

# STARS AND STRIPES.®

## Hagel suggests he favors tobacco sales ban at military installations

By Jon Harper

Stars and Stripes

Published: March 31, 2014

WASHINGTON — As the Navy considers banning tobacco sales on all bases and ships, Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel gave a strong endorsement of the review Monday, and suggested that he would be in favor of a ban.

“I don’t know if there’s anybody in America who still thinks that tobacco is good for you,” Hagel told reporters at the Pentagon in response to a question about the Navy review.

“We don’t allow smoking in any of our government buildings. Restaurants, states, [and] municipalities have pretty clear regulations on this. I think in reviewing any options that we have as to whether we in the military through commissaries [or] PXs sell or continue to sell tobacco is something we need to look at. And we are looking at it. And I think we owe it to our people.”

Hagel said that the financial and human costs of tobacco use need to be taken into account. The secretary said that dealing with tobacco-related health issues costs the Defense Department more than a billion dollars a year.

“Now the dollars are one thing. But the health of your people — I don’t know if you put a price tag on that. So I think it

does need to be looked at and reviewed,” Hagel said.

Studies show military members use tobacco at higher rates than same-age civilians. A 2011 DOD survey showed 24 percent of troops smoked, compared with 20 percent of civilians of the same age.

Last week, Cmdr. Tamara Lawrence, a Navy spokeswoman for the secretary, confirmed Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus is taking a new look at tobacco use across the service.

A Navy official, who spoke to Stars and Stripes on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to speak on the topic, said one option on the table is banning tobacco sales on Navy bases and ships.

*[harper.jon@stripes.com](mailto:harper.jon@stripes.com)*

*Twitter: [@JHarperStripes](https://twitter.com/JHarperStripes)*

[http://www.stripes.com/news/hagel-suggests-he-favors-tobacco-sales-ban-at-military-installations-1.275539?utm\\_content=bufferb62ad&utm\\_medium=social&utm\\_source=twitter.com&utm\\_campaign=buffer#.UzoP3q1dXJM](http://www.stripes.com/news/hagel-suggests-he-favors-tobacco-sales-ban-at-military-installations-1.275539?utm_content=bufferb62ad&utm_medium=social&utm_source=twitter.com&utm_campaign=buffer#.UzoP3q1dXJM)