

KEY AREA PAPER - PUBLIC AFFAIRS

SMOKING AND HEALTH - HEALTH WARNING CLAUSES

Background

The situation has existed for many years where health warnings have appeared on cigarette packets in some circumstances and in others they have not. Health warnings have been required by governments in developed nations for decades and, notwithstanding the general public awareness, it is the perception of the company that there is a community expectation, in developed nations anyway, that all cigarette packets should contain a warning of some kind. This issue has been debated in public many times, often being given more importance than it deserves. As a responsible manufacturer, BATCo believes it should respond to those expectations and apply a health warning to all products it makes.

In many countries health warnings are also included in advertising either as a result of legislation or industry agreement.

Policy

It is BATCo policy to comply with any national requirement to place health warnings on cigarette packaging and advertising.

In most cases warnings are required by government and should therefore contain an attribution to the government.

In cases where there is no requirement or agreement, health warnings should be included on packaging but not in advertising. (guidelines for implementation of warnings in these circumstances are circulated separately)

Pictorial warnings and those occupying a major pack face or faces (front and back) or a disproportionately large area of advertising space should be resisted.

Objective

To neutralise the controversy over pack warning labels; to minimise the damage to the Group's most valuable assets, trade marks, pack designs; and to minimise the disruption to advertising communications.

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