

Three Fatal Fires: Lessons from inquests

Hugh Dillon
NSW Deputy State Coroner (2008-2016)



Bankstown 2012



The fatal blaze in a Bankstown apartment block in September 2012. ABC NEWS 24



Quakers Hill Nursing Home, 2011



Draytons' Winery, Hunter Valley 2008



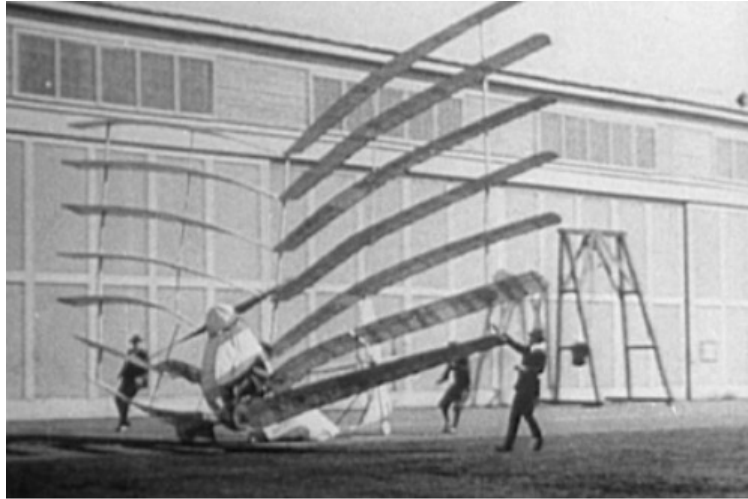
Flammable chemicals and a welding incident are believed to have been factors in the blast. *(Damien Griffith: User submitted)*



Costs – human and economic

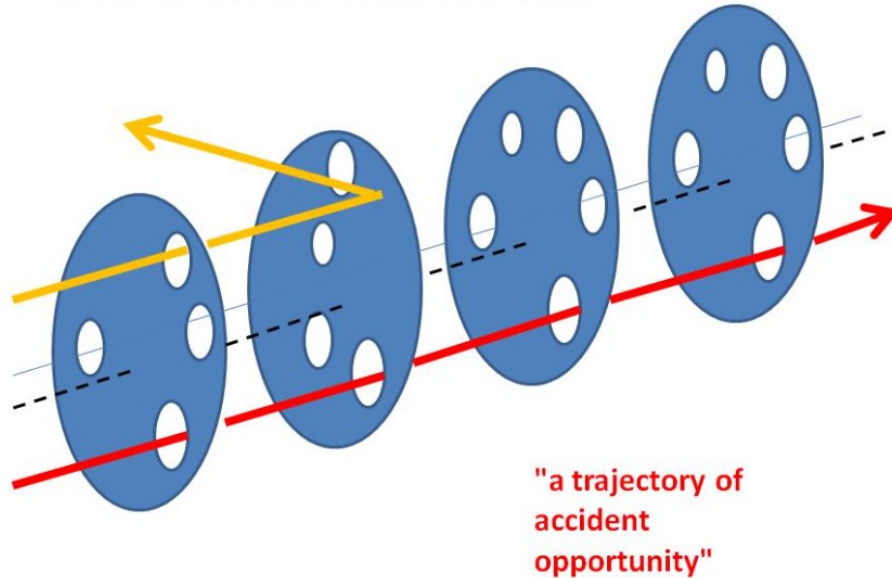
- Australian Government - 2021 – value of a statistical life \$5.1m
- Value of a statistical life year - \$220,000
- Human cost – immeasurable and life-shattering
- Each preventable death has a multiplier effect - US National Academy of Sciences estimated that each Covid death in America left on average 9 mourners.

1. Mistakes are inevitable



2. Systems are fallible

Reason's Swiss Cheese Model



Swiss Cheese model of accident causation

3. Regulations don't make safe – behaviour does





Victims: These residents died as a result of the fire and a further eight suffered from serious injuries. Firefighters said they could hear residents calling out for help.

THANK YOU FOR LISTENING...



And good luck.