

FORM 6-K

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

Washington, D.C. 20549

Report of Foreign Private Issuer

Pursuant to Rule 13a-16 or 15d-16 of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934

July 16, 2004

JAMES HARDIE INDUSTRIES N.V.

(Exact name of Registrant as specified in its charter)

4th Level, Atrium, unit 04-07
Strawinskylaan 3077
1077 ZX Amsterdam, The Netherlands
(Address of principal executive offices)

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant files or will file annual reports
under cover Form 20-F or Form 40-F.

Form 20-F Form 40-F

Indicate by check mark if the registrant is submitting the Form 6-K in paper as
permitted by Regulation S-T Rule 101(b)(1): Not Applicable

Indicate by check mark if the registrant is submitting the Form 6-K in paper as
permitted by Regulation S-T Rule 101(b)(7): Not Applicable

Indicate by check mark whether by furnishing the information contained in this
Form, the registrant is also thereby furnishing the information to the
Commission pursuant to Rule 12g3-2(b) under the Securities Exchange Act of
1934.

Yes No

(If "Yes" is marked, indicate below the file number assigned to the registrant
in connection with Rule 12g3-2(b): Not Applicable

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Safe Harbor Statement

The exhibit attached to this Form 6-K contains forward-looking statements. Words such as “believe,” “anticipate,” “plan,” “expect,” “intend,” “target,” “estimate,” “project,” “predict,” “forecast,” “guideline,” “should,” “aim” and similar expressions are intended to identify forward-looking statements but are not the exclusive means of identifying such statements. Forward-looking statements involve inherent risks and uncertainties. We caution you that a number of important factors could cause actual results to differ materially from the plans, objectives, expectations, estimates and intentions expressed in such forward-looking statements. These factors, which are further discussed in our reports submitted to the Securities and Exchange Commission on Forms 20-F and 6-K and in our other filings, include but are not limited to: competition and product pricing in the markets in which we operate; general economic and market conditions; compliance with, and possible changes in, environmental and health and safety laws; dependence on cyclical construction markets; the supply and cost of raw materials; our reliance on a small number of product distributors; the consequences of product failures or defects; exposure to environmental or other legal proceedings; and risks of conducting business internationally. We caution you that the foregoing list of factors is not exclusive and that other risks and uncertainties may cause actual results to differ materially from those contained in forward-looking statements. Forward-looking statements speak only as of the date they are made.

EXHIBIT INDEX

Exhibit No.	Description
99.1	Letter to Shareholders: Statement on Funding Future asbestos claims – Filed with the Australian Stock Exchange on July 15, 2004

SIGNATURES

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, the registrant has duly caused this report to be signed on its behalf by the undersigned, thereunto duly authorized.

James Hardie Industries N.V.

Date: July 16, 2004

By: /s/ Folkert Zwinkels
Folkert Zwinkels
Managing Director

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99.1	Letter to Shareholders: Statement on Funding Future asbestos claims — Filed with the Australian Stock Exchange on July 15, 2004

14 July 2004

James Hardie Industries
ARBN 097 829 895
Incorporated in the Netherlands
The liability of its members is limited

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Dear Shareholder

James Hardie today lodged an important statement with the Australian Stock Exchange. To ensure you are fully informed, the complete text of the statement appears below.

James Hardie statement on funding future asbestos claims

The Board of James Hardie announced today that it would recommend that shareholders approve the provision of additional funding to enable an effective statutory scheme to be established to compensate all future claimants for asbestos-related injuries caused by former James Hardie subsidiary companies.

A submission that discusses these issues in response to Term of Reference Four of the Special Commission of Inquiry into the Medical Research and Compensation Foundation (MRCF) will be provided to the Commission later today.

The submission contains a number of principles proposed by JHI NV for a future scheme for consideration by the Commissioner. These principles, which are consistent with existing compensation schemes and established principles of tort reform in NSW, include:

- speedy, fair and equitable compensation for all existing and future claimants, including objective criteria to reduce superimposed (judicial) inflation;
- determination of contributions to be made in a manner which provides certainty to:
 - claimants as to their entitlement
 - the scheme administrator as to the amount available for distribution; and
 - the contributors as to the ultimate amount of their contribution to the scheme;
- significant reduction in legal costs via the removal of requirements for litigation;
- limitation of legal avenues outside of the scheme.

While this submission will remain confidential until noon July 28 under the confidentiality orders of the Commission, the company confirms it is willing to contribute to a resolution in the best interests of all parties, including current and future asbestos claimants against the MRCF, James Hardie shareholders and other constituents. The submission continues to affirm the company's legal position and will put forward detailed arguments in response to the contentions raised in Counsel Assisting the Inquiry's Issues Paper.

The Board is deeply concerned that asbestos related claims are now projected to be far in excess of amounts anticipated at the time of establishment of the MRCF. Subject to the Inquiry's findings James Hardie is hopeful of being able to contribute to an effective statutory scheme that provides resolution for claimants and shareholders.

End.

We are still involved in the formal processes of the Special Commission of Inquiry, and await the publication of the Commissioner's report which is due in September.

I believe the statement made today represents an important first step towards resolving the issues that have affected the company during the course of the Commission.

We are hopeful that it will be possible to reach a resolution in the interests of all parties. If we can develop a resolution that your Board feels is in the best interest of shareholders, we will recommend it to you for your approval. As we seek to achieve a resolution on these issues, we remain committed to providing you with as much information as we can.

Here is a list of key dates for the company over the coming months:

14 July	Deadline for submissions to the Special Commission of Inquiry; All submissions are confidential
26 July	Deadline for submissions in response to original submissions; All submissions remain confidential
28 July	All submissions become public, subject to any confidentiality orders that the Commissioner may decide to make
2-6 August	Oral arguments in response to submissions; Hearings will be open to the public
10 August	James Hardie announces results for 1st Quarter fiscal year 2005
mid-August	Notice of Meetings mailed to shareholders
15 September	Annual Information Meeting 11am, Ballrooms 3 & 4, The Westin, 1 Martin Place, Sydney
21 September	Commissioner due to report to the NSW Government

Yours sincerely

/s/ Alan McGregor AO

ALAN MCGREGOR AO
CHAIRMAN