

KEY AREA PAPER - PUBLIC AFFAIRS

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS STAFF

Background

The effectiveness of an operating company's Public Affairs Department rests upon the professional competence of public affairs staff. In a worldwide group such as BATCo, special efforts must be made to establish uniformly high standards of professional practice.

Policy

It is essential that the head of public affairs function be aware of the company's policies, plan, directions and any developments to be able to operate effectively and provide informed advice to the company.

It is policy that public affairs staff in operating companies be trained in the techniques necessary for communicating the company's policies and views to key audiences. Staff must be able to report external views back to the company so that management is always in a good position to recognise changing circumstances and to act accordingly.

The professional development of public affairs and public relations staff should be through external training programmes, but where these are not available, staff should be assisted by in-company training, by co-operative programmes with companies in the same region and with Public Affairs Department, Millbank.

Staff must be trained in appropriate communications skills. Staff must also be able to work with company departments so as to identify the communication needs which together will constitute the Public Affairs Department's annual work programme.

Objective

To ensure the highest standing of the company within its local environment.

The objective of staff training is to ensure that high professional standards are maintained. In this way the company will be able to communicate effectively with and enlist the support of those groups and individuals who can help it maintain its commercial freedoms.

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