



Risks Newsletter



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Risks is the TUC's weekly online bulletin for safety reps and others, read each week by over 12,000 subscribers and 1,500 on the TUC website. To receive this bulletin every week, click [here](#). Past issues are [available](#). This edition contains [Useful links](#) [TUC courses for safety reps](#) [Disclaimer](#) and [Privacy statement](#).

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ACTION

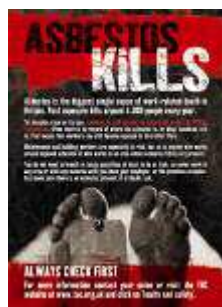
Last chance to tell us what you think



Time's running out... if you want to say what you really think of us, you better act fast. The Risks reader survey is designed to find out more about our readers, and to identify improvements that could be made. Responses to the survey will be confidential and all personal information will be deleted before any use is made of the figures. This survey takes less than five minutes to complete online and will run until 28 February 2006. The findings will be reported, exclusively, in Risks.

- [Risks online survey.](#)

UNION NEWS



Asbestos banned but still a killer

Asbestos may now be banned but the fatal fibres could still be lurking in up to 1.5 million shops, factories and offices across the UK, the TUC is warning. The union

body is launching a major new safety drive aimed at preventing more workers from being exposed to the killer substance which currently claims over 4,000 lives a year. The move comes ahead of Action Mesothelioma Day, Monday 27 February. A million 'Asbestos Kills' stickers and thousands of leaflets have been sent to workplaces up and down the country, so that union safety reps can do more to stop employers

needlessly exposing their staff to asbestos at work. TUC believes many employers are either unaware of their legal obligations to management asbestos risks or are simply choosing to ignore them. And with the average workplace getting a visit from a safety inspector on average only once every 8 – 20 years, negligent employers can be safe in the knowledge that they are unlikely ever to get found out. But with figures predicting that within 10 years the UK will see 10,000 deaths a year from asbestos-related diseases – of which mesothelioma is just one – the TUC wants union safety reps to make sure that no-one else's health is jeopardised because of employer carelessness. TUC general secretary Brendan Barber said: "We don't want to see any more people exposed to asbestos in future. The new stickers and leaflets should help focus the minds of careless employers, and minimise exposure for those maintenance and construction workers most at risk." Over five thousand Tyneside residents have signed the Action Mesothelioma Petition, reports the charity Mick Knighton Mesothelioma Research Fund (MKMRF). The national petition will be presented to 10 Downing Street on 27 February.

- TUC asbestos poster [[pdf](#)] and [asbestos webpages](#). [Thompsons Solicitors news release](#).
- [Hazards Campaign listing of Mesothelioma Day events](#), 27 February.
- [Action Mesothelioma Day. Sign the Action Mesothelioma Charter](#). Ask your MP to support the [Action Mesothelioma](#) campaign.
- Hazards [asbestos](#) and [cancer](#) webpages.
- [HSE asbestos duty to manage campaign](#).

Nearly half the workforce wants fewer hours



**WORK YOUR
PROPER
HOURS DAY**
FRI 24 FEB '06

A stunning 45 per cent of people at work want to work fewer hours, and more than two

million people – 1 in 10 employees - would downshift by giving up pay for a better work-life balance, according to new figures from the TUC. The analysis of official figures was released in the run up to Work Your Proper Hours Day, Friday 24 February. People working in mining and quarrying are the unhappiest with their hours, and have the largest proportion who want fewer hours even if it means losing pay. Hotels and restaurant staff are the least likely to want fewer hours or give up pay for more time off - probably reflecting the large numbers of part-time and low-paid jobs in hospitality. Other than the relatively small mining and quarrying sector, the two groups who most want to downshift are the education and the financial services sectors. In both nearly one in six employees (14 per cent) want to reduce their hours even if it means giving up pay. Manufacturing, transport and communication complete the list of sectors where more than half the workforce wants fewer hours. TUC general secretary Brendan Barber said “more than two million are so desperate to downshift that they would give up pay in return for a better work-life balance.” He added: “But all our long hours are not making us more productive. Too many workplaces are gripped by a long hours culture, which staff and managers could easily work together to tackle. Work Your Proper Hours Day this Friday is the ideal time to get started with more happy hours and fewer long hours.” February 24 is the day that those who do unpaid overtime would start, on average, to get paid if they did all their unpaid work at the start of the year. TUC has also published a league table of long hours jobs. The league table, which is derived from the official Labour Force Survey, shows that managerial and professional staff dominate the top places. But less senior staff in IT, law, accountancy and finance are also likely to put in almost an extra day of unpaid work a week.

