

DATE FEBRUARY 26, 1974

TO (MEMORANDUM OF MEETING)

FROM MANAGER, INDUSTRIAL HYGIENE -
HEAD OFFICE

FEB 27 1974

SUBJECT MCA MEETING ON VINYL CHLORIDE

MEDICAL DIRECTOR

On February 19 and 20, the MCA Technical Task Group on Vinyl Chloride met. The meetings on the 19th were of the Work Practices Task Force and of the Research Coordinators. The full group met on February 20.

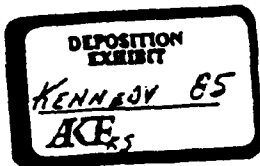
Work Practices Task Force

The group attempted to write a recommended work practice for control of vinyl chloride monomer exposure in polyvinyl chloride operations. We were quite explicit that this meant the resin activities only and was not applicable to monomer production activities. The rationale behind this was that a second work practices document for monomer would subsequently be written. The two documents would be compatible. However, it was considered important to assure that in the presentations to NIOSH and OSHA that there were essential differences between monomer and polymer operations. A draft was completed of a work practices document, and a small subcommittee comprising of Z. G. Bell of PPG Industries, R. N. Wheeler of Union Carbide, Mayo Smith of Air Products, and myself was formed to redo the draft in an acceptable format. The subcommittee met for three hours on February 20. A copy of that draft has been sent to Mr. Reynolds; one copy is appended to the original of this memorandum. Highlights of the draft include a proposal for exemption of resins which contain less than 0.1% free vinyl chloride monomer. The committee also decided not to recommend a threshold level for VCM. This is based on the definition of a threshold level which implies that it is a level below which no danger is assumed to exist. Rather, the committee adopted the concept of a "working level" which implies an interim version which is both related to current knowledge and technical feasibility. The working level also implies that it is a current target and that it will be changed as new information and methodologies become available. On this basis the work practices document contains a suggested working level of 50 ppm as the time-weighted average.

Research Coordinators

The Research Coordinators met on February 19, 1974. (The Work Practices Task Force adjourned so that the RCs could meet.) It was moved and seconded to recommend that Mayo Smith be added to the seven Research Coordinators. This was done on the basis that he represents industry on the NIOSH Ad Hoc Committee.

A number of the members present then detailed information on cases of cancer and other illnesses in their plants. Ben Zwicker of B. F. Goodrich Company identified two additional cases. These are the ones that had been reported in the Wall Street Journal on that day. One was a 1964 death in



BFG40514

302711

25310001

which the autopsy protocol had mentioned angiosarcoma, but the death certificate did not so state. This was a worker born in 1912 and who died at age 52. He had had 11 years experience in monomer manufacturing primarily with very little polymer experience, and according to Zwicker, almost no tank-cleaning activities. He subsequently had nine years of bagging and warehousing resins. The monomer process at the plant was the acetylene/hydrochloric acid process.

B. F. Goodrich has a sixth known case of a worker who is still alive. He had shown a slight elevation in one of the liver function tests in the SMA-12. The man's physician was suspicious, ordered a biopsy, and the angiosarcoma was confirmed. (In a subsequent discussion with Dr. Falk of CDC I learned that some 15 operators who had shown abnormal liver function tests on an SMA-12 repeat were given liver scans. This worker was the first scanned, showed a positive finding, and underwent a laparotomy. Dr. Falk stated that as of February 24, no other positive scans were found.) This worker had been with BFG for 13 years. He was born in 1928, was a polymer operator, and did clean reactors. He has had little exposure to vinylidene chloride.

R. N. Wheeler of Union Carbide then stated that UCC was notifying NIOSH that they had discovered a case of angiosarcoma of the liver in a worker in their South Charleston, West Virginia plant. This man had had surgery for gall stones, and an angiosarcoma was found during the process of the operation. The man died in 1968. He had had 13 years service with Carbide and did not clean reaction vessels but did work in solution polymers and dispersion resins operations. Wheeler also indicated that Carbide has completed the study of over 900 medical records in the South Charleston plant (which had started operations in 1935) and was still looking for cancer. Except for the one just cited, there were no other workers with either confirmed or suspicious angiosarcoma. Wheeler felt that this search of work records would also include employees who may have been exposed but were not picked up by the Tabershaw-Cooper epidemiologic study since they were not originally identified by the corporation as vinyl chloride workers.

Dr. David Duffield of ICI then reported on a death in one of their employees. The man, age 71, died in December 1972. He had worked on the autoclaves from 1946 to 1966 when he retired. Dr. Duffield does not know whether the man cleaned reactors but felt that it was likely. Diagnosis of the angiosarcoma was made at the postmortem examination in January 1973.

Dr. Rinehart of Ethyl indicated that in their Louisville bottle-manufacturing plant a worker died on December 28, 1973, and on the basis of the autopsy, cause of death was cancer of the gall bladder with metastases to the liver. The man was born in 1922 and had been employed at Ethyl for three years. Dr. Rinehart had no information as to other work history.

BFG40515

302712

25340002