

REPORT ON EAST ASIATICS

We interviewed two groups. The first consists of Quality Products, Natal Oil & Soap Products, Natal Oil Products and Dana Foods which are centrally controlled and have one personnel manager between them. The second group consists of Interflex and Rubber Engineering and is no longer connected with East Asiatic.

We drew up questionnaires which were handed to workers by an African interviewer who also gathered information by talking to the workers (payslips proved very difficult to obtain). We also interviewed the personnel manager of the group.

Here are the results of our investigations:

QUALITY PRODUCTS

(287 African, Indian & Coloured workers of whom 35 Africans were interviewed. 10/11/73).

<u>Wage Breakdown</u>	<u>Wage</u>	<u>No. of Workers</u>
A. 0-1 years service	Labourers R16,00 - R17,99	3
	18,00 - 19,99	4
	First Aider R24,05	1
B. <u>Over 1 Year</u>	Labourers R14,00	1
	16,00 - 17,99	2
	18,00 - 19,99	11
	21,00	1
	22,00 - 23,99	2
	Delivery men 14,50	1
	15,00 - 19,99	2
	Lift Driver 23,50	1
	Drivers 24,00	1
	26,00	1
33,45	1	

9 of the 33 workers had their grades mentioned :

<u>Grade</u>	<u>No. of workers</u>	<u>Wages</u>
1	1	R24,05
2	2	23,75, 23,50
3	1	24,00
4	1	18,40
5	4	14,00, 16,60, 17,50 17,55

There is an attendance bonus of R2 per week and 2 hours latitude per week is allowed. Most workers have had wage increases of between R2 and R6 since last year. One worker's wage was raised from R11,88 to R17,75 and another's from R11,50 to R14,50. (The first worker had been new in the firm).

The average increase was R4,10 and most increases occurred in January 197.

Hours Everyone works 46 hours a week except drivers, deliverymen, etc.

Answers to questions:

	YES	NO	
Is overtime compulsory?	6	23	(6 said sometimes)
Are you happy your job will last?	6	13	(16 didn't know)
Are trade unions a good idea?	13	2	(8 know nothing about them)
Does your firm provide a pension or other fund?	5	24	(3 didn't know)
What complaints do you have about the firm?			30 said wages were too low and 6 said they should be treated better.

The firm doesn't help with housing, transport or free meals.  
 There is an annual paid leave of 2 weeks  
 There seems to be a long service fund.

THE WORKS COMMITTEE

The Works Committee has been in existence for 2 years. Most workers refer their complaints to the committee. Asked if it handles complaints successfully 14 workers said YES; 14 said NO; 4 didn't know and 3 said it tries hard. Most workers feel that management bullies the Works Committee.

The Committee meets regularly once a month and management never refuses to see it.

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NATAL OIL & SOAP PRODUCTS and NATAL OIL PRODUCTS

These are virtually one factory as they are in the same building and have the same management. We got a figure of 380 workers for the factory but we don't know if this is for N.O.S, N.O.P. or both. We interviewed 15 Africans : 4 from N.O.S. and 11 from N.O.P.

WAGES

	<u>Grade</u>	<u>No. of Workers</u>	<u>Wages</u>
A. <u>0-1 year</u>	Labourers (Grade 3)	1	R18,00, R21,00
	Watchmen (No grade)	3	All R20,00
<u>Over 1 year</u>	Grade 2	3	R19,50, 23,00 22,00
	Labourers (Grade 3)	6	4 x R21,00, 18,00 19,50
	Labourers (Grade 5)	1	R19,50

Attendance bonus of R2 per week.  
 There were increases of up to R7 since last year, averaging R3,10.  
 The workers have a 46 hour week.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

	YES	NO	
Is overtime compulsory?	4	11	
Are you happy that your job will last?	2	6	(6 didn't know)
Are trade unions a good idea?	9	0	(6 know nothing about it)
Does the firm provide a pension or other fund?	5	10	

What complaints do you have about the firm? All 15 said wages should be increased.

Again the firm doesn't help with transport etc. and there is the same paid leave.

#### WORKS COMMITTEE

The Committee's relationship with management and the workers seems very similar to the Quality Products Committee.

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#### DANA FOODS

There are only two workers in the firm with salaries of R56,00 and R60,00 a month. One had a salary of R40 last year.

#### GENERAL

The firm seems to be more "enlightened" than most in Durban but not very much. There have been no reports of victimisation and the Works Committee seems to deal fairly open with management. In our interview with them they wouldn't tell us much because we wouldn't tell them for whom we were working. They gave us some wage figures from a cost sheet which indicated that African and Indian workers received an averagewage of about R30. The Personnel Manager said that the PDL was taken into account when deciding wages. The wages for each worker does not necessarily depend in what grade work he does.

There is a factory Doctor who attends to workers at the factory but the firm offers no other medical benefits.

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#### POVERTY DATUM LINE

There are at least two PDLs for Durban. One was done by the University of Port Elizabeth and was R78,84 in March 1973. The other was done by the Economics Dept. of the University of Natal and was R110,56 in March 1974.

The Port Elizabeth PDL is rather unscientific (the person who conducted it has admitted this to some extent). This is the PDL used by East Asiatic. The Durban one, on the other hand, has been very scientifically worked out.