- [TUC news release](#). Full analysis [[pdf](#)]. [League table of long hours jobs](#). BBC News Online stories on [the hours league table](#) and [unpaid overtime](#).
- [Tell the TUC](#) about your experiences of long hours working.

- Stop working and do something! [Take the work time quiz](#). [Work your proper hours day website](#) and [posters and deskcards](#). Send your boss an anonymous [Boss-A-Gram](#). [Play the 9-to-5 game](#). [Find something entertaining to do](#).

Don't gamble with safety RMT tells Virgin XC

Virgin Cross Country's refusal to negotiate a settlement to the dispute over Sunday pay rates for train guards could undermine rail safety, rail union RMT has warned. It says the company's intransigence and attempts to keep services running on strike days has led to “a potentially dangerous undermining of safety standards”. RMT says it has complained to the Railways Inspectorate that the company is using inadequately trained and medically restricted managers to cover safety critical duties on strike days. “We have supplied a dossier of cases to the Railways Inspectorate showing how Virgin XC are using inadequately trained and even medically restricted managers to run trains on strike days,” RMT general secretary Bob Crow said. “They are putting people in charge of trains who have not been near one for years and others who have no operational background at all except a training course only one-third as long as the usual 12-week guards' course. They are even pushing people back into frontline work who are normally kept away from operational duties for medical or safety reasons.” He added: “We hope the HSE will not just accept Virgin XC's word that they are using competent people, but investigate exactly how the company can expect managers to be competent after a course that lasts a fraction of the usual 12 weeks.”

- [RMT news release](#).

Speed up means workers pay the Asda price

Supermarket giant ASDA hopes to up the workrate so high at its Wigan warehouse that workers could be shifting by hand over 10 tons

each working day. The workers' union, GMB, says the introduction of a radio frequency voice picking system would increase the daily "pick rate" from 1,100 to 1,400 boxes per person. The union says the higher work rate, which it says the company is also seeking to introduce at other depots countrywide, would leave workers at increased risk of musculoskeletal disorders and has asked ASDA "to submit the matter for arbitration to a panel of experts that can adjudicate on an efficient and safe method of working in line with each worker's individual capabilities." The union says it is also concerned that those wearing the radio frequency voice picking equipment might not hear approaching warehouse traffic. GMB organiser Eddie Gaudie said: "Asking an ASDA worker to shift 1,400 boxes a day is equivalent of asking someone to workout in a gym for eight hours a day every working day. It is equivalent of ASDA asking their staff to work themselves to death. GMB is appealing to ASDA to take this matter to arbitration to agree an efficient and safe method of working in line with each worker's capability."

- [GMB news release.](#)

Dangerous start to the flat race season?

The flat season could get off to a dangerous start, a union has warned. TGWU, which represents stall handlers, has released photographs showing starting stalls awaiting essential maintenance which should have been completed weeks ago. The union said if this winter maintenance has not been done there may be a safety issue. Chris Kaufman, TGWU national secretary, said: "The race to the bottom in employment terms now appears to have a distinct safety angle which the TGWU believes needs exposing." He added: "With the clock ticking away to the start of the flat season it is wholly wrong that the crucial winter maintenance appears not to have been done." Mr Kaufman said the winter maintenance programme is normally carried out by the RaceTech stall handlers but they have been made

redundant. He said the union has been advised that there are in excess of 30 sets of starting stalls standing idle awaiting essential maintenance, modification and testing. The union believes there are now insufficient staff to undertake the necessary pre-season safety work. According to Chris Kaufman: "Who is going to carry out the work? Are they going to get the correct maintenance with so few staff? Why did RaceTech make all their staff redundant when there is all this work to be done?"

- [TGWU news release.](#)

OTHER NEWS

No compensation for lost leg

A Swansea man who lost a leg in a forklift accident when still in his teens has lost his battle for compensation. A damages claim by John Paul Jones against his former employers, Flexicare Medical, was rejected at Swansea County Court last July. Now the Appeal Court has rejected an appeal against that ruling. Mr Jones was just 19 when in July 2000 his leg was crushed in an accident after he collected pallets in the factory yard. He sought damages from the company, alleging they were liable for his injury because he had not been trained to use the truck's emergency braking system. His claim was rejected at Swansea County Court after a judge heard evidence that there was nothing wrong with the braking system. The Appeal Court has now dismissed Mr Jones's challenge to that ruling and exonerated Flexicare from all blame for the accident. Britain's common law compensation system requires a claimant to prove negligence on the part of the employer. Reports last year from the TUC ([Risks 217](#)) and Hazards magazine ([Risks 207](#)) revealed over 90 per cent of those injured at work received no compensation. Last week, Risks reported the case of a demolition worker severely injured and disfigured at work, who also lost an Appeal Court claim for compensation ([Risks 244](#)).

