

Apollo Program

Abex hydraulic equipment played an important role in the NASA Apollo program. Abex produced all of the hydraulic power and controls on launch pad No. 39 at Cape Kennedy, as well as on the giant transport vehicle which moves the rocket from the assembly building to the pad. Ground support for both space vehicles and aircraft is a growing market. A total of eight Abex hydraulic pumps were on the rocket as it was launched on its course for the moon.

FRICITION CONTROLS

Friction control products include braking materials for automotive, aircraft, industrial machinery and railroad equipment. Abex products also are used in clutches and transmissions for many kinds of mobile and industrial equipment. Abex bearing products are widely used in steel mills, industrial machinery and railroad rolling stock.

Sales of friction control products held about level in 1968. There was a decline in sales to the railroads and an increase in the automotive product lines. Passenger car and truck production was at a high level in the U.S. and in most other producing countries of the world. This activity was reflected in increased sales to vehicle manufacturers. Sales to the replacement market continue to grow.

Abex manufactures automotive brake lining in France, Canada and Mexico as well as in the U.S. Also, a number of licensees provide coverage of other parts of the world market. Brake lining is distributed under several Abex brand names and also under numerous private brand labels.

Abex is the world's largest manufacturer of disc brake linings. In Europe, where disc brakes on passenger cars are quite prevalent,



Abex products play a large role in helping to mine and process the world's ores. Power shovels use huge Abex dippers to scoop up tons of ore in one bite. Abex alloys take brutal punishment, while crushing and grinding the ore. Fluid power and friction controls find application on almost every type of mining machine.

Abex is an important supplier of brake material. This type of brake is less important in the U.S. market but its use is increasing.

Sales of metallic friction products for aircraft brakes and industrial transmissions and clutches were affected by production problems arising from strikes. The prolonged work stoppage in the copper mining industry caused severe copper shortages which restricted production. Strikes also occurred in some plants of large customers. Additionally, a strike in one Abex plant, lasting six weeks, caused a loss of production and sales.

The wide variety of Abex friction products for automotive, aircraft, railroad and mobile equipment has provided a good growth market in the past and there is a strong upward trend predicted for the future.