

YEAR REPORT OF THE INDUSTRIAL HEALTH UNIT
1992
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1. ADMINISTRATION AND STAFF

Administration during the last six months concentrated on streamlining accounts, regular financial statements for the management committee meetings and up to date balance statements. Income has been recorded this year and the tax payments on them sorted out. With the acquisition of new funders in the future it would become necessary to account to them for the respected contributions timeously for additional instalments to be paid in.

Dr. Rajan Naidoo joined the Unit at the beginning of the year and is now the co-ordinator of the clinic. Because of the diverse nature of the community we serve, it has been necessary to employ the services of an interpreter. Boniwe Nqadi performs this task.

Mrs. Polly Boniaszczuk has been employed as our clinic administrator from 16-03-92. She is responsible for all financial matters and the general running of the clinic. She will work at the clinic from 08h00 to 13h00 every weekdays.

Dr. Fareed Abdullah has resigned to take up a post in Cape Town.

2. FUNDING REPORT

This year the unit received funding for the project from the following funding agencies

Commission for the European Communities (EEC)

ISCOS (an Italian funding agency)

Equal Opportunities Foundation (EOF)

For the first time we have received funding from the EOF, a South African funding organisation, for the amount of R 50 000.00. Funding applications to many other local and foreign organisations met with a negative reply because of their commitment to already existing projects. Most funding organisations have preferred to wait for changes in the political climate so that they can direct funds to the new government. Others have shifted emphasis to rural issues. However, we observe that a few agencies may prefer to fund small items such as a booklet, a research project and a database. These items are usually as a result of some of the high profile issues the unit handles in it's work, eg. the Chrome workers. However, we will continue to explore other avenues of funding in the coming year. especially local funding, and also increase our capacity to generate more income from our services.

3. EDUCATION

3.1 COSATU NATIONAL

The HSSO's have been requested by COSATU to develop teaching material for courses in health and safety for next year. IHU has developed material on WCA and work environment.

3.2 COSATU WOMEN'S FORUM

We were requested by COSATU WOMEN'S FORUM to give a talk on Women and Aids in their regional conference. There were about forty people present mainly women.

3.'3 cosxm REGIONAL

Upon meetings held with the new regional education officer to discuss the education work of IHU, we were given an opportunity to address the Regional Education Committee on cannon and major health and safety problems faced by workers.

3.4 UNION REQUESTED PROJECTS

FAWU: Fawn requested us to give talk on AIDS and Workmen's Compensation Act in their branch general meeting. There were about sixty'shopstewards from different workplaces. Both topics generated a lot of interest.

Hone Bakery: Subsequent to the talk that was given to shopstewards at the general meeting, shopstewards from this company have requested us to run an Aids programme for their members. A pamphlet in two languages zulu and english has been designed and sent to them. This is going to be followed by a video and discussions. This approach has been agreed upon by the management and the union. An education programme was drawn up for a FAWU shopsteward who had been appointed by management to be a health and safety representative.

NUMSA: Dunlap. A request was received from the senior shopsteward of Durban branch to give a talk on chemicals. Present were 35 shopstewards from all over Natal. Ferralloys, after a one day workshop for fifteen shopstewards on health issues, workers were referred to the clinic for chest X-rays due to unhappiness with those done by the company doctor.

POTWA: At the beginning of the year we concentrated on the national education programme for Potwa. This programme was scheduled to be implemented in February. Unfortunately it was cancelled by the union due to lack of funds.

SAFAWU: We were requested by this union to run a seminar for sixty members in Stanger. People who attended were mainly hospital workers (general assistants) and farm workers. Two topics were covered in this seminar i.e. Workmen's Compensation and pesticides. At another workshop held in Durban, the twenty farmworkers attending resolved to form area health and safety committees. IHU was requested to train them as health and safety representatives at a later date.

IHU had discussions between the union and Geneva based delegates from the "International Federation of Plantation, Agricultural and Allied Workers." IHU then helped the union draw up a budget of about R12.600.00 for submission to IFPAAW in order to cover the costs of an educational programme for the union.

SAMWU: We were also requested by this union to run a two day health and safety seminar. A meeting was held with office bearers to discuss the programme and also decide on the dates, venue and fees. IHU prepared the programme but education officer of the union cancelled the seminar due to lack of funds.

T&G: We were requested by a senior shopsteward, who trianed on our Aids educators course last year, to evaluate his talk on Aids to fellow workers at the University of Natal. His presentation was excellent and response to questions was mature and informative. He has also written an Aids article for our newsletter. At Rennies Bulk Terminal a workshop, attended by nine shopstewards, was conducted around union demands of 1989. Two of them were elected to be responsible for health and safety. A seminar requested by KwaZulu Transport on WCA catered for twenty

shopstewards. A two day health and safety workshop for Tanker Services involved shopstewards from the Jacob, Mobeni, Pinetown and Pietermaritzburg depots. The IHU was requested to address shopstewards from South African Stevedores on workplace health issues. The Earthlife Africa/IHU programme for dockworkers was as a result of the Maria Laura toxic waste episode. Two meetings have been held between the above organisations to discuss setting up a national programme on health, safety and the environment for dockworkers.

