

Shenzhen Smoking Control Regulation: one-year implementation assessment report (summary)

The Shenzhen Smoking Control Regulation came into effect on March 1, 2014. It clearly stipulates a comprehensive smoking ban for indoor workplaces, indoor public places, public transportation, and select outdoor places. (A grace period until December 31, 2016 was given for bars, dance halls, tea houses, massage parlors, and bath centers.) The Regulation expressly defines the scope of Shenzhen City's smoking ban, its enforcement agencies, violation penalties, and the responsibilities of administrative bodies and individuals.

At the end of the Regulation's first year of implementation, the Shenzhen Chronic Disease Prevention and Control Center (Shenzhen NCD Center) conducted a survey to evaluate its enforcement, compliance, and impact. The evaluation was supported technically and financially by the International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease.

OBJECTIVES

The survey sought to assess:

1. The Regulation's status of enforcement and related challenges;
2. The compliance rates in diverse venue settings;
3. The public's (including venue owners/managers) knowledge and attitude on the Regulation's implementation, as well as suggestions for improvement.

METHODS

From January to February 2015, the Shenzhen NCD Center conducted:

1. Interviews with eight law enforcement agencies;
2. Covert visits to 2,162 venues located in 10 administrative districts of Shenzhen;
3. Questionnaire surveys for 232 venue owners/managers and 2,316 members of the public.

Sampling method:

- For the types of venues with a public registry (e.g. medical/welfare institutions, schools, parks, rail stations, hotels, beauty salons, restaurants), random sampling was applied to yield 894 venues.
- For venue categories without a public registry (e.g. shopping centers, supermarkets, banks, postal/telecom services, private/civic entities, internet cafes, recreation venues, residential areas, etc), one neighborhood unit was randomly selected per city sub-district (57 in total), within which the venues were conveniently sampled, yielding 1,189 venues.

RESULTS

1. Interviews with enforcement personnel revealed:

1.1. Enforcement efforts

- Established a multi-sectoral coordination mechanism, with clear division of responsibilities;
- Built personnel capacity for tobacco control enforcement;
- Established regulatory mechanisms for implementation and supervision;
- Strengthened public education and advocacy, fostering social attitudes favorable to tobacco control.

1.2. Enforcement challenges

- Insufficient funding and human resource;
- Violation evidence often difficult to obtain;
- Penalty seldom imposed;
- Difficult to gain access to certain venues for inspection (e.g. certain offices, restrooms)

Table 1. Shenzhen Smoking Control Regulation enforcement status in by agency (Mar 1 – Dec 31, 2014)

Enforcement agency	Enforcement (Person-visits)	Venues	Individuals fined	Fines on individuals (RMB)	Individuals dissuaded	Rectification letters	Venues warned	Venues fined	Fines on venues (RMB)
Health Supervision	25606	11091	433	22100	2275	4679	572	0	0
Market Supervision	55954	64668	498	25000	9129	222	188	2	40000
Transportation	17117	3778	13	650	6219	108	394	0	0
Police	10234	4605	1884	94200	16638	742	476	0	0
Culture, Sports, and Travel	27717	6925	5	250	50499	173	68	0	0
City Management	33737	9186	5842	277900	9642	428	405	0	0
Total	170365	100253	8675	420100	94402	6352	2103	2	40000

2. Covert visits to smoke-free venues showed that compliance is as follows:

- Among 2,162 surveyed places, 1,634 places **posted no-smoking signs (76%)**. Top three: taxi (99%), airport/train/subway stations (98%), bus/subway cars (97%). Bottom three: beauty salons (44%), wholesale/retail (45%) and private/civic entities (51%).
- **Tobacco ads were observed in 7 venue types**. They were found in 20% of wholesale/retail venues, and less than 3% of public transit stations, private/civic entities, hotels, restaurants, internet cafes/recreation halls, or residential areas.
- **Ashtrays and smoking equipment were found in 17.3%** of surveyed venues. Top three: residential areas (42%), hotels (36%), internet cafes/recreation halls (35%). No ashtray or smoking equipment were found in buses/subways. They were found in less than 10% of medical/ welfare institutions, banks/postal/telecom offices, airport/train/subway stations, taxis, and beauty salons.
- **Smoking was observed most frequently in internet cafes/recreation halls (52%)** and in parks/scenic areas (21%). No smoking was observed on buses/subway cars. Smoking was observed in less than 5% of medical/welfare institutions, cultural venues, banks/postal/telecom offices, taxis, hotels, beauty salons, and residential areas.
- No sale of tobacco products was observed on bus/subway cars, taxis, and residential areas. However, there is **sale of tobacco products in 137 wholesale/retail venues**, 9 airport/train/subway stations, 8 hotels, and 22 internet cafes/recreation halls.

