

REPORT ON INDUSTRY MEETING CONCERNING ETS

Grove Park Inn
Asheville, NC

July 2, 1987

PARTICIPANTS: J. Fyock, Chairman; A. Colucci; D. Fishel;
C. Heckman; D. Hearle; A. Hilburg;
G. Oldaker; S. Weiss; T. Ogburn; M. Phillips;
J. Rupp; S. Stuntz; P. Sparber; M. Ward.

PART I --GENERAL EXAMINATION

Mr. Fyock, who chaired the meeting, identified the objective of the exercise: to identify our audiences, the proper and most effective channels of communication with which to reach them and the perspective which is required to position the issue properly.

Mr. Fyock also underscored the "thinness" of the science involved in the NAS and SG studies on ETS and introduced the concept of an examination of those studies by a reputable scientific institution.

Mr. Rupp pointed out three major occurrences during 1986 which impacted the issue: 1. the issuance of Government Services Agency regulations restricting smoking among federal workers; 2. the release of the National Academy of Science report on ETS; and 3. the release of the Surgeon General's report on ETS.

In 1987, to date, fifteen states have approved restrictive measures concerning smoking and there is still other activity at the city and county levels that is often more restrictive than those of the states.

Mr. Rupp reported three major causes for this activity:

1. The perception by the public that ETS is a health risk which is visited on them involuntarily.
2. ETS is, in fact, a visible indoor air pollutant. It is a nuisance.
3. The perception by the public that the tobacco industry is intransigent.

Mr. Rupp's additional observations included:

- the tobacco industry has a credibility problem
- the Surgeon General has credibility
- the tobacco industry has a problem with science writers and journalists
- ETS suffers from the presumption that since active smoke is bad, ETS is also bad--merely less so

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- the tobacco industry is inadequately prepared and is still not putting major resources against the issue.

Mr. Rupp concluded by enumerating three possible responses to the current situation:

1. Do nothing (hope it will pass like a fad)
2. Concede defeat
3. Redouble our efforts

Dr. Colucci discussed the scientific merits of the issue:

1. Relative to lung cancer - There is no data to support the allegations. Problem: The public perceives it as a cause. Merely less of a cause than active smoking.
2. Relative to exacerbating asthma - In some people (a very small percentage) there is a hypersensitivity.
3. Relative to compromising lung function - There are insignificant changes.
4. Relative to the cardiovascular system - Not a factor at all.
5. Relative to unborn children - Dr. Colucci sees "some connection."

Dr. Colucci contends there is a major battle going on to control INDOOR AIR. People spend most of their time indoors and Indoor Air has become "a new industry." EPA wants to regulate it. ETS is an issue in the fight.

The arena for this battle is CLEAN AIR not WORKERS RIGHTS.

The tobacco industry, according to Dr. Colucci, is on the outside looking in. The automotive, chemical and utility industries are in the process. They are players. They have joined EPA and OSHA by providing data. They have put resources against the issue. The tobacco industry has not and is therefore not in the game.

Dr. Colucci states "we must publicize the science of the issue. We can win on the science."

Dr. Colucci distributed a schematic describing the process required for setting the national standards for primary ambient air quality. He pointed out that many regulatory bodies are usurping the authority to sidestep this process. The schematic is enclosed with this report.

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Ms. Heckman suggested the need for an offense rather than a defense. She suggested the industry set the agenda as CLEAN AIR. She called for a broadening of the arena by focusing on all of the elements that contribute to a lack of clean air. A discussion illustrated that while many things contribute to indoor air pollution (such as wall board, carpet adhesives,etc.) smoking is different because someone is doing it. It is more apparent. It is associated with an act.

Mr. Rupp pointed out that the industry has, in fact, a policy of reasonable accommodation but the public is not aware of it. He called for building on the policy.

Mr. Rupp cited several things that are not currently being done at the Tobacco Institute:

1. The Center for Indoor Air Research is not yet a reality.
2. We're not recruiting scientists.
3. We're not funding significant appropriate research.
4. We're not attempting to "clone" Gray Robinson.
5. We're doing too little to change the current perception of intransigence in the industry.

Mr. Sparber reported that those against tobacco have changed their targets from smokers to non-smokers.

He offered as possible solutions:

- scientific utility arguments
- targeting windows of opportunity
- reconstruction of exposure levels
- re-focus on ventilation

Mr. Ogburn saw our targets as follows:

The Expert/Scientific Community which sets a base for policy	Federal	State	Local
Regulatory/ Legislative bodies which set policy	Federal	State	Local
The press/media which impact policy	Federal	State	Local
Public constituency which impacts legislation			

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Mr. Weiss and Mr. Rupp shared some general objectives which were articulated at a Philip Morris exercise a week earlier as follows:

Smokers	Instill comfort; activism
Non-smokers	Make ETS a non-issue
Anti-smokers	Isolate them
Regulators	Provide a balanced perspective
Media	Balance
Scientists	Objectivity
Tobacco industry execs	Commitment to deal with issue

Mr. Rupp observed that while ideally the tobacco industry should pool its resources through the Tobacco Institute, individual companies can't wait and must take steps to protect their markets.

