



ADDRESSING VAPING DISPOSAL IN QUEENSLAND & AUSTRALIA

BRIEFING DOCUMENT

Key points

- Vaping devices pose at least three threats for our environment
- More than 250 thousand Queenslanders are vaping regularly
- More than 100 tonnes of e-waste is generated annually by Queensland vapers
- Existing e-waste programs do not accept vaping devices
- **Action:** Implement a national disposal scheme
- **Action:** Increase fines for littering vapes, as a dangerous / hazardous item

History of advocacy

No More Butts has been raising the issue of the environmental impacts of vaping since it completed an issues paper for NSW EPA in late 2021, which resulted in a [published document](#) in June 2022.

Shortly after preparing this report, in January 2022, we made a [pre-submission for the 2022-23 federal budget](#) for funding to design and implement a national disposal scheme for vaping devices.

In April 2022, we presented to delegates at the NSW [Litter Congress](#) on “Addressing an Emerging Litter Threat: Vaping devices and products”. Shortly after in May, we presented the same topic at [Waste Coffs](#).

In Perth in September 2022, we presented at [Waste & Recycle WA 2022](#), bringing to the attention of attendees that vaping was already a big problem in WA, despite laws preventing the sale of e-cigarettes. At [Waste Expo 2022](#) Melbourne, we were on a panel where we raised the environmental impacts of vaping as a “new threat”.

After making a new budget pre-submission for 2023-24, in February 2023, at a meeting with Mr Michael Healy MP, our Founder was encouraged to write a briefing note, which was due to be circulated to relevant members of Parliament.

In parallel, we seeded a story to [The Guardian](#) about the urgent need to take action on vaping disposal. Based on this, we were consulted by blogger, Matilda Boseley who published an [Instagram video](#) about the perils of vaping disposal.

We also spoke with ABC Radio in several states, including [Perth](#) and were featured on the Ocean Protect podcast in [2022](#) and [2023](#).

Specifically in Queensland, we made submissions in response to the Draft [Queensland e-Products Action Plan](#), as well as the [Inquiry into reducing rates of e-cigarette use in Queensland](#). We gave [evidence](#) for the latter in Townsville to the Health and Environment Committee, with some comments and images being picked up by [media](#).

During the year, we penned an article about the issue for [Inside Waste](#), expanding on these concerns and worked with Comsol on a “Closing the e-loop” module for [Cool Australia](#) for deployment in schools across Australia. We were recently engaged by EPA Victoria to help them develop a policy position on vaping disposal.

In the past few weeks, our involvement in the panel discussion Waste Expo 2023 was featured in a [Media Release](#) about the event.

At a Federal level, after making a [submission](#) to the Department in February 2022 for vaping devices to be included in the e-Products strategy, we engaged with the [ACCC](#) consultation on batteries, as well as the recent Federal Government [SEEE consultation](#).

In addition to making our own [submission](#) to the Federal consultation on vaping, we have been joined to the peak health body group for a [closed consultation](#) on the development of the Commonwealth response to vaping.

We also already engage and inform [Clean Up Australia](#) and the Sea Shepherd Marine Debris team on this topic.

Proponent

[No More Butts](#) is a subject matter expert on tobacco related waste and a registered Australian environmental charity, having been entered onto the Register of Environmental Organisations in Australia.

Formed in 2020 to tackle Australia's most littered item: cigarette butts, No More Butts' vision is for a 'butt free environment'. However, in recent years with the emerging trend of vaping slowly augmenting smoking behaviours, No More Butts has also initiated a national conversation about the environmental impacts of vaping.

Performing multiple functions from research and advocacy, we are engaged as a consultant on the topic by peak bodies, including NSW EPA, in addition to performing pro bono work with councils and other environmental organisations.

About our founder

After an early work history spanning hospitality and entertainment, our founder and Executive Director - Shannon Mead, forged a successful corporate career over two decades with multi-national companies, including Nokia and Microsoft.

Most recently, Shannon led Commercial Operations & Go-to-market for a global consumer electronics company, where he was accountable for governance, analytics, training, and retail operations across 14 countries in the Asia Pacific region, reporting to the Global Chief Commercial Officer. During his tenure, Shannon held the role of General Manager for Philippines, Singapore, Indonesia and Pacific Islands, living in the three former countries, giving him a greater sense of worldwide impact and cultural understanding.

Prior to that role, Shannon led Sales Operations across Australasia for Microsoft Devices after being leading channel sales for Nokia Oceania, where he had worked for 13 years across sales, product management and training roles.

Shannon has presented across various conferences since the inception of No More Butts on the topic of cigarette butt litter, considerations for recycling and the importance of democratisation of data. More recently, he has spoken about the importance of e-waste programs to cater for the rise in vaping devices.

Along with a team of 10 others, Shannon works as a volunteer in the organisation, as a full-time focus and is an Executive Director. Shannon was presented with the Cairns Regional Council 2022 Australia Day Awards "Volunteer of the Year" for his efforts with No More Butts.