,362	98.0%	233,530	84.6%

Base: all respondent local authorities and port health authorities (359)

During July-September, enforcement authorities issued:

- 798 written warnings in respect of failing to prevent smoking and there were five court hearings
- 5,192 written warnings in respect of signage, seventeen fixed penalty notices and there were two court hearings
- 276 written warnings to individuals smoking in a smokefree area, seventy fixed penalty notices and there were three court hearings.

More information on these findings is available at www.smokefreeengland.co.uk