

ICOSI - INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE ON SMOKING ISSUES

History

Faced with increasing pressures from government and anti-smoking groups, the major international cigarette companies met in Europe in June, 1977, to discuss the possibility of unified efforts to deal with certain aspects of the smoking and health controversy.

Working groups and task forces were formed subsequently to explore specific areas of possible cooperation, and the principals of the companies held two additional meetings, in November, 1977, and March, 1978, to review the findings and recommendations of the sub-groups.

The principals agreed at the March meeting that ICOSI should continue on a permanent basis as a formally established organization.

Role and Purpose

ICOSI is an international organization which will study, advise and act upon issues concerning smoking, with particular regard to the social acceptability of smoking.

ICOSI aims to establish an agreed industry position on issues of common interest, to establish appropriate policies, and to encourage their implementation through affiliates of member companies and through national trade associations.

Topics of interest to ICOSI are those in the smoking and health area that may affect the long-term development of the tobacco industry. ICOSI's activities are not concerned with matters associated with the marketing of tobacco products or matters of a competitive commercial nature.

Membership

Membership in ICOSI is restricted to free-enterprise tobacco companies with interests in a number of national markets.

Present membership comprises British American Tobacco, Gallaher, Imperial, Philip Morris, Reemtsma, R. J. Reynolds, and Rothmans.

Although there are no plans to expand membership at this time, the possibility will be kept open, including

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consideration of an associate membership category. Companies in which ICOSI members hold more than a 25% interest would be excluded.

Structure

ICOSI has two decision-making bodies:

- the Board of Governors, which is responsible for establishing policy. It will comprise one principal from each member company, who may be accompanied to meetings by up to two company representatives. The Board will meet at least annually.
- the Executive Committee, which is responsible for implementing the policies of ICOSI in those areas where decision-making powers have been delegated to the Committee by the Board of Governors. It will comprise one representative from each company represented on the Board of Governors. Each representative may be accompanied to meetings by one aide. The frequency of Committee meetings will be determined by its members.

A Secretariat will be established in a centrally-located European city and will be directed by a Secretary General. Its tasks will include:

- handling administrative functions for ICOSI;
- monitoring developments in international organizations;
- a clearing-house to provide information relative to tobacco issues to members of the industry, tobacco trade associations, and other interested groups.

Working Groups and Task Forces

There are at present two working groups and three task forces, which are studying various areas of interest to ICOSI:

- Social Acceptability Working Group
- Medical and Behavioral Research Group
- EEC Task Force
- Product Liability Task Force
- Swiss Referendum Task Force

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Philip Morris Participation in ICOSI

Philip Morris is at present represented in ICOSI as follows:

- Governing Board: H. Cullman, with assistance from A. Holtzman and a third PM representative;
- Executive Committee: R. W. Murray, with assistance from J. Hartogh;
- Social Acceptability Working Group: J. Landry, with J. Morgan serving as alternate.
- Medical and Behavioral Research Group: H. Gaisch and H. Wakeham;
- EEC Task Force: P. Isenring
- Product Liability Task Force: M. Mockridge
- Swiss Referendum Task Force: H. Schedel

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Industry Briefing Statement

Briefing that may be given to answer inquiries from other cigarette companies that are not members of ICOSI should they learn about the Committee.

Representatives of several international cigarette companies, including Philip Morris, have met during the past 12 months to exchange views on issues of a non-commercial nature regarding smoking.

These companies are concerned about trends in public opinion on smoking in a number of countries and have agreed to establish an association of international cigarette companies to collect and exchange information on the issues. The name chosen by the new association is International Committee on Smoking Issues.

The membership of ICOSI comprises non-governmental cigarette companies with interests in a number of national markets.

ICOSI aims to develop a body of knowledge and materials on matters of common interest and to make it available to affiliates of member companies and to national trade associations in those countries where the issues on smoking are a common concern.

After ICOSI has been formally established, more information will be available to advise non-member companies and trade associations of the Committee's activities.

We (Philip Morris) believe that the other founding members share our opinion that the activities of ICOSI can help efforts to ensure a stable future for the tobacco industry throughout the world.

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Statement to Answer Public Inquiries

In the event the press or other segments of the public learn about the formation of ICOSI, the statement below should be used to answer inquiries. When ICOSI becomes established officially, we will send you an updated statement.

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Since the association has not yet been formally established, there is no additional public information available at this time.

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