



Diary of Denial:

A Record of Denials Made by the Australian Tobacco Industry

"It's all a charade isn't it? You read the packet, everyone else's packet, it tells you that the government health officers, who are not stupid, assert that smoking causes cancer and so on. I am prepared to assume that they haven't made it up. But I am here to do a job. I took the job knowing what I was involving myself in. I am not heavily into hypocrisy. We are all lightly into it,"

Nick Greiner, Chairman, W.D. & H.O. Wills (Australia) Limited (37).

In March 1997, the US tobacco company, the Liggett Group, made a number of admissions as part of a class action settlement agreement.

Bennett S. LeBow, Director of the Liggett Group, declared:

"We at Liggett also know and acknowledge that, as the Surgeon General, the FDA [Food and Drug Administration] and respected medical researchers have found, cigarette smoking causes health problems, including lung cancer, heart and vascular disease and emphysema."

"We at Liggett also know and acknowledge that, as the Surgeon General, the Food and Drug Administration and respected medical researchers have found, nicotine is addictive."
"Liggett acknowledges that the tobacco industry markets to "youth", which means those under 18 years of age."

The Australian tobacco industry has refuted and continues to refute these assertions.

This resource exposes the denials made by the Australian tobacco industry, an industry which kills 18,000 Australians and costs the nation \$12.7bn a year.

Smoking & Disease

By the early 1960s, the scientific community had determined that smoking is causally related to lung cancer and probably related to heart disease. Results from tobacco industry laboratories supported these conclusions, but the Australian tobacco industry publicly denied that the links had been proven (1).

Tobacco Institute of Australia (TIA)

"Isn't the statistical evidence overwhelming that smoking causes cancer and other diseases? No. Because statistical associations cannot establish cause and effect,"

Tobacco Institute of Australia. (2)."

"At no time did the Tobacco Industry representatives, state other than that it is not known what the role of cigarette smoking is in the production of disease because the causes of the relevant diseases are unknown, and that much more research is needed to find these causes and the mechanisms involved,"

Tobacco Institute of Australia Limited. May 1983 (3).

"The argument against smoking is statistical. No research anywhere in the world over the past thirty years has shown how diseases claimed to be associated with cigarette smoking are caused. There is no proof of causation of even one single death from cigarette smoking."

Tobacco Institute of Australia Limited. 28 July 1983 (4).

"The claim that Australians die prematurely as a result of smoking is not legitimate, nor is the emphasis on tobacco."

Anna Wheatley, Executive Officer, Tobacco Institute of Australia Limited. 21 April 1986 (9).

"No I don't [believe smoking causes lung cancer]. I think there's obviously a strong statistical correlation there..."

John Dollison, Tobacco Institute of Australia Limited. 10 June 1986 (10).

"The research that is available does indeed show that there are some statistical associations but none of the research and I emphasise none of the research shows you clear causality..."

Blair Hunt, Chief Executive, Tobacco Institute of Australia Limited. Circa 1988 (13).

"The Tobacco Institute acknowledges that smoking is a risk factor in the development of a number of diseases...the association is strong but to reach a causal conclusion there are other factors which should be taken into account..."

Donna Staunton, Chief Executive, Tobacco Institute of Australia Limited. 3 February 1995 (16).

"There are statistical relationships between smoking and a number of diseases but as for saying smoking causes those diseases, I believe there are problems in the leap from association to cause,"

Donna Staunton, Chief Executive, Tobacco Institute of Australia Limited. 3 February 1995 (16).

WD & HO Wills

"Well, I don't know that [if smoking kills] and I certainly know that the scientific world community is still out, the jury is still out,"

Martin Riordan, W.D. & H.O. Wills (Australia) Limited. 23 June 1992 (15).

"The studies that have been done are epidemiological studies, they study different rates of diseases between smokers and non-smokers, and that establishes the statistical association. It does not establish causation, in my view"

David Chapman, Chief Executive Officer, W.D. & H.O. Wills (Australia) Limited. 10 February 1995 (16).

"I do not accept that causation has been established [between smoking and several major diseases]"

David Chapman, W.D. & H.O. Wills (Australia) Limited. 10 February 1995 (16).

"I am not aware of any causal relationship with lung cancer and heart disease and smoking,"

Stuart Watterton, Chief Executive Officer, W.D & H.O. Wills (Australia) Limited. 9 March 1997 (17).

"There's obviously some clear information that correlates, for example, between people who smoke and people who have lung cancer. There is a statistical correlation. Beyond that, the question of direct causation and detailed causation is really not for me to opine on."

Nick Greiner, Chairman, W.D. & H.O. Wills (Australia) Limited. 18 April 1997 (18).

Philip Morris

"No there's no proof that it [smoking] has any effect [on disease], we just don't know the answers... there is no hard cold scientific proof that will stand up in any community."

David Butcher, Philip Morris (Australia) Limited. February 1984 (6).

"...I never said that it [smoking] didn't cause any illness, we don't really know."

Mr Tony McAdam, Philip Morris (Australia) Limited. Circa 1986 (8).