UPUSA: An organiser from this union asked us speak on health and safety issues to the general members of his union. There were about fifty workers in this seminar.

CWIU Regional Health and Safety Seminar: This three day workshop, attended by 30 shopstewards, was mainly run by the union. IHU made inputs "The body and effects of work" and "The Workmen's Compensation Act and occupational diseases".

Occupational Safety and Health Act seminar: This seminar was aimed at creating interest and discussion on the new draft OSHA bill. Paul Benjamin from CALS gave the main address and over 120 people from industry, commerce, the unions and academia attended.

3.5 WORKERS COLLEGE

We were approached by the co-ordinator of this project to run a series of lectures for her students. Topics covered in these lectures were, what is health and safety, medical monitoring, identification, evaluation and control of health hazards. We are receiving requests from the unions that attend these lectures.

3.6 NURSING DEPARTMENT

Policy Document: We were asked by the Department of Nursing(UND) to comment on SANA (South African Nursing Association) policy document on occupational health nursing in South Africa.

Talk: We were again asked by this department to address post grad students on trade unions perceptions on occupational health system.

3.7 COMMUNITY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

At the beginning of the year we were approached by the Department of Community Health(UND) to run a series of lectures for 6th year students. The first lecture was in March and the last one will be in October.

3.8 NATAL PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATION

We were requested by Senior NPA nurses to comment on the primary health care training manual for use in the workplace.

3.9 WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION ADVICE OFFICE

This office is based in Pietermaritzburg doing an advice work for the workers. IHU conducted a workshop, organised by this office, for twenty NEHAWU shopstewards on WCA.

3.10 VISIT TO UNIONS

Before the visit we designed a pamphlet on health and safety aiming at raising awareness among the general members of the unions on health and

itearety issues. Pamphlets were distributed during the visits to union locals and verbal reports were presented on the work we have done for each union including the medical work.

3.11 TRAINING COURSES

We have developed quite a number of courses namely, Workmen's Compensation Act. Training of Aids educator's. identification, evaluation and control of health hazards, and the 6th year medical students' course.

3.12 TRAINING MANUAL

The idea of writing a health and safety training manual for workers developed from the Potwa national health and safety seminar. The first draft has been written and sent to other health and safety service organisation for comments. Preparations are being made to test the effectiveness of the training manual.

4. INDUSTRIAL HYGIENE

4.1 WORKPLACE INSPECTIONS

NUMSA: Conducted inspection at Hendler and Hart.Co. which manufactures plastic household items; a number of workers from this facility were seen at the clinic with respiratory-related problems; our report has been circulated to the union and management. An inspection was also done at Prestige which manufactures household kitchen ware items.

CWIU: Conducted inspection at NC? at Isipingo. Chemical manufacturing co. that makes maleic anhydride, a known asthma-causing agent. Report being written. Another inspection at British Industrial Plastics (BIPI. Pinetown was done because workers were concerned about the health effects of the chemicals at the factory. This company manufactures a variety of resins and compounds. The resin plant has since been closed and a number of workers retrenched.

SACTWU: Conducted inspection at James North in New Germany. Manufacturer of protective clothing and equipment, such as PVC and cotton gloves, PVC clothing, hard hat, safety harnesses and belts. The company also makes the materials used in the manufacture. Workers attending the clinic complained of health problems due to exposure to cotton dust/lint. The report was submitted to the union. An inspection report was also done on Visions Creations in Phoenix Industrial Park because workers complained about the fumes generated into the workplace environment. The company prints designs on fabric using the rotary screen printing method. Lastly an inspection was done at EVA Components which manufactures the plastic soles of beach tongs from a variety of raw materials, including pigments.

UDW: Conducted an inspection, in the Department of Anatomy, of the air conditioning system (unit as well as ducts) which had been infected by a fungus. UDW employed a consultant to conduct the cleaning of the system. A proposal for conducting a quality control assessment of the cleaning/ 'maintenance procedure of the air conditioning system was completed and forwarded to UDW. Liaised with Natal Tech Microbiology Dept. for use of air monitoring apparatus.

TGWU: IHU conducted an inspection at Tanker Services. a company that transport a range of food products and chemicals in bulk. Workers

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'complained about the hazards they were expose to when cleaning these tankers; .

NEHAWU: We did an inspection at the SPCA premises in Pietermaritzburg because the workers expressed concern about the possibility of the-contracting diseases from the animals with which they work.

4.2 SURVEYS

CAWU: Surveys for noise and dust were conducted at the facility of Border Concrete outside of East London at the request of Industrial Health and Safety Education Project (IHSEP). This company manufactures concrete bricks, roofing tiles and paving tiles. The manufacture of the bricks is an outdoor operation.

