

STATEMENT BY SIMON DANCZUK, MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR ROCHDALE,
TO THE ASBESTOS SUB-GROUP

MARCH 6, 2013

I am away on constituency business so cannot attend this week's All-Party Asbestos subcommittee in person. However, I do have an important matter to raise.

At 3am on Friday 15th January a large fire broke out at the former T&N asbestos factory site in the Spodden Valley of Rochdale. It took 50 fire fighters and 6 tenders to tackle the blaze.

The fire has raised a number of important issues that I have been calling for answers on:

As the fire raged, I gave a live interview on BBC Radio Manchester where I expressed my concern about the potential release of asbestos from this old, dusty factory site. Several minutes later a confident assessment of the situation was broadcast by a spokesman for the Greater Manchester Fire & Rescue Service who claimed at 8am that there had been no release of asbestos fibre and that there was no risk to public health. These assurances were repeated later that day by GMF&RS and the Health Protection Agency.

I have asked Greater Manchester Hazards Centre to draft a report detailing best practice and a time line of events and personnel from the various agencies and authorities responsible for matters relating to asbestos and Friday's incident.

I have also asked the Leader of the House, Rt. Hon. Andrew Lansley MP, for a government assurance that all laws relating to public health and environmental safety are enforced.

I am asking you as the sub-committee with most involvement in asbestos-related issues to support my call for a written report to investigate all the issues raised by the former TBA site fire.