

A letter like this slams home.  
My PPE? 10a shorts and sandals.  
My awareness of this problem? Found out today.

142313Z SEP 04 SIC Z4P/W2M/HFH

FROM: DGNVAVCERTSAFE

SUBJ: OPERATION STAYS SAFE HOT TOPIC 3 - ZINC CHROMATE A.  
MCAUST W2M/LAL/I2B 100620Z MAR 04 B. MHQAUST HAY/WAP/PZJ  
110311Z MAY 01 C. AS 4361.1-1995 - GUIDE TO LEAD PAINT  
MANAGEMENT D. AKZO NOBEL GUIDANCE NOTE VERSION 2 MAY 2001

1. NAVY WITHDREW ZINC CHROMATE PAINT FROM USE IN 1991.  
HOWEVER, HMA SHIPS MAY HAVE ZINC CHROMATE PAINT WHERE IT  
HAS NOT YET BEEN REMOVED THROUGH MAINTENANCE, AS WELL AS  
IN RECYCLED FITTINGS (EVEN IN NEWER PLATFORMS)

AND IN SOME EQUIPMENT PURCHASED OVERSEAS. ZINC CHROMATE  
IN A STABLE FORM PRESENTS NO RISK BUT WHEN DISTURBED THE  
SUBSTANCE PRESENTS A SIGNIFICANT RISK TO PERSONNEL.  
REPORTS OF POTENTIAL EXPOSURE TO ZINC CHROMATE, SUCH AS  
HIGHLIGHTED IN REF A, ARE THEREFORE OF ONGOING CONCERN.

2. ZINC CHROMATE IS LISTED AS A CATEGORY 1 CARCINOGEN.  
CONTACT WITH PARTICLES AND OXIDES CONTAINING ZINC  
CHROMATE CAN HAVE IMMEDIATE HEALTH EFFECTS. SHORT TERM  
EXPOSURE TO ZINC CHROMATE CAN INCLUDE SKIN IRRITATION  
INCLUDING DERMATITIS, RASHES, AND SKIN ULCERS, NOSE,  
THROAT AND EYE IRRITATION, AND LUNG IRRITATION THAT CAN  
LEAD TO ASTHMA. LONGER TERM EXPOSURE TO ZINC CHROMATE  
HAS BEEN LINKED TO LUNG AND THROAT CANCER.

3. PERSONNEL ARE ONLY EXPOSED TO THE DANGERS OF ZINC

CHROMATE WHEN THE PRODUCT IS SUBJECT TO SANDING, GRINDING, CUTTING AND WELDING. THE PIGMENT PARTICLES GENERATED WHEN SANDING OR GRINDING MAY RELEASE CARCINOGENS INTO THE ATMOSPHERE. WHEN HEATED BY CUTTING OR WELDING THESE CARCINOGENS CAN BE RELEASED AS A FUME WHERE THE RISK IS COMPOUNDED DUE TO THE EXTRA VOLATILITY OF THE FUMES GENERATED.

4. THE CORRECT USE OF PERSONNEL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE), AN ABILITY TO IDENTIFY THE HAZARD (ZINC CHROMATE USUALLY EMERGES AS A DISTINCTIVE YELLOW COLOUR BELOW OTHER LAYERS OF PAINT) AND EXECUTION OF THE CORRECT CLEAN UP PROCEDURE IAW REFS B, C AND D ARE ALL IMPORTANT IN LOWERING THE INCIDENCE OF ZINC CHROMATE EXPOSURE.

5. IN THE MAJORITY OF CASES, ZINC CHROMATE IS IDENTIFIED AND MANAGED CORRECTLY BUT INCIDENTS INVOLVING PERSONNEL EXPOSURE CONTINUE TO OCCUR.

THE MAIN DEFICIENCIES IDENTIFIED HAVE BEEN POOR AWARENESS OF THE ZINC CHROMATE HAZARD, A LACK OF SUPERVISION, AND PERSONNEL NOT USING OR RECEIVING GUIDANCE ON THE USE OF THE CORRECT PPE.

6. ALTHOUGH ALL PERSONNEL ARE EDUCATED ON THE DANGERS ON ZINC CHROMATE DURING INITIAL TRAINING AND SHIPS OR ESTABLISHMENTS JOINING ROUTINES, CONTINUAL EDUCATION IS STILL REQUIRED. SHIPS AND ESTABLISHMENTS ARE ENCOURAGED TO INCLUDED ZINC CHROMATE AWARENESS TRAINING AS A REGULAR WORK PLACE PRACTICE IN ORDER TO REDUCE THE RISK OF EXPOSURE.

7. ANY SHIP OR ESTABLISHMENT THAT BELIEVES IT HAS A BEST PRACTICE EXAMPLE OF THE MANAGEMENT AND HANDLING OF ZINC CHROMATE IS INVITED TO FORWARD BRIEF DETAILS, THROUGH THE CHAIN OF COMMAND, TO DGNCSA VIA SIGNAL (TO DGNVCSA)

OR VIA EMAIL TO NAVY.SAFETY(AT)DEFENCE.GOV.AU.

SUBMISSIONS WILL BE CONSIDERED FOR INCLUSION IN THE SEAWORTHY COLUMN OF NAVY NEWS AS AN EXAMPLE TO OTHER UNITS SEEKING TO IMPROVE THEIR OWN PROCESSES.

## 8. KEEP NAVY SAFE

Sure. Close the gate after the horse has bolted.

I am wondering how many other ill-health causing materials we were exposed to during service?

Asbestos.

Carbon Tet.

Lead

Turco

Contaminated water.

---

John 'ozzy' Osborne

ex - LSETW

1st Muppet Intake O No. S112467

July 1972 - Dec 1983

HMAS Nirimba, HMAS Melbourne, HMAS Perth, HMAS Kuttabul, HMAS Waratah, HMAS Kuttabul, HMAS Platypus, HMAS Waterhen, HMAS Stalwart, HMAS Hobart, HMAS Penguin