

MEMORANDUM

From: Dr C. Le Galès-Camus, ADG/NMH **To:** Regional Directors
Assistants Director-General
(please see below) **Date:** 16 August 2006

Our ref: MSD **Attention:**

Your ref: **Through:**

Originator: Dr B. Saraceno, Director MSD/HQ **Subject:** PRINCIPLES AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR
INTERACTION BETWEEN WHO SECRETARIAT
AND THE ALCOHOL INDUSTRY

Please find attached the document "Principles and Recommendations for Interaction between WHO Secretariat and the Alcohol Industry", which the Acting Director-General has approved. We should appreciate this document being drawn to the attention of all departments concerned within your offices.


Dr Catherine Le Galès-Camus

ENCL: (1)

Distribution:

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WHO Representatives, Liaison Officers and Country Offices

bcc: Regional Advisers, Mental Health and Substance Abuse

MEMORANDUM

Office of the
Director-General
318134
124 JUL 2006

From: Director, MSD

To: Acting Director-General Date: 10 July 2006

Our ref:

Attention:

Received in

Your ref:

Through: ADG/NMH

11 JUL 2006

Originator: Coordinator,
MSD/MSB

Subject: Principles and Recommendations for Interaction
between WHO Secretariat and the Alcohol Industry

Please find attached the document on "Principles and Recommendations for Interaction between WHO Secretariat and the Alcohol Industry", for your clearance and subsequent circulation to the Regional Directors. Kindly note that the comments received from the Office of the Legal Counsel (also attached) have been considered and incorporated in this document, then discussed and approved by the NMH-DGO Working Group on Alcohol.

Dr Benedetto Saraceno

ENCL.: As stated.

Principles and Recommendations for Interaction between WHO Secretariat and the Alcohol Industry

Introduction

Purpose

Suggested principles and recommendations were developed for internal use of WHO Secretariat to assist in appropriate interaction with representatives of the alcohol industry for achieving positive outcomes for public health.

Definition

For the purposes of this document the term "alcohol industry" means manufacturers of alcoholic beverages, wholesale distributors and importers that deal solely and exclusively in alcohol beverages or whose primary income comes from trade in alcohol products. In addition, in this document the term "alcohol industry" includes associations or other entities representing or funded largely by any of the above, as well as alcohol industry lobbyists.

Rationale

Suggested principles and recommendations are deemed necessary in view of the nature of the alcohol industry that produces, distributes and markets beverages containing alcohol, which is a potentially harmful and dependence-producing substance. As far as harmful use of alcohol is concerned, the public health objectives aimed at controlling alcohol-related harm include also reducing exposure of populations to alcohol as an intoxicating and dependence-producing psychoactive substance.

In recent times the alcohol industry has become increasingly involved in addressing alcohol-related problems, for example, by supporting selected programmes against drink-driving or measures to regulate availability of non-commercial alcohol. Interaction with the alcohol industry may contribute to the pursuit of mutually-agreed public health objectives provided that such interaction follows principles and recommendations stipulated in this document.

In order to minimize the risks involved and maintain the integrity, credibility and the validity of WHO's views, values and functions with regard to alcohol related health issues and public health policy developments, WHO staff is requested to comply with the **principles and recommendations** listed below, which are subject to periodical review.

Principles

- The public health objectives of WHO in relation to alcohol should serve as the basis for interaction with the alcohol industry.
- The type of interaction between WHO secretariat and the alcohol industry advisable in the existing environment should be limited to meetings or open consultations.
- Meetings or open consultations with the alcohol industry can be considered only when such interaction is deemed necessary.

- Interaction with the alcohol industry within a given framework should not lead to or imply "partnership", "collaboration" or any other similar type of engagement that assumes a formal joint venture with defined legal status that grants equal power to all participants.
- WHO activities or projects, including those designated to WHO collaborating centers, can not be funded directly or indirectly by the alcohol industry.
- In-kind contributions to WHO projects and activities from the alcohol industry, like contributing products, services, secondment of staff, can not be accepted.

Recommendations

Where meetings or open consultations between the WHO Secretariat and the alcohol industry are considered or taking place, WHO staff should adhere to the following recommendations:

- The goals of the meeting and how the meeting will contribute to the public health objectives of WHO should be determined in advance.
- In correspondence arranging the meeting, (whether it is sought by the alcohol industry or WHO Secretariat), the public health objectives of WHO should be explicitly stated.
- WHO Secretariat should be informed in advance about the names, positions and affiliations of each participant of the meeting representing the alcohol industry.
- Before the meeting, WHO staff should clearly indicate in writing to the alcohol industry representatives that the meeting does not imply collaboration or partnership between WHO and the alcohol industry.
- The alcohol industry representatives should be informed before and reminded after the meeting that WHO will decide on follow-up questions that must be answered after the meeting and will publicly correct any misinformation with regard to the meeting if any statement from the industry or a third party mischaracterize the nature and the outcomes of the meeting.
- WHO Secretariat will establish the agenda if the meeting is sought by the secretariat or will have a discretion of final approval of the agenda if the meeting is sought by the industry or a third party.
- The meeting should take place on WHO premises, at a public event or on premises of a third party and within a formal structure with legal counsel present if necessary.
- At the meetings with the alcohol industry WHO Secretariat has to be represented by at least two staff members.
- WHO personnel will moderate the meeting if it is sought by the WHO.
- At the beginning of the meeting with the alcohol industry representatives WHO staff will state the public health reasons for and focus of WHO alcohol-related policy, the role of the WHO body with whom the meeting is taking place, the specific purpose of the meeting, and reiterate that the meeting does not imply collaboration or partnership between WHO Secretariat and the alcohol industry.
- WHO representatives maintain the right to terminate the meeting at any point if it is sought by WHO secretariat or terminate their participation at the meeting sought by the alcohol industry or a third party.
- Meetings or open consultations with the alcohol industry should only take place on the understanding that such exchanges will not be publicized in any form or manner by the alcohol industry.

- No documents, contracts or memoranda of understanding on the circumstances of the meeting should be jointly signed by WHO Secretariat and the alcohol industry as this implies a relationship.
- WHO personnel will write the only official minutes of the meeting or will have a discretion of final approval of the minutes if the meeting is sought by the industry or a third party; the minutes of the meeting can not be shared or publicly disclosed without written approval from WHO.
- WHO will publish a press release if this is deemed necessary.

Coordination

In order to establish a coordinated and consistent approach to interaction with the alcohol industry all WHO programs are requested to inform Management of Substance Abuse unit at the Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse about any requests for interaction by the alcohol industry or any meetings or consultations planned and their outcomes.