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Mr I G Burgess

Re Mesothelioma Case: Mr C Maas

On Tue 14 Jun 77 I had a telephone conversation with Mr D Bills the Acting Manager Perth Branch on Mr Maas' claim.

Amongst other matters Mr Bills stated that he had had a telephone conversation with a Mr S E Taylor of SGIO on Fri 10 Jun 77 wherein Mr Taylor assured Mr Bills that "SGIO would not step out from under CSR". Assessing the importance of the statement Mr Bills wrote the comment down and it was as quoted above. Mr Taylor said he could not put this in writing.

Mr Taylor was the person who signed the SGIO letter to CSR Perth dated 1 Jun 77 in which SGIO took a clear position that they would not accept liability at common law. Mr Taylor indicated to Mr Bills that the letter was merely taking a tactical point. He inferred that it was written at the request of SGIO's legal advisers.

This would indicate that we should be prepared to vary our approach ~~from~~ SGIO: hard line if they stick to their letter, or soft line if they stick to Mr Taylor's comment.

Mr Taylor has gone on one month's leave as from 10 Jun. Mr Bills does not know what his position in SGIO is but believes he was relieving Mr K Bower who is the claims manager of SGIO and with whom I have already made personal contact in 1976.

Mr Bills has searched the ABA files and has found some documents relating to Mr Maas' employment. He will send one copy to Mr Sadleir and one copy to this office.

N C I *mm*
14 Jun 77

cc Mr E B Coates
Mr S B Benson