

# Risks

issue no 223 – 10 September 2005



HAZARDS  
MAGAZINE

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**Risks** is the TUC's weekly online bulletin for safety reps and others, read each week by over 11,000 subscribers and 1,500 on the TUC website. To receive this bulletin every week, click [here](#). Past issues are

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## SPECIAL FEATURE – Smoke-free work

### **'Be brave' and make work smoke-free, says TUC**

The TUC is calling for the government to “be brave”, resist vested interest lobbying and seize the opportunity to ban smoking in all workplaces, including all pubs and clubs, by April 2006. In its submission to the government consultation on restricting smoking at work, which closed on 2 September, the TUC says anything other than a total ban would threaten the lives of hundreds of workers a year and the health of thousands more. TUC general secretary Brendan Barber said: “It's time for the government to be brave. The public wants a ban, the health arguments are overwhelming and all that is holding government back seems to be a reluctance to say no to business lobbying or risk being called nannies.” He said a confusing attempt at a compromise that depends on whether pubs serve prepared food has not stood up to public debate, and should be quietly dropped. He added that the government should resist proposals for smoking areas in all pubs, as this would leave workers and the non-smoking public at risk. The TUC leader concluded: “The signs are that some ministers understand that this is an historic opportunity to make the most important improvement in public and employee health in a generation and save the lives of the 600 workers who die every year from passive smoke at work. The rest of the government should listen, be brave and enjoy the public support that a clear policy will win.”

- [TUC news release. The Observer.](#)
- [Hazards smoking news and resources.](#)

### **Smoky casinos want get-out-of-jail cards**

Two-thirds of casino workers want to see smoking banned from their workplaces and over half believe it is adversely affecting their health, according to a new survey. It also found some casino workers are now being asked to sign away their right to sue if they develop passive smoking-related disease. Research led by Paul Pilkington at the University of the West of England found 83 per cent of casino workers reported being exposed to other people's tobacco smoke nearly all the time at work and 65 per cent wanted smoking banned from working areas. Pilkington, working in co-operation with casino unions GMB and

TGWU, analysed responses from over 500 casino workers. He said the survey was restricted to union members because the major casino companies declined to participate in the study. The survey found many casinos now ask employees to sign a declaration that they are happy to work in a smoky environment. One worker commented: "The casino has already taken steps by making new staff sign a clause in their contract that in the event of a smoke related illness they're not to sue the company." Pilkington said the research was intended to give casino workers a voice in the smoking debate. He concluded: "The majority of casino workers who responded to our survey want their working area to be smoke-free, including 40 per cent of current smokers. More than threequarters of workers are bothered by other people's tobacco smoke at work, and over half believe their health has suffered as a result of that exposure, which then impacts on attendance at work. The findings strengthen the case for introducing a total smoking ban in all workplaces, including casinos."

- [UWE news release.](#)

### **Plea for complete pub smoking ban**

The government has been urged to introduce a comprehensive ban on smoking in pubs after new research showed that many publicans would stop serving food so they could get around a planned smoke-free law. A survey of 1,250 bar managers showed that many, particularly in poorer areas of the country, would stop offering food because that meant smoking could continue. Cancer Research UK and ASH, who carried out the survey, said the results confirmed fears that the partial ban would widen the health gap between rich and poor. Results show that the proportion of exempt pubs in England and Wales could rise by a third – from 29 per cent at present to 40 per cent – if the government proceeds with a smoke-free law that excludes pubs that do not serve prepared food. In the poorest areas, the proportion could be as high as 50 per cent. ASH director Deborah Arnott said: "This survey shows that the government is threatening to undermine the enormous public health benefits of its smoke-free legislation by exempting many pubs and clubs... exemptions would leave many workers at most risk from the damage caused by secondhand smoke." Cancer Research UK chief executive, Professor Alex Markham, said: "Going smoke-free will save lives. It will protect the health of workers, and evidence shows that it will help smokers quit. But this survey provides strong evidence that a partial smoke-free law would widen the health gap between rich and poor." The British Medical Association

has also called for a blanket ban.

