

FTR. SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
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INTER-OFFICE CORRESPONDENCE

To: Mr. A. Holtzman Date: 20th July, 1983
From: H. Gaisch Number:
Subject: Epidemiology

This is in reply to your telephone call on the subject of epidemiology, in particular responding to the questions raised by Mr. Hugh Cullman and Mr. Lincoln.

1 The USA

The ICOSI group on Medical/Behavioural Research, MBRG, later re-named STAG, discussed the issue of epidemiology in great detail during the year 1977. The general consensus of the opinion of all members, the leading scientists in the field of all participating companies, was that epidemiological studies involving smoking must cover already in their layout all possibly associated risk factors in order to avoid that smoking shows up by default to be singularly associated with a major variable.

A further conclusion was that most organisations who are likely to conduct such a major undertaking are not necessarily interested in obtaining an unbiased picture.

The group further concluded that any well conducted study could only result in more favourable results than any of the earlier studies.

Such a study would have to be run in parallel in several countries in order to be able to cover different ethnic / environmental / cultural / climatic / topographic / etc. scenarios.

It was also the opinion of the group that only industry could initiate such a unified and coordinated study but could very well run it at arm's length via consultants.

Our group also pointed to the fact that, although an expensive project, its long duration would buy time for the industry. Then, in 1977, we estimated that the first trends and tendencies might not become available before 1986 (preparation during the years 1978 - 1981, start around 1982).

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The group's first recommendations (enclosure 1) are dated 19th January, 1978 and contain a list of risk factors that should be considered in such a study. The group pursued the work until its dissolution (letter by W.D. Hobbs to H. R. Bentley, dated 3rd October, 1979).

After this event, the subject came up once or twice again, and in 1981 I spent quite some time on reviewing relevant literature coming up with yet another list (enclosure 2). This reason was the surge of interest in the ambient smoke issue.

Should you want any more detail, I would prefer to give it in a presentation rather than in a report.

2 The United Kingdom

The second subject you raised concerned the state of the "Monitoring Studies" in the United Kingdom.

They are a commitment undergone by us within the context of the current Voluntary Agreement but which is going to run longer than the three years due to the longterm nature of such studies.

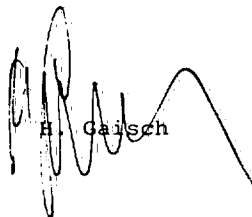
What had happened is the following:

As the Studies are run at arm's length, we were commenting when asked but let the ISCSH get on with it. The result was that the individual professors, who were potentially involved, all wanted a piece of the cake, which meant that a coherent prospective study as originally discussed was no longer on the books.

They then started all sorts of piecemeal mini-studies on selected populations. For this they needed to hand out an enormous number of cigarettes. So they came back to us for free cigarettes, upon which we only reacted with raised eyebrows and declined politely. So they decided to buy these cigarettes out of the regular funds and went to H.M. Customs & Excise with the request of having the tax waived. There, they were also received very badly and turned it down.

The long and short of it is, that they have been frittering away their money and have hardly anything to show for.

Kind regards,


H. Gaisch

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Enclosures as mentioned

Distribution list:
(Without enclosures)

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