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Alstom appeals against Lille court decision

Alstom is to appeal against the decision of the Lille (France) Regional Criminal Court, delivered on 4 September, to fine it for breach of the regulations governing the risks associated with the inhaling of asbestos dust. The events in question concern the former site of Alstom Power Boilers (APB) at Lys-lez-Lannoy (Northern France) between 1998 and 2001.

The strong emotions aroused by the case (particularly at the time of the hearing in May 2006) are perfectly understandable given the serious consequences of the past use of asbestos in numerous sectors of activity.

Alstom's appeal aims to re-establish the reality of the events and situations. Alstom considers that several points of application of the law, as argued by the court in Lille, call for a fresh examination by the courts.

Essentially:

- Alstom contests the court's wrongful assertion that the activities carried out at the Lys-lez-Lannoy site equated to "the manufacture and transformation of products using asbestos" or "the containment and removal of asbestos".
- The results of the measures taken to prevent dust accumulation becoming a source of airborne asbestos on the shop floor – carried out not by Alstom but by independent organisations – have been validated and proven to be compliant with the regulations.
- Alstom contests the determination of the offence decided on by the Lille court, which accuses Alstom, without justification, of having deliberately endangered the health of its employees.

It is on this basis that Alstom has decided to appeal against the decision of the Lille court, which has convicted the company based on a questionable analysis of the facts and principles established by the regulations.

Press contact

Philippe Kasse, Stéphane Farhi (Corporate)

Tel +33 1 41 49 29 82 /33 08

philippe.kasse@chq.alstom.com

stephane.farhi@chq.alstom.com

Investor relations

Emmanuelle Chatelain

Tel + 33 1 41 49 37 38

investor.relations@chq.alstom.com

Website

www.alstom.com