



# TPackSS: Tobacco Pack Surveillance System Cigarette Health Warning Label Compliance



## Thailand - 2013

In December 2013, Thailand's health warning labels (HWLs) - which fulfill the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) Article 11 minimum requirements - included the following:

1. 55 percent coverage of the front and back of the pack, with color pictorial HWLs
2. Text warning displayed on contrasting background color
3. Ten different tobacco use health warning messages, in Thai



Front of pack      Back of pack

Thailand's HWL size ranked 2nd in the WHO South East-Asia Region and ranked 14th globally in 2012.<sup>1</sup> Thailand meets FCTC guidelines for warning size on the front and back of the pack.

TPackSS assesses health warning label compliance as HWL requirements improve in countries. In December 2013, TPackSS collected cigarette packs in Bangkok, Chiang Mai, and Hat Yai using a systematic protocol.<sup>2</sup> Cigarette packs were assessed for compliance with the current HWL policy in place at the time of data collection.<sup>3</sup>

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 systematically collected a sample of 63 unique cigarette packs that displayed the HWLs mandated by Thailand. Packs were assessed for compliance with four key requirements.<sup>3</sup>

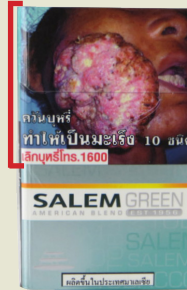
### Warning Location

**98 percent** of packs had a health warning located at the top, left edge of the front and back of the pack.



### Warning Size

**68 percent** of packs had a health warning that covered 55 percent of both the front and back of the pack.



### Warning Label Elements

**100 percent** of packs had the correct text warning paired with its corresponding pictorial health warning.



### Warning Text Size

**95 percent** of packs had health warning text with the correct size and positioning displayed as provided by the Ministry of Public Health.



**63%** of the unique cigarette packs assessed were compliant with the four key HWL requirements.

## Area of Concern: Obstruction of Health Warning Label

These packs are compliant with the four key HWL requirements. However, the tax stamp position partially covers the HWL. On hard packs, the tax stamp covers the rear HWL. On soft packs, the HWL covers part of the front and rear HWL.



Back of pack



Back of pack



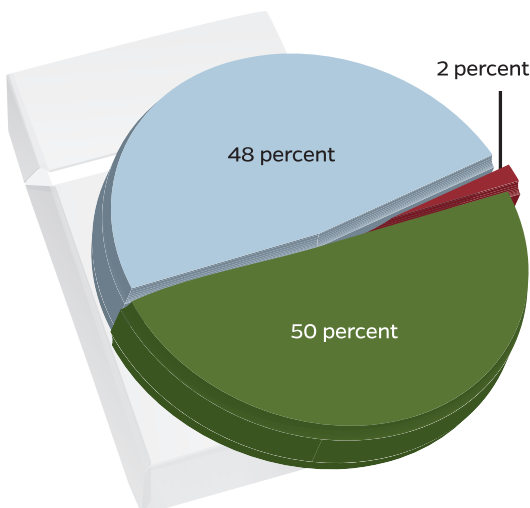
Front of pack



Back of pack

Hard Packs

Soft Packs



### Breakdown of packs collected and presence of required HWLs

Total number of unique packs collected: 126

- **50 percent** of total packs had a current mandated HWL (n=63)
- **48 percent** of total packs had no HWL or a non-Thai HWL (n=61)
- **2 percent** of total packs had a not yet required HWL (n=2), with a pictorial warning that covered 85 percent of the front and back of the pack

Nearly half of packs collected in Thailand displayed a non-Thai HWL or no HWL. Thailand should take action to reduce the sale of packs that do not bear the mandated Thai HWL. Exposure to best practice HWLs can improve the effectiveness of HWLs in Thailand.

<sup>1</sup> 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](http://www.ensp.org/sites/default/files/CCS_status_report_health_warnings_2012.pdf). Accessed May 25, 2016.

<sup>2</sup> Smith K, Washington C, Brown J, Vадnais 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):e8 DOI: 10.2196/publichealth.4616.

<sup>3</sup> Ministry of Health Notice of Rules, Procedures, and Conditions for the Display of Images, Warning Statements, and Contract Channels for Smoking Cessation on Cigarettes Labels, 2013; Ministry of Public Health Notice of Rules, Procedures, and Conditions for the Display and Content of Cigarette Labels, 2009; Notification of the Ministry of Public Health B.B. 2550 (A.D. 2007) Re: Criteria, Procedures and Conditions for Displaying Pictorial Labels and Statements of Warning on Harm of Tobacco Issued under the Tobacco Products Control Act B.E. 2535 (A.D. 1992).

### 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.