- [ASH news release](#). [The Guardian](#). [UNISON news release](#). [BBC News Online](#).

## UNION NEWS

### **Unions meet in offshore leave row**

Union leaders representing North Sea oil workers seeking four weeks' paid holiday per year have met to decide their next move. The 2 September meeting between TUC, AMICUS, GMB, NUMAST, RMT and the TGWU expressed disappointment at the announcement from the employers' organisation, the UK Offshore Operators Association Limited (UKOOA), that it is to appeal against a recent employment tribunal decision which ruled that holiday rights should apply to workers offshore ([CTN62](#)). The unions agreed to continue to support and encourage North Sea employees to take employment tribunal cases over the disputed holiday rights. The TUC is also calling on minister for employment relations, Gerry Sutcliffe, to clarify the law on paid leave in the offshore industry. TUC general secretary Brendan Barber said: "Many people employed in the North Sea work 84 hours a week plus overtime during their time on the rigs - more than twice the length of the average working week onshore. It cannot be fair that many of them are still denied the right to the four weeks' paid leave that all other British workers are entitled to." He added: "These very successful businesses say they can't afford to give UK workers paid holidays, but with oil fetching record prices, their claims of poverty have a hollow ring. Rather than dragging the issue of holiday rights through every stage of the legal process, employers should accept their responsibilities to offshore workers and their families and settle this matter now." NUMAST senior national secretary Paul Moloney said it was important "unions work together on this crucial issue and that is clearly what is being done."

- [TUC news release](#). [NUMAST news release](#). [Grampian TV](#). [Press and Journal](#). [BBC News Online](#).

### **Amicus calls for better safety rules offshore**

Oil industry workers need better health and safety protection and rights, the offshore union Amicus has told the government. At a meeting in Aberdeen this week, union leaders told health and safety

minister Lord Hunt there should be a complete revision of the “fundamentally failing” health and safety representative regulations for offshore workers. Amicus national officer for the offshore industry, Rab Wilson, said: “The current health and safety legislation for offshore workers is out of date in an era that encourages greater participation in health and safety issues and management and better workplace involvement and consultation.” He added: “The second class legislation that currently exists is fundamentally failing workers in the offshore industry which should be in a position of excellence. The growth of contractualisation in the industry is also resulting in poorer safety standards offshore.” Amicus also said platforms with more robust standards of health and safety have higher levels of production, a point it said needed reinforcing with the oil companies. The union said Lord Hunt agreed to meet again to discuss changes to the offshore regulations.

- [Amicus news release.](#)

### **Workers urged to join a union**

A union in the south-west is urging workers to get union protection after latest statistics revealed the area has a horrific workplace injury record. GMB says south Somerset is a regional workplace accidents hotspot, with 475 reportable accidents in the last year, 84 of which were described as “major.” The union says the figures show that more needs to be done to protect people in the workplace and has urged anyone not a member of a union to see if they can join. GMB regional organiser Stuart Fegan said: “South Somerset has a high manufacturing and industrial base so it is understandable that there should be more industrial accidents than in an office environment but even one incident is one too many.” He added. “People living in south Somerset and beyond need to keep their eyes open. We want to highlight that these figures are very high and we want to keep the issue high on the political agenda to ensure these figures are lower next year.” He added that current government strategy was a problem. “At the moment not enough is being done to enforce breaches of health and safety and to enforce government guidelines as the HSE does not have big enough teeth. Until government clamps down on this, workers need the safety afforded by a union,” said Mr Fegan.

