

## Personal Damage from Work

Dear Australian

On each day of 1992-93, 7 days a week, 52 weeks of the year, 137 workers had their lives permanently altered (non-fatally) by damage from work.

- Class I Damage** - permanently alters a life - fatally or  
- non-fatally
- Class II Damage** - temporarily alters a life
- Class III Damage** - inconveniences a life

	<u>Percent of Total Costs</u>		
	<i>Class I fatal</i>	<i>Class I non-fatal</i>	<i>Class II</i>
1981-82 (G L McDonald 1984)		70 - 85	15 - 30
1992-93 (Industry Commission 1995)	1.5	80.5	18
2000-01 (NOHSC 2004)	3.5	88.5	8
Add cost of pain, suffering and early death	<b>6.5</b>	<b>90.0</b>	<b>3.5</b>

	<u>NSW Change in Incidence (number per 1000 workers)</u>		
	<i>91-92 to 00-01</i>	<i>10 Year Change Rate</i>	<i>Costs</i>
Class I fatal	┌──────────┐	<b>-31%</b>	<b>6.5%</b>
Class I non-fatal	└──────────┘	<b>+140%</b>	<b>90.0%</b>
Class II	└──────────┘	<b>-35%</b>	<b>3.5%</b>

*2000-01 Total \$82.8 billion*

As a boy I remember my Grandfather Alexander Nixon explaining, "It's a poor man who cannot use his own money and someone else's too." He borrowed money and founded what would become, in the next generation, "Devon Court" – one of the top Hereford studs in the country.

It is an ill-informed man who cannot use his own experience and someone else's too.

Grandfather could go to a bank which had collected and stored money and made it available to enable progress. In Work Health and Safety, there is no bank. No one has collected and made available adequate data on Class I non-fatal damaging occurrences.

By government decree and inaction, we struggle in information darkness and feel our way by "risk assessment" which splatters attention and effort rather than brings the directed focus that comes with an adequate knowledge of Class I damage.

Without a veridical information bank on Class I damaging occurrences, very very few, if any of us, can become a "Smart Alex".

**How do we bring this "big picture" to bear on work activities?**

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