4.3 EVALUATION OF REPORTS

Evaluated a report by Dept. of Manpower Inspectorate of a heat survey conducted at Filpro.

4.4 WORKSHOPS/SEMINARS:

CWIU: Health & Safety workshop with Thor shop stewards re: health & safety demands and discussion of the workplace inspection report.

NUMSA: Health & Safety negotiations with shop stewards from S.A.

Smelting -- provided technical assistance. Completed document re: concerns of the IHU on the "Medical Separation Agreement" signed by NUMSA; sent document to NUMSA, local and head office. The need for critical comment arose from what transpired during the health and safety negotiations at S.A. Smelting. Conducted seminar, for shop stewards, on the health hazards of chemicals used in the various Dunlop plants. A list of chemicals used was submitted to IHU, and this formed the basis of the seminar.

4.5 GENERAL

Letter to Dept. of Manpower re: requirements for accreditation.

5. WORKERS' HEALTH CENTRE

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This is the first report for 1992, on the occupational health clinic established by the Industrial Health Unit. This clinic is funded by ISCOS, an Italian funding agency. The clinic is rapidly establishing itself as a major centre for occupational health in the Natal region. Workers from most industries recognise it as a place where they can get acceptable treatment for the medical problems due to unhealthy conditions in the working environment. Moreover, many academic institutions constantly refer problems to the clinic. We are also beginning to gain recognition from the management of a few industries.

5.2 PREMISES

The clinic is now situated in a permanent premises. This place has proven to be the ideal venue. It is only a 100 metres from one of the busiest hospitals in South Africa and is in the middle of a massive industrial area with easy access to public transport. The lease for these premises has been finalised. The clinic is currently open on

Tuesdays and Thursdays for all workers. On the other days of the week it is open by appointment for unions and management for specific patients or programmes.

5.3 EQUIPMENT

The clinic is now operating with the basic and essential equipment of an occupational health centre. Additional items purchased include office furniture, computer equipment and other equipment necessary for investigation for industrial health diseases. We have since acquired a electrocardiogram and a sound booth for audiogram testing improving the quality of testing of the increasing number of workers referred to the clinic by companies. We are in the process of linking up our Lung Function Machine and Audiometer to our computer. This will allow us to store all our data on computer software, providing easy access for reporting.

5.4 STATISTICS

The data presented below indicate that over 492 patients were seen in the period covered by this report with 866 visits in all (including repeated visits). This number does not include those seen for specific projects eg chemical workers seen from Chrome and Thor Factories. Workers from twenty two different unions have used the clinic. Of these 14 are affiliates of COSATU, two from NACTU and six are independent. Currently, a large number of unemployed workers also attend the clinic. The most common problem is unsatisfactory settling of claims for compensation following injuries at the workplace. Equally common are patients presenting with work-related chest problems.

MONTHLY CLINIC DATA

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV
NO. OF CONSULT.	58	69	90	49	55	109	94	52	90	88	112
NO. OF PATIENTS:	48	59	72	43	46	79	72	40	73	63	77

UNIONS:

AWA	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	1	1	-
CAWU:	-	1	2	1	4	1	-	-	-	-	1
CWIU:	3	6	10	6	11	17	11	3	11	10	16
DIHES:	2	-	-	-	-	2	-	2	-	2	4
DMES:	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
FAWU:	-	3	4	3	1	1	1	2	3	-	2
EIWUSA:	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
MEWUSA:	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
NUMSA:	23	18	24	14	15	21	21	7	22	14	20
NUM:	1	1									
NEHAWU:	1	-	-	1	e	-	-	-	2	1	1
POTWA:	3	5	5	-	2	2	-	-	-	1	3
PPWAWU:	2	2	-	1	1	1	1	1	1	-	2
SACCAWU:	-	-	1	1	1	-	2	-	1	2	1
SADWU:	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
SAFAWU	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
SAGAWU:	-	2	-								
SAHWU:	-	3	5	2	1	1	1	-	1	1	1
SARHWU:	7	1	2	-	2	1	2	2	4	-	1
SACTWU:	2	2	7	7	3	12	5	4	6	6	6
TGWU:	1	-	5	3	4	a	12	13	5	12	11

VUPUSA: - - - - 1 2 - 1 - 1 -
 NON-UNION/UNEH: 10 12 21 18 8 9 12 4 15 8 13
 PRESENTING PROBLEMS:
 CHEST: 15 22 18 18 13 18 13 28
 EYES: 2 2 3 4 1 4 2 3
 EARS: 2 3) 5 7 2 3 5
 NOSE: 2 -)
 SKIN: 1 1 1 3 - 1 - -
 INJURIES: 19 24 29 27 9 22 21 32
 MUSCULAR: 2 .5 8 3 3 2 2 1
 NON-OCCUPAT: 7 28 21 15 23 25 28
 PENSION: 2 6 9 5
 HEART: 4 1 3
 NEUROLOGICAL: 1 4 3
 ABDOMINAL: 1 - 1
 IMMUNOLOGICAL: 1 1 1
 PSYCHOLOGICAL: - 1 -
 MEDICO-LEGAL: 1 - -

5.5 MEDICAL PROJECTS

Since the establishment of the clinic an increasing number of projects have begun because of workers seen at the clinic.

