

1995 KEY AREA PAPER : SMOKING ISSUES

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1. Environmental Tobacco Smoke (ETS)
2. Tobacco Ingredients
3. Yields of Tar, Nicotine and other components of tobacco smoke
4. Smoking and Health - Communications

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**SMOKING ISSUES
ENVIRONMENTAL TOBACCO SMOKE (ETS)**

BACKGROUND

The claim that the health of non-smokers may be adversely affected by ETS is being increasingly used to justify restrictions on smoking in a wide range of public places and the workplace. It is the aim of those opposed to tobacco to make smoking increasingly socially unacceptable. However, BATCo's position continues to be that there is no conclusive evidence that ETS exposure causes diseases such as lung cancer and heart disease in non-smokers.

POLICY

Companies should communicate BATCo's position on the science of ETS where appropriate. A pro-active strategy for addressing all issues related to ETS (for example, ETS science has been mis-interpreted by the US EPA and others, ETS is a minor component of indoor air quality, smokers and non-smokers can be accommodated) should be developed and implemented using existing materials previously developed by Smoking Issues Department and through developing new materials and strategies in consultation with Smoking Issues Department (who will liaise with Corporate Affairs Department)

All new communications on ETS, whether for internal or external audiences, must be cleared with Smoking Issues Department, Millbank before issuing in order to ensure accuracy and consistency

The company's policy is to promote the sensible accommodation of both smokers and non-smokers in indoor areas and other places where total smoking bans are proposed. The company endorses smoking bans or restrictions on the grounds of safety such as in places where flammable liquids are stored.

OBJECTIVES

To encourage recognition that the claims regarding the health effects of ETS cannot justify legislative action (smoking bans etc.)

To prevent smokers being victimised on the grounds that their tobacco smoke causes disease in non-smokers when this has not been established.

To support the sensible accommodation of smokers and non-smokers.

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SMOKING ISSUES - TOBACCO INGREDIENTS*

BACKGROUND

In many regions of the world, WHO and other anti-smoking groups are calling for tobacco companies to declare lists of ingredients that are used with tobacco and, on some occasions, to list them on packs. This issue has in some countries been taken up by government.

The "recipes" of brands are of significant commercial value and in order to develop strategies that protect these recipes whilst at the same time responsibly responding to requests from government it is important that no negotiations commence with government on these issues without prior discussion with Smoking Issues Department (who will liaise with Corporate Affairs Department, Millbank).

POLICY

It is BATCo policy not to provide lists of ingredients on a company brand by brand basis to any outside agency, government or private. Should government require information about ingredients, it should preferably be provided on an industry basis following appropriate discussion. It is policy not to list individual ingredients on product packaging or include them on pack inserts.

Information should not be provided and no agreement should be entered into prior to consultation with Smoking Issues Department who will liaise with BTC, Southampton and seek approval from the BATCo Board.

OBJECTIVES

To preserve the commercial confidentiality of product formulae and recipes,

To preserve the company's individual ability to satisfy consumer tastes,

To prevent ill-informed abuse of the company, its products and the tobacco industry.

* All ingredients must have received clearance from the Additives and Materials Guidance Panel.

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SMOKING ISSUES YIELDS OF TAR, NICOTINE AND OTHER COMPONENTS

BACKGROUND

Largely in response to WHO recommendations and often following examples from other countries, an increasing number of governments are requiring the display of mainstream smoke yield figures for cigarettes. In most cases this covers NFDPM (Nicotine Free Dry Particulate Matter - "tar") and nicotine, but carbon monoxide and other smoke components may also be included. Some governments are also seeking to limit and reduce levels of yields either by tar ceilings or by introducing S.W.A.T. (Sales Weighted Average Tar) requirements.

POLICY

BATCo is not opposed to the display of information regarding NFDPM ("tar") and nicotine, preferably displayed on the side of packets. Tar and nicotine measurements must be made in accordance with the ISO method, or a nationally agreed standard method.

Unless legislation specifically requires otherwise, companies should not agree to the display of other smoke components including carbon monoxide either on cigarette packets or by way of enclosures because of the potential for misinterpretation and misrepresentation.

BATCo is opposed to the introduction of unrealistic tar and nicotine ceilings and where government proposals are considered S.W.A.T. regulations are preferred. All such proposals should be discussed with Smoking Issues Department (who will liaise with Corporate Affairs Department, Millbank).

OBJECTIVES

To prevent ill-informed abuse of the company, its products and the tobacco industry,

To maintain the right to manufacture products which satisfy the taste demands of consumers.

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SMOKING AND HEALTH - COMMUNICATION

BACKGROUND

A large number of doctors and scientists believe that smoking has been shown to be harmful to health. However, the company believes that it has not been scientifically established whether or not smoking is a cause of human disease. Indeed, the processes and mechanisms which lead to the development of the so-called smoking-associated diseases are not yet known; nor is it known what role, if any, smoking plays in the development of these diseases. Many scientific studies have claimed that smoking is statistically associated with certain diseases, but these studies by their nature cannot determine whether smoking causes those diseases. BATCo continues to support independent scientific research into these issues.

POLICY

BATCo's views on smoking and health and related matters (as set out in the Smoking Issues "Claims and Responses" document) should be clearly communicated to key audiences whenever suitable opportunities arise. It is important that such views be expressed accurately and in a non-emotional manner. It should, however, be noted that companies should not adopt a proactive approach to the communication of the company's views on smoking and health without careful consideration and prior discussion with Corporate Affairs Department, Millbank; however they should take advantage of appropriate opportunities to express their views when requested to do so.

Unless directly copied from previously-issued materials, all statements on smoking and health or relevant issues, whether for internal or external audiences, must be cleared before issuing with Smoking Issues Department.

OBJECTIVES

To encourage the recognition, even amongst those firmly committed to the anti-smoking point of view, that smoking and health is an extremely complex subject and to promote the adoption of a more balanced view of the issues involved.

To ensure that key elected representatives, government officials and company employees are aware of the company's views on smoking and health.