

## Research methods for the papers:

**“Asia is now the priority target for the world anti-tobacco movement”: attempts by the tobacco industry to undermine the Asian anti-smoking movement**

and

**“Asian yuppies ... are always looking for something new and different”: Creating a tobacco culture among young Asians**

Following is a discussion of a number of methodological issues pertaining to the papers *“Asia is now the priority target of the world anti-tobacco movement”: attempts by the tobacco industry to undermine the Asian anti-smoking movement* and *“Asian yuppies ... are always looking for something new and different”: Creating a tobacco culture among young Asians*.

### Data sources

Data for these papers were primarily drawn from internal tobacco industry documents made available online through the Master Settlement Agreement (MSA). In addition, a selection of documents from British American Tobacco (BAT) were also used. Preliminary document searches were conducted from April 2001 to October 2002 using the primary MSA websites. These included four manufacturers’ sites:

Philip Morris	<a href="http://www.pmdocs.com">http://www.pmdocs.com</a>
R.J. Reynolds	<a href="http://www.rjtdocs.com">http://www.rjtdocs.com</a>
Lorillard Tobacco Company	<a href="http://www.lorillarddocs.com/">http://www.lorillarddocs.com/</a>
Brown and Williamson	<a href="http://www.bwdocs.com/public.asp">http://www.bwdocs.com/public.asp</a>

as well as the sites from the two major US-based industry organizations:

Tobacco Institute	<a href="http://www.tobaccoinstitute.com">http://www.tobaccoinstitute.com</a>
Council for Tobacco Research	<a href="http://www.ctr-usa.org">http://www.ctr-usa.org</a>

As the research progressed initial MSA searches were supplemented with subsequent searches on three secondary online document collections:

Tobacco Documents Online (TDO)	<a href="http://tobaccodocuments.org">http://tobaccodocuments.org</a>
Legacy Tobacco Documents Library (LTDL)	<a href="http://legacy.library.ucsf.edu">http://legacy.library.ucsf.edu</a>
Tobacco Documents System (TDS)	<a href="http://tobacco.health.usyd.edu.au/site/gateway/docs/index.htm">http://tobacco.health.usyd.edu.au/site/gateway/docs/index.htm</a>

### Data collection

While the two papers are regional in focus they both had their origins in documents originally gathered through searching Hong Kong documents. The initial search

words used to gather as broad a sweep of HK documents as possible were: Hong Kong, Macau, Kowloon, BAT Hong. The preliminary search produced an initial set of 9,626 documents. See <http://tobacco.health.usyd.edu.au/site/gateway/docs/pdf/HongKong.pdf> for details of the preliminary analysis of these documents.

### **Data analysis**

Once the Hong Kong data were gathered and summarized, data specifically relating to the industry's attack on HK based antis and industry's attempts to construct a setting in which smoking was normalized were identified. For the antis paper documents summarized in three of the Excel worksheets were utilized: Mackay, Tobacco Institute of Hong Kong, and COSH. For the yuppie paper, documents summarized in three of the Excel worksheets were utilized: women, young adults, and advertising. Documents from these worksheets formed the basis of the two papers.

### **Refining the initial search**

A number of specific searches were conducted utilizing specific keywords relating to individuals, organizations or legislation (see Table 1 and 2 for examples). From there "snowballing"<sup>1</sup> and opportunistic searches completed the data collection stage of the study.

Lists of search terms were created and maintained throughout the search process. Initial inquiries were followed up by entering new, more specific terms we came across as we worked through the documents initially located.

In addition, the metadata for documents considered to be of high value were screened for further clues to conduct subsequent searches. Opportunistic searches were conducted on both the primary MSA websites and secondary document collections. As recommended by Malone and Balbach,<sup>2</sup> search words incorporated synonymous terms, acronyms, abbreviations, and variations of spelling (eg. searches on the name of Hong Kong based physician/activist Judith Mackay included "Mackay", "MackKay", "Mckay" and "McKay").

The antis paper also drew upon searches undertaken for the paper entitled "*A phony way to show sincerity, as we all know*": *tobacco industry lobbying against tobacco control in Hong Kong* (see <http://tobacco.health.usyd.edu.au/site/gateway/docs/pdf/HongKong.pdf> for details). Results of that paper's searches on keywords such as Tobacco Institute of Hong Kong (TIHK), Asian Tobacco Council (ATC) and Council on Smoking and Health (COSH) were also used in this paper.

