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Smokefree Coalition pleased at New Zealand's Extraordinary Award

The Smokefree Coalition is pleased that New Zealand has been jointly awarded the Global Smokefree Partnership's Extraordinary Award, along with Ireland and Finland.

The award was given this week in Edinburgh in recognition of the three countries' contribution to the development of the World Health Organization's Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC), a binding international treaty to which New Zealand is a signatory.

Coalition Director Mark Peck said New Zealand has shown leadership in tobacco control at an international level, and has also worked hard at home to implement the treaty. Receiving world-wide recognition for this is a real encouragement.

"New Zealand's smokefree environments legislation has now become almost as entrenched as our nuclear policy and it looks like becoming part of our national identity. And I am pleased that a lot more money has been committed to tackling the evils of smoking, much of it targeted towards encouraging kiwis to quit puffing on cigarettes."

However, Mr Peck cautioned that the award should not be seen as an indication that New Zealand's work in tobacco control is done.

"While we have been among the forerunners in the many areas of tobacco control, identified in the award citation, there remain several areas of work that still need to be addressed, two of which are taxation and product regulation.

"If we are serious about not having our children exposed to smoking behaviour then these areas will need to be tackled at an early juncture.

"In my view we can become smokefree in ten years if we build on the successes which we celebrate today," said Mark Peck.

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