- [Western Gazette.](#)
- [More on the union safety effect.](#)

## Read this or the puppy gets it



OK, the puppy doesn't get it. TUC respects the health and welfare of workers and working dogs. But TUC is using more and more creative ways to get its message across – if you want safety, dignity and a decent place to work, you want a union. "Comfort breakdown", a witty animation for TUC by cult animators DogHorse and Eclectech, uses a cute puppy to deliver this hard message. Like tens of thousands of workers in the UK, the puppy doesn't get the breaks it needs. The new online resource concludes: "Want some dignity at work? Want to work safe? Need more pay? Need more skills? Get a union." There is a handy link to help workers without union protection to find the union for them.

- **See the puppy for yourself - [Comfort breakdown. TUC WorkSMART webpages. Send a free WorkSMART ecard.](#)**
- **Not getting your breaks? – [see the Hazards toilet breaks webpages. Check your computer workstation.](#)**

## OTHER NEWS

### Executives cleared of train crash blame

Five rail executives charged over the Hatfield crash in which four people died and more than 100 were injured in October 2000 were this week cleared by an Old Bailey jury of breaking safety rules. However, Network Rail, the successor organisation to Railtrack, which was responsible for Britain's railway infrastructure at the time the King's Cross-Leeds train was derailed at 115mph, was convicted of safety breaches. Balfour Beatty, which was responsible for track maintenance, had already pleaded guilty to breaking safety regulations. The two companies will be sentenced at the beginning of October. The five executives and Balfour Beatty were originally charged with manslaughter, but the judge threw out these charges during the seven month trial ([Risks 215](#)). Manslaughter charges against Network Rail were dropped before the trial began ([Risks 172](#)). TUC general secretary Brendan Barber commented: "The TUC welcomes the conviction of Network Rail. However, the acquittal of the five directors shows the need for legislation on the duty of directors."

- [The Guardian](#). [Daily Mirror](#). [The Times](#) and [related analysis](#). [BBC News Online](#).

### **How could no-one be to blame?**

Rail unions have reacted angrily to the acquittal of five rail managers on charges relating to the Hatfield rail crash. Commenting after the jury's verdicts, the unions called for changes in the law to make dangerous managers more accountable. Keith Norman, general secretary of ASLEF, said the decision to clear executives of all blame "defied logic and distorted compassion." He said: "It is clearly an injustice that needs to be addressed urgently. The government has dilly-dallied long enough on this issue. In all justice to the four people who died at Hatfield and the 102 who were injured, we must have urgent and comprehensive laws covering management's responsibility in these cases." RMT general secretary Bob Crow said: "How can it be that safety rules were broken yet no-one was responsible?" He added: "Now more than ever before we need an effective corporate manslaughter law to ensure that bosses responsible for avoidable deaths are held to account. The law as it stands makes that next to impossible." Gerry Doherty, TSSA's general secretary, said: "The case underlines the growing need for reform of corporate manslaughter law. However, the families and friends of the deceased will take small comfort from the fact that Network Rail has ultimately been found guilty for the failures of others."

- [ASLEF news release](#). [RMT news release](#). [TSSA news release](#).

### **Balfour Beatty guilty in death case**

Construction giant Balfour Beatty has admitted failing to protect the safety of its employees following the death of a roadworker. The company pleaded guilty this week to one charge of failing to ensure the safety of its employees. Stephen Hayward, a 43-year-old stop-go board operator, died after being hit by a lorry while working on the A5 Nesscliffe Bypass. Balfour Beatty Civil Engineering Limited was charged under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 in the case brought by the Health and Safety Executive, and was committed to Shrewsbury Crown Court for sentencing. The firm, which has faced recent criticism for the safety record of some of its subsidiaries ([Risks 216](#), [Risk 177](#)), including its role in the Hatfield train crash, continues to attract massive public contracts. It picked up a £7m contract this week as part

of a new PFI hospital deal with Mid Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust. And Balfour Beatty subsidiary Mansell was this week awarded a number of education contracts worth a total of over £30m from Norfolk County Council.

- [Shropshire Star](#).

