



Prime Minister (4)

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MS

17 May 1982

R Arthur,

STANDARDS

You copied to me your letter to Sir Geoffrey Howe about the report of the group of officials on this subject.

I agree that the recommendations in the report offer an acceptable approach to implementing the decisions of MISC 14 and I have therefore no objection to our proceeding as you propose.

A number of the recommendations are for the Health and Safety Commission to be invited to consider various policy departures and obviously I cannot pre-judge what their response might be when these proposals are put to them. The sooner I can put these matters to the Commission formally for their consideration and advice to me the better and I would like at the same time to be able to give them as much of the background and context to the particular recommendations as possible (including, for example, copies of the recommendations as a whole - with the exception of recommendations 18 and 19). I suggest that the new official committee gives very early consideration to the detail as to how we should proceed in this respect and advises us accordingly. In the meantime I would make only one point of detail on the recommendations. Recommendation 3 would involve me in persuading the HSC to publish a list of standards of which they make informal use. When it comes to my writing to the Commission on the various recommendations that affect them I would propose on this one simply asking them for their views in the context of



their consideration of recommendations 2 and 6, where such action would be among the possible options open to them.

Copies of this letter go to the Prime Minister, other members of MISC 14 and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

J. W. N.

09 MAY 1982



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