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MEDIA RELEASE

SHOPPING CENTRE INDUSTRY WELCOMES ILLICIT TOBACCO NATIONAL DISRUPTION GROUP

The Shopping Centre Council of Australia (SCCA) has welcomed the Albanese Government and Minister Tony Burke's announcement of the **Illicit Tobacco National Disruption Group**, a new multi-agency taskforce led by the Australian Border Force (ABF), to tackle the growing threat of illicit tobacco across the country.

The Disruption Group will work alongside the existing ABF-led Illicit Tobacco Taskforce and focus on targeting mid-level criminals and enablers, including within the retail supply chain.

Angus Nardi, Chief Executive of the SCCA said: "We welcome Minister Tony Burke's establishment of the Illicit Tobacco National Disruption Group as part of the fight against the illegal tobacco market.

"Illicit tobacco continues to undermine legitimate retail operators, small businesses and shopping centres who are doing the right thing, along with giving rise to significant community safety issues.

"We have recently partnered closely with State Governments on developing stronger laws to enable retail property landlords to swiftly and forcefully terminate the leases of illegal operators.

"The Queensland Government recently introduced laws into their Parliament, which we worked closely on, and hope that they will become the national benchmark for other jurisdictions.

"We recently met with the Illicit Tobacco Commissioner to discuss ensuring a strong and coordinated approach and will continue to work closely with relevant Police forces on key issues," Mr Nardi said.

The Group's partners include:

- All state and territory police forces
- Australian Federal Police
- Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission
- AUSTRAC
- Department of Home Affairs
- Department of Health, Disability and Ageing
- Australian Taxation Office
- Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
- Illicit Tobacco and E-Cigarette Commission
- Services Australia

The Shopping Centre Council of Australia is the leading voice for shopping centre owners across Australia.

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