

**Australian Government****Department of Health,
Disability and Ageing**

Niels Gabriels
Coroner's Registrar
Coroners Court of Victoria
cpuresponses@coronerscourt.vic.gov.au

Dear Registrar,

Investigation into the death of Ashleigh Mills (COR 2020 004808).

We refer to the letter dated 12 March 2026 regarding Coroner Audrey Jamieson's findings and recommendations. The department would like to extend our sympathies and condolences to the friends and family of the deceased.

I acknowledge Coroner Jamieson recommends that the Australian Government Department of Health, Disability and Ageing (department) consider whether warnings about the risk of fire/and or burns should be included as part of the mandatory health warnings on cigarette packaging.

While the Commonwealth reserves its position on whether it is bound by section 72(3) of the *Coroners Act 2008* (Vic), noting and recognising the important role of the Coroners Court of Victoria in investigating and preventing deaths, the department provides the following voluntary response to the recommendation.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Karlie Brown'.

Karlie Brown
Assistant Secretary,
Tobacco and E-cigarette Control Branch,
Department of Health, Disability and Ageing
04 June 2026

AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT RESPONSE**INVESTIGATION INTO THE DEATH OF ASHLEIGH PETER MILLS****RECOMMENDATION**

That the Australian Government Department of Health, Disability and Ageing consider whether warnings about the risk of fire/and or burns should be included as part of the mandatory health warnings on cigarette packaging.

RESPONSE

Tobacco use remains the leading cause of preventable death in Australia and is estimated to kill over 24,000 Australians a year. The Australian Government is committed to implementing public health measures that will prevent hundreds of thousands of premature deaths and reduce the health and social burden of tobacco-attributable disease.

The department administers the *Public Health (Tobacco and Other Products) Act 2023* (Tobacco Act) and the *Public Health (Tobacco and Other Products) Regulations 2024* (Regulations). The current suite of mandatory health warnings on tobacco products are legislated by the Tobacco Act and the Regulations. The health warnings were developed in line with scientific evidence, expert advice, extensive testing, and public consultation. They align with Article 4 of the World Health Organization Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, which states that every person has the right to be informed and to understand the health consequences of smoking.

The department will consider the Coroner's recommendation, including seeking expert advice and consultation, for any future development or updates to mandatory health warnings on tobacco products.