Everite: This is an asbestos factory, situated near Durban. The doctors of the unit were asked to review chest radiographs of workers who have been recently retrenched. The union has a standing agreement with the management for this exercise. The request had come from the union, the Construction and Allied Workers' Union (CAWU). The X-rays were read at the company clinic at the factory. The X-rays of 45 workers who were retrenched in 1991, were reviewed. The ILO standard and classification was used for this. On the basis of our assessment, ten workers were submitted for compensation for asbestosis.

Pefco: This is a foundry situated in Pinetown, just outside Durban. The union, National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa, (NUMSA), had negotiated with management for the screening of their 25% workers for silicosis. Chest radiographs were used for the basic screening. The medical staff of the unit read these X-rays. All those workers with abnormal X-rays were subjected to full medical examinations. Following consultations with colleagues at the IHRG, a further set of workers were examined. A total of 18 workers were diagnosed as having silicosis. This project was completed last year. However, this year a group of about ten workers were subjected to a further examination and lung function testing because of their borderline status last year. They were also submitted for compensation for silicosis.

Dunlap: This is a major tyre manufacturer in Durban. The union, NUMSA approached the unit doctors for examination of 13 workers in the final inspection section of the factory. They were having eyesight problems as a result of the bright lights to which they were subjected. We employed the services of an eye specialist to examine the workers. It was found that as a result of the glare, workers were suffering from headaches and blurred vision. Recommendations were made to management to correct this situation.

Handler and Hart: This is a manufacturer of household plastic items. We had had numerous visits to our clinic from workers from this factory.

'The complaints were lastly chest and injury related problems. Working in close liaison with the union, NUMSA, we set up a factory inspection with the management. A report was prepared by our industrial hygienist which included recommendations for changing certain aspects of the work environment.

CWIU: A meeting was held with the union H&S coordinator in order to go over and discuss all the projects that we have had with the union over the years. Feasible projects will be followed up.

Chrome Chemicals: Retrenched workers from Chrome Chemicals have started to receive their compensation claims that were filed by the IHU (see previous reports for background on this issue). However they are getting paltry lump sum payments of between R 150.60 and R 46\$.00. The workers are objecting to these low amounts and the IHU has filed the relevant documents in consultation with the Legal Resources Centre.

In May an IHU doctor, Mark Colvin, was asked by two organisations in Germany (Coordination Gegen Bayer Gefarhen and Medico International) to attend the Bayer AGM in Koln, Germany. The aim of the trip was to inform Bayer (the parent company of Chrome Chemicals) and the German public of what happened in their Durban plant. Three weeks were spent talking to worker committees, anti-apartheid groups and concerned doctors organisations.

Our hope is that by putting pressure on the firm they will accept responsibility for the illnesses caused by exposure to chrome and will compensate the effected workers and families of workers who died of lung cancer. Already there has been substantial press and television coverage in Germany and lawyers in that country are looking at taking legal action against Bayer management. The IHU is collecting information for these lawyers.

Over the last few months representatives from the German organisation that are taking up the case in Germany against Bayer have come to visit South Africa. Ushe Merk of "Medico International" attended a general meeting of Chrome workers and has also had meetings with the CWIU leadership and the IHU. As a result of this the union has agreed to fully participate in the international campaign against Bayer for what happened at Chrome Chemicals.

Currently Regine Gunther of "Coordination Gegen Bayer Gehfarhren" is in South Africa and will spend 3 weeks obtaining information on the case in order to produce a book for the German market. At the same time Mark will accompany Regine in order to collect data for a book to be published in South Africa. Information from the widows of ex-chrome workers who died of lung cancer will be followed up.

The IHU is also to represent the first Chrome worker who is having his objection heard in November against the ruling of the Workmen's Compensation Commissioner. This is a vitally important test case as another 30 add workers have similar objections lodged with the Commissioner.

Thor Chemicals: In February this year the media picked up on the cases of mercury poisoning that the IHU doctor diagnosed in late 1992. There was a lot of coverage in the press and a television programme on Thor was shown on the TV1 programme, "Agenda". Although Thor management denied that anyone had ever been effected at Thor, a month later an IHU doctor found 3 Thor workers in different hospitals with severe mercury poisoning. Unfortunately 2 of the workers had lain undiagnosed for several weeks and were already in deep irreversible comas before we could start treatment. The third worker was immediately started on chelation therapy and, although unable to walk or talk properly, is improving.

'The IHU end the CWIU did an inspection of the plant and the IHU submitted a report to the union. The union and the IHU then arranged for Prof A.C. Davies, who is the director of the National Centre of Occupational Health, to do an independent investigation of the problem. Prof Davies then released a report that was severely critical of Thor and substantiated most of the IHU's complaints against the company. Subsequent to the incident the mercurials section was closed down and the company retrenched 12 workers. The IHU doctor examined these workers and found that most of them still had high levels of mercury in their urine and symptoms of mercury poisoning.

