

Considering the work environment at a local shipbuilding industry, namely, Malta Shipbuilding. Here, I was employed on a five day week basis, visiting employees reporting sick at their homes. A total number of 2,000 employees were registered on their books during the period in question – namely, 19th October 1990, when I started work, up to the 11th October 1991 (52 weeks). I was only responsible for half the workforce – that is, 1,000 employees. During this 52 week period, there were 3 weeks of shutdown: from the 15th to the 30th August, and from 24th to 31st December. In addition, I was off work for four weeks during the whole year. So, I actually worked 45 weeks during the year and visited a total of 1,659 cases averaging 7 to 8 employees per day in a 5 day week.

The workforce at Malta Shipbuilding comprises skilled labourers like shipwrights, painters, grinders, carpenters and crane drivers together with their chagemen, foremen and managers. The industry has only 60 managers but a bigger number of administration clerks,

Considering breakdown of figures in terms of certified illnesses. (A)

	AETIOLOGY	NO. OF CASES	%
1	URTI	330	30.5
2	GIT	195	18.0
3	BACKPAIN	105	9.6
4	TRACIMA	80	7.4
5	E.N.T.	72	6.6
6	LOWER RTI	70	6.5
7	MALINGERING	65	6.0
8	CVS	32	2.9
9	POST OP+HOSPITAL	30	2.8
10	OPHTHALMIC	25	2.3
11	OTHERS	79	7.4
	TOTAL	1086	100

Considering breakdown of figures in terms of Injuries on duty (B):

1	OPHTHALMIC	263 CASES
2	LOWER LIMBS	101 CASES
3	UPPER LIMBS	95 CASES
4	BURNS AND SCALDS	59 CASES
5	BACK AND NECK	27 CASES
6	HEAD INJURIES	19 CASES
7	CHEST AND ABDOMEN	7 CASES
	TOTAL COMPLAINTS	573 CASES

This averages 8.81 days absence per worker per year due to injury on duty. A graph representing number of injuries versus complaints may be read in ANNEX (B). A graph representing number of injuries versus month by month may be read in ANNEX (B1).

JOURNALS REPORT

- (i) Suratman A and Lai C.S. from Ann. Acad. Med. Singapore 1984
- (ii) Sadaragani C from Ann. Acad. Med. Singapore 1984

I would like to thank the following:

Josef Micallef – final year Medical Student for his great dedication and enthusiasm.
Malta Shipbuilding – Personnel Department (re statistics quoted).

Considering individual cases in decreasing order of frequency:

1	URTI	included influenza – illnesses, tonsillitis, sinusitis, pharyngitis, and laryngitis.
2	GIT	included gastritis, gastric flu, gastro enteritis and abdominal colic.
5	ENT	included autitis externa and media, vertigo and labyrinthitis.
6	LOWER RESPIRATORY TRACT INFECTION	incorporated bronchitis and asthma.
7	MALINGERING	these cases included people not found at home, patients examined and found fit for work and no reply on ringing the doorbell.
8	CVS	included chest pain due to angina, M.I. and hypertension.
9	POST OP+HOSPITAL	included hip replacement, LIH, SMR, Gastroscopy Gallstones op. and FIA.
10	OPHTHALMIC	included conjunctivitis and foreign body.
11	OTHERS	included psychiatric cases (24), skin (15), renal (11), generalised allergy (9) and dental complaints (8).

A graph representing Aetiology versus no. of Cases may be read in ANNEX (A).

This gives a total of 1086 cases seen, corresponding to 4329 working days lost, averaging 3.67 days sick per man per year.

draughtsmen and store officers. The average age of the shipyard worker is roughly 28 years.

The average absence due to sick leave amounted to 3.67 days per employee per year. In addition injury on duty at said work place amounted to 8.81 days per employee per year. Thus the total days lost amounted to 12.48 days per employee per year.

