



In this issue... Environmental claims; the ART letter to the Canadian Prime Minister and related issues; the reconvening of the Kuruman ACC; Who's who in the Jo'burg crew; a new Belgian law...

Environmental Claims

The trust deeds of both Trusts make provision for compensation of environmental (non-occupational) claims. While proof of occupational exposure was very clear, proof of environmental exposure was in many cases unclear. Because of the sheer volume of occupational claimants, a decision on what constituted qualifying environmental exposure was held in abeyance. Consensus was reached at a meeting of Trustees of both Trusts in Johannesburg on 20 February 2007, where having weighed the available evidence and trust deed requirements, the following was decided:

1. Claimants with mesothelioma and pleural thickening would qualify, and asbestosis and lung cancers typically would not as these diseases are generated mainly by the higher exposures of the occupational setting.
2. Claimants with domestic exposure (eg. exposure to a husband's dust-laden overalls) and those who resided at or near qualifying operations as specified in the trust deeds would qualify
3. A specific structure would be set up in the Trust to process these claims.



Asbestos Coordinating Committee

The next meeting of the ACC will be held on 24 May in Kuruman. It is a special meeting to finalize the draft constitution and to elect a Management Committee. Whilst the previous meeting was well subscribed by local stakeholders, the ART is hoping for additional government participation in this organization.

ART Trustees Meeting in May 2007

The next Trustees meeting of the ART will take place in Johannesburg on 29 May.

New Belgian asbestos compensation law

The Asbestos Victims Compensation Fund came into operation on 1 April 2007, and will be funded to cover all asbestos related diseases in Belgium. The amount of funding for 2007 will be €750,000 (ZAR 7.1 Million) and in subsequent years the funding will be proportional to the number of asbestosis victims. The aim of the law was to modernise social security in Belgium.

**From our website: The core at the Johannesburg Head office
New faces not seen here - Caroline Chinjeke (PA to Tina) & Baso Nodada (Administrator)**



Tina, Sharlene, Lynette, Tshidi, Shaheda, Amanda

Letter to the Canadian Prime Minister

A strongly-worded petition entitled J'Accuse and coordinated by IBAS – the International Ban Asbestos Secretariat – was sent to the Canadian Prime Minister on International Workers Memorial Day, 28 April 2007. ART supported this by writing a separate letter to the Canadian PM, reproduced below. The J'Accuse petition can be viewed on the website www.thepetitionsite.com/takeaction/323742038.

The Honourable Mr Stephen Harper
Prime Minister of Canada
Canada

25 April 2007

Dear Mr Prime Minister,

GLOBAL BAN ON ASBESTOS

The Asbestos Relief Trust is a South African organization which was set up to disburse compensation to claimants who have been exposed to asbestos and who have, as a result, developed asbestos related diseases, in accordance with our Trust Deed.

South Africa had a long asbestos mining and manufacturing history which has left a considerable deleterious legacy. This legacy represents a huge problem that both governmental and non-governmental organizations are today still struggling to deal with.

Our experience in processing over 10,000 applications for compensation indicates that all types of asbestos are a health hazard and that this health hazard continues for many decades.

We deplore the fact that Canada is still mining asbestos as well as exporting this hazardous substance to countries where controls on its safe use are known to be ineffective.

We know that there is no cure for asbestos related diseases and that all forms of asbestos mining, manufacture and usage can be deadly.

As a result we support a total worldwide ban on asbestos and call on the Canadian government to ban asbestos mining, manufacture and use, as well as banning the import and export of all asbestos products. In addition, we urge your government and your asbestos industry to ensure that any areas polluted by asbestos are thoroughly rehabilitated.

Yours faithfully,

ASBESTOS RELIEF TRUST

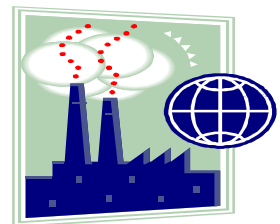
Tina da Cruz
Trust Manager

Dr Jim teWaterNaude MBChB, FCPHM
Occupational Medicine Specialist

Closer to home, Zimbabwe like Canada is also still mining chrysotile asbestos. It is the world's fifth largest producer of white asbestos, after Russia, Canada, China and Brazil.

South Africa consumes some 40 percent of Zimbabwe's asbestos output, using it mainly for roofing in low-cost houses, manufacturing of brake and clutch pedals for heavy vehicles and for high temperature seals, all of which can be substituted with safer non-deadly materials.

The challenge for the Trusts now is to act locally having thought globally.

**Dept of Error**

How we should have spelled it in the March Newsletter: Sr **Phemelo** Magabanyane

In the next issue or 2: Keep a lookout for the research report commissioned by the ART on how the compensation monies have been spent by claimants

To comment or subscribe or unsubscribe from this newsletter, send an email to:

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For more information about the Trusts, visit www.asbestostrust.co.za