"We don't know what causes cancer...there is a statistical association between people who smoke and those diseases... we don't know what causes lung cancer, the sooner we find out the better it will be, we don't know what causes heart disease, we don't know what causes emphysema but we are doing something about it."

John Dollison, Philip Morris (Australia) Limited. 1987 (11).

"The facts about smoking are is that no-one knows the cause of cancer, no-one knows the cause of heart disease... what we do know is that there's a relationship between those people who smoke and a risk of certain diseases... there is a relationship between the people who smoke and the risks of certain diseases, that's not causality."

John Dollison, Philip Morris (Australia) Limited. 21 October 1987 (12).

"...there is a statistical association between smoking and certain diseases but that's not scientific proof that smoking causes those diseases."

Richard Ellis, Philip Morris (Australia) Limited. 5 April 1989 (14).

"I don't know [if smoking kills], you'd have to ask the Health Department that."

Philip Francis, Corporate Affairs Director, Philip Morris (Australia) Limited. 23 June 1992 (15).

"Causation [between smoking and disease] has not been proved yet by the scientists... Genetically some people smoke and get cancer while others smoke all their lives and don't."

Henry Goldberg, Chief Executive Officer, Philip Morris (Australia) Limited. 9 March 1997 (17).

Rothmans

"Nobody denies that there is a statistical argument for a relationship between smoking and ill health, but so long as a causal relationship between the two cannot be established, it is arguable whether it is in the public interest to confuse the issue either by inference or by intent,"

A.A. Wood, Public Affairs, Rothmans of Pall Mall (Australia) Limited. 18 October 1983 (5).

"...I am also still aware of the fact that there has been no direct link or mechanism by which it [smoking] causes these diseases,"

Gary Krelle, General Manager, Rothmans of Pall Mall (Australia) Limited. 10 February 1995 (16).

Nicotine & Addiction

By the early 1960s British American Tobacco (BAT) and its American subsidiary Brown and Williamson had developed a sophisticated understanding of nicotine pharmacology and knew that nicotine was pharmacologically addictive. Publicly, however, the tobacco industry has maintained and continues to maintain that nicotine is not addictive (1).

TIA

"I don't think smoking is addictive,"

Donna Staunton, Tobacco Institute of Australia Limited. August 1994 (22).

"I do not think that cigarette smoking is addictive on any reasonable definition... If it [being addicted] means that tobacco smokers would become physically dependent, like heroin users, then tobacco smokers are not addicted,"

Donna Staunton, Chief Executive, Tobacco Institute of Australia Limited. 3 February 1995 (16).

WD & HO Mills

"...the industry believes that there is no evidence to substantiate that it [nicotine] is addictive,"

Phil Scanlon, Manager of Corporate Relations and Public Affairs, Amatil (W.D. & H.O. Wills). 18 June 1984 (19).

"Thus I can only conclude that cigarette smoking is a habit. Indeed, I believe that to label smoking as addictive provides individuals with a ready made excuse not to quit,"

David Chapman, Chief Executive Officer, W.D. & H.O. Wills (Australia). 10 February 1995 (16).

Philip Morris

"Cigarettes are not an addictive drug. They are a habit like chewing gum,"

Peter McAdam, Manager, Corporate Affairs, Philip Morris (Australia) Limited. 9 July 1987 (20).

"...tobacco is not addictive in the strict sense,"

Tony McAdam, Philip Morris (Australia) Limited. 27 April 1988 (21).

"It [smoking] is habit forming but it is not addictive in the way heroin or cocaine is,"

Henry Goldberg, Philip Morris (Australia) Limited. 9 March 1997 (17).

Marketing to children

The Liggett Group has admitted that the tobacco industry markets its products to children under 18 years of age. The tobacco industry, however, denies targeting children, maintaining that it only advertises to people over 18 years of age.

TIA

"...the preponderance of evidence indicates that advertising is not a significant influence on the initiation of smoking in the young... if it is true that more children are smoking now than in earlier years, the reasons may well include some degree of rebellion against anti-smoking campaigns... whilst there is a correlation between what brands are advertised and what brands are smoked there is no correlation between what brands are advertised and the reasons that people either started to smoke or why they continue to smoke,"

Tobacco Institute of Australia Limited. (23).

"The tobacco industry does not target young people. It aims its advertising at existing tobacco smokers,"

Brendan Brady, Tobacco Institute of Australia Limited. (26).

"...why do children smoke... is the question advertising? Certainly it is not,"

John Dollison, Chief Executive Officer, Tobacco Institute of Australia Limited. 25 April 1985 (7).

"...smoking behaviour amongst children cannot be related to the amount of advertising by cigarette companies,"

Tobacco Institute of Australia Limited. June 1985 (29).

"...they [children] smoke.... for parental smoking habits, peer pressure and socio-economic factors, not advertising,"

John Dollison, Tobacco Institute of Australia Limited. 10 June 1986 (10).

"...advertising is not what makes people take up the practice of smoking,"

Richard Mulcahy, Tobacco Institute of Australia Limited. 19 July 1989 (33).

