

1st Speaker - The BC Workman's Compensation Board now called Worksafe BC

2nd Speaker - Veterans Affairs Canada

3rd Speaker - Simmons Attorneys At Law based in East Alton Illinois

The first speaker focused on victims who were exposed to asbestos in industry and discussed the rules governing application for compensation from Worksafe BC. It was interesting to note that a claimant must have worked at least three years in BC and have ample evidence that he/she was exposed to asbestos in that employment that led to a related disease. If they did not work for that length of time in BC but worked in another Province, they must claim in that Province. Worksafe BC also adjudicates claims made by Federal employees who contacted Asbestos related diseases while working in BC.

The second speaker was from Veterans Affairs who, of course, focused on military and RCMP claims. I'm sure you are well aware of the procedure for making a claim for compensation from VA so I won't get into the information he passed on in this regard. What he did say that was interesting was that VA recognizes secondary cancers that stem from asbestos such as those attacking the colon, upper respiratory system, stomach and kidneys. I mentioned that I had been exposed to asbestos big time in the Navy when we used to make asbestos insulation pads for valves and piping as well as a host of other occasion when we were all exposed from a wide variety of sources. I said that I mentioned it to my doctor during an annual checkup and he sent me for a series X Rays. Nothing showed up but I added that, apparently, evidence of exposure does not always show on the X Ray so you have to have a CAT Scan/MRI to detect hidden asbestos deposits. My question was will VA pay for this procedure if we were exposed to asbestos but nothing shows on the X Rays. The answer was **NO**.

The third speaker was an American Lawyer. He had some interesting things to say about claims made by non Americans on the US Trust fund set up by companies to compensate those exposed to their asbestos products. In some cases those companies no longer exist but the Trust Fund remains intact. He said that irrespective of nationality, if a person was exposed to asbestos products made by these companies the victims can raise claims against the Fund as if they were American citizens. Apparently, The US Trust keeps a detailed list of offshore companies and agencies, such as the RCN, who bought asbestos products from US companies. I understand that CanSAV will initiate action for claims by filling out the attached form. If a person takes this route I guess the best thing to do would be to contact The Canadian Society For Asbestos Victims and seek guidance on how to proceed.

Given many of us were exposed to asbestos during our naval careers, I thought you may be interested in this information.