Individual companies, he noted, are in a position to take advantage of their commercial resources but should make every effort to do so toward the common goal of the industry as a whole.

Mr. Rupp underscored the need for everyone to be "scrupulously accurate and prudent" in discussing ETS.

Mr. Fyock stated that to the extent that Philip Morris can share the results of their meeting on ETS (certainly excluding any proprietary information), it would be very valuable to the industry and all the companies.

PART II - NEEDS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

At this point Mr. Fyock requested that each participant identify specific needs and make recommendations with a view towards the development of action points.

The participants' contributions are paraphrased as follows:

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MR. WEISS:

The news media are being duped by the scientific community and various health organizations.

There is a need for a mechanism to impact on the media and legislators to counter these efforts in a credible fashion.

1. We must get people from both sides to discuss ETS publicly.
2. We must broaden the issue.
3. We must distribute the debate, on a coordinated basis, to opinion leaders.

MR. FISHEL:

The primary need is to obtain a solid commitment from the top management of the tobacco industry. Without it and the resources such commitment will provide, nothing effective can take place.

MS. WARD:

1. We need to undertake more scientific research.
2. We must accept the fact that there will be smoking regulations and work toward making them least harmful to the industry. We must help frame them in such a way as to make our customers more comfortable.

MR. OGBURN:

1. We must have a solid, long-term strategic plan within which each company will react appropriately.
2. Within the plan we must develop specific programs to achieve that long-term objective on an industry basis.
3. We must address adverse media coverage.
4. We must address social costs.
5. We must educate key sources of opinion and expertise, particularly on the local level.
6. We must improve communication within and among the companies.

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MR. HILBURG:

1. We need to work more closely with the media to encourage a consistency of coverage. We must help them do their jobs better and with more balance.

2. We should link this issue to litigation potential in order to get top management's attention to the seriousness of the threat.

3. Any long-term strategic plan should begin at the local level.

MR. RUPP:

Structural recommendations:

1. Establish a task force under the auspices of the Tobacco Institute to refine a plan to deal with the ETS issue. Membership of the task force should be restricted to individuals who are senior enough to speak for each company.

2. The ETS issue should be separately budgeted within the Tobacco Institute.

3. Budgetary levels need to be increased dramatically.

4. We must be prepared to work on a continuing basis towards a long-term objective.

Action recommendations:

1. Fund a center at a major university which would combine the health, science and communication disciplines. Its purpose would be to train scientific writers.

2. Recruit, train and deploy double or triple the number of academic and business scientists and support them better.

3. Increase the budget for scientific research.

4. Engage in a more aggressive media relations program with heavier emphasis on media training.

5. Take steps to always oppose restrictive legislation as a matter of policy.

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6. Attempt to find ways to be less than intransigent and communicate this flexibility to the public.

MR. HEARLE:

1. In order to gain the commitment to this issue that is necessary, we should regard management of the tobacco industry as a target audience. We should create a task force of scientists, lawyers and communicators and formally present the facts of the situation in person to the executive committee of the Tobacco Institute.

2. Inventory all efforts that have been undertaken by the industry within the area of CLEAN AIR and target others for action.

3. Prepare for and undertake a "gate-keeper" program aimed at the editorial boards of major media. Its purpose would be to gain a commitment from them to have our perspective objectively heard on an ongoing basis and to understand the industry's role in bringing about the achievement of clean air.

DR. COLUCCI:

1. The commitment of top management is crucial and the threat of possible litigation may help us gain this support.

2. Scientists can identify the "Achilles heels" of the anti-tobacco forces and we must be aggressive in going after them. Their theses can be destroyed. We can win this issue on the basis of scientific fact.

MR. OLDAKER:

1. A strategy must be formulated and presented to top management along with budgetary estimates and a time table. These must be accompanied by the ramifications if no action is taken. The strategy must include the coordination of scientists, lawyers and public relations experts.

2. We also need a short-term strategy for "fire-fighting."

3. We must fund scientists to examine extraneous issues with ETS.

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MR. PHILLIPS:

1. We must gain a commitment from top management as our number one priority.
2. The action program must be created by an industry-wide task force to which all companies subscribe.

MR. SPARBER:

1. We must have a long-term strategy for this issue at the Tobacco Institute.
2. Commitment is the key word. It also extends to sharing of information and ideas.
3. We must position ourselves as reasonable and constructive. We need to be identified more with the concept of accommodation.

MS. STUNTZ:

1. We need to stop talking about ETS and talk more about Indoor Air Quality. We have a potential coalition on IAQ. Many of our former friends (hotels, restaurants, airlines) don't want to deal with the ETS issue any longer.
2. We must prepare to deal with "brush fires" on smaller levels -- down from local government to the corporate level or even arbitration cases.

MS. HECKMAN:

1. We must reinforce legislative prejudice against all forms of government interference.
2. We must help develop prejudice for the concept of "good science driving good legislation."
3. We should consider helping the states to "squash" local government restrictive initiatives.

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