

THE COUNCIL FOR TOBACCO RESEARCH—U.S.A., INC.  
500 SECOND AVENUE  
NEW YORK, N. Y. 10017

LITERATURE RETRIEVAL DIVISION  
7TH FLOOR

May 2, 1980 -

FOR: Miss Brown  
Messrs: Bezanson  
Decker  
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Jacob  
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Shinn

Here is a status report regarding the processing of the retrospective and prospective asbestos literature.

We understand that the need to process the asbestos literature is not perceived to be greater than the need to process the other literature that we gather or have on hand. Consequently, the Division is not giving special priority to asbestos articles, except for those that are designated for high priority processing.

There are certain differences in the manner in which we must handle the retrospective asbestos literature in connection with the gathering and the bibliographic cleanup of these articles. But with regard to the assignment of classification codes using the expanded classification system, the use of these codes and title words for retrieval, and other routine processing, asbestos articles are being handled in the same manner as are non-asbestos articles.

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It is anticipated that classification of the entire backlog of 15,050 articles in the Preliminary Data Base, which includes the retrospective asbestos articles, will be completed in approximately one year. The title word search capability should be operable within a month. High priority articles will continue to be expedited and fully processed.

Our overall goal is to ensure that the most useful articles will be fully processed; other articles will receive a lower level of processing and will be retrievable by title words and by the expanded classification system. Thus, all articles, whether processed fully or at a lower level, will have been "completely processed"; i.e., they will have been processed as completely as is necessary at this time. Consequently, completely processed articles no longer need to be considered as part of the "backlog". If interest becomes focused on a given collection of articles, such as the asbestos literature, any of these that previously had received a lower level of processing could become a candidate for full processing.

Please call me if you have any questions whatsoever.



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Status Report  
← Processing of the Asbestos Literature

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Exhibits:

- Expanded Classification System
- Memorandum (May 1, 1980): Selection and Processing Guidelines for Asbestos-Related Articles
- Memorandum (May 1, 1980): Classification of In-Process Documents, Supplemental Guidelines Number 10

May 1, 1980

Status Report  
Processing of the Asbestos Literature

I. Processing of the Retrospective Asbestos Literature

A. Collection

Collection of the outstanding asbestos articles cited in the bibliographies supplied by the attorneys will be completed by approximately May 31. More than 3,100 articles will have been obtained by then.

Citations for articles that are not able to be obtained will be purged from the Preliminary Data Base. These include unpublished papers, out-of-print textbooks, pamphlets, personal communications, motion pictures, slide presentations, incomplete citations, etc. Unobtainable citations will not be cross-referenced to the source bibliography or to the Division's central author file. However, a list of all purged (unobtainable) citations will be available on request.

A subcontractor will be selected within 30 days to begin work on the identification of the estimated 1,000 to 2,000 other articles on asbestos that may exist in the earlier published literature. Collection and processing of these articles will depend on their number and availability.

B. Selection and Assignment of Processing Priority

All articles that are obtained will be deemed to be selected for processing; i.e., will not be purged from the Preliminary Data Base.

High priority articles will be expedited and fully processed. A high priority asbestos article has been defined as one that deals with either any form of lung cancer (not mesothelioma) and/or smoking. It is estimated that there are only approximately 200 high priority articles in this collection. Seventy of these were published in the earlier literature, 40 appeared in obscure English and foreign language journals and 90 are

from texts and symposia. Thus, high priority articles as defined here have been selected and processed routinely over the years under Sections I. and II. of the Scope of Coverage.

Articles that are not assigned high priority status will not be fully processed, but will be retrievable by classification codes and by title words. These articles could become candidates for full processing at a later date, depending on the needs and priorities of the industry.

C. Classification

The classification system for documents that are in the Preliminary Data Base has been revised and expanded to include 430 topical and 20 non-topical classification codes (refer to attached exhibit). This expanded classification system will improve substantially the retrievability of these documents.

Use of the new classification system was implemented on a prospective basis earlier this year, and development and testing of the necessary software was completed in mid-April. The entire system is now operational.

There are currently 15,050 documents in the Preliminary Data Base to be classified, including the retrospective asbestos articles. Classification of all documents in the Preliminary Data Base is scheduled to be completed during the first calendar quarter of 1981.

D. Title Word Search

The title word search capability will serve as an adjunct to the expanded classification system, and will improve substantially the retrievability of documents in the Preliminary Data Base.

Document titles currently are stored in the data base, but are available only for search output display. Structuring of the data base to allow searches of title words will be accomplished by mechanical means. Development of the necessary software is now in process, and we expect the system to be operational by the end of May 1980.

E. Bibliographic Cleanup

The numerous asbestos bibliographies received from the lawyers were in need of extensive bibliographic cleanup, which has not yet been completed. This task will be accomplished in concert with the classification process. Additional staff has been hired to accomplish these tasks and also to reduce the large backlogs of routine articles that exist at the library/bibliography/accessioning stations. All this work is expected to be completed by the second calendar quarter of 1981.

F. Cross-Referencing Accession Numbers to Source Bibliographies

The citations in the Johns-Manville and Asbestos Defense Counsel bibliographies will be cross-referenced to the Division's document accession numbers. Each accession number will be added manually, to a copy of the bibliographies, in the margin next to the appropriate citation. This cross-reference information can be added to the data base(s) for retrieval and display at a later date.

II. Processing of the Prospective Asbestos Literature

Prospective articles that deal with asbestos will be selected and processed in the same general manner as are the retrospective asbestos articles. Articles that deal with asbestos, that are encountered in our scanning of currently received primary and secondary sources, will be selected for inclusion in the System. Such articles that deal with lung cancer (not mesothelioma) and/or smoking will be assigned high priority and will be fully processed. Other asbestos articles will not be fully processed, except for such articles that warrant full processing because of their content without regard to asbestos.

Section III of the Scope of Coverage, dealing with asbestos, specifically excludes certain articles. Our experience has shown that there are approximately only 100 such articles per year, so long as we do not materially expand our current journal receipts to include the chemical, engineering or manufacturing literature. Consequently, we will continue to select and include in the System all asbestos articles identified at scanning because it is less expensive and more efficient to do so. These articles will not be fully processed and will be retrievable by classification codes and by title words.

