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SHIPBUILDERS COUNCIL OF AMERICA

1730 K STREET N. W. • WASHINGTON, D.C. 20006 • 202|338-7722

October 29, 1970

To: Accident Prevention Committee

Subject: Insulating Materials as Health Hazards

On October 15 a meeting sponsored by the Mount Sinai School of Medicine, New York City, was held to consider health hazards created by the rise of insulating materials in shipyards.

The Council was invited to be represented at this meeting. Mssrs. Harry Howard and Newt Whitman, Bethlehem Steel Corp. and Mr. Austin Shean, Todd Shipyards Corp. were present on behalf of the Council.

Enclosed for your information are the minutes of this meeting and a complete list of those in attendance.

Mr. Howard has consented to represent the Council as a member of the ad hoc group referred to in the minutes.

R. H. Mereness
Assistant to the President

Enclosures

PLAINTIFF'S EXHIBIT
SBCA 5001
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The City University of New York
October 15, 1970

Minutes of Meeting on Use of Insulation Materials in Shipyards

The meeting was held October 15, 1970 at Mount Sinai School of Medicine for the purpose of considering health hazards created by the use of insulating materials during ship construction, refit or demolition; to ascertain what procedures for controlling hazards had been instituted or were planned; to determine what activities should be undertaken to reduce exposures in this industry to toxic substances; and to disseminate information. A list of participants and organizations represented is attached.

Dr. Selikoff reviewed the data on the biological effects of exposure to asbestos which have been developed by clinical and epidemiological studies of insulation and shipyard workmen. The records show that, in addition to asbestosis, this group exhibited significantly elevated incidences of lung cancer and mesothelioma. Actions should be taken promptly to correct conditions, with particular emphasis on reducing peak exposures as it is considered that these are especially significant as a cause of injury.

Mr. Reitze opened a discussion of environmental conditions in shipyards by relating observations made in visits to many operations in the United States. He pointed out that removal of insulation produced large amounts of dust and that this operation was done by many different trades. Similarly to building construction work, mixing mortar and handsawing operations also created considerable dust. Some dust reduction measures were in use in almost all yards, but no yard was utilizing all procedures. Many operations were similar to those observed in the building construction industry during surveys by the field staff of the Insulation Industry Hygiene Research Program. Dr.

Barboo stated that conditions which had prevailed in Navy shipyards were similar to those found in private facilities. An intensive control program has been instituted in the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard involving substitution of materials containing lower percentages of asbestos, use of local exhaust ventilation, control of waste handling and use of personal protective equipment. Regulations covering use of asbestos-containing materials are being prepared and will be distributed to all Navy shipyards.

Dr. Nicholson described the health protection program which is in operation at the Devonport Dockyard at Plymouth, England. The main emphasis of this program is on use of personal protective equipment, isolation of operations, housekeeping and substitution of materials.

There was considerable discussion of control procedures which have been, or could be, used. Substitution of materials containing reduced amounts of asbestos, use of plastic bags for mixing mortar, use of downdraft tables for hand-sawing work, provision of respirators and disposable coveralls were all mentioned. It was apparent that procedures were now available which would greatly reduce peak exposures to dust and that the most complete program in operation was that of the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard.

Mr. O'Neill stated that the U.S. Department of Labor was responsible for health and safety in ship construction and would be drafting regulations covering this industry. The regulations will not concern such items as work practices but will establish health and safety standards.

The question of the most productive course of action was discussed by Mr. Holaday. It appeared that sufficient knowledge was available to permit development of recommendations for control procedures.

These recommendations would be developed by an ad hoc committee composed of representatives from each group having an interest in or responsibility for ship construction, refit or demolition. Hopefully, this committee would collate information and produce recommendations for consideration by the groups concerned. The Environmental Sciences Laboratory, Mount Sinai School of Medicine, would sponsor this work as part of the insulation industry hygiene research project. The consensus of the meeting was that this procedure was feasible and should be followed. The suggested time for completing this task was three months, at which time another general meeting would be arranged.

Dr. Selikoff expressed his appreciation to the participants and the meeting adjourned.

October 15, 1970

Participants in Meeting on Control of Hazards created by Use of Insulating Material in Shipyards

U.S. Navy Department -- Bureau of Medicine & Surgery
- Dr. George M. Lawton, Director, Occupational Health Division
- Dr. Samuel Barboo
- Mr. Carl A. Mangold, Head, Industrial Hygiene Branch, Medical Department, Puget Sound Naval Shipyard, Bremerton, Washington

U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Standards
- Mr. John P. O'Neill

Shipbuilding Council of America
- Mr. Harry Howard, Tech. Assistant to the Vice President for Shipbuilding and Ship Repair, Bethlehem Steel
- Mr. Newt Whitman, Chief Environmental Health Chemist, Bethlehem Steel
- Mr. Austin Shean, Director of Safety, Todd Shipyard Corp.

Johns-Manville Corporation
- Dr. F. L. Pundsack
- Mr. E. Fenner
- Mr. C. Ernst
- Mr. W. Raines

Mount Sinai
- Dr. Selikoff
- Dr. Heimann
- Dr. Nicholson
- Mr. Reitze
- Mr. Holaday

International Association of Heat & Frost Insulators & Asbestos Workers
- Mr. James Mulhern