

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM HOTEL AND RESTAURANT OWNERS ON HOW TO IMPROVE GOVERNMENT INSPECTIONS OF SMOKE-FREE AIR COMPLIANCE IN VIETNAM

BACKGROUND

In 2013, Vietnam prohibited smoking indoors in restaurants and hotels, apart from designated smoking areas. Compliance is low, with smoking often observed in prohibited areas. Enforcement visits are one way to improve venue compliance. Little is known from the perspective of the venue owner/manager on visit frequency, effectiveness in deterring violations, and how to improve interactions and information shared during government visits.

METHODS

- In summer 2025, we conducted 30 in-depth interviews with hotel (n=12) and restaurant (n=18) owners or managers across three cities in Vietnam of varying size/region: Hanoi, Da Lat, and Nha Trang
- Participants were recruited equally in high- and low-tourism areas from venues diverse in affordability and facility features (e.g., patios)
- Interviews were conducted in Vietnamese, following a semi-structured guide, and were translated into English for coding and thematic analysis

INCREASED INSPECTION FREQUENCY, HIGHER FINES FOR VENUES, AND MASS COMMUNICATION ABOUT FINES FOR INDOOR SMOKING VIOLATIONS COULD IMPROVE SMOKE-FREE COMPLIANCE IN VIETNAMESE HOTELS AND RESTAURANTS



◀ Access this poster and other IGTC work presented at the SRNT 2026 Annual Meeting

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RESULTS

- Key informants (KIs) perceived inspections for smoke-free (SF) violations as infrequent and discussed a lack of communication from the government; the threat of inspection did not seem to deter violations
- Recommendations from KIs for the government included an increase in the frequency of inspections, improved communication to the public and businesses regarding SF laws, supplying businesses with more prominent SF signage and documentation, and increasing education on the harms of tobacco products and penalties for smoking
- Many KIs also suggested increasing fines on the venue, but some restaurant owners indicated apprehensiveness about the cost

CONCLUSIONS

Findings highlight the perspective of hotel and restaurant management on their experiences with enforcement visits and government communication regarding SF laws. Policy recommendations include increasing the rate of enforcement visits, increasing fines for venues found in violation, and clarifying the legal rights of businesses to collect fines for SF violations through both mass media communication campaigns and within the legal framework governing SF implementation.

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