FILE NAME: Asbestos Sacks and Bags (ASB)

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# THE OCEAN SHIPOWNERS GROUP JOINT COMMITTEE

Telegrams—"TRAFFIC, 'PHONE, LONDON."
Telephone—ROYal 8131

Shipping Federation House,
146-150, Minories,
LONDON, E.C.3.

Reference: 15B/PLEC/67

20th February, 1967

J.K. Badcock Esq.,
Secretary,
Port Labour Executive Committee,
Plantation House,
Fenchurch Street,
LONDON E.C.3.

Dear Sir,

Asbestos - Raw and Manufactured

You are aware of the difficulties which were experienced in the port some eighteen months ago and which lead to the Ministry of Labour conducting an investigation and thereafter issuing a report - copy attached. This was accepted by both sides of the Ocean Shipowners Group Joint Committee and shipments in the Ocean Trades have continued to move.

At a recent meeting of the Ocean Shipowners Group Joint Committee the Transport and General Workers Union complained that whilst raw asbestos was being imported in the imporoved pack in block stowages, there were instances when either:-

(i) the pack was not up to the required standard;

(ii) the pack was up to the required standard but a block stowage had not been used and over stowing cargo had damaged the bags;

(iii) asbestos had been discharged at a previous port but considerable loose remained on other cargo; or

(iv) asbestos was contained in bags which at some stage before arriving at London had suffered seriour damage by hook holes and other causes.

As considerable loose had been envountered and in view of the widespread publicity which has been given to the ill effects of this commodity in the papers and on television, the Trade Unions have come to the conclusion that asbestos must be shipped in sealed containers. They, therefore considered that as this is a national issue it should be referred through the P.L.E.C. to the National Joint Council with a view to the appropriate Ministry being approached to introduce statutory regulations.

A further complaint was made in respect of export cargo which contained asbestos, such as a boiler lagging, in that no indication was given on the bag or other outside covering that there was an asbestos content. The Trade Unions consider that a true description should be given in such cases on the external packing as this would give men the opportunity to request the issue of masks.

The Employers appreciating that in view of the publicity of late serious industrial trouble might follow unless the matter was subject to a further Ministry of Labour investigation, agreed to join with the Trade Union in referring this issue to the Port Labour Executive Committee.

Yours faithfully,

D.L. BENNETT,

Secretary.