



ecigintelligence.com/motorsport-expected-to-ignore-whos-call-to-end-tobacco-sponsorship

David Palacios Rubio



A recent call by the World Health Organization (WHO) for governments to enforce bans on all tobacco or e-cigarette advertising and sponsorship in sports events has so far received no formal response from the world of motor racing.

According to Alan Blum, founder of the University of Alabama Center for the Study of Tobacco and Society, neither Formula 1 nor MotoGP is expected to pull out of partnerships with Big Tobacco any time soon.

The WHO called on both governments and sporting bodies “to adopt strong tobacco-free policies that ensure their events are smoke-free and their activities and participants, including race teams, are not sponsored by tobacco companies”.

The Geneva-based United Nations (UN) agency urged laws to be made at national level to ban any kind of tobacco sponsorship or promotion “in the strongest possible ways”, including penalties for companies that fail to comply.

Article 13 of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC) obliges countries to implement a comprehensive ban, or restrictions, on tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship.

In recent times, partnerships between tobacco corporations and major international motor sports organisations such as F1 and Moto GP teams have come under legal scrutiny in some countries.

Philip Morris International (PMI) and Ferrari were forced by the Australian authorities to cancel their partnership for the Australian Grand Prix, the opening race of the F1 season.

In February, British American Tobacco (BAT) announced that it would team up with UK-based F1 team McLaren.

“It will be interesting to see if nations step up to the plate to bar the BAT and PMI ploys,” said Blum. “The only sure bet is Canada, but there’s a chance that Singapore, France, Monaco and Spain could intervene.”

What This Means: Despite the clear declaration of intent by the WHO, it is likely that the current partnerships signed between Big Tobacco and major motorsport organisations F1 and MotoGP will continue rolling.

For now the UN agency has simply published a statement, but depending on how far it wants to influence national health authorities the matter could be escalated and taken to the next Conference of the Parties to the WHO FCTC, which will take place in the Netherlands in 2020.

– Jennifer Freedman *contributing writer* and David Palacios *ECigIntelligence staff*

Photo: [emperornie](#)

ECigIntelligence does not provide legal, strategic or investment advice. Tamarind Media Limited, the publisher of ECigIntelligence, does not accept any liability or responsibility for information or views published.

Please see [this page](#) for a detailed description of our methodology.