PCB file

Europe File

MONSANTO CHEMICALS LIMITED
RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
RUABON

J.W. Barrett - London
J.D. Carr - London
J.F. Churchill - London
H.N. Dahlström - Brussels
E.V. John - St. Louis
P.J.A. Marsh - Brussels
W.B. Papegeorge - St. Louis
J.J. Spano - St. Louis
P.W. Whippy - Brussels
S. Chantrell - London

Meeting at Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries & Food
Great Westminster House,
Horseferry Road,
London.

on Friday, October 29th, 1971

Present:

Mr. Trevor Coomes - Head of Food Chemistry and Atomic Energy Branch (MAAF) and Secretary of Food Additives and Contaminants Committee.

Mr. Dennis Cole - Wiggins Teape

Mr. Peter Leonel - PR Consultant (Nielsen McCarthy)

S. Chantrell, H.A. Vodden - Monsanto

This meeting was a follow-up to one at the Department of Trade and Industry intended primarily to inform relevant Government Departments of the present position relating to carbonless papers in the U.K.

The sequence of events which followed the finding of significant levels of PCBs in the environment and culminated in Wiggins Teape changing from Aroclor 1242 to HB40 for their NCR paper manufacture in July 1970 was outlined to Coomes. It was explained that at that time officials of the Ministry of Technology were informed, but no public statement was made.

Because of adverse publicity in many parts of the world relating to the use of PCB products in carbonless papers and the fact that some of Wiggins-Teape's customers in Europe were expressing concern, it was now intended that an advertisement should be published explaining that PCBs were no longer used in Wiggins-Teape NCR paper. A draft of the proposed advertisement was shown to Coomes. (Copy attached).

His immediate reaction was that he did not like the reference to FDA approval, since this would imply that NCR paper could be used for wrapping food. In fact, although he was grateful for the information, he did not think the advertisement was necessary nor desirable. His view was that Wiggins-Teape had acted correctly and that such a statement might only serve to draw more attention to a situation which was already greatly exaggerated. He referred to several instances, e.g. mercury in Tuna fish, cyclamates etc., where publicity of this type had forced hasty and probably unnecessary actions. However, he agreed that in such a case as this the PR experts were probably the best judges of the situation and should make appropriate recommendations.

He did, however, strongly recommend that the reference to FDA approval should be deleted and replaced by a phrase like non-toxic and non-persistent.

He mentioned the Paper & Board Manufacturers' Association as a body who might be consulted on this problem. Dennis Cole agreed that this might be worthwhile.

Coomes asked for some information on toxicity levels of the PCB product and the substitute. He was given oral LD50 (rats) values for Aroclor 1242 and HB40. This information seemed to satisfy him.

Coomes was not specifically interested in the persistance of PCBs and referred to the Department of the Environment as the specialists in that area.

H.A. Vodden

H.A. VODDEN

HAV/BWG
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