FILE NAME: Asbestos Sacks and Bags (ASB)

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JAEC/AML

24th August, 1965.

Mr. A.D.N. Jones,

Handling of Asbestos Fibre

Thank you for your memorandum of 20th August.

Mr. Howard and I discussed the position and then jointly saw Mr. Bateman. The outcome was the adoption of a statement, for use in case of need, as per the attached.

I return herewith Dr. Knox's letter to you of 12th August, having made a copy for my own file.

J.A.E. CLOGG.

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Handling of Asbestos Fibre

Turner & Newall Ltd., like other members of the Asbestos Industry in the United Kingdom, have been aware of the dangers of asbestosis for very many years and were largely instrumental in setting up the joint research body which keeps this possible hazard to health under constant review. The various companies in the T&N Group receive asbestos fibre in its crude or only partially opened state, packed in strong hessian bags. They have spared no expense over the years in installing special dust extraction and air purification plants in order to remove from the air the dust produced by the subsequent fibre opening treatment. The result is that in some of the factory areas the air is purer than in the atmosphere outside; in areas in which there is danger from dust respiratory masks are provided, the use of which eliminates any risk. All manufacturing processes are so organised as to reduce health hazards to the minimum. The health records of operatives in T&N companies compare well with those of operatives in the generality of industry.

We believe that there is no danger to the health of dockers who handle the hessian bags containing crude or partially opened asbestos from our mines, provided the bags are not split or burst by the careless use of hooks or some similar accident. Heavy concentrations of dust are unlikely unless bags are damaged in this way. Nevertheless, we are accelerating existing plans for the provision of impermeable bags which will, quite apart from any health factor, make this cargo more pleasant to handle.