In July there was a three day medical enquiry by the Department of Manpower into the cases of mercury poisoning at the factory. A series of meetings were held between the IHU, the union and the union's legal team in order to prepare for the enquiry. There was a lot of preparation to do including the further examination 15 retrenched workers for signs of mercury intoxication. The enquiry highlighted gross negligence by the company and the case will now be forwarded to the attorney general for prosecution.

The IHU had also assisted the union in preparing for and attending a series of negotiation meetings on a health and safety agreement which we hope will be signed in the near future. We have also prepared a protocol for an epidemiological study at Thor to ascertain the extent of neurological abnormality amongst the remaining workforce. IHU made inputs a meetings called by the surrounding community on environmental pollution.

Sanachem: Problems of environmental and occupational exposure to chemical continues (see previous IHU reports). A worker was hospitalised with acute lung damage due to methyl isocyanate poisoning. Because this was the same gas that caused the poisonings at Bhopal there was much public and media interest in the subject. The IHU doctor visited the patient in hospital and has been advising the union on how to take the issue further. A list of demands for further information has now been sent by the union to the company and we await their response.

Environmental pollution by the company recently hit the media and this has resulted in the setting up of a "forum" between industry, the local community, politicians, and environmentalists. At the first public meeting, Dr. Mark Colvin was elected as the scientist and was given the task of coordinating the research that is looking into the cause of the air pollution in the area. The idea of a "forum" between industry and the community is a new concept in Natal and we hope it achieves it's aims of being more accountable to the community.

Dorbyl Marine and Shipbuilding: This large company employing about 2600 workers asked the IHU whether we would be interested in running their occupational health services. We discussed the matter at length and submitted a proposal to the company. Recently the company has approached IHU to draft for them a model occupational health programme. This was discussed with the Numsa shopstewards and they gave their approval for us to take up the commission. A draft has been completed and presented to the management.

Hans Merensky: This company is third biggest paper manufacturer in the province. It is organised by the Paper, Printing, Wood and Allied Workers' Union. (PPWAWU). The workers at the Peating Section of the mill complained of a variety of chest and eye problems. They were working with creosote, a potentially dangerous chemical used for preserving wood. Through their shopsteward structures, the IHU was approached via the union.

'Because the factory was a great distance from the clinic base - a three hour drive, and because of the large number of workers to be examined (70), who would have taken at least ten days to be fully examined. a proposal was placed to the workers, for a few workers to be examined and tested, and a full screening programme for all workers be drawn up for the union to negotiate with management. Subsequently twelve workers were examined and some had lung function tests conducted indicating problems as a result of the use of creosote at the plant. Following this exercise, a full Health and Safety Programme for an Education Programme, Industrial Hygiene and Medical Screening was circulated to the union for discussion. Shortly after this a workshop was held with the shopstewards at the factory. After the conclusion of wage negotiations, health and safety negotiations will proceed.

James North: Several workers were brought to the clinic, by the union (South African Clothing and Textile Workers' Union-SACTWU), three of which had chest complaints as a result of working with cotton fibres. The union negotiated with the management for us to do a factory inspection. Our Workplace Inspection Report was then submitted to the union with recommendations for further medical screenings to be conducted especially in the knitting section.

Marley Tiles: On request from the shopstewards a draft programme for occupational health services was submitted to the shopsteward committee for them to present to management.

Ferralloys: A one day meeting was set up with shopstewards from this large foundry in order to discuss health and safety problems there. On the occupational medicine side workers have signed medical release forms which enable the doctors from the IHU to gain access to worker's X-rays in order to check the amount of silicosis in the factory.

Rennies Bulk Loading: Twenty five workers were examined at the factory clinic and had shown signs or symptoms of occupational respiratory disease on our previous screening programme. A report on these workers has been submitted to the shopstewards and the factory doctor, in order to obtain his support for union demands.

Montebello Accident: Three years ago 60 farmworkers were involved in a vehicle accident whilst on the way to work. Five workers were killed, including two children, and many other injured. Only one worker received any form of compensation.

IHU assisted the union in drafting a funding application to the "South African Council of workers" for them to sponsor lawyers to take the matter up. This was successful and a meeting has already been held in the Montebello area between the legal team, the affected workers and families, the union and a doctor from IHU.

5.6 MEETING WITH COSATU

We have an ongoing policy to involve the trade unions in all our decision making. To this end we constantly try to meet with the individual affiliates of COSATU. This allows us to gauge their feelings on our the clinic and other projects of the unit. We send regular written reports to the unions that use our services, highlighting specific problems that their members bring to the clinic. We are in the process of trying to assess their feelings through meetings on how to make the clinic self sufficient in the near future.

