

Dr. J. Hammacher,
Surabaya, Java.

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CABLEGRAMS:
ETHYLPORT, LONDON.

TELEGRAMS:
ETHYLPORT, SOWEST.

File under Dr. Hammacher and put note in de Priester file indicating interest in Hammacher file

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405, LEXINGTON AVENUE,
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November 8th, 1938.

Dr. R.A. Kehoe,
Laboratory of Applied Physiology,
College of Medicine,
University of Cincinnati,
CINCINNATI, Ohio.
U.S.A.

Dear Dr. Kehoe,

Mr. Bevan asked me to agree the enclosed copies of a correspondence with the Asiatic regarding the medical officers at their Tandjong Priok and Bandaran plants. I think you will find the two letters to be fully self-explanatory.

We would appreciate it if you would advise us of your views, on the whole matter and any definite action which may be taken regarding the two doctors, namely Dr. Hammacher and Dr. de Priester.

Yours sincerely,

H. Fossett
H. FOSSETT.

c. Mr. Champlin.

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THE ASIATIC PETROLEUM COMPANY LIMITED.

ETHYL/E SECTION No.185.

St. Helens Court,
Great St. Helens,
E.C.3.

1st November, 1938.

Dear Sirs,

MEDICAL OFFICERS - TANDJONG PRIOK AND BANDARAN
ETHYL BLENDING PLANTS.

Our Sourabaya office have now sent their recommendations for the medical officers who will examine the Ethyl blending plant and crew at Tandjong Priok and Bandaran.

BANDARAN INSTALLATION - SOURABAYA.

For the supervision of this plant they recommend Dr. J. Hammacher, who is a general practitioner and who has, besides his Dutch qualifications as a doctor, also the British qualification D.T.M. & H.

Tandjong Priok Installation - BATAVIA.

For the supervision of this plant they have recommended Dr. W. F. de Priester, who is the K.P.M. doctor at Tandjong Priok.

In connection with these two doctors our Sourabaya office write as follows:-

"Both doctors have carefully examined the instructions issued by the Ethyl Export Corporation as regards the nature of their duties in connection with their supervision of the blending plants, and we feel sure that these instructions are quite clear to them. On the occasion of his visit Mr. C. H. Noble had the opportunity of seeing Dr. Hammacher, to whom he explained various matters, but unfortunately we have not been able to arrange for him to meet Dr. de Priester on account of the latter being absent on local leave. However, Mr. Noble has discussed all particulars with our Batavia branch management, who have passed on the necessary particulars to Dr. de Priester.

In this connection there is one point on which the two doctors hold different views. Dr. Hammacher of Sourabaya is of the opinion that the medical control of the blending crew should be very strict, and his idea is that a quarterly medical examination will not be sufficient guarantee for preventing accidents. Therefore he thinks it highly necessary that a more or less permanent control of the blending crew should be exercised and that these people should be examined at short intervals. From our point of view we are definitely in favour of the strictest possible control of both crew and equipment, because we know from past experience that the Labour Control people in this country are extremely difficult in the case of casualties, and we would certainly incur no end of trouble if in such a case it would appear that we have not taken all possible measures to prevent accidents. In this connection we should not forget

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that we have to deal with simple natives, who never realise the danger such work entails, and therefore if we want to be certain that there will be no difficulties, we think that we should let Dr. Hammacher exercise the control which in his opinion is absolutely necessary.

Of course this method of control, which will take a good deal of his time, is rather expensive, and Dr. Hammacher has suggested that we pay him a fee of Fls. 200.- a month. For the amount of control he intends to exercise, we think that this amount is quite reasonable.

On the other hand, the K.P.M. doctor at Tandjong Priok thinks that a quarterly examination of the blending crew and an occasional visit to the blending plant will be sufficient, and he is willing to exercise this control for a yearly fee of Fls. 175.-. We are somewhat afraid that for this amount we cannot expect Dr. de Priester to do much more than examine the crew once every three months and that there can be no question of a regular and strict control. Therefore we fear that during the time between two medical examinations of the crew, these people will be exposed to dangers which will not be recognised until it is perhaps too late and as already mentioned above, if this lack of control should ever lead to casualties, we would certainly incur all sorts of difficulties with the Labour Control people, and the Press would certainly comment very unfavourably on our lack of precautions.

