

Helen Fitzroy

Work Safety Advocate, Author & Speaker

When Helen Fitzroy lost her husband to a mining accident in Norseman, WA in 1991, one of the strategies she used to cope with her circumstance was to write – she wrote to her husband, but wrote largely for herself and small children. As a consequence of her writing, several years later, *Just a Number* was published. The book outlines the journey she and her children took for the five years after Steve’s death, as they waded through the quagmire of emotional, legal and bureaucratic processes that make up the life of families bereaved by a workplace fatality.

Just a Number is now used largely throughout industry around Australia, as a means of informing workers and their families of the dire consequences on loved ones, and of the devastation of a workplace fatality. In 2007, *Just a Number* was reproduced as a DVD.

Helen is devoted to campaigning for both improved safety within the mining sector, and for improved, on-going support for bereaved family members. In 2010, as a result of her work in this area, the Western Australian Resource Workers Legacy Scheme was established (known as *The Miners Promise*), and she was appointed Chairperson of the Board.

This organisation provides emotional and practical support to ensure that no family of a resource worker is left in a position of poverty or isolation following the death of a loved one and that they receive a diverse range of on-going support, to meet individual members’ and their family’s needs. The initiative was subsequently expanded, enabling resource workers, no matter what their jurisdiction, to be eligible to become members.

Helen was awarded WA Local Hero- Australian of the Year in 2012, for facilitating the development of a not-for-profit organisation called *Miners’ Promise*, which assists workers and their families following a workplace death or crisis.

In 2023, she was awarded an OAM (Order of Australia Medal) for services to the Australian mining industry.

She is also a qualified Grief Counsellor, assisting other family members who have found themselves in a similar position to her family, to cope with the burden of the loss of a loved one.



Client testimonials

“ Thank you for your very thought-provoking and moving talk. We really appreciate how much everyone's attention to implementing and maintaining safe work practices makes a positive difference to our quality of life both at work and at home. I'm sure that you have inspired many of us to be more aware and proactive in making changes happen. Thank you.

- *RCR Resources Eagle*

“ Your presentation was extremely powerful. Personally for me, it made me appreciate the role I am in even more, and like you, want others to learn from the past and prevent incidents in the workplace.

- *Thiess Georgiou JV*

“ One aspect of your presentation that really hit me hard were the numbers of people who have been unfortunate enough to make your list. I would've thought stats like that would be from the 1800's- and that's only in Western Australia... Thanks for being so brave and bold. You really are making a difference to the way people think (and work).

- *Blaize Thompson, Surveyor*

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