

STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO INTERNET ALLEGATIONS

23 April 2010

It's absolutely not our policy or practice to use social networking sites such as Facebook to promote our tobacco product brands. To do so could breach local advertising laws.

Social media and other types of 'user-generated content' sites are growing at a phenomenal rate. Because of this, earlier this year we reminded our employees of our long-standing rules, to ensure that they were in no doubt about their existing obligations and responsibilities as they apply to this relatively new and growing medium.

Our rules mean that employees should not post branded material on social networking sites, blog sites, chat forums or other 'user-generated content' sites such as You Tube – whatever the intention in posting the material may be. The web is vast and constantly changing, and no company can continuously police it. Things can happen there that we simply don't know about. However, we can work hard to ensure that our rules on internet use are understood and applied by our own people and contractors, and we are doing so.

This report raises concerns that we share, and to that extent it helps us. However its scope is very broad, and the report itself points to the importance of distinguishing between personal and 'commercial' content on the web. Our people are, of course, free to use sites such as Facebook in their private lives or to take part in business forums such as career networking, provided this excludes anything that could be viewed as tobacco product advertising. BAT has not authorised the creation of any Dunhill or Lucky Strike sites.

Nonetheless, the report has drawn to our attention some specific instances which – if they have involved any of our employees – would certainly be wrong and should not have happened. We are investigating these and if we find that Group employees have posted material that they shouldn't, perhaps out of naivety, we will be telling them to remove it.

For further information, contact
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