



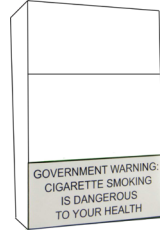
TPackSS: Tobacco Pack Surveillance System Cigarette Health Warning Label Compliance



Philippines - 2013

In April 2013, the Philippines' health warning labels (HWLs) did not fulfill the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) Article 11 minimum requirements but included the following:

1. 30 percent coverage of the front of the pack
2. Text warning displayed on contrasting background color
3. Four different tobacco use health warning messages, in English or Filipino



Front of pack

The Philippines' HWL size was ranked 19th in the WHO Western Pacific Region and ranked 126th globally in 2012.¹ However, FCTC guidelines recommend the use of pictorial warnings that cover 50 percent or more of the front and back of the pack, which the Philippines' HWLs did not fulfill.

Article 11 of the World Health Organization's (WHO) FCTC requires that Parties implement effective tobacco packaging and labeling measures to increase public awareness of the negative health impacts of tobacco products.

TPackSS assesses health warning label compliance as HWL requirements improve in countries. In April 2013, TPackSS collected cigarette packs in Manila, Cebu City, and Davao City using a systematic protocol.² Cigarette packs were assessed for compliance with the current HWL policy in place at the time of data collection.³

TPackSS systematically collected a sample of 99 unique cigarette packs that displayed the HWLs mandated by the Philippines. Packs were assessed for compliance with four key requirements.³

Warning Location

100 percent of packs had a health warning on the bottom portion of the front of the pack.



Warning Size

68 percent of packs had a health warning that covered 30 percent of the front of the pack.



Warning Label Elements

98 percent of packs had a health warning in black text printed on a white background with a black border.



Warning Text Size

26 percent of packs had health warning text that covered at least 50 percent of the warning display area.



Compliant



Non-compliant

17% of the unique cigarette packs assessed were compliant with the four key HWL requirements.

Area of Concern: Non-Standard Pack Shape

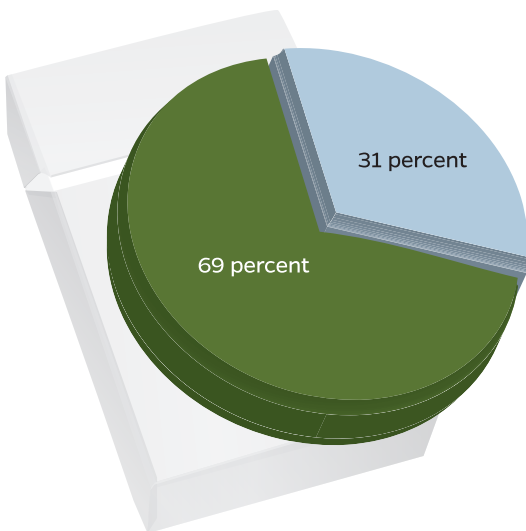
These packs are compliant with the four key HWL requirements and represent two interpretations of the main principal display area. The beveled edge poses a problem with positioning the HWL. Neither the past nor current HWL policy⁴ addresses the implementation of HWLs on principal display surfaces with beveled edges. Specific requirements for the HWL to reach the true edge of the pack would be beneficial. However, requiring standardized packaging would eliminate all health warning placement ambiguity.



This Kent pack shows the HWL extending through the bevel to the true edges of the principal display surface, increasing coverage of the HWL.



This Mild Seven pack shows the HWL edge stopping prior to the beveled portion of the pack preventing the HWL from extending fully to the edge of the pack, thus it is smaller in size compared to a HWL on a non-beveled edge pack.



Breakdown of packs collected and presence of required HWLs

Total number of unique packs collected: 144

- **69 percent** of total packs had a current mandated HWL (n=99)
- **31 percent** of total packs had no HWL or a non-Philippine HWL (n=45)

Nearly one third of all packs collected in the Philippines displayed a non-Philippine HWL or no HWL. The Philippines should take action to reduce the sale of packs that do not bear the mandated Philippine HWL.

At a minimum, the Philippines' health warning label policy should require a pictorial HWL and coverage of at least 50 percent on the front and back of the pack. Exposure to best practice HWLs can improve the effectiveness of HWLs in the Philippines.

¹ Canadian Cancer Society. Cigarette Package Health Warnings: International Status Report, Third Edition. European Network for Smoking and Tobacco Prevention; 2012. http://www.ensp.org/sites/default/files/CCS_status_report_health_warnings_2012.pdf. Accessed May 25, 2016.

² Smith K, Washington C, Brown J, Vadnais A, Kroart L, Ferguson J, Cohen J. The Tobacco Pack Surveillance System: A Protocol for Assessing Health Warning Compliance, Design Features, and Appeals of Tobacco Packs Sold in Low- and Middle-Income Countries. *JMIR Public Health Surveill.* 2015;1(2). doi: 10.2196/publichealth.4616.

³ An Act Regulating the Packing, Use, Sale, Distribution and Advertisements of Tobacco Products and for Other Purposes, 2002, Republic of the Philippines; Inter-Agency Committee-Tobacco Memorandum Circular No. 1, Series 2004 on Rules and Regulations Implementing Republic Act No. 9211, Otherwise Known as the Tobacco Regulation Act of 2003, Republic of the Philippines.

⁴ An Act to Effectively Instill Health Consciousness Through Graphic Health Warnings on Tobacco Products. 2013. Republic of the Philippines.

About TPackSS

The Institute for Global Tobacco Control (IGTC) at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health developed the Tobacco Pack Surveillance System (TPackSS) project to monitor whether required health warnings on tobacco packages are being implemented as intended, and to identify pack features and marketing appeals that might violate or detract from country tobacco packaging laws in these countries.