5.7 WORKMENS' COMPENSATION CASES

Statistics at a recent WCA conference revealed that very few cases of occupational diseases were reported by doctors in this country - 140 for 1991, whilst in one state in the USA 36 000 were reported for 1991. Against these sort of figures, the significant, the significant impact of IHU must be measured. This year we have submitted thirty six cases and are in the process of preparing another three. This figure excludes the numerous cases being prepared as a result of our work at Chrome Chemicals and Thor Chemicals. Another ten cases from Everite were submitted for asbestosis following our review of X-rays.

The following cases were submitted to the Workmens' Compensation Commissioner for consideration as Occupational Diseases:

SILICOSIS: 12

ASBESTOSIS: 10

OCCUPATIONAL LUNG CANCER: 1

OCCUPATIONAL ASTHMA/CHRONIC CHEST DISEASES: 8

NOISE INDUCED HEARING LOSS: 5

However, submissions to the Workmen's Compensation Commissioner still remains one of the biggest problems at the clinic. Cases for compensation and requests for re-opening of cases receive poor or very delayed responses from the WCA Office in Pretoria, for example twelve cases submitted before April 1992, have still not been responded to or acknowledged.

5.8 ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Because the scope of work of the Workers' Health Centre fell outside the experience of the Management Committee of the Industrial Health Unit (which consists of academics from the University, medical personnel and union representatives), the Management Committee felt it was necessary to set up a Committee to advise on the working of the clinic. This committee consists of doctors from the occupational health field, from the private sector and the state hospitals. This committee will allow us to set up links with other people interested in the field who we will be able to call upon when the need arises.

5.9 USER'S COMMITTEE

The Clinic is designed for the use by the trade union movement, and such it was hoped that representatives from the unions will form the basis of the User committee. However, following consultations with COSATU, the unions were not keen to set up another committee because of their already excessive workload. We have invited shopstewards and workers to serve on our User's Committee. Because of their direct link to workers on the shopfloor, and also because of their representative status, these shopstewards will be able to give us clear direction on how to provide our services to meet the needs of all workers.

5.10 ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCE

One of the advantages of having a permanent administrator, is the setting up of efficient administrative routines and an accounting system which will allow the clinic to generate some finance of its own. The immediate way of getting income is through the submission of cases for Workmen's Compensation. Other sources of income currently are through Medical Aid Schemes and charging of nominal user fees from patients. Another possibility is to arrange for the Companies to pay for our services. We hope that unions will be able to negotiate payment from

their companies. We are currently approaching unions with this suggestion.

6. RESOURCE CENTRE

6.1 MEDIA: The question of poster production was followed up by getting an idea of the costs involved. We consulted Andy Mason but it was decided to hold on until our funding comes through from the EEC. This also applies to the idea of producing a video on the work of the IHU. Alterations were done to the 1991 Yearly Report before it was produced and sent to relevant organisations. Subscription forms for the library and a poster on the subject categories in the library was printed and distributed extensively. Other pamphlets on our chemical databases were drawn up for dissemination at the Cosatu Winter School. SACHED consulted the unit on the content of publication of two articles on health and safety in Umafrika, a local zulu newspaper. The services of the unit has been advertised in the Shopsteward, Cosatu's magazine for union officials. Photographs of Chrome Chemical workers were taken and forwarded to Medico International for the publicity campaign in Germany. Nu focus interviewed us to publish an article on the work of the unit.

6.2 INCOMING RESOURCES

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We have received books from the ILO free of charge.
List of articles on women workers and health available at the Wits project on women and health re Barbara Klugman.
Regular newsletters from State of the Environment Canada
Euro reports and studies WHO
Technical Report series WHO
Environmental Health Criteria (complete set) WHO
CABS bulletin 144 academic articles
Women's Environmental Network information
Danish Working Environment Act Arbejdsmiljøfondet
Eco-Journal Manitoba
Janus EEC health and safety journal
International Directory of Occupational Safety and Health Institutions
Making a World of Difference A directory of women in Canada specializing in global issues
ILO CIS bulletin and bibliographies
e Course Handbook and training manual from ITGLWF on health and safety.
t Legislation on health and safety from EEC Commission
Offices in Europe, France, Britain, Portugal, Belgium.
t Established contact with and now receive the NETWORKER - a PPHC newsletter from Cape Town.
t WHO directory on international newsletters and EPI info data programme.

We are members of GEENET

t Trade union research and databases from Australian unions.

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.3 ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Addresses installed into computer.

LAN and E-mail facility available.

We have access to the ILO database free of charge for 1992

We have written to 39 Canadian organisations on info on women. Some stuff has been coming in.

We are establishing use of databases from SABS, NRC and CSIR.

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li. Approach the Ranfurly Library Service in UK and Books for Africa USA to donate books on OHS to the resource centre.

6.4 RESOURCE CENTRE SUBSCRIPTIONS

A total of 732 subscription forms to the resource centre were sent out. Subscribers at the moment are eleven. Income from resource centre work amounted to R1100.00 (subs) and R88.00 for research charges.

