

C. H. Clements, Esq.

Strictly Confidential

D

PUBLICITY FOR 'TAR' CONTENT OF CIGARETTES

1. We can take it that sooner or later we are going to be forced to publish 'tar' figures.
2. The object should be to give the figures:-
 - (a) with the minimum of sensationalism,
 - (b) in a manner that is easily understandable,
 - (c) with the fewest practical difficulties for ourselves, and
 - (d) in a way that allows some flexibility, since 'tar' contents are not likely to remain fixed.
3. If we put anything on the packet (e.g. a statement of 'tar' content or a coloured band) there are various difficulties:-
 - (a) We detract from the design of the packet.
 - (b) We tie ourselves to a particular 'tar' level for each brand, unless, if we alter the 'tar' level, we also alter the packet.
 - (c) We tend to draw more attention to 'tar' than we would by, e.g. a quarterly press statement.
 - (d) This method is less informative to the public because there is no ready method of comparing the 'tar' levels of a whole range of brands.
 - (e) Odd batches of rag could vary considerably from the 'norm' and the packet could then be telling a lie.
4. A statement in advertisements is open to many of the same objections. Moreover, not all brands are advertised.
5. There might be less objection to printing something on a film overwrap, or using tear strip of different colours to indicate 'tar' zones.
6. The only other practical method seems to be the periodical issue of lists of 'tar' contents of all brands on sale in the U.K. and Northern Ireland. These could be posted up on traders' premises or published in the press or elsewhere. It might involve a scheme on something like the following lines:-
 - (i) An independent 'watch-dog' agency is set up and its employees are trained in standard techniques of 'tar' measurement.
 - (ii) The onus is placed on each manufacturer of notifying this agency of the 'tar' 'norm' for each of his brands, and thereafter of notifying any change in the 'norm'.
 - (iii) The agency will be responsible for publishing these figures periodically, grouped into zones. The range of each zone, expressed in mgms. 'tar' per cigarette, will have to be large enough to allow for the inevitable fluctuations in 'tar' levels from one laid down operation to another.

301058920

- (iv) The agency will monitor brands regularly (so many cigarettes per brand per period according to volume of sales) by means of random purchases. The agency will call the attention of a manufacturer to any variation from the 'norm' outside certain tolerances.
- (v) If the 'tar' content of a brand varies upwards from the 'norm' by more than 7% of cigarettes tested in, say, two successive periods the agency will alter the 'norm' after informing the manufacturer. If the 'tar' content is consistently below the 'norm' the manufacturer, if he wishes, can lower the 'norm'.
- (vi) It might be best if the operation of the scheme were put in the hand of Customs and Excise, the testing being carried out by the Government Chemist. C. & E. could then take random batches of cigarettes direct from factories, hand a proportion of them to the manufacturer for check-testing in the manufacturer's laboratory, and arrange duty drawback for cigarettes removed.
- (vii) Presumably the manufacturers would have to pay for all this.

7. Wills and Player Branches are considering all the implications and will submit views. They will also consider the possibility that nicotine tables might be forced on us as well as 'tar' tables.

2.

H.R. Bentley/
J.A. Gordon.
24th May 1966.

501058921