

Item 4(k)

Turner & Newall Limited
Executive Committee Meeting
2 March 1981

Asbestos dust levels in overseas companies

In March 1980, the Executive Committee decided that overseas asbestos-processing companies ought to report on their asbestos dust situation by November 1980. All companies have now reported, and I summarise the position against the questions asked:

1. HAVE YOU ANY OPERATIONS WHICH NOW EXCEED A DUST LEVEL OF 2 FIBRES/ML?

Normally all companies operate within a 2 fibre standard. However, the exceptions are:

Hindustan Ferodo	Bulk fibre receipt, storage & dispensing, textile carding, spinning, weaving, plaiting, millboard guillotine and inspection, Baker Perkins and spike mixers, factory cleaning
Ferodo Italiana	Grinding clutch facings
Ferodo (Pty)	Drilling and inspection
Ferobrake companies	Grinding, drilling and rivetting
Payen Components	Auto-guillotine
Zimbabwe friction materials	Grinding
TAP Zambia	Torrance mill, blender infeed and bagging off, hard-waste grinding
Turnall, Jacobs	Torrance mill, fibre infeed to machines, belt sander
Kuilsriver	Blending, feeding, stripping and cleaning, dry sawing, slate grinding, belt sander, hard-waste grinding
Havelock	Most of the mill complex
Shabanie & Mashaba	All mills except large parts of the new King and Shabanie mills.

2. CAN 2 FIBRES/ML BE ACHIEVED BY 31 DECEMBER 1981?

Yes, except

Hindustan Ferodo	Carding, which is enclosed. Success in other areas depends on success in union negotiations
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Payen Components	Not yet known
Havelock	Increasingly difficult to achieve further reductions
Shabanie & Mashaba	Major portion of King & Shabanie mills only. The plans to close down single storey mills (Birthday, CC, Temeraire) are long term, and will take a number of years

3. WHAT OPERATIONS EXCEED 1 FIBRE/ML?

Obviously, all areas reported on above. Additionally,

Ferodo (Pty.)	Mixing, Miracle mill, finishing and railway brake blocks
Ferodo Italiana	Fibre weighing and turning clutch facings
Nuturn, New Castle	Bag opening and mixing
Payen Components	Cutting head gaskets on jigsaw
TEP, Nigeria	One press
AC Ltd.	Bulk fibre receipt
TAP, Zambia	Lathes and saws
TBP, Emene) TBP, Arewa)	Bulk fibre receipt
Turnall, Jacobs))- Kuilsriver)	Bulk fibre receipt, treated fibre stacking, hard-waste feeding, lathes, saws, fettling, mitring, slate grinding
Turnall, Zimbabwe	Intermittently at both Salisbury and Bulawayo
Havelock	Underground, operative neglect
Shabanie & Mashaba	All mills

4. WHAT REASONS PREVENT THE ACHIEVEMENT OF A 1 FIBRE STANDARD BY 1 JANUARY 1985?

Hindustan Ferodo	Current plant. Capital cost of suitable new plant seems prohibitive
Ferobrace companies	Adequate dust extraction equipment may not be installed
Havelock	The capital cost of a new mill, estimated at £100 million, in the context of the remaining life of the mine
Shabanie & Mashaba	Doubtful if technology exists

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The summary discloses that, although there are problem areas requiring further work, the general situation is reasonably satisfactory. However, this conclusion depends crucially on the credibility of the dust measurements. Inter-laboratory comparisons between IBA, USA, Cape, H&SE and the ICM show variances of $\pm 40\%$ at a 2 fibre standard. If the standard is halved the variation on either side of it would double unless techniques are developed to harmonise variations. Ultimately, T&N is responsible for conditions in all its operations. It is important, therefore, that Mr. Rickards, who is already involved with the H&SE/ICM Central Reference Laboratory project and with the Asbestos International Association's Dust Measurement Advisory Panel, should visit on a regular basis all asbestos processing plants internationally with the aim of covering each over a three year cycle.

Until 1972, the Turnall companies in South Africa and Zimbabwe and TAP Zambia were under common management. The South African companies and Zambia both report problem areas yet, notwithstanding UDI, Salisbury and Bulawayo do not appear to have serious problems. I find this inconsistency surprising.

The situation at the New Castle, Indiana, plant of Nuturn is not good although dust counts, according to the factory records, are only just above 1 fibre/ml in the bag opening and blending area. New equipment is on order from Canada to replace a part of the substandard equipment now in use. However, local management did not appear wholly confident that the installation of this would enable them to keep below a one fibre standard. The hygienists at both New Castle and Smithville are very young and, although they have been on a two week training course by OSHA, they are relatively inexperienced. An outside laboratory has run a cross check on Nuturn dust measurements and has advised that they are reasonably accurate. Nevertheless, it is noticeable that OSHA's actual counts are somewhat higher than Nuturn's counts. This reverses T&N experience in the UK where Ferodo counting is normally higher than H&SE counting. I consider that both hygienists would benefit from a visit by Mr. Rickards.

Obviously, the counts in Zimbabwe are a major problem. I believe that we would sleep easier if a T&N check on their dust sampling, slide mounting and counting techniques was carried out in the near future.

H.D.S. HARDIE

25 February 1981