

FILE NAME: Asbestos Sacks and Bags (ASB)

DATE: 1967

DOC#: ASB082

DOCUMENT DESCRIPTION: Excerpt - Meeting Minutes - Asbestos Pellets
in Bags-Discharging

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Asbestos Pellets in Bags - Discharging (15C - 1114F)

Joint
P/W
14/4/67

The Chairman recalled the protracted discussions which had taken place over the handling of asbestos in bags culminating in a directive being issued by the Transport & General Workers' Union to its members not to handle the commodity unless the pack eliminated all possibility of dust and loose escaping. He went on to say that the Trade itself had been most concerned and as a result, considerable research in the processing of asbestos had taken place. He was now able to report that one particular company - Union Carbide Corporation had devised a particular method of producing asbestos which, in their opinion, eliminated any possibility of dust. Thereupon he introduced Messrs. Sly, Sayers and Cheston of the Union Carbide Corporation who wished to speak about their product.

Mr. Sly said that he appreciated the concern felt by Port Transport Workers over the handling of asbestos due to fears of contracting certain diseases. The Union Carbide Corporation, had therefore given considerable thought to this problem and had introduced asbestos in pellet form which would eliminate any possibility of dust on being handled. Never the less as an added precaution the asbestos in pellet form would be packed in multiwalled paperbags which would be placed on a pallet. A protective cardboard cover would envelope the pallet and the whole would be strapped as a single unit.

Mr. Cheston, responsible for U.K. marketing, said that this new material had been developed by the Corporation to take the place of certain other chemicals which were used in industry and particularly for paper making. It was of interest that asbestos in a pellet form, had made it possible for the paper industry to produce a cheaper paper. To his knowledge, this pelletisation was only possible with Californian Mineral deposit of asbestos due to its unique characteristics. He explained that the extremely pure nature of the deposit which contained a lesser number of by-products than other deposits made pelletisation possible. As a sample was being passed round for inspection Mr. Cheston pointed out that the loose content visible at the bottom of the plastic bag was not asbestos dust, as it was known, previously but what the Trade termed 'fines'. He explained the difference between the 'fines' and normal asbestos dust as being that the former were not able to float in air, and fell readily to the ground. The production of this deposit of asbestos in pellet form was obtained by adding a water content which bound the fibres together with no other type of resin binder being required.