### **Government “encouraged” danger cover-ups**

Dangerous and fraudulent employers have been helped cover-up their wrongdoing because of the government’s flawed whistleblowing rules, according to an official watchdog. A report this week from the Parliamentary Ombudsman strongly criticised the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) for the “inherently misleading” way it introduced regulations that prevent people learning about whistleblowing concerns raised under the Public Interest Disclosure Act. The whistleblowing charity Public Concern at Work (PCAW) said the regulations keep secret all information about cases that settle before hearing – about 70 per cent of all cases - and so “encourage dangerous and fraudulent employers to buy off the whistleblower and cover-up their wrongdoing”. The regulations were introduced after PCAW had successfully argued in court that whistleblowing claims in employment tribunals should, following the practice in the higher courts, be on the public record. The Ombudsman's Report forced the DTI to apologise to PCAW and, exceptionally, compensate the charity for the expense, time and trouble it incurred in trying to uphold the public interest in the face of DTI’s misconduct. Accepting the apology and promised compensation, the charity's director, Guy Dehn, said: “The question is will the public have to wait for a major disaster or scandal before this issue gets the open and honest consideration it so clearly deserves.”

- [PCAW news release](#). **Parliamentary Ombudsman’s report [pdf]**.
- [Hazards whistleblowers news and resources](#).

### **Work smarter not longer says government**

Working smarter is key to improving employee satisfaction and productivity, the government has said. Employment minister Gerry Sutcliffe, launching a joint DTI, TUC and CBI guide to tackling Britain’s unhealthy long hours culture, said: “Changing working patterns can benefit everyone - employers, workers and their families. The government is firmly committed to giving people real choice about

their working hours to achieve greater work-life balance.” The minister added: “While regulation has a part to play, creating a culture where we work smarter rather than longer is key to improving worker satisfaction, as well as improving competitiveness, productivity and retaining skilled workers.” Brendan Barber, TUC general secretary, said: “Lots of organisations have shown that we can beat Britain's long hours culture by working smarter. Unions do believe in proper regulation, but this initiative shows that workplaces can do even better when managers and employees work together.” The report showcases good practice and has been produced as the culmination of a series of nine master classes around the UK, at which 'business champions' have shared their experiences with other employers. However, despite protests from the TUC and mounting medical evidence, the government continues to defend the UK's unhealthy opt-out from Europe's 48-hour working week ceiling ([Risks 209](#)). This was introduced Europe-wide in response to clear evidence that long hours were a cause of more accidents and ill-health. A report last month in the journal *Occupational and Environmental Medicine* confirmed the detrimental effects ([Risks 220](#)).

- [DTI news release. Managing change: Practical ways to reduce long hours and reform working practices.](#) [DTI long hours project webpages.](#) [UNISON news release.](#)
- [TUC It's about time! campaign](#) for an end to the UK working time opt-out. [Hazards get-a-life news and resources.](#)

### **Cocktail effect of doctors' hours**

A study has shown how important the reduction of junior doctors' hours has been, equating the effect of long shifts to drinking a few cocktails. US researchers found 90-hour weeks impaired performance in the same way as alcohol. The *Journal of the American Medical Association* study concluded it was important to ensure doctors had adequate rest. Researchers from Brown University and the University of Michigan studied 34 trainee doctors and found those who worked longer weeks had significantly less sleep per night than those working the lighter shifts - even when they were not on duty overnight. The performance impairment in those working longer 90-hour weeks matched those who worked just 44-hour weeks, but followed up their shift with three vodka and tonics in 30 minutes. A study earlier this year found that doctors working grossly excessive hours were more

likely to be involved in a car crash on their journey home from work ([Risks 191](#)). Commenting on the latest study, Dr Mike Peters, head of the British Medical Association's Doctors for Doctors Unit, said: "Excessive working hours are bad news for doctors and patients. It is difficult for over-tired, stressed and burnt out doctors to give patients the quality of care they need." Last month public health minister Caroline Flint said Hospital at Night, a model NHS response to the European Working Time Directive, had "played a key part role in helping trusts formulate new ways of working, achieve Working Time Directive compliance, improve patient care and encouraged a better work-life balance between doctors."

