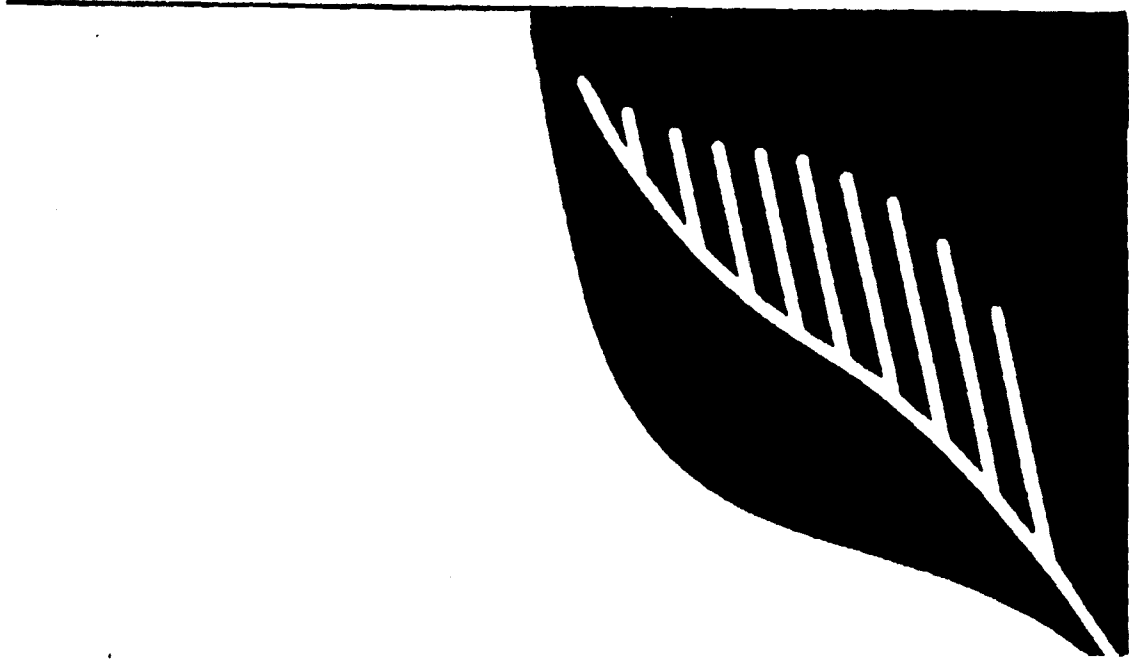


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BATCo document for Province of British Columbia 22 April 1999



Indoor Air Quality

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Indoor Air Quality

Because ETS is visible and easy to identify, it is often blamed for poor air quality in public places and workplaces.

However, a number of studies have shown that ETS contributes little to the overall quantity of chemicals in the air.

The substances present in ETS are present in the air anyway, from other sources eg buildings, furnishings, office materials etc. They are not unique to ETS.

Banning smoking in public places and offices would not, therefore, significantly reduce people's overall level of exposure to these airborne substances.

A build-up of ETS in the air may be a symptom of poor ventilation. Adequate ventilation will not only get rid of ETS, which of course may be annoying to some people, but will also get rid of the other substances that are present in far greater quantities.

Smoking bans will not result in 'clean air'. They will fail to solve the problem of poor ventilation and may make it less likely that more effective efforts will be made to address the situation.

Many issues surrounding smoking in the workplace and public places can be addressed by common sense, co-operation and courtesy on the part of both smokers and non-smokers.

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Advertising

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BATCo document for Province of British Columbia 22 April 1999

Advertising

There is substantial evidence from countries where tobacco advertising has been banned to indicate that advertising bans do not reduce consumption of tobacco.

Tobacco advertising cannot induce people to smoke, but is aimed at persuading them to switch brands. People don't need advertising to tell them what tobacco exists or to make them aware of it; in the same way that advertisements for different brands of televisions are unlikely to persuade people to buy more televisions, or to persuade those who have decided not to have a television to buy one.

Studies have shown that young people's decisions to smoke are affected by peer pressure and by parent and sibling smoking, rather than by advertising.

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Constituents

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Constituents

Virtually all of the chemicals in tobacco are present in the air we breathe, or in water or the diet from other sources. They are unavoidable, whether or not you smoke.

Even nicotine, commonly thought by people to be unique to tobacco smoke, is present in many vegetables (eg tomatoes, aubergines) and so people will take in nicotine from their diet.

It is often said that individual chemicals present in tobacco smoke are toxic or are able to cause cancer. However, when laboratory animals are exposed to whole cigarette smoke by inhalation, studies have not generally found that it causes cancer.

Most of the chemicals claimed to cause cancer have been classified as toxic or cancer-causing on the basis of studies in laboratory animals, not on the basis of studies in humans. In most of these experiments animals are given doses tens or hundreds of times higher than the level in cigarette smoke, and usually the animals do not even inhale it - it may be injected into the stomach or skin, or painted onto the backs of mice. This is hardly a suitable model for human smoking.

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Addiction

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Addiction

Millions of smokers all around the world have given up smoking without any difficulty or specialised help.

You only have to look at the difference between smokers and the average heroin or cocaine addict to realise how ridiculous it is to compare smoking with hard drugs.