"...but I don't believe that if you ban tobacco advertising you'll stop young people smoking, I think that's a myth,"

Brendan Brady, Tobacco Institute of Australia Limited. 1 December 1989 (34).

"...the industry rejects any assertion that it targets young people in its advertising. There is no conclusive evidence to show that advertising is responsible for influencing young people (or adults) to start smoking... as an industry we have addressed community concerns over juvenile smoking and have introduced measures to minimise the perceived effects of advertising on young people,"

Reiner Jessurun, General Manager, Tobacco Institute of Australia Limited. 21 October 1992 (36).

"I believe that in respect of cigarette consumption it is other matters [other than smoking] which may encourage youth or juveniles to try smoking,"

Donna Staunton, Chief Executive, Tobacco Institute of Australia Limited. 3 February 1995 (16).

WD & HO Wills

"The stated purpose of the Voluntary Advertising Code for Cigarettes in Australia is 'that advertisements should not encourage people, particularly the young, to start smoking or encourage existing smokers to increase their levels.' We are aware of no valid evidence to support the contention that cigarette advertising has this effect and there is much evidence, which is known to you, to the contrary,"

Dean Wills, Managing Director, W.D. & H.O. Wills (Australia) Limited on behalf of Geoffrey Bible, Managing Director, Philip Morris (Australia) Limited, Bill Ryan, General Manager, Rothmans of Pall Mall (Australia) Limited, Bruce Cormack, representing the Advertising Federation of Australia and Ian Faircloth, representing the Media Council of Australia. 6 July 1983 (28).

"...advertising in general has a minimal effect for instance on children's decision to adopt a particular lifestyle [tobacco consumption],"

George Symms, Manager, Corporate Affairs, W.D. & H.O. Wills (Australia) Limited. 3 April 1991 (35).

"No, we do not believe we are targeting children at all,"

David Chapman, Chief Executive Officer, W.D. & H.O. Wills (Australia) Limited. 10 February 1995 (16).

Philip Morris

"They ignore the objective fact that Philip Morris has established strict standards to ensure that its marketing efforts are directed solely towards adults who choose to smoke. They ignore the objective that Philip Morris does not market cigarettes to persons under 18 and that the Company is committed to discouraging persons under 18 from using cigarettes."

Donna Staunton, Director, Corporate Affairs of the Philip Morris Group. (24).

"...advertising doesn't encourage, it doesn't tell people to take up smoking. It's something which evolves,"

David Butcher, Philip Morris (Australia) Limited. February 1984 (6).

"Our marketing efforts are directed at the adult population... we do not market to children,"

William Webb, Managing Director, Philip Morris (Australia) Limited. 25 April 1985 (7).

"...we do not target children, I don't know how much we have to do to establish our bona fides on that,"

Tony McAdam, Philip Morris (Australia) Limited. Circa 1986 (8).

Interviewer: *"Do you deny that you are out to get young smokers?"*

"Yes, absolutely... the [tobacco] industry does not foster juvenile smoking... we have done more for juvenile smoking in this country than you [ASH Australia] or the health minister has done,"

Philip Francis, Corporate Affairs Director, Philip Morris (Australia) Limited. 10 June 1986 (30).

"There has been no attempt to encourage juveniles to smoke in the development and marketing of Peter Jackson and Alpine 15s; we are well aware of our responsibilities in this area,"

William H. Webb, Managing Director, Philip Morris (Australia) Limited. December 1986 (31).

"I don't believe advertising in the case of smoking plays that role [recruiting smokers],"

John Dollison, Philip Morris (Australia) Limited. 1987 (11).

"Our main aim when marketing our products is to market to adult smokers, either of our own brands or to those of opposition brands. At no time do we ever direct any of our marketing to people below the age of 18,"

Stewart Mallinson, Marketing Director, Philip Morris (Australia) Limited. 3 February 1995 (16).

"...the evidence suggests that young people do not take up smoking because of the advertising; they take it up for other reasons,"

Stewart Mallinson, Marketing Director, Philip Morris (Australia) Limited. 3 February 1995 (16).

Rothmans

"Why do they [children] take it [smoking] up? Is it the power of the [sport] sponsorship that allows them to take it up or encourages them to take it up? I would say no,"

Peter Alexander, Rothmans of Pall Mall (Australia) Limited. (25).

"...cigarette smoking is not a factor in the initiation and recruitment of adolescent smokers,"

W.P. Ryan, Research Director, Rothmans of Pall Mall (Australia) Limited. 17 July 1978 (27).

"They [Vogue Superslim cigarettes] are not directed at young people and the advertisements have passed the Cigarette Advertising Code Council,"

Adrian Mitchell, Manager, Media Relations, Rothmans of Pall Mall (Australia) Limited. 2 September 1988 (32).

"We do not want under-age persons to smoke. In our view tobacco use is an adult custom. Our marketing activities reflect this position. Our products are marketed to adult customers and we do not conduct market research on persons under 18 years. We do not engage in activities designed to encourage children to smoke,"

Gary Krelle, General Manager, Rothmans of Pall Mall (Australia) Limited. 10 February 1995 (16).

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