



THE DOW CHEMICAL COMPANY

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1803 Building
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CMA VINYL CHLORIDE PANEL CONFERENCE CALL

Yesterday, I participated in a conference call with representatives to the CMA Vinyl Chloride Program Panel from nine other companies. The major activity of this Panel has been to sponsor an industry-wide cohort mortality study, the results of which were made public several years ago. The purpose of the conference call was to: (1) review progress made by the contractor in obtaining pathological specimens on 38 liver and biliary tract cancer deaths (these were to be independently reviewed by the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology to determine if they were angiosarcomas); (2) determine whether we should pursue an alternative strategy for obtaining the specimens; and (3) reconcile the number of angiosarcoma deaths identified from the study with the number that have been reported to the International Registry (Sir Richard Doll has noted a discrepancy). These questions are important because they impact on the credibility of the CMA-sponsored study. Furthermore, if there is an excess of non-angiosarcoma liver cancer in the study, it may have implications for vinyl chloride risk assessments.

It was determined that the contractor has not fulfilled our agreement and the prospects for them doing so are not good. It was recommended instead that the individual companies who employed the liver and biliary tract cancers should be asked to pursue obtaining specimens. Local medical directors, it was reasoned, would stand a better chance of obtaining permission from next-of-kin, and convincing area hospitals and physicians to participate.

As yet no action is required on our part, but sometime in the near future I will receive a letter from CMA asking us to participate. According to my records, one of the liver and biliary tract cancer patients was employed at the Michigan Division. We already sought

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and received copies of this individual's medical records (it was indicated to have been an intrahepatic bile duct carcinoma), but we did not ask for pathological specimens.

Please let me know how you would like to proceed on this. In my opinion, there is more upside in participating than downside.



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