

NATIONAL BLOOD TRANSFUSION SERVICE

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Dr H H Gunson
National Director
National Directorate of the NBTS
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Dear Harold

Anti-HCV Testing of Blood Donations

Many thanks for your memorandum of 22 January 1991.

I have thought about this extremely carefully and find it difficult to give you a definitive answer. If finances were secured, if the company who supplies us could produce both disposables and hardware in time and if we did not have the prospect of even more frantic activity on land based action in the Gulf hanging over our heads, then we might have been able to start on 1 April, with 1 May as a more probable time. This would have given us time to take on extra staff and carry out required training etc and would have represented the minimum interval necessary to guarantee proficiency and safety.

However, I feel the biggest fly in the ointment is the Gulf. There is no doubt whatsoever that we could not have taken on extra microbiological testing during the organized chaos of the past 10 days, and with the obvious certainty of this happening again as and when there is a significant development in the Middle East, I think it would be idle speculation to give an early date for this. We are not going to be able to persuade the generals to delay action until such time as we are up and smoothly running and so I feel sincerely that we should earnestly consider the question of putting off a start date until there has been a resolution of the Gulf affairs.

I accept that this is a negative approach in many ways, given the fact that we are all eager to start and under normal circumstances could do so within 2-3 months of being told to go ahead. However, these are not normal circumstances.

With kind regards

Yours sincerely

GRO-C

Dr W Wagstaff
DIRECTOR

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