

Annex one

Discussions pertaining to Professor Ian Macdonald's advisory roles on the Mars Europe Advisory Board, Coca Cola European Scientific Advisory Committee and Coca Cola International Public Policy Advisory Board were summarised in the letter of June 2012 from Dr Alison Tedstone (Deputy Director, Nutrition, DH) to the Chair of SACN, Dr Ann Prentice. A copy is attached.

Dr Tedstone noted that in 2009, the then Chair of SACN, Professor Alan Jackson, had expressed concerns regarding Professor Macdonald's potential conflicts of interest in relation to his position as Chair of the SACN Carbohydrates Working Group. Professor Macdonald had previously declared these conflicts of interest in accordance with the Code of Practice for Scientific Advisory Committee guidance¹.

After discussion with officials at the Department of Health (DH) and the Food Standards Agency (FSA)², Professor Macdonald agreed to step down from his industry advisory roles in 2010 until the SACN carbohydrates review was completed.

During the early stages of the review it became clear that the depth of investigation and the volume of evidence needing to be reviewed were much greater than originally envisaged. As a result, the expected date for completion was put back from 2013 to 2014. Professor Macdonald noted that the honorarium he had previously received as a member of the Coca Cola International Public Policy Advisory Board had part funded a research assistant within his team. As a result of giving up these roles he had to make the research assistant redundant. The loss of staff was affecting his team's research and their output, and Professor Macdonald therefore requested that DH reconsider the decision regarding his potential conflicts. Dr Tedstone discussed this with Elizabeth Woodeson (Director of Health and Wellbeing, DH) and considered the processes in place to ensure the transparency and integrity of the review. These processes were:

¹ The Government Office for Science Code of Practice for Scientific Advisory Committees <http://www.bis.gov.uk/assets/goscience/docs/c/11-1382-code-of-practice-scientific-advisory-committees.pdf>
The relevant declaration of interest is published as part of the SACN annual report: http://www.sacn.gov.uk/pdfs/sacn_annual_report_2012.pdf.

² Until October 2010 SACN reported to DH and FSA, and the two Departments provided a joint secretariat to the committee.

- The three systematic literature reviews which form a large proportion of the evidence base for the carbohydrates review were carried out by an external supplier;
- The literature reviews and all consideration of evidence, follows the strict criteria for the inclusion and exclusion of evidence agreed by SACN and set out in the committee's framework for the evaluation of evidence, published on the committee website [here](#);
- Oversight of these reviews and the deliberations of the SACN Carbohydrates Working Group by the multiple independent experts who make up the group;
- Oversight of these reviews and the deliberations of the Working Group by government officials in the SACN secretariat, who draft the report of the review;
- Sign-off of a draft report by the SACN main committee before it is published in draft for a 12 week public consultation, whereby members of the public and the wider scientific community may input into the report;
- Final sign-off of the report by the SACN main committee following consideration of points raised during public consultation.

In light of this, it was clear that the conclusions and recommendations made in the report on carbohydrates and health would reflect considerations of the whole of SACN and would not be influenced by an individual member of the Committee. It was therefore agreed that Professor Macdonald should be allowed to re-join these advisory groups.