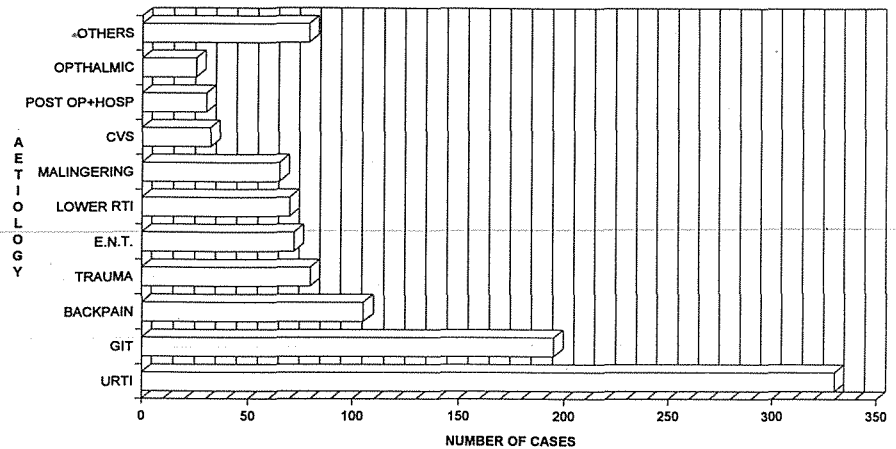
These figures were arrived at by considering absence from work due to sickness where there were 4,329 days lost and 1,086 cases seen. This gives a figure of 3.99 days absence on average. However, there were 1,000 employees on the books of Malta Shipbuilding giving 3.67 days loss from work due to sick leave per employee per year.

Considering days lost from injury on duty when there were 2,895 days lost and 573 cases seen, one arrives at the figure of 5.05 days absence due to injury per employee per year. The workforce of Malta Shipbuilding was 1,000 giving a figure of 8.81 days lost per employee per year. The total figure for days lost from work per man per year amounted to 12.48 days.

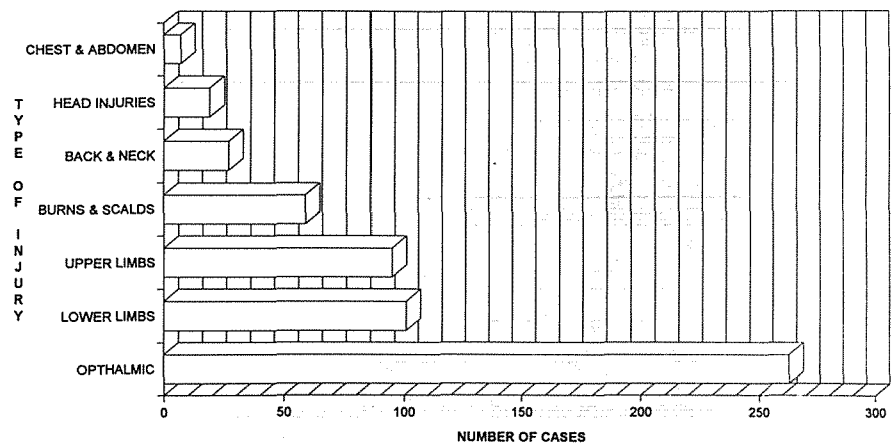
From a report in a journal (i) an oil company in Singapore gives 7 days loss from work due to sick leave per man per year for 1982. This rate compares to that for two shipyards in Singapore. Another report (ii) gives 4 days sick leave per employee per year in a Kuwait company for the year 1982. This journal quotes that the rate for Britain is 19 days sick leave whereas that for Germany is given as 12 days sick leave for 1978.

Considering the above reports the Maltese shipyard worker compares remarkably well with his European counterpart. On the other hand, he is not lagging far behind with his Asian colleagues. One must take into account the work environment, climate and advanced technology of his Asian colleagues.

CERTIFIED ILLNESS (ANNEX A)



INJURIES (ANNEX B)



MONTHLY INJURIES (ANNEX B1)

