

FILE NAME: ICI (ICI)

DATE: 1967 Mar

DOC#: ICI028

DOCUMENT DESCRIPTION: Memo

68/713-14 112
x122.

ACM/DC

To: SM/AAH

8th March 1967.

It is important that we should try to identify any loss of business which may result from the adverse publicity about asbestos, so would you please let me have appropriate comments when you do your stop-press notes for each Board Meeting.

A. C. MARR

Reminded

Mr. A. C. Mott

*For info
Ni*

JW/BW
To: ACM(2)/RHW

Copy of letter received by Mr. J. Waddell from Mr. W. P. Howard,
Turner & Newall Limited, Manchester, dated 16th March, 1967

Asbestos and Health

-ICI

As arranged, I had a long discussion with Mr. Gordon Long who
Heads the Public Relations Department at I.C.I. Head Office.

Apparently, the basic element in I.C.I. policy on health questions
is their extreme sensitivity to any risk of public criticism. For example,
as a result of only one worker contracting bladder cancer at their
Naphthylamine plant, the plant was closed down immediately although up
to that time it had been thought to be the safest of its kind in the world.
I.C.I. also stopped manufacturing toxic seed dressings as a result
of public agitation against their effects on bird and animal life.

It is, therefore, in line with their normal policy that in the
present circumstances they should be actively seeking substitutes for
asbestos both in the products they make and in their plant installation,
since their medical staff, led by Dr. Lloyd Potter, feel that there is
sufficient doubt surrounding the safety of men who work with asbestos to
warrant their abandoning it wherever they can. This attitude has been
reinforced by the death of a contractor's man at Wilton.

Mr. Long was, however, quite concerned that any of I.C.I.'s
Divisions should appear to be knocking asbestos in publicity material,
and I am, therefore, sending him a photocopy of the advertisement to which
we take exception so that he can look into the question of the advisability
of such copy being withdrawn, and also of course of preventing other
divisions following the same line.

I hope that in the course of our conversation I succeeded in putting
Mr. Long's own attitude on the subject into a sounder perspective. He
was certainly not aware of the distinction between various types of
asbestos

One conclusion to be drawn from this encounter would certainly
be that I.C.I. if they were to be in our position would probably abandon the
use of "blue" fibre in their own plants.

(signed) W. P. Howard.

*Mr. J. W.
Could I have
a copy of
this please
How
M. R. C. M.
Blenworth
JW*