Assessing the reduced-risk potential of our products

With this new and emerging category of potentially reduced-risk products (PRRPs), we are in a truly transformative era. And as with any new category, consumers and regulators need as much information as possible about our products and their reduced risk potential.

At BAT, we use our own peer-reviewed scientific assessment framework to assess emissions, exposure and risk of our products, to ultimately assess their reduced risk potential when compared to smoking cigarettes. As part of this, we go through a 5-step framework in terms of the science and studies we conduct.

The results of one study alone are important but it’s only by combining the results of all these different studies that we can build a comprehensive set of scientific evidence and thus a clear picture of how our products compare to cigarettes.

While, like cigarettes, it will take decades of use to fully understand the health effects of PRRPs, it is essential that, in the interim, we try to learn as much as we can.

Our risk assessment framework

Reduced Emissions - What is in the vapour/aerosol?
Reduced Exposure - What happens when exposed to these emissions?
Reduced Risk - What is the long-term risk?

The 5 steps
We undertake a range of different studies when measuring emissions, exposure and risk of our products. These include:

- Behavioural sciences - How do people use the product? We observe how consumers use the products to help us replicate this in the lab. The results help us ensure that we test the products in a realistic way.
- Chemistry - What’s in the vapour/aerosol? We look at what toxicants are in the vapour/aerosol and the air in which our products are used. We compare the results to what is in cigarette smoke.
- Biological sciences - What does the vapour/aerosol do to human cells in the lab? We compare this to the impact that cigarette smoke has on human cells.
- Clinical studies - How does using the product impact the human body? This involves studying real consumers, for example by taking blood or urine samples, to understand what using these products might mean for health.
- Population studies - How might the product affect population health? We use a computer modelling approach to predict the impact that the availability of such products will have on the health of a population.

What the results of all these tests tell us

Through the results of these studies, we can assess the risk profile of our products. Each stage of the process helps us to make various product and marketing claims, but it’s only when taken together, that we can confidently start talking about reduced risk.

All of our science to date seems to be pointing in the right direction and is aligned with our ambition to transform tobacco by offering consumers a portfolio of less harmful products.

Potentially less risky alternatives to smoking cigarettes.