

Research paper on asbestos industry analysis

[Business](#), [Management](#)



Introduction

Asbestos mining and its usage has been proven to result to premature deaths caused by asbestosis, mesothelioma, and related cancers to those who come close to the mineral (Calvert, 2008). This inference has led to many developed countries restricting, and some eliminating its use. However, Canada continues to support Asbestos mining and exportation as the industry is worth \$ 97 million dollars (Mesothelioma Herald, 2010). The move to protect the industry has caused frustration for many occupational safety and health officers globally and at home. Asbestos is exported to developing countries such as India and Mexico who use it to manufacture goods cheaply hence act as supporters of the industry (National Asbestos Website). This conflict of interest has resulted in debates, controversies, and differences in opinion in the two parties when dealing with asbestos (National Asbestos Website). The various stakeholders in the industry have been implored to take serious measures in dealing with the Asbestos issue. They have however done so through following management of issues approach in accordance to Carroll & Buchholtz, (2009). This paper will analyze and discuss the issues management approach taken by the Canadian government and Jeffrey mines in dealing with the issue of Asbestos.

Canadian Government

“ In Canada the issue of sovereignty has been a central part of Canadian society since the ‘ Quiet Revolution’ in Quebec in the 60’s (Calvert, 2008, p. 2).” This has directed politics in the country to be how issues are ‘ framed’.

Likewise, the issue of Asbestos has been effectively 'framed' by advocates for Asbestos commerce, as opposed to critics. The government has decided to use conventional approach of issue management as a way of satisfying public concerns of the health risks of Asbestos. Pressures from trade unions such as CNTU (conference of National Trade Unions) that has over 300, 000 members, and other regulatory groups such as Canadian Cancer Society forced the government to formulate a regulatory policy in the industry (Shelly, 2011). The policy that was formulated was banning the use of Asbestos and its products in Canada but allowing the exportation of the product (Austen, 2011). The policy had an element of moderation where it was intended to allow both parties to benefit. The reasons for the government protecting the industry are that the politics favored conservation of the industry, and that the Canadian Asbestos industry pressurized the government to protect its operations (Calvert, 2008). The approach by the government to protect Asbestos industry through allowing exportation to developing countries had unethical dimensions. Despite global health concerns they promoted the industry through: \$ 50 million funding of Jeffrey Mines expansion project; direct subsidy to the Chrysotile institute; and using of international trade missions and foreign embassies to promote exports (Calvert, 2008). The control measure that the government has implemented in accordance to the conventional approach in issue management was that it offered education and training programs to the Chrysotile institute that would be offered to manufacturers in developing countries who used Asbestos (Calvert, 2008). The programs and education were formulated with the intention of safe processing and manufacture of

Asbestos products. Furthermore, results obtained from researches funded by the government showing health hazards of Asbestos were hidden by the same government all with the intention of promoting the industry. Hiding of results was evident when the Natural Resources Minister, Christian Paradis blocked a government report in 2010 from being released to the public (Calvert, 2008)

Jeffrey Mines

The company is the leading producer of Asbestos and is at the heart of the conflict that is being experienced in the industry. The management of the company—led by the CEO—have approached the issue from a strategic perspective so as operations in the mine continue without hindrances. This strategic management approach has provided them with the confidence of even going to the Canadian government for assistance in monetary terms and promotion and marketing of Asbestos (Shneider, 2011).

The mine has identified health issues resulting from mine operations through partnering with regulatory groups such as the Canadian Cancer Society. The identified issues are: health risks for workers without masks, deplorable safety and working conditions, and inadequate safety measures in the mine that results in locals being exposed to the material (Castleman, 2005). The issues were analysed and prioritized and the management decided on making sure that workers were safe through provision of: working attires and equipment, and good clean working conditions (Castleman, 2005). The mine also managed to formulate and implement responses for the identified issues through programs that would educate locals and workers on proper handling and disposing of Asbestos (National Asbestos Website). In addition,

other responses that the company have formulated and implemented are: limiting the usage of the product through prohibiting Asbestos customers from making products that would be in direct contact with humans; prosecuting Asbestos contractors without licenses or health letters; and following business ethics in dealing with employee welfares such as proper medical facilities, and offs for workers (Castleman, 2005).

It is also important to note that the management of the company has showed intent and seriousness in curbing health risks associated with mining Asbestos. This is by evaluating, monitoring, and controlling of results of health issues in accordance to Carroll & Buchholtz (2009), steps in strategic management of issues. Monitoring and evaluation is done through frequent medical checks of employees, implementing up to date safety systems in the mine, and restricting the selling of Asbestos to the local vicinity in accordance to government regulations (Calvert, 2008).

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