FILE NAME: Ford (FD)

DATE: 1975

DOC#: FD215

DOCUMENT DESCRIPTION: Memos - NIOSH Meeting

Cover Memo:

RMM (Robert M. Middlekauf)

SFM (S. F. McKenna) agreed that the company should be represented at the NIOSH meeting provided the notion expressed in item 4 on page 2 of the attachment is fully exploited; or, if evidence is presented that asbestos exposure is an auto industry problem that Company comment be withheld pending internal discussion. Dr. Northrop was advised accordingly and told me he agreed with the approach.

July 15, 1975

Mr. S.F. McKenna

Attached is the memo concerning the July 21 NIOSH meeting I mentioned to you this morning. Since I will be out of the office the remainder of today and all of Wednesday, if you seek additional information before I return Howard Meyer will be pleased to accommodate you.

A.W. Hanlon

Handwritten note: OK with me as long as Dr. Northrop understands that #4, P.2 is important. I don't want anyone to give any indication to any group or individual outside the company that we have an asbestos problem. If the facts indicate otherwise, we should discuss internally.

PLAINTIFF'S EXHIBIT

tabbies

R. M.
SA - agreed that the Company should be represented at the Washington Printing the entire response item 4 on page 2 of the attachment is fully explained; or if unclear is presented the entire response is an auto industry problem the Company cannot be held liable for. Pending item Discussed w. Northup who was advised accordingly and told me he agreed with the approval.

7/17

8008 0160

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Note to the File 7/17/75

Dr. Northrop was advised in accordance with the note from S. F. McKenna, agreed with it and emphasized that no commitments of any kind would be made by Ford personnel at the meeting.

A. W. Hanlon

8008 0161

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Ford

A. W. Hanlon

July 15, 1975

Mr. S. F. McKenna

Attached is the memo concerning the July 21 NIOSH meeting I mentioned to you this morning. Since I will be out of the office the remainder of today and all of Wednesday, if you seek additional information before I return Howard Meyer will be pleased to accommodate you.

Attachment

Company feels that we have an obligation to initiate otherwise, OK Allen, If he feels internally Steve K 7-15

O.K. with me as long as Dr. Northrop understands that #4, P. 2 is important. I don't want anyone to give any publication to any group or individual outside the

8008 0162

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Mr. Sidney F. McKenna

July 15, 1975

cc Mr. Robert M. Middlekauff

Subject: July 21, 1975 NIOSH Meeting to Discuss Health Problems Regarding Asbestos Exposure

As you know, the question of having the auto industry represented by MVMA at the subject NIOSH meeting was raised in the July 10, 1975 MVMA Personnel Committee meeting. Through Mr. Middlekauff we understand the Committee resolved that MVMA attendance would be inappropriate and that member companies, if invited, should individually decide whether or not to attend.

To obtain the background information for this meeting, Dr. H. Northrop and Mr. P. Toth were contacted. They indicated that some time ago Dr. Block received a telephone invitation to the July 21 NIOSH meeting from Dr. John Finklea, the new NIOSH Director. Dr. Finklea advised Dr. Block that the meeting was to review data assembled by Dr. Irving Selikoff, NYU Mt. Sinai School of Medicine, concerning health problems related to asbestos dust exposure among workers handling and repairing brake linings. It is anticipated that at the July 21 meeting Dr. Selikoff will elaborate on his preliminary findings dealing with asbestos-related health problems among a few brake lining workers as he outlined in a previous meeting on May 16, 1975 at our Scientific Research Center. You will recall that Ford medical and industrial hygiene personnel were at that meeting, along with medical personnel from General Motors, Chrysler and American Motors. At that time, Dr. Selikoff presented slides showing results of his studies in the New York City area and briefly described four West Coast cases of mesothelioma (asbestos-related lung cancer) that had come to his attention.

While no one from the UAW was at the May 16 meeting, it is our understanding that the UAW has been invited to the July 21 meeting. We have also been advised that invitations have been extended to selected organizations and individuals including the AFL-CIO, International Association of Machinists, Johns-Manville Company, American Petroleum Institute, New York Auto Dealers Association, and the University of Pittsburgh School of Public Health; however, no other automobile companies have been invited.

In further discussions with Dr. Northrop and Mr. Toth, it was confirmed that Mr. Toth had discussed the upcoming July 21 NIOSH meeting with Mr. N. McCallum who subsequently docketed it for review by the MVMA Personnel Committee. When Dr. Northrop and Mr. Toth were informed the Committee had rejected an MVMA appearance at the NIOSH meeting, they indicated that Ford personnel should attend. (Previously Dr. Block and Dr. Northrop had felt that with the relatively small number of Company employes exposed to asbestos, Ford interests could best be served if the automotive industry was represented as a group through MVMA.)

8008 0163

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Specifically, Dr. Northrop has asked for our comments regarding the possibility of his and Mr. Toth's attendance at the NIOSH meeting. (Dr. Block was personally invited, but because he will be away on vacation Dr. Northrop is the appropriate substitute. NIOSH has agreed.) Mr. J. A. O'Reilly has been informed of this matter and he has advised that there are no legal considerations which would dictate that we decline to attend. In fact, he recommends that Ford be represented.

For additional background, Mr. Toth provided us with information regarding the extent of potential asbestos dust exposure in the Company, a field communication and bulletin concerning Company action to be taken in connection with asbestos exposure, and certain 1973 and 1974 correspondence between Dr. Block and Dr. Selikoff or his associates on this and a related industrial health subject. A copy of this material is attached. You will note that in a January 11, 1974 letter to Dr. Selikoff, Dr. Block indicated an interest in the asbestos research project and willingness to discuss possible Ford assistance. Also attached is a copy of a paper presented in 1974 by the UAW to Chrysler which refers to asbestos-related hazard research by Dr. Selikoff, as well as BNA material describing the OSHA standard currently in effect for asbestos dust exposure, the basic role of NIOSH under the Occupational Safety and Health Act, and a brief report on Dr. Finklea who earlier this year was appointed NIOSH Director.

Some reasons in support of Company attendance at the NIOSH meeting appear to include the following:

1. Dr. Finklea took the time to call Dr. Block personally. A rejection of his invitation may be considered a personal affront and may prove detrimental in the future, given Dr. Finklea's position.

2. Rejecting the invitation could be construed by Dr. Finklea to mean that Ford is not sufficiently concerned about potential industrial health problems in its plants or dealerships.

3. The Company might be able to influence the direction that a NIOSH action plan might take.

4. The Company would be able to restate its views as expressed in the May meeting with Dr. Selikoff that this is not an auto industry problem but an auto repair and service problem, and thus forestall a potential NIOSH research effort in our manufacturing and assembly operations.

5. The Company would be aware on a "firsthand basis" of Drs. Selikoff's and Finklea's intentions and attitudes on the subject.



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Some reasons for the Company not to attend the meeting might be:

1. The Company's presence could provide an opportunity for NIOSH to attempt to draw the Company into a study.

2. The Company's presence may provide an occasion for a Union attempt to embarrass the Company on other health and safety issues.

On balance, it appears that the Company should accept the invitation to the subject meeting. If you concur, we will advise Dr. Northrop accordingly.

Arthur W. Hanlon

Attachments



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