6.5 INFORMATION WORK

We have done the following information work:

NEHAWU Info on incinerators to Dr. K. Vallabhjee for Nehawu

NUMSA DBN Info on chemicals used in factories

JHB Info on accidents via WIG

PMB Survey analysed and sent to James Sithole of Filpro

KIM Info on WCA to Chris Ntuli

ICCO Package on IHU and campaigns plus adjusted budget.

IHRG Info on 21 chemicals

IHU Organised info research from overseas for Thor issue

SEAVIEW Info on cement dust and respiratory questionnaire for George Mann

CASHE Info on chemicals used in school laboratories.

WHO, ILO Info on Thor issue

COSATU JHB Info on Thor faxed to David Morake

NTL Information poster on categories in library to all affiliates and education officer Maphalala

REDF Research audit on occupational health and safety.

NACTU JHB Info on ohs services to Buti Msimango Educ Dept.

IHSEP Info on pneumatic drills and contact nos for TUC postal workers, safety reps, hazards identification, and environmental videos.

HSSO'S Drew up and circulated a list of journals and newsletters in the library.

COMMUNITY HEALTH Info to Dr. B. Kistnasamy on costs for Industrial Hygiene, resources and the Thor issue

ATTIC Info details on IHU for resource directory on Aids

PRODDER Info details on IHU for directory on development organisations

IIC 150 brochures on CCINFO for circulation to their members

HAP Info on IHU for HAP directory

UND PMB Info on detergents/phosphate to Sanjay Pillay - Dept of Geog

EEC Info on Thor and Chrome issues to Pretoria and Brussels

AECI Info on resources to Ian Mkhize

STUDENTS UND/UDW/HLSTECH Info on aids, aids policies, ohs services, accidents and WCA, mercury and sampling methods.

HILLCREST Info on Thor to teacher

WITS Info on sulphuric gas affecting mineworkers.

KEN HANSEN MAPUTO Info on addresses of unions

WIG Info on dieldrin, list of occupational health clinics in SA

ARLAC - ZIMBABWE Info on the retailing trade, violence to staff, noise WCA, shiftwork, dust, chemicals.

NRC Info on IHU for resource directory, and newsclips on Thor for media teaching

CHILE Association for maternal aid, info on chrome, lead and talc.

KING EDWARD HOSPITAL A manual on health and safety for hospital workers

was forwarded to the Superintendent of the hospital.

SACCAWU Manual development for the organisers.

POTWA Dossier on health problems developed for the regional

, . office.

CITY HEALTH Info on chemicals for Dr. Naraidu.

ZCTU Info and pamphlets to Zimbabwean Trade unions

SACTWU Info on chemicals used at Romatex

TGWU Info on chemicals used at South African Health Protection Services.

6.6 VIDEO DEVELOPMENT

We have acquired the BHOPAL video on Union Carbide. A copy of the Thor and Chrome interviews were obtained from Thegwini Productions. Currently we have received environmental videos from TVE-NETHERLANDS. In September we jointly hosted a video festival on environmental issues at the Wildlife Expo with Earthlife Africa. Currently the University's Library and CORD are eager to acquire copies.

6.7 NEWSLETTER

The english and zulu version of our newsletter has been printed and distributed to all unions. Total number of newsletters printed is 2000.

7. ENVIRONMENTAL WORK

Merebank Residents Association (NRA): The IHU continues to assist this organisation in their efforts to combat industrial pollution in their residential area. We submitted a proposal on what research is needed in order for them to properly document the health problems that are allegedly caused by the pollution. This is being submitted to funders by the NRA.

An IHU doctor also gave a short input to a general meeting called by the NRA to discuss environmental matters. The NRA has subsequently met with management of the local refinery and they have won substantial concessions from the company as regards reducing pollution levels. The achievements of this residents association are a good example of how an organised community can work to improve their environment.

Maria Laura - Toxic waste: The "Maria Laura" was a ship that was transporting toxic waste PCB (Polychlorinated biphenyls) from Australia to France. The local environmental organisation "Earthlife Africa" objected to the shipment on the grounds that it contravened the Greenpeace ban on the shipment of Toxic waste across the international boundaries. Earthlife Africa in conjunction with the TGWU and IHU obtained access to the ship and spoke to the captain as well as the head of the Medittarreanean Shipping Company. At the meeting the M.D. of the shipping company gave a written undertaking to the delegation that they would never again carry toxic waste material. A great deal on media attention was given to the issue.

8. RELATIONS WITH OTHER ORGANISATIONS/PARASTATALS

Contacts with State Departments: In the course of our work the IHU has substantial contact with certain state departments such as the Workmen's Compensation Office and the factory inspectors within the Department of Occupational Safety. 'In the changing South Africa our relationships with such bodies are becoming less adversarial and we are trying to improve our working relationships with them. In order to do this we have written to them and are awaiting their response.

