

# Tobacco

# FACTS

for the National Press Club

*Dear David...*

**please tell us the TRUTH about tobacco!**

**No, not like these guys did:**

*US tobacco execs at 1994 Congressional hearing, testifying that "No sir, we do not believe nicotine is addictive" – when their own internal documents showed they knew it was.*



**Questions for**

**David Davies, Senior Vice-President,  
Corporate Affairs, Philip Morris International**  
National Press Club, Canberra, March 23 2005.

**Q.1:** Your company, Philip Morris, holds a 14% brand share of the international cigarette market. Your website states plainly that cigarettes cause fatal diseases like lung cancer and heart disease. The WHO puts the global death toll from tobacco today at 4.9 million people. That's 686,000 deaths a year attributable to Philip Morris products or about 78 deaths an hour. Do you accept that figure, or do you argue that it should be lower? How much lower - and based on what evidence?

**Q.2:** While we've been listening to you, about 40 of your best customers have died. My question is this: how many will still die if they switch to so-called "reduced harm" products? Has your industry EVER produced a cigarette which caused lower death rates?

**Q.3:** For at least 40 years, your company denied its products caused harm to smokers, until revelations from your own internal documents, released after court action, made it impossible for you to go on denying the obvious. If, in a few years time, your company's "reduced harm" products start killing thousands of people, can you assure us all publicly here today that we won't be treated to decades' more denial while smokers continue to die?

**Q.4:** When people do wrong, civil society normally demands that they do four simple things: admit that they've done wrong, promise not to do it again, apologise to those they've harmed, and try to make good the damage that's been done. Mr Davies, has Philip Morris done ANY of these things? Will you commit to doing so here in the spirit of 'reducing harm'?

**Q.5:** The International Agency for Research in Cancer lists the following as carcinogens present in tobacco products: aromatic amines (e.g. 4-aminobiphenyl), polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (e.g. benzo[a]pyrene), tobacco-specific nitrosamines, benzene, acrylamide and acrylonitrile. Which have you fully eliminated and how much will this reduce the risks of smoking?

**Q.6:** Will you confirm that Philip Morris has taken out patent registrations on chemicals that are analogues of nicotine? Internal tobacco industry documents reveal that one of the reasons these have been developed is to "get around" potential regulation of nicotine by allowing your company to say that these are distinct products, not covered by regulations pertaining to nicotine. Is that true? Are you claiming these analogues are safer? On what evidence?

**Q.7:** In 1984 one of your senior Australian executives wrote to his US counterpart about how to arrest the declining sales of Marlboro in Australia. I'll read this out to you:

As was presented to you in October, the two key areas where we think we can make positive changes are the blend and the advertising. With the former, our aim is to move Red and Special Mild as close as possible to the U.S.A. blend and thus make it harder for existing smokers to leave the product. At the same time we are working on making the advertising more appealing to younger smokers who are in the process of forming brand preferences but have no taste perceptions of Virginian nor blended cigarettes.

Mr Davies, what do you think he was referring to when he talked about changing the blend to "make it harder for existing smokers to leave the product"? Was he talking about fiddling with the chemistry of addiction here? Does your company still do this?

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**Q.8:** [to be asked if Davies tries to argue that Australia's tobacco advertising ban precludes Australian consumers being told about the new harm reduced products & should therefore be reviewed] Mr Davies: Don't you think the public would find it more appropriate if agencies like our cancer authorities were the ones to communicate with people about cancer risk and not companies such as yours with a shameful track record of misleading the public? Don't you agree it's unwise to leave the fox in charge of the chicken coop?

**Q.9:** Mr Davies in 1978, a Swiss lab, on receiving shipments of Australian leaf from Philip Morris, stated:

**Extremely high pesticide residue levels have been found in all samples submitted by PM-Australia, e.g. DDT group: >300 ppm; HCH-group: up to 100 ppm; Dieldrin: up to 22 ppm!**

Further analyses from 1993 found DDT on Australian leaf above the maximum permissible residue limit allowed in the USA and in 1994, 62/68 samples were over the recommended limits for dichloran. Significant DDT levels were found in 14 samples. Why weren't Australian smokers told about this? What are the levels you are finding today? And why should the public trust a company that treats its customers like this?

**Q.10:** More than 20 years ago, the Johnson & Johnson, the makers of Tylenol, the leading US pain reliever, earned universal praise for its response to deaths linked to its product. Tylenol was and remains perfectly safe when taken as directed, but criminal tampering with the product after it left the factory had led to several deaths. J&J removed tens of millions of dollars worth of untampered-with products from store shelves, giving consumers reassurance, and brought back its Tylenol products in tamper-proof containers. Over these same 20+ years, what has Philip Morris done to inform users of all the risks of its untampered-with products? We know that "bad batches" of cigarettes are sometimes recalled, but have any products been pulled from shelves when they've sickened and killed consumers who used them precisely as directed by the manufacturer?

**Q.11:** [to be asked by guest with lung disease] Mr Davies, as you can see, I have to have oxygen to help me to breathe. Can I have your absolute guarantee that the new harm reduced products won't cause people to go what I've been through?

**Q.12:** Some 70-80% of all current smokers would like to quit and 90% express regret over ever having started. How can you even attempt to maintain the fiction that adults are making the informed choice to smoke when your industry now does recognize that smokers are addicted to its products and when it's uninformed children who make the poor choice to smoke but adults who regret that childhood choice?

**Q.13:** Your website says repeatedly that you do not want children to smoke. How much money does your company make each year from smoking by the young people you say you don't want to see smoking? If you are sincere about not wanting to see them smoke, why don't you hand back all the money you make each year to cancer and heart charities and quit campaigns?



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**Q.14:** Philip Morris now says that there is no such thing as a safe cigarette. But not long ago, Philip Morris said cigarettes had not been proven to be unsafe. A Philip Morris executive also said if their products were ever found to be unsafe that they would stop selling them. Are you here today to announce that Philip Morris will keep its promise not to sell unsafe cigarettes? If we could not believe what the company was saying then, how can we believe you now?

**Q.15:** Can you rank order Philip Morris cigarettes brands in terms of their risks to human health? If no, does this mean all brands are equally dangerous? If you were to advise a smoker how to lower their risk of getting sick from smoking what five things would you tell them to do?

**Q.16:** In Australia will Philip Morris agree to pay for stop smoking medications to help your addicted customers who wish to quit doing so?