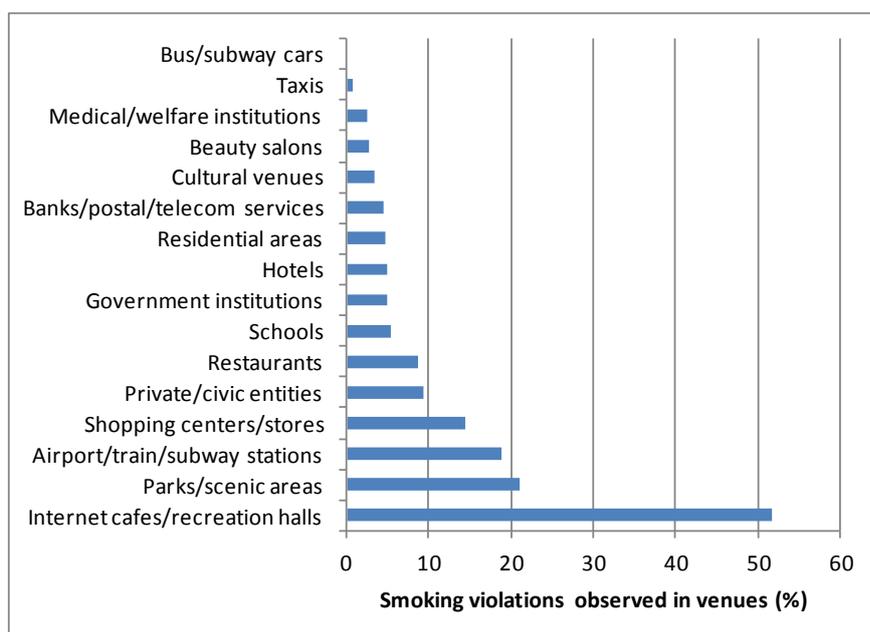


Figure 1. Smoking violations observed in each type of venues

3. Questionnaire surveys revealed the following knowledge and attitudes:

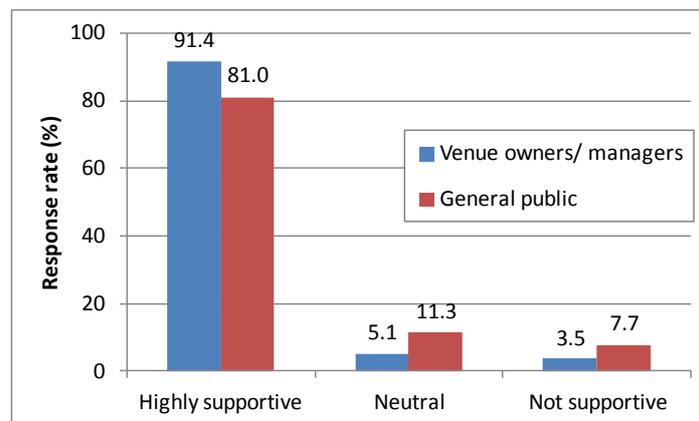
3.1. Venue owners/managers

- Out of 232 managers, 87% attested comprehensive smoking ban in their venues and 10% attested partial ban only.
- 91% of surveyed managers are highly supportive of indoor smoking ban, 3.4% do not support a total ban, and 5.2% are neutral.
- 28% of managers still do not know their responsibilities as stated in the Regulation, while 67% know they will be fined if they fail to comply with the Regulation.
- 67% of venues surveyed have written smoking control policies, and about 50% have smoking inspection personnel.
- 24% of managers believe that public smokefree implementation has been very good, 43% believe it satisfactory, and only 4.7% believe it to be poor.
- 51% of venues discourage indoor smoking behaviors whenever observed; 32% discourage smokers frequently; 16% do not discourage consistently.

3.2. The general public

- Among 2,316 surveyed members of the public, 81% know of the Regulation; 19% do not.
- 81% of people surveyed strongly support the total ban on smoking in public places, but 7.7% do not support; 11% are neutral.
- 19% of those surveyed are current smokers. They usually smoke at designated smoking areas (26%), at home (25%), and in restrooms (21%).
- 33% of those surveyed believe that public smokefree implementation has been very good, 55% believe it to be only somewhat effective, and 12% believe it to be ineffective.

Figure 2. Attitude towards the Shenzhen Smoking Control Regulation implementation



CONCLUSIONS

1. Shenzhen has demonstrated strong commitment to enforcing the Regulation. Nonetheless, some challenges to enforcement remain.
2. Compliance to the Regulation needs to be improved for certain types of venues.
3. Implementation has been broadly regarded as effective, but with specific exceptions.
4. Comprehensive smoking ban for public places is highly accepted by the public.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Equip enforcement agencies with specific tobacco control funds, personnel, and equipment, to ensure long-term sustainability.
2. Improve the training and education for venue owners/managers on their responsibilities in enforcing the smoking ban.
3. Strengthen enforcement efforts in key venue types with frequent violations.
4. Expand publicity efforts for tobacco control to widely educate the public through innovative publicity methods.