

Fahey takes on smoking ban debate

By PETER WILMOTH

FORMER NSW premier John Fahey, the new chairman of the World Anti-Doping Association, who lost a lung after being diagnosed with lung cancer, wants to debate a prohibition on smoking.

"It's worth talking about because, if nothing else, it will highlight just what the damage is that smoking causes. And I think people ignore that to some extent.

"You kind of figure one day I'll give it up and I'll get rid of all those dreadful things inside me that smoking causes," he said.

Mr Fahey, 63, smoked 25 cigarettes a day from the age of 20 until he was diagnosed with lung cancer in early 2001. He was given a one-in-four chance of being alive by Christmas of that year.

He said he knew the call for a debate was problematic. "How do you enforce that prohibition?" he asked.

Anti-cancer groups have approached Mr Fahey to be a public face of anti-smoking campaigns, but he has declined because, after failing to legislate against smoking while premier of NSW, he fears being labelled a hypocrite.

Last hours of midget sub

An underwater rendezvous with death



Watery grave ... the remains of the Japanese submarine rests off Sydney's northern beaches.

By LISA CARTY
STATE POLITICAL REPORTER

THE mystery of how the Japanese midget sub that attacked Sydney Harbour in 1942 met its end off Sydney's northern beaches has been solved.

State Government maritime archaeologist Tim Smith led a team which has found M24 came to grief as it was on its way to rendezvous with a mother sub near Broken Bay.

Five massive mother subs - each 110 metres long and carrying 100 crew - had been waiting south of the harbour for M24 and two other midget subs to return from their assault on the night of May 31-June 1.

The other midget subs were blown up in the harbour - one by its own crew after being detected, the other by the Royal Australian Navy. M24, which attacked a ferry being used by the navy, killing 21 and injuring 10, slipped out of the harbour and remained undetected until it was discovered by recreational divers in November 2006.

Mr Smith said a map recovered from one of the bombed subs combined with Australian wartime intelligence records showed the attackers had planned a second rendezvous spot off Broken Bay.

"The historical records show the Japanese had more flexibility in their recovery plans than had been

postulated by researchers in the past," he said.

The two men aboard the M24 - Katsuhisa Ban, 23, and Mamoru Ashibe, 24 - had probably decided on the northern rendezvous because they did not want to draw attention to the fleet of mother subs to the south.

While one mother sub did head north, it seems Ban and Ashibe were forced to stay submerged off Bungan Head, new Newport, and died of a lack of oxygen, or fumes.

"I am sure they tried to get to the northern recovery point because the wreck lies on the agreed route but ... they either ran out of battery power or were overcome by bad air, or decided to commit suicide and end the mission," he said.

Naval historian Steve Carruthers said Mr Smith's work showed M24 did not head north by mistake.

"It wasn't on the wrong course, it was supposed to be there," Mr Carruthers said. "Tim's put forward the theory in his preliminary final report, which I have read and totally agree with."

The Japanese submariners' remains and some unexploded weapons remain in the sub, which is protected by a 500-metre exclusion zone, underwater cameras and sound detectors. Planning Minister Frank Sartor has placed a permanent heritage listing on the site, with fines of up to \$1.1 million for those breaching the exclusion zone.