**Table 1: select examples of keywords/search terms used in data collection for  
*“Asia is now the priority target for the world anti-tobacco movement”*: attempts by the tobacco industry to undermine the Asian anti-smoking movement**

APACT	Mackay, J
APACT conference	Connelly, G
Tung foundation	Winokur, M
regional anti-smoking groups	Hedely, T
activist movement	Lam, TH
trade for Life	Chitanondh, H
golden circle	Vateesatokit, P
world no-tobacco day	Fazal, A
anti-smoking	Chen, T
anti-smoking pressure groups	
activists	
activists groups	
antis	
anti-tobacco network	
anti-smoking movement	
Council on Smoking and Health (COSH)	
tobacco control	

**Table 2: select examples of keywords/search terms used in data collection for  
*“Asian yuppies ... are always looking for something new and different”*:  
*Creating a tobacco culture among young Asians***

Virginia slims (VS)	Michael Chang	FCTC
555 club	Billy Jean King	Asian Football Confederation
Marlboro music hour		ASEAN
Top of the charts		FIFA
Target group meeting point (TGMP)		
Nightman disco		
Marlboro adventure team		
Young adult male smokers (YAMS)		
Salem open		
Formula one (F-1 or F1)		
Team Lucky Strike Suzuki (TLSS)		
Marlboro superbike show		
Marlboro Cup tournament		
Marlboro dynasty Cup		
You've come a long way baby		
World cup		
Beauty salon program		
Swatch watch promotion		
Fashion designers association		

## Limitations

There are a number of limitations inherent in document research which impact upon this paper. Some of these limitations are general and are intrinsic to company documents from any industry. The available documents may, for example, be fragmentary in content and time covered providing only a partial picture of the organisation's activities and plans.<sup>3</sup> As Forster notes:

Company documentation may be fragmentary and subjective. It may not be an authentic or accurate record of actual events and processes. . . They may not be truly representative of life in a particular organization. They are invariably political and subjective. They may be used by information gate-keepers in organizations with ulterior motives. Such documents need to be carefully checked, interpreted and triangulated with other data sources . . . they must be regarded as information which is context-specific and as data which must be contextualized with other forms of research.<sup>3</sup>

Other concerns are specific to the use of documents from the tobacco industry. These include:

1. public accessibility: available documents are those released through the process of discovery (ie. specific documents related to litigation that were requested by the parties involved in the legal action) not the entire collection of all documents of those companies covered by the MSA<sup>4</sup>;
2. limited access to BAT documents: BAT was not party to the MSA and as a result, access to their documents is not through primary industry sites as is the case for all other leading tobacco companies. At the time of preparing this paper only a small subset of BAT documents were available from a range of sources including TDO, TDS as well as the Legacy library. This limited availability and its ramifications has been discussed by, for example, Bero<sup>1</sup> and MacKenzie et al<sup>4</sup>. Since submitting this paper for publication, UCSF has launched the British American Tobacco Document Archive (BATDA) (<http://bat.library.ucsf.edu>). This site plans to make available all BAT documents currently housed in the Guildford Depository. The documents will be released in phases, with the first one million documents released in September/October 2004;
3. document destruction: the 2002 McCabe-BAT case in Australia demonstrated that the industry can and does destroy its documents.<sup>5</sup> The full extent of such destruction is, however, impossible to ascertain. Available documents therefore represent an unknown cross section of all documents written and circulated;
4. use of industry websites: documents are continually being added to the industry internet sites. While our search strategy was comprehensive at the time it is possible further relevant documents have since been posted. In addition, specific challenges to efficient researching of documents inherent in the websites have been identified.<sup>1-2</sup>

An appreciation of these shortcomings and challenges must be taken into consideration when studying this paper.

## REFERENCES

- 1 Bero L. Implications of the tobacco industry documents for public health and policy. *Annu Rev Public Health* 2003;24:267-88.
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- 4 MacKenzie R, Collins J, Lee K. *The tobacco industry documents: an introductory handbook and resource guide for researchers*. London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. 2003.  
<http://www.lshtm.ac.uk/cgch/tobacco/Handbook%2008.07.03.pdf> (Accessed 19 Oct 2004).
- 5 Liberman J. The shredding of BAT's defence: McCabe v British American Tobacco Australia. *Tobacco Control* 2002;11:271-74.