

# RMA's Prevention Programme – Prevent | Protect | Prosper

**Jessica Hutchings:** Head of Prevention, COID & Operations, Rand Mutual Assurance  
e-mail: [jhutchings@randmutual.co.za](mailto:jhutchings@randmutual.co.za)

## Background

In April 2022, Rand Mutual Assurance (RMA) launched the Prevention Programme, which is a strategic focus area of the business. RMA administers claims for occupational injuries and diseases according to the Compensation for Occupational Injuries and Diseases Act No. 130 of 1993 (COIDA). RMA has the licence to administer claims for both the mining and metals-related industries.

As an organisation that has existed for 129 years, there is a large amount of data available to us that informed the decision to launch the Prevention Programme. The programme is offered to our metals class employers as our statistics indicate that this class, compared to mining, has a higher number of injuries; therefore, interventions are needed to curb these. The Prevention Programme aims to assist our metals class members with improved safety, health, and wellness initiatives. Prevention is all encompassing of these important business imperatives. We believe that a safer workplace can result in safer work practices and therefore we offer our members a better opportunity for enhanced production and quality of goods. RMA understands the impact of poor working conditions and environments, and how these contribute to workplace fatalities, injuries, and diseases.

## Reflecting on the effectiveness and initiatives of the programme

Since inception, the Prevention Programme has grown steadily, with a remarkable increase in the sign up of employers in 2023 from 2022. In 2022, 10 companies joined the programme and, by the end of 2023, an additional 17 companies had joined. The 27 companies that are now part of the programme range from small family-run businesses to large heavy-steel industries, including companies that manufacture vehicles and parts in the automotive sector. The increase in interest is attributed to the promotion of the programme; results are evident in the companies that joined in 2022. The growth is also attributed to companies that are battling to implement their own prevention programmes due to limited funding and resources.

In 2023, the Prevention Programme implemented several activities, which resulted in an increased uptake of members to the programme, improved safety performance of employers, and greater collaboration with our stakeholders.

Examples of some of these interventions include: solutions to close out safety audit findings, training, awareness, and medical



RMA's Prevention Programme seeks to curb the high rate of injuries in its metals class of companies

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surveillance. Of the solutions implemented, most have included occupational hygiene surveys, employees undergoing medicals, correct and appropriate personal protective equipment, and additional safety support.

In terms of advocacy, RMA hosted its first Prevention Conference, which was well received and brought the metals industry together. This was an expected outcome as a general finding identified during the gap analyses was that many health and safety professionals had not been given opportunities for continuous professional development, or to keep up to date with the legislative environment and best practices. RMA also introduced the launch of prevention days which encompass health, safety, and wellness activities to create a culture around prevention and to empower employees to know their basic health statuses.

Stakeholders and partners are vital for the success of the Prevention Programme. One important stakeholder for RMA and the metals industry is the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (NUMSA). RMA has committed to training approximately 3 000 shop stewards in a three-day basic health and safety course. The course will help to advance education and awareness for union members to fulfil their mandates, a major one of which is health and safety.

### Plans for 2024

In 2024, the Prevention Programme will mobilise its execution of delivering prevention initiatives in the RMA members' workplaces to reduce the rates of incidents and ultimately reduce the number of claims. This will also foster a culture where prevention is seen as an important business imperative. An exciting event will be the launch of the first RMA Prevention Awards, which will recognise top talent in the metals space, aligned to prevention campaigns, innovations, teams, and employees who are advocates of prevention. The aim of these awards is not only to recognise and acknowledge such talent, but also to generate pride, excitement, and morale around prevention. In an industry such as the metals space, where prevention is not well entrenched, we anticipate that this event will ignite the need to refocus on safe production.

Another activity planned for 2024 is the inclusion of a wellness element in the programme. The aim is to assist employees working in companies that do not have the most basic of psycho-social support to obtain this through an employee assistance programme. Prevention is a dual responsibility and, whilst the programme continues to work in parallel with the employers, there is a need to recognise that psycho-social factors truly have a bearing on safe performance.

Reflecting on the work done this year, RMA is proud to state that it is a social insurer that aims to serve with compassion and care. The Prevention Programme is doing just this. Our aim is to prevent occupational injuries and diseases, protect both the sustainability of organisations and their employees, and allow for both employers and employees to prosper. Sustainability is critical to making a real difference and, in 2024, we aim for continuous improvement, the inculcation of prevention as a key business imperative and, ultimately, to carry out our purpose, which is for our members' employees to return home healthy and safe every day.

*If you have any questions about the Prevention Programme and how we can work closely with you, please contact our team at [rmaprevention@randmutual.co.za](mailto:rmaprevention@randmutual.co.za)*

**Preventing occupational injuries and diseases; ensuring livelihoods.**

PREVENTION | OHS | FINANCIAL WELLNESS



### Our PREVENTION PROGRAMME

is a blend of Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) and financial wellness solutions developed in line with leading Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) and Financial Wellness standards.

The programme is designed to complement existing employer safety programmes and enhance the drive toward the overall physical and financial wellness of employees within our Class Metals (Iron, Steel, Artificial Limbs, Galvanising, Garages, Metals, etc.) client base.

Ultimately, a reduced incident rate ensures healthy and stable families.

**Taking care of lives since 1894**

**For more information, contact us:**

**Tel: 0860 646 274**

**Email: [rmaprevention@randmutual.co.za](mailto:rmaprevention@randmutual.co.za)  
[www.randmutual.co.za](http://www.randmutual.co.za)**