Spare a thought for those working at Christmas

As many workplaces prepare to shut down for the Christmas break and thoughts turn to family and friends, mince pies and presents under the tree, the TUC is urging everyone to spare a thought for the tens of thousands of people who will be working this Christmas Day.

NHS and social care workers are likely to make up largest group of people working this Christmas.  As well as hospitals asking more staff to work during the festive period, many work in hotels, pubs and restaurants on Christmas Day and also local shops and garages.

There has been a significant increase in the number of people working on Christmas Day in recent years, reflecting the changing nature of the way we live our lives.

We should all spare a thought for the people on who will be hard at work on Christmas day while we're opening our presents, messing about with our new gadgets, tucking into our turkey dinners, sipping a glass of sherry and relaxing with our families.

Emergency and hospital staff and others whose jobs are vital to the functioning of society have always worked through the festive season, but the commercialisation of Christmas reaches new heights this year. While increasing profits for business will give the economy a boost, those working during this time need to be valued too. Unions have worked hard to make sure that the UK's Christmas Day employees get premium rates, earning double or even triple their normal pay.

But whether it be the emergency services, those in the health service, call centre workers, people working in petrol stations or in hotels and restaurants, let's remember all those whose work helps keep the country ticking over while the rest of us are enjoying ourselves.

On behalf of the Northern TUC I’d like to offer warmest Season’s greetings, good health and good work to one and all.

Beth Farhat – Regional Secretary Northern TUC