'Hssting with City Health: Two reps fro- the 180 set with senior officials from the Durban Municipality Health Department. Our aim was to clarify what the department's role is in nonitoring working conditions. Although we obtained a basic understanding of what their role is we were refused a lot of information that should be a fundamental public right. This issue will be followed up. Comments on the OSHA Bill to Dept. of Manpower: This important new draft was put out to the public for comment before being submitted to parliament. After discussions with the Chemical Workers Industrial Union, Dr. Mark Colvin submitted comments and suggestions on the bill to the Dept. of Manpower. He has now been asked to attend a seminar in December to discuss the redrafted bill.

Medical Research Council Meeting on Waste Technology: Dr. Mark Colvin was asked to attend this meeting called by the NRC. The point of the meeting was to network different parties who had an interest in the issue of waste technology. The IHU's main interests are in the field of waste worker's health and the effects on the environment.

9. STUDENT SUPERVISION

An honours student, who did her dissertation on HIV/AIDS in the Natal / Kwazulu region, was supervised by an IHU staff member. The dissertation is comprehensive and will be a useful addition to our resource centre. Dr. Mark Colvin ran a 9 lecture course on statistics for 140 sociology students.

10. IN-SERVICE TRAINING

DBASE COURSE Polly

INTRO TO VENTURA Myron

ZULU CLASSES Myron, Mark, Faiza, Rajan and Cheryl

ADULT EDUCATION Myron, Cheryl and Faiza

TEAM WORK By Fred Toerin

XYWRITE Cheryl and Faiza

11. CONFERENCES TALKS AND SEMINARS

Environmental Meeting: Dr. Mark Colvin gave a talk on workers and the "right to know" at a public meeting organised by a local environmental group "Earthlife Africa". About 5% people attended the meeting.

Forum Lecture, University of Natal Durban: Annual Rick Turner Memorial Lecture, University of Natal Pietermaritzburg: The above two lectures were given by Dr. Mark Colvin on the subject of industrial diseases in the chemical industry in Natal. The recent cases of Thor and Chrome (see this report) have generated a substantial amount of interest in the area and hence we were asked to present the talks.

Talk to an ATIC AIDS Seminar in Pietermaritzburg: Dr. Mark Colvin gave a talk on AIDS in the workplace to a mixed audience of business people and trade unionists. The talk focussed on pertinent issues such as testing of workers, workers' rights and an overview of international norms and developments in this area.

Dr. Lesley London is involved in occupational health in Cape Town. As he was in Durban the IHU arranged for him to address a group of doctors on skin problems in the canning industry.

Nbrknen's Compensation Conference: Dr. Mark Calvin gave a paper at this national conference entitled "Problems with Occupational Disease Surveillance, Reporting and Compensation in South Africa". The paper was well received and has been accepted for publication in the "Industrial Labour Law Journal". The conference itself was worthwhile in that it, for the first time, got together all those disparate organisations and individuals who have been dealing with the Workmen's Compensation bureaucracy over the years. Delegates plan to keep in touch in order to coordinate our response to changes to the Act.

Earthlife Africa Conference: At this week long international environmental conference, attended by over 200 local environment and community organisations as well as international guests, Dr. Mark Calvin gave a paper on the relationships between trade unions and environmental organisations and how they co-operate together as well as areas of possible conflict between them.

Workmen's Rehabilitation Centre Seminar: This organisation had a one day public seminar on issues around injuries on duty and compensation. Dr. Mark Colvin participated on a panel discussion and gave brief input on the issue of "light duty" and workers.

National Centre for Occupational Health (Johannesburg): Dr. Mark Colvin was asked to give a guest lecture to students on the Diploma for Occupational Health course on the topic of neurotoxic occupational diseases in the South African workplace.

Institute of Personnel Management, University of Port Elizabeth: Dr. Mark Colvin gave a guest lecture to the institute on problems experienced by the workers with occupational diseases in South Africa and proposals for improving the surveillance of these diseases.

Department of Political History Seminar Series: Dr. Mark Colvin and Dr. Dave Sanders delivered a seminar on likely future developments in health policy in South Africa.

Natal Libraries Medical Interest Group: Dr. Mark Colvin gave a talk to this organisation on problems experienced by workers with occupational diseases.

Natal Technikon: Dr. Mark Colvin gave a talk to the nurses on what happened at Thor and Chrome Chemicals and how these issues typified problems in occupational health care in South Africa.

Labour Law Conference: This annual conference which was attended by over 200 people was held at the University of Natal. Dr. Mark Colvin was asked by the organisers to be a respondent to the section on draft Occupational Safety and Health Bill.

12. VISITORS

Prof. Burton Sangor University of Yale USA

Ken Hansen Maputo/Cuso based health and safety project

Sheila O'Sullivan AHRTAG LONDON

Rene Loewensson ZACTU (Zimbabwe Council of Trade Unions)

CCFD Delegation from FRANCE

Radha Kunar Dehli INDIA

Erwin Friedman NICHE

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Compiled by Myron Peters Co-ordinator