



**MEDIA RELEASE**  
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### **GULL INTRODUCES NEW MEASURES AGAINST AGGRAVATED ROBBERIES**

Gull New Zealand has introduced New Zealand's first anti-theft tobacco dispenser at one of its Auckland service stations in a bid to discourage aggravated robberies.

Aggravated robberies of service stations are becoming increasingly prevalent in New Zealand and the company hopes the dispenser, at its Rosebank Road service station in Avondale, will discourage this behaviour.

From January to September 2016 there have been 58 incidents across the country, with the vast majority of assailants after tobacco. Eight out of the 58 aggravated robberies have taken place at Gull.

The price of tobacco has steadily increased and will continue to do so as the government continues its effective strategy of using price as a cessation tool. Subsequently, tobacco is becoming an increasingly valuable commodity and a target for thieves.

Breaking into the premises by driving a stolen car through the door is now one of the main methods of forced entry. Offenders are using hammers, baseball bats, screwdrivers, knives and even guns to threaten and assault service station attendants.

"The safety of our staff and customers is paramount. We have already put in place several safety measures, including employing security guards at night, installing bollards and lowering tobacco stock levels," says Gull's Chief Operating Officer, Ulrik Olsen.

Part safe and part dispenser, the anti-theft unit securely stores tobacco under the counter, with a controlled delivery system that allows only one packet of tobacco to be released at a time. Tobacco can only be delivered once it has been selected through the point of sale system, meaning no sale, no tobacco – and no thefts. The machine is made in Germany from heavy duty steel and cost Gull upwards of \$30,000 to import and install.

"It's about taking the prize away. Money has always been stored in a safe now cigarettes are too," continues Olsen.

Gull has plans for a network-wide roll out as soon as possible.

"We hope this move will discourage aggravated robberies at service stations for good, not just at Gull stations, but across the country. We want all brands follow our lead and make service stations safer for everyone," concludes Olsen.

**-ENDS-**

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