Smokers do not experience most of the symptoms of 'addiction': there is no standard withdrawal syndrome or physical dependence, and unlike all other 'addictive' substances smoking does not lead to intoxication or euphoria. Smoking does not lead to any kind of deterioration in social or occupational functioning, as happens with addiction to alcohol or heroin.

To claim that smoking is like hard drug use trivialises the real problem of drug addiction by putting such a large percentage of the population into that category.

The term 'addiction' has been used in so many different ways that it has become meaningless. For example, people say that they are addicted to chocolate, or to soap operas, or video games.

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Environmental Tobacco Smoke



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Environmental Tobacco Smoke

Scientists do not agree that environmental tobacco smoke (ETS) has been proven to be a cause of disease, and the scientific evidence, considered as a whole, does not justify this conclusion.

For example, more than 30 statistical studies of lung cancer among non-smokers married to smokers have been published. Of these, over 80 per cent report no statistically significant association between ETS exposure and lung cancer.

Even in the minority of studies that report a significant result, the risk is so low as to be virtually unmeasurable by normal epidemiological standards.

Most of the studies have been severely criticised for poor methodology and for failing to take into account other factors that could influence the results, eg evidence suggesting that smoking households have different diets and lifestyles from non-smoking households, which could affect their risk of diseases like lung cancer.

People often say that smoking should be banned in the workplace because it is a risk to the health of non-smokers. However, again, 85 per cent of the studies investigating whether exposure to ETS in the workplace carries with it an increased risk of lung cancer, report no statistically significant association.

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Active Smoking

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Active Smoking

There is still a controversy about smoking and health.

Although there is a 'statistical association' between smoking and certain diseases, which means that smokers are more likely to develop lung cancer than non-smokers, smoking has not been proven to actually *cause* the diseases.

The cause could equally be one of the many other things that smokers do that makes them different from non-smokers.

Smokers have been reported to have quite different lifestyles from non-smokers. For example, smokers have poorer, high-fat diets than non-smokers. It has been suggested that this may explain the elevated risk of heart disease in smokers.

There are a number of 'anomalies' in the evidence that do not sit comfortably with the simple theory that smoking causes disease.

For example, Japanese men have one of the lowest rates of heart disease, and also of lung cancer, in the world. And yet around 62 per cent of Japanese men smoke: one of the highest incidences of smoking in the world.

Conversely, Chinese women have one of the highest rates of lung cancer in the world - and yet very few of them smoke. (Cooking practices have been considered to be a major influence on lung cancer rates here).

Smoking might cause disease,
or it might not.

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Smoking Issues

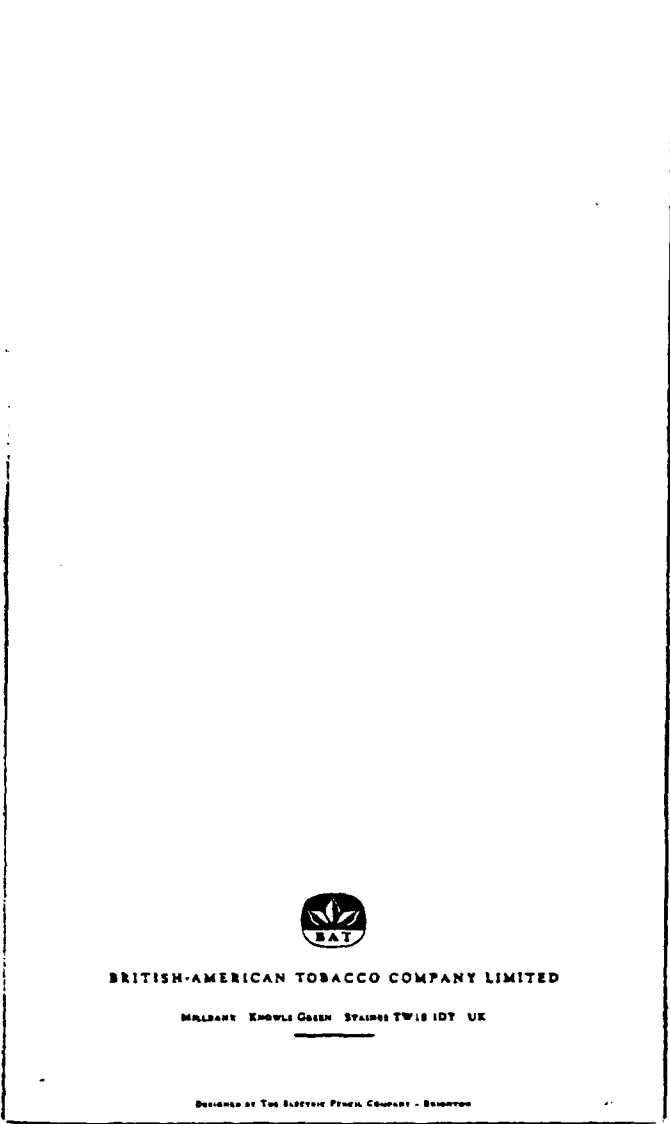
Claims about the effects of tobacco smoking have led to a very complex and controversial debate, covering a large number of different scientific disciplines. The enclosed cards provide only a summary of BAT's conclusions after analysing the relevant data.

More complete analyses of all of the issues summarised within this folder can be obtained from

Smoking Issues Department
British-American Tobacco Company Limited
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