



Hearing advice gives compensation hope for shipyard workers

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Workers at Plymouth’s historic Devonport docks may have the opportunity to pursue a claim for compensation, if their hearing was damaged as long ago as 1963, due to excessive levels of noise while working in the docks.

Leading industrial injury lawyers Attwood Solicitors are set to take action on behalf of Devon workers after uncovering evidence of hearing loss among shipyard workers elsewhere in the UK.

Attwood Solicitors represent around 200 ship workers in Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria, whose hearing was allegedly damaged while at work.

Experts say many older and retired workers are now suffering hearing loss after being subjected to high levels of noise while working in heavy industries during the 1970s and 80s.

And a Scandinavian study into the health of shipyard workers showed around half had hearing problems with a fifth suffering severe Noise Induced Hearing Loss.

The Royal Naval Dockyard at Devonport has 14 dry docks and 25 tidal berths. It is the base for seven Trafalgar class nuclear powered hunter killer submarines and the main refitting base for all Royal Navy nuclear submarines.

Attwood Solicitors represents hundreds of clients with hearing loss across the UK. Around 100 workers in a diverse range of industries have so far received pay-outs ranging from £1,000 to £12,000.

Principal Solicitor Ashley Attwood said: “We have helped workers in a range of industries from truck manufacturing to quarrying but perhaps the biggest response has been from the ship building industry.

“We had an overwhelming response to an awareness raising campaign in the Barrow shipyards last year and, as a result, are now pursuing claims on behalf of around 200 people.”

A Hearing Advice Day, where people can get free legal advice from Attwood Solicitors’ legal team and a free hearing test, will be held in Plymouth if there is a demand from workers in the area.

To register an interest telephone Attwood Solicitors on 0800 587 3231 or log on to www.attwoodsolicitors.co.uk. Or even download Attwood Solicitors iPhone App in the App store.

Mr Attwood said: “Many workers who experienced hearing loss while working in extremely noisy environments have simply put up with it.

“Often people suffer in silence and don’t believe they have a right to compensation for the pain and inconvenience caused to them.

“Employees may wrongly believe it is too late to claim compensation. People perhaps don’t realise that even if the damage was caused many years ago they may still be entitled to get help and compensation.

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Noise above 80 decibels – roughly the same as an average alarm clock - is considered dangerous but many older people are now suffering from damage caused before current health and safety standards were introduced.