- **J Todd Arnedt and others. Neurobehavioral performance of residents after heavy night call vs after alcohol ingestion, JAMA, volume 294, pages 1025-1033, 2005 [[abstract](#)].**
- **[BBC News Online. DH news release](#) and Hospital and Night report [[pdf](#)].**
- **[Hazards worked to death webpages](#).**

### **Gloom after decision on sunshine exposures**

The TUC and safety campaigners have warned that a lifesaving opportunity could be missed after MEPs voted down a measure that would have made employers responsible for protecting workers from harmful exposures to sunlight. Expressing dismay at the "cynical campaign" mounted by critics of the proposals aimed at protecting workers from skin cancer, Labour MEP Stephen Hughes pointed out that cases of skin cancer in the UK had doubled in 25 years, and had risen by 15-20 per cent among German farmworkers in the last decade. He said Eurosceptic media and rightwing politicians were "hell-bent on misrepresenting important health and safety legislation." TUC head of safety Hugh Robertson said: "This is a serious health issue that requires a serious response. Australia dealt with the issue of protection for outdoor workers sensibly, and now has lower rates of skin cancer than the UK." He added: "As well as the cancer risk, excessive exposure to sunlight causes damage to the skin and macular degeneration, permanent damage to the eye. Add to that the risk of heat stress and heat stroke and outdoor workers have a genuine reason to get hot under the collar." The TUC had written to MEPs prior to the vote urging them to ensure workers get the protection they deserve. As it now stands, the measure will leave it to each member state to decide whether employers should protect staff from the sun.

However, EU member states may yet attempt to overturn the parliament's decision. If the EU Council, made up of ministers from the member states, rejects the parliament's decision, a conciliation committee will be set up to attempt to reach a compromise.

- [BBC News Online](#). [Today Online.com](#). [Reuters](#).

### **Injured shipyard worker in payout battle**

A welder who has been left brain-damaged after an accident at a Clyde shipyard is still awaiting compensation 10 years after receiving the horrific injuries at work. Arthur Thomson and wife Jean are angry they have received no compensation, despite the once fit and active man's life being ruined. The 67-year-old from Glasgow struggles to walk, has lost the use of his right hand, and speaking causes him difficulty. The accident happened in January 1995 and, in 2002, three of Scotland's most senior judges ruled he should be awarded £250,000 compensation from Kvaerner Govan. But that decision was overturned last year by the House of Lords. Mr Thomson told the *Evening Times*: "All I did was go to my work and, through no fault of my own, I have ended up like this. Why should the highest court in Scotland and Scotland's top judge be over-ruled by an English House of Lords? I have been a victim of rough justice. We have been left with nothing." Mr Thomson was working for Kvaerner Govan when a painted plank in a ship's hull snapped and he fell backwards, hitting the back of his head on a steel handrail. In July, TUC revealed that nine out of 10 UK workers never receive any compensation or work-related injuries or ill-health ([Risks 217](#)).

- [Glasgow Evening Times](#).
- [Hazards compensation news and resources](#).

### **Sick record used to refuse job applicants**

The government's hopes to channel workers on incapacity benefits "from welfare to work" might hit a major barrier – employers don't want to take them on. The latest quarterly Labour Market Outlook from the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) reveals that more than 60 per cent of employers exclude groups with certain characteristics from the recruitment process. High on the list, alongside those with criminal records or a history of substance abuse, are those with a history of long-term sickness or incapacity. CIPD chief economist John Philpott commented: "Widespread reluctance on the

part of employers to recruit the core jobless highlights the magnitude of the task facing the government as it strives to get more economically inactive benefit claimants – especially those claiming incapacity benefit – off welfare and into work.” He welcomed government initiatives including Pathways to Work ([Risks 195](#)), but added “the government will have to reinvigorate its welfare to work agenda by making greater efforts to both improve the employability of the core jobless groups and by addressing negative employer attitudes to people in these groups.” CIPD found the most disadvantaged ‘core jobless’, excluded by around 1 in 3 employers, were people with a criminal record, a history of drug or alcohol problems or a history of long-term sickness.

