

No airport tobacco ads: AMA

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The Australian Medical Association called on the Federal Government yesterday to ban cigarette advertising at Sydney Melbourne and Brisbane airports when the contracts come up for renewal in May.

Figures produced by the AMA show that cigarette contracts with the Federal Government for the three airports are worth \$700,000 a year.

The call follows the decision of the NSW Government to phase out advertising on public transport property.

The Federal president of the AMA, Dr Lindsay Thompson, said 16,000 people died each year from smoking-related diseases.

The State Labor backbencher who pushed the ban through the Caucus, Mr Ken Gabb, believes it will soon spread to the major cricket grounds, including the Sydney Cricket Ground.

Mr Gabb said he would ask the New South Wales Health Minister, Mr Brereton, to put forward a proposal to ban sportsground tobacco advertising at the next meeting of State health ministers later this year.

In New South Wales, the next move would be to ban tobacco advertising on all government-owned property, including the SCG, as well as property owned by the Maritime Services Board, and roadside billboards controlled by the Department of Lands.

Mr Gabb said he would also like to see tobacco companies banned from sponsoring cultural and sporting events.

He said the Government's ban was a courageous decision, especially in the light of the lobbying and financial muscle of the tobacco and advertising industries.

Tobacco companies have claimed that the SRA and the UTA stand to lose between \$500,000 and \$1 million in revenue because of the ban.

"I think this move is very sig-

nificant because it means that the NSW Government has now established a principle against an unhealthy practice," Mr Gabb said.

He said that any campaign which effectively threatened the tobacco industry's advertising outlets, could be expected to be long-term and "not a very easy" one.

Mr Pat Hills, the Minister for Industrial Relations, and chairman of the Sydney Cricket and Sports Ground Trust, last night was critical of Mr Gabb's moves to ban cigarette advertising at the SCG.

Mr Hills said that Mr Gabb had already put the motion to Caucus and it had been defeated.

"He is pursuing a cause which is against his party's decision," Mr Hills said.

Meanwhile, Fremantle City Council has refused the West Australian Football League permission to erect cigarette and tobacco advertising at Fremantle Oval.

The council stipulated that no such advertising be allowed as part of a new lease agreement between it and the league.