

A continuous process for devulcanisation has been

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For details: circle 123

GRP men seek guidance

Is styrene a hazard?

RECEIVED

OCT 27

MEMPHIS COMPANY
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page 2

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ly director, has been appointed director of
to Dr W. F. Watson, whose place was to
late Dr A. R. Payne.

A RAPRA spokesman told



EASY RIDER!

AVON adds a touch of glamour to a Triumph Tiger 750 machine fitted with its Roadrunner tyres. Avon sponsored a Best of British feature stand at the recent Earl Court Motor Cycle Show and presented 15

PRW News Editor

INTERNATIONAL anxiety over the ill-effects of styrene fumes in the workshop is beginning to worry the plastics industry in Britain.

GRP boat-builders, in particular, are concerned about rumours that tougher restrictions may be imposed on the use of styrene in confined areas.

At the Southampton Boat Show a number of them were alarmed by reports that the permitted level was being slashed to 20 ppm in Sweden.

'This is totally unworkable in the UK,' said one. 'If such a rule is introduced here, I'm finished.'

Government health authorities and trade associations were reluctant to comment this week on the progress of tripartite discussions

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GOVERNMENT MUST HELP

The cost of improving plant ventilation to 50 ppm in Britain, it is argued, would cost from £1,000 a man to about £40,000 per plant and aid would have to be sought from Government.

ACCELERATORS

RSV 0006501

Weigh Anchor for a smooth passage
from Drug Room to finished products

urrent investigations into major hazards in industry, in
nd rubber sectors, is being held in London in November.
ide Professor Bryan Harvey, chairman of the Major Hazards Advisory
man of the safety and health council of the Chemical Industries Associ-

Styrene: no risk of hasty action in the UK

attempt to find
that will aid both
investigators.
ails: circle 124

Conversion free

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broad range of products, from cups to
baths.



PONT-A-MOUSSON S.A.
DIVISION MACHINES

TRANSFORMATION DES PLASTIQUES
rance tel 522 22 97 telex SIDELPAR Paris 280 270

from page 1

with unions and employers,
but reassurances were given
that harsh measures were not
contemplated.

An industrial health spokes-
man told PRW: 'We licked the
VCM problem by facing up to
it and working together. This
is exactly what we are doing
now and we expect to produce
a working plan and an accept-
able solution.'

GRP boat-builders and other
users, however, feel there is
need for more immediate
overt guidance and leadership.
'Who are our champions?'
asked one. 'We are not even
certain if the talks are going
for or against us... or even
what the supposed new
hazards are.'

Investigations into the
alleged risks of styrene are
still being carried out by
officials and scientists in both
the public and the private sec-
tors of industry. It may be
some time, therefore, before
the full implications, as well as
the risks, have been measured
and assessed by the responsi-
ble authorities.

Nevertheless, the toxicity of
styrene is well-known to labo-
ratory scientists and responsi-
ble management. It can act as
an irritant on the ocular and
respiratory mucous mem-
branes of animals, especially
in the lungs, and it has a
depressing action on the cen-
tral nervous system which can
lead to death in cases of ex-
treme exposure.

Symptoms of poisoning have
been found in laboratory
animals exposed to concen-
trations ranging from 200-
10,000 ppm.

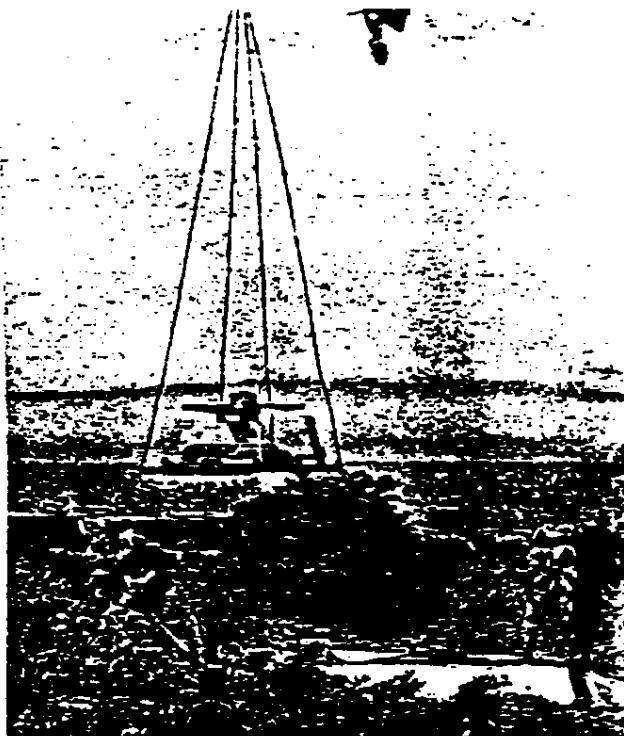
Late news

STYRENE STATEMENT

The British Plastics Federation is to issue an authoritative
statement on the styrene problem after a meeting of its
experts on September 30.

It is expected to give guidance to styrene users, including
those engaged in GRP. Consideration is also being given to
the need for information leaflets.

The BPF is known to be closely monitoring the situation,
aided by the Chemical Industries Association and the
Government.



ON TARGET!

Typical of RAF courtesy: when they landed the polyester resin
sculpture seen dangling here from a Wessex Mk II helicopter it was
landed as softly as a feather and bang in the middle of the plinth!
The sculpture was being placed on an island in the Bristol Channel
as part of a Welsh Arts Council scheme. BP Chemicals of Barry
supplied the materials.

Investigations into human
toxicity has shown that at con-
centrations of 400-700 ppm,
styrene vapours are un-
pleasant and even painful to
some people, causing irritation
of the eyes, throat, and mucous
membranes of the nose and
respiratory tract. There is also
a sensation of tiredness and,
occasionally, nausea and a loss
of appetite.

All these symptoms, how-
ever, are purely temporary
and quickly disappear when
the subject is exposed to fresh
air.

Air containing 800 ppm of
styrene can be tolerated for
some hours without ill-effect,
but continued exposure causes
marked irritation of the

mucous membranes. This can
be extreme at 1,300 ppm.

The results of investigations
authoritatively published so
far, however, do not indicate
any lasting or abnormal
effects, despite intensive
research by carcinogenic
specialists.

Adequate precautions are
already being taken in
most workshops and factories
throughout Britain, and the
current discussions are be-
lieved to centre on recommen-
dations to improve still further
the ventilation of plants. In-
dustrial education is likely to
be stepped up to remind wor-
kers of the need to observe
appropriate precautions.

Informed sources, mean-
while, are quietly reassuring
the industry that, as in the case
of VCM, remedial steps are
being considered in the closest
consultation with Govern-
ment. Peremptory legislation,
therefore, is completely ruled
out, and there are no grounds
for supposing that this country
will impose the severe
measures being contemplated
or adopted in other parts of the
world.

● See page 6