

State bans tobacco advertising

By JOHN CAMPBELL

THE NSW Government has banned all tobacco-related advertising from its trains, buses, ferries and billboards.

The advertising is worth about \$500,000 a year to the State Rail Authority and the Urban Transit Authority.

Advertising on SRA property and rolling stock should be phased out by the end of this year, but special contracts with the UTA will take up to 2½ years to end.

The banning decision was reached in Labor Caucus yesterday after representations by the Minister for Transport, Mr Cox, and the Minister for Health, Mr Brereton.

In a joint statement, the ministers said no new cigarette advertising would be accepted and existing contracts would not be renewed.

The federal director of the Australian Association of National Advertisers, Mr Peter Long, said last night it was hypocritical of the Government to ban cigarette advertising and still accept revenue from taxes on the tobacco industry.

A major factor in the Government's decision was the conflict between its "quit for life" anti-smoking campaign and the benefits it received from tobacco products advertising.

Mr Brereton said the decision removed any conflict which had existed between his and Mr Cox's department on over-all government policy.

Confident

He said his department was finalising plans for a State-wide anti-smoking campaign.

Mr Cox said he recognised that the tobacco and advertising industries would be disappointed, but he believed the Government's primary responsibility was to promote good health.

He was confident the Government would only experience a short-term fall-off in advertising revenue.

In another move, penalties under a 78-year-old Queensland law to prevent shopkeepers selling cigarettes to juveniles may be increased.

The law — the Juvenile Smoking Suppression Act — forbids the sale of cigarettes to children up to 16 years of age.

Under the Act, persons convicted of selling cigarettes to juveniles can be fined up to \$20, but there have been no convictions for the past 25 years.

The Queensland Minister for Police, Mr Glasson, said yesterday he would seek a review of the Act following representations from a Queensland Cancer Fund delegation.

Some unscrupulous shopkeepers in Brisbane were reported to be selling cigarettes to children at up to 25 cents a cigarette, Mr Glasson said.