- [CIPD news release](#).
- [Hazards sickness news and resources](#).

## INTERNATIONAL NEWS

### **Australia: Unions say nano-loopholes may hurt workers**

Unions are warning that thousands of Australian workers could be being exposed to potentially dangerous nanoparticles. They are calling for urgent regulation and say they could even press for nanoparticle production to stop. The Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) raised its concerns in a submission to a senate inquiry into workplace exposure to toxic dust, including silica dust and nanoparticles. “There are thousands of workers working for those companies that are potentially exposed to this hazard,” said Steve Mullins, ACTU occupational health and safety officer. “There are several options on the table - one of which is prohibition if it's required.” In its submission to the inquiry, the Australian Manufacturing Workers' Union (AMWU) said it is concerned about nanoparticles slipping through regulatory “nano-loopholes”. AMWU and the Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union (CFMEU) raised the spectre of inaction leading to a repeat of what happened with workplace exposure to asbestos. The ACTU has called for a conference to be held before the end of the year to look at how to deal with the issue, with government, business, union and scientists taking part. “We need to make a pretty urgent decision about what to do,” said Mullins. “We need to act now.” The differences between nanoparticles and larger particles of the same chemical have been the source of some concern, a matter raised by HSE ([Risks 179](#)), TUC and in a 2004 report by the UK's Royal Society and Royal Academy of Engineering ([Risks 167](#)).

- [ABC News. FoE Australia nanotechnology campaign. Senate enquiry into toxic dust.](#)
- [TUC nanotechnology factsheet. Hazards nanotechnology resources and guide. HSE nanotech webpages and information sheet.](#)

### **Canada: Authorities don't count worker deaths**

Canadian authorities have no idea how many workers are stricken each year by diseases related to work, because they don't keep records, a top occupational health authority has warned. Mary Cook, managing director of OCHOW, five highly regarded independent occupational health clinics in Ontario, said there is a "silent epidemic of occupational disease" in the country. Writing in the *Toronto Star*, she said: "There is no database of occupational disease in Ontario — no one keeps records. In addition, Ontario doctors are not required to report incidences of occupational disease. Sexually transmitted diseases, yes; gunshot wounds, yes; mesothelioma from asbestos exposure, no." Canada is facing a mesothelioma epidemic but has been accused of playing down the risks, instead lobbying abroad to continue exports from its own asbestos mines. Cook estimated that at most 1 in every 40 of the "conservative" 2,000 plus people in Ontario developing work related cancer each year receives official compensation and recognition of their condition.

- [Toronto Star. OHCOW website.](#)

### **Trinidad: Union concern as safety act goes unsigned**

Trade unions in Trinidad and Tobago have expressed serious concerns about the government's failure to sign into law a new health and safety act, passed by parliament over a year ago. The unions were speaking out after the year's workplace death toll hit 13. In June, four Trinidadian workers died while doing routine repairs aboard a Panamanian-registered tanker when sparks from a welder's torch ignited fumes. The unions says they are concerned that the relatives of the dead workers may not get adequate compensation, pointing to the failure of the government to sign into law the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA), even though it was approved by parliament in February 2004. The National Trade Union Centre (NATUC) blamed lobbying by some businesses for the slow pace of reform. "That is the reality," said Vincent Cabrera, NATUC's general secretary. "The trade union movement is going to continue to push for the implementation of

that act and you are going to be hearing more and more from us on that question in the near future". Errol McLeod, president of the Oilfield Workers Trade Union (OWTU), the island's biggest union, accused the government of lacking the courage to promulgate the legislation, which he said would protect working people and industry.

