Australian work fatalities not forgotten

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By Gabrielle Clark

President Matt Jarman has led an SSTUWA delegation to honour people killed in workplace accidents.

The event was held at Solidarity Park near Parliament House on Friday 28 April, which was World Day for Safety and Health at Work and Workers' Memorial Day.

The day raises awareness of occupational safety and health and of work-related injuries, diseases and fatalities.

This year's theme for World Day for Safety and Health at Work was *A safe and healthy working environment is a fundamental principle and a right at work.*

Accompanying World Day for Safety and Health at Work, the International Trades Union Congress set the theme for Workers' Memorial Day 2023 as Remember the dead, fight for the living.

According to the latest data from Safe Work Australia (SWA) 169 workers were fatally injured at work in Australia in 2021.

Of the 169 workers that were fatally injured at work in 2021, six were female while 163 were male.

Those between the ages 55 and 64 were at the highest risk of workplace fatalities, with 43 people in this age bracket being fatally injured in 2021.

In Western Australia alone there were 20 fatalities in 2021, or 1.4 per cent for each 100,000 workers.

Fatalities that occurred as a direct result of a vehicle crash were the most common cause of fatality in 2021, according to

SWA.

Machinery operators and drivers were most at risk with 8.2 per cent fatality rate per 100,000 workers.
Industries most impacted, according to SWA, included agriculture, forestry and fishing, with 10.4 per cent fatalities per 100,000 workers; transport, postal and warehousing with 7.9 fatalities per 100,000 workers and mining with 2.3 fatalities per 100,000 workers.

Representatives from WA unions spoke about the loss of loved ones at work and occupational health and safety issues.

A service of remembrance was conducted for those who have died or been injured at work.

The SSTUWA is committed to safety at work. You can find information on WHS issues here.

Solidarity Park

Solidarity Park was founded in 1997 during the Third Wave Campaign, when the Court Liberal Government introduced legislation that would significantly restrict the ability of unions to protect members and the general community from unfair and exploitative employment practices.

On 29 April 1997, over 25,000 unionists and community supporters marched on Parliament House to demand the scrapping of these unjust laws.

The government rejected this demand and on 1 May (May Day) the site was pegged and legally claimed by unionists under the provisions of the Mining Act.

Authorised by Sally Dennis, General Secretary, The State School Teachers' Union of W.A.
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