

25 January 2006

Mr Stephen Lodge
Manager
Legislation Review
Public Health
Department of Human Services
GPO Box 1670N
MELBOURNE VIC 3001

Dear Mr Lodge,

Please find enclosed the MAV submission for consideration by the Department of Human Services in its review of the Health Act 1958.

The MAV understands and supports the imperatives behind the Department seeking to introduce a new public health act to provide an appropriate statutory framework to deal with public health crises that may emerge in the future. If the proposals canvassed in the DHS Draft Policy Paper proceed, however, there will be consequences for local government, in particular new legal obligations and liabilities, the full impact of which are unknown at this stage.

I therefore wish to stress the importance of the State Government working constructively with local government to ensure it can also meet the new challenges likely to result from the changes. The State Government's willingness to provide funding direct to councils to implement the new provisions successfully at the local community level would be an important investment. The MAV also requests that if the new public health act is introduced, the impact of the changes on local government be monitored and evaluated with appropriate action and resources being committed following this review.

If you require further information, please contact Rosemary Hancock at the MAV, email rhancock@mav.asn.au.

Yours sincerely,


ROB SPENCE
Chief Executive Officer