

# Dr Stephen Dealler

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3.7.9

Dear Andrew,

You wrote about my interactions with Dr Ernie Gascoigne at Bio Products Ltd in 1995-6.

This is always a difficult factor: I have moved major jobs twice since then, and have after 2005 worked in 17 hospitals as a locum doctor. Any written documents at the time may well have simply disappeared and I would not at all be surprised. Certainly any emails to BPL will have long gone in that I have got through at least 3 home computers since then and until the last one I did not know how to transfer the emails to the next one. I could not find written documents.

I do remember speaking to Dr Gascoigne at the time in 1995-6 and explaining to him the potential risks that were associated should BSE (if in humans blood donors) being transferred to further patients. The major problem being that the infection would be expected to be present before symptomatic illness and the donor could not be tested.

He was exceptionally polite to me at the time and I remember worrying to myself that he did not know of the risks already (but I was anxious about the subject anyway). I told him that the risk may well be there but we just could not be sure. The problem being that even if there was little risk, BPL probably could not wait to find out in that the safety of their products could no longer be certain. I explained to him that, because we could no longer know that the risk was not present then BPL may be at risk. Again he was good in listening to my explanation and asked me for any source of evidence. All I could then tell him was about the animal models of TSE and even in them the evidence was not brilliant.

My worry at the time was that, as on average in the UK we had eaten 50 meals each made from the meat of infected cattle, the potential number of cases of disease might be very high...but then again it might not, and my statistics to the officials and when published showed that the range was from an exceptionally awful outcome to almost no cases at all. The problem was that we simply did not know the blood product risk and BPL may have a great problem. The difference being that, unlike the Ministry of

Agriculture Fisheries and Food (which had assumed the BSE risk to humans to be small until shown to be of significance), the Department of Health ethically should do the opposite.

I am not at all surprised that Dr Gascoigne has little recognition of me in that my memory of 2 telephone calls must have been quite minor to him when coming ahead of what must have been a shocking down come for BPL.

In around 1998 I was asked to present the data to the National Blood Service meeting and indeed they were a depressed lot as a result.

Yours sincerely,

**GRO-C**

Dr Stephen Dealler

cc. Ernie Gascoigne