However, we have no experience as regards blending tetraethyl lead and therefore we think that the best procedure might be that at first, say for a year or two years, we see how the medical control works. If it would appear that the Sourabaya doctor has taken too serious a view of the situation, we can always decide to drop part of our precautionary measures and reduce the doctor's fee accordingly. If, on the other hand, we find in course of time that the control by the Tandjong Priok doctor is insufficient, we should of course have to decide that a stricter control should be instituted there as well. As already mentioned above, we do not feel entirely easy as regards the effectiveness of the control at Tandjong Priok and although we are prepared to watch first how this works in actual practice, we intend to instruct the doctor concerned to intensify his control and to examine the crew more frequently, say at least once a month, as soon as there might be indications that this is advisable."

Our own view is that our Sourabaya Office's lack of experience in Ethyl blending has made them take rather too stringent a view with regard to the precautions which it is necessary to take, as we have found in Singapore for instance that the quarterly examination has worked quite well.

We should be pleased to have your views on the matter.

Yours truly,
For: THE ASIATIC PETROLEUM COMPANY, LIMITED.
sgd. STURGESS.

cc. Aviation Dept.

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ETHYL/E SECTION No.185.

3rd November, 1938.

The Asiatic Petroleum Co. Ltd.,
St. Helens Court,
Great St. Helens,
E.C.3.

Dear Sirs,

Medical Officers - Tandjong Priok and Bandaran
Ethyl Blending Plants.

We thank you for your letter of the 1st November with reference to the above subject and have noted what your people in Sourabaya say in connection with the appointment of medical consultants at these two blending plants.

It is, I think, apparent that your people in Sourabaya have rather over-estimated the dangers connected with the blending of concentrated Ethyl F with gasoline. We think it would be worth while stressing to them that, provided the regulations as laid down by ourselves for the handling and blending of Eth Fluid are followed in the minutest detail, and a responsible individual is present at all blends to ensure that the natives stick to the routine closely, there is little or no hazard involved since the system to all intents and purposes is a closed one and men working on Ethyl blending plants, unless a most unusual accident occurs, are not exposed to the concentrated Fluid or its vapours.

As you know, we have some hundreds of blending plants throughout the world and a great many of these have been in operation for a period of ten to thirteen years.

Regular medical supervision is of course absolutely essential, but to have the men examined once every month is in our opinion quite unnecessary and experience over the last thirteen years has shown that provided only men who have been passed as suitable for work on a blending plant are employed, there is absolutely no necessity for a medical examination of these men at more frequent intervals than three months.

We should be glad to ask our chief medical consultant, Dr. Kehoe, to write direct to Dr. J. Hammacher and Dr. W. F. de Priester, explaining in detail to them the possible hazards involved and the reasons why he considers medical examinations of the men every three months sufficient.

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We believe that Dr. Hammacher has got an unduly exaggerated idea of the work and hazards involved and I am sure that an explanation from Dr. Kehoe will not only relieve his mind, but also clarify the exact type of medical supervision required.

Your people in Sourabaya mention that the Labour Authorities are likely to come down on them if it can be shown that they have not taken adequate precautions. We would like to point out, however, that the medical supervision which we exercise over the personnel of blending plants is primarily for our own information and is additional to any precautions that may be taken by your own company. We believe, however, that insofar as Ethyl blending only is concerned, the medical supervision we suggest will be found adequate.

We think that the fees suggested by Dr. Hammacher are out of all proportion to the work he will be required to do, but this probably is due to the fact that he has misunderstood the situation. As you know, the fee that we normally pay for medical supervision of this type amounts to approximately £5 per quarter, dependent of course upon local conditions, and I do not think we can agree to pay Dr. Hammacher a fee in excess of Fl.250 per year, plus expenses. We would be agreeable also to paying Dr. de Priester the same fee.

We think it essential that in addition to carrying out a medical examination of the personnel of the plant once every three months, our medical consultants also visit the plants at regular intervals to satisfy themselves that the equipment is being kept in proper condition.

Yours truly,

T.R.A. BEVAN.

cc.Dr. Kehoe.

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