- [IPS News.](#)

### **Ukraine: Chernobyl 'likely to kill 4,000'**

New estimates say around 4,000 people will die from the effects of the 1986 accident at the Chernobyl reactor in the Ukraine, which sent a radioactive cloud across Europe. Most of the dead so far are emergency workers exposed immediately after the disaster. The new figures come in a report from the Chernobyl Forum, set up by a number of agencies including the IAEA, the World Health Organisation (WHO), a number of UN bodies and the governments of Belarus, the Russian Federation and the Ukraine to look at the impact of Chernobyl. It found more than 600,000 people received high levels of radiation exposure, including reactor staff, emergency and recovery personnel and residents of the nearby areas. The predicted 4,000 death toll includes 50 emergency workers who died of acute radiation syndrome in 1986, and from other causes in later years; nine children who died from thyroid cancer and an estimated 3,940 people who could die from cancer as a result of radiation exposure. Since the accident, some 4,000 cases of thyroid cancer have been seen, mainly in individuals who were either children or adolescents at the time of the explosion, but almost all those affected have survived. Greenpeace, however, challenged the report's findings, saying in a statement that the reports it was based on contained contradictory information and research had been omitted.

- [WHO news release](#) and [Chernobyl webpages.](#) [IARC news release.](#) [BBC News Online.](#) [Planet Ark.](#) [Mosnews.com.](#) [NRDC news page.](#)

### **USA: Union warning on immigrant workers at risk**

Immigrant workers are dying at work at a far greater rate than native-born workers in the US, a new study has found. Research by national union federation AFL-CIO found workplace fatalities among all foreign-born workers increased by 46 per cent between 1992 and 2002. Latino workers fared even worse, with a 58 per cent jump in on-the-job

deaths in the same time period. The report says the increase in immigrant death rates far outpaces the growth in the number of foreign-born workers in the workforce. Between 1996 and 2000, the share of foreign-born employment increased by 22 per cent, but the share of fatal occupational injuries among those workers jumped by 43 per cent. It says many immigrant workers "toil in high-risk occupations, work in the unregulated 'informal' economy and often fear reporting workplace injuries. Many are not aware of their legal rights to safety and health on the job and to workers' compensation if they are injured." AFL-CIO is calling for improved safety protection for immigrant workers, including protection from victimisation for raising safety concerns and a duty on employers to provide training in an appropriate language. Immigration authorities in the US this year used a bogus safety course to entrap undocumented immigrant workers ([Risks 215](#)).

- [AFL-CIO news release](#). 'Immigrant workers at risk: The urgent need for improved workplace safety and health policies and programs' [[pdf](#)].

## EVENTS AND COURSES

### TUC courses for safety reps

#### COURSES FOR SEPTEMBER TO DECEMBER 2005

[Midlands](#), [Northern](#), [North West](#), [Scotland](#), [South East](#), [South West](#), [Wales](#), [Yorkshire and the Humber](#)

#### Occupational disease in Asia, Hong Kong, 20-24 September 2005

ANROAV, the Asian Network for the Rights of Occupational Accident Victims - a coalition of victims' groups, trade unions and other labour groups across Asia - will hold its annual meeting in Hong Kong from 20-24 September. The main focus of the meeting will be occupational diseases. One outcome anticipated by the organisers will be the strengthening of a global network to more effectively challenge the harmful health impact of hazardous work.

- **Invisible victims of occupational diseases in Asia, ANROAV annual meeting, 20-24 September 2005, Hong Kong. Further information, [Sanjiv Pandita](#), Asia Monitor Resource Centre.**

## USEFUL LINKS

**Visit** the TUC [http://www.tuc.org.uk/h\\_and\\_s/](http://www.tuc.org.uk/h_and_s/) website pages on health and safety. See what's on offer from [TUC Publications](#) and [What's On in health and safety](#).

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