- [Evening Post](#).
- [TUC compensation webpages](#). [Hazards compensation news and resources](#).

Spy row over injured oil worker

A North Sea company has been criticised for hiring a private detective to trail a worker while he was taking sick leave after an injury at work. Ensko Services brought in an investigator who put the worker, recuperating at home with a back injury, under video surveillance. The man said he was “absolutely sickened” by the episode. Aberdeen-based Ensko Services declined to comment. The worker, who did not want to be identified, said he suffered a back injury while offshore last year, which both the company doctor and his own GP diagnosed. He was recovering at home and had agreed to attend physiotherapy, and was then asked by drilling company Ensko to attend a disciplinary hearing. The firm sent the worker reports which had been produced by a private investigator, which contained details of his home, his movements and those of his girlfriend. The man told BBC Scotland: “I was absolutely sickened, I felt violated and disgusted.” The surveillance reports detailed the movements of the man's girlfriend, including details of her doing housework in her pyjamas and driving to see another family member. She said: “I felt extremely uncomfortable. I felt vulnerable. I felt as if my privacy had been invaded.” Norwich Union insurance apologised to a severely injured worker last month, after admitting it had videoed his movements and called him a malingeringer. He received a £1m settlement for his injuries ([Risks 244](#)).

- [The Scotsman](#). [BBC News Online](#). [Hazards privacy webpages](#).

Stockline to be prosecuted over factory deaths

The owners of a Glasgow factory in which nine people died when it exploded in 2004 are to be prosecuted, the Crown Office has confirmed. Officials said ICL Plastics, the owners of the Stockline factory, would face High Court action over alleged breaches of health and safety law. A Crown Office spokesperson said survivors and families of victims had been informed. As yet, no date has been set for the trial. Five men and four women were killed and about 40 people injured in the blast in Maryhill on 11 May 2004. The Crown Office said the decision to prosecute ICL Plastics and ICL Tech under the Health and Safety at Work Act followed the submission of a report conducted by the procurator fiscal in Glasgow, Strathclyde Police and the Health and Safety Executive. The company has been accused of: Failing to maintain pipes carrying hazardous gas or gases; a failure to ensure the safety of staff; and failing to carry out a “suitable and sufficient” risk assessment. The authorities promised a thorough investigation into the tragedy and relatives of the victims were backed by MPs and trades unionists in their call for a public inquiry ([Risks 220](#)). A Crown Office spokesperson said: “It is a matter of public record that the lord advocate has made it clear that there will be an inquiry, in public, into the circumstances and causes of this explosion. In order to avoid any possible prejudice to criminal proceedings, an inquiry can only happen once these proceedings are concluded.”

- [Crown Office news release](#). [The Scotsman](#). [BBC News Online](#). [Personnel Today](#).

AEA Technology fined for radioactive lorry leak

A firm responsible for a radioactive leak from a lorry for more than 100 miles has been fined £250,000. The vehicle, which travelled from Yorkshire to the Sellafield nuclear plant in Cumbria, leaked radioactive material for 130 miles, a court heard. Leeds Crown Court was told it was “pure good fortune” no one was dangerously contaminated in March 2002. AEA Technology admitted health and safety breaches

and was ordered to pay £151,000 costs. The Oxfordshire-based company was transporting part of a piece of cancer treatment equipment, which had been decommissioned at Cookridge Hospital in Leeds, to the Sellafield complex. But a “plug” was left off a specially-built 2.5 tonne container. Mark Harris, prosecuting for the Health and Safety Executive, said: “Through pure good fortune no-one involved in the removal, containment and transfer of the source may have been directly exposed to the radiation beam.” He said the incident was serious, adding: “It exposed employees of the company and their sub-contractors to unnecessary and potentially high radiation risks due to poor radiation protection practices. The radiation dose rates measured at Windscale were in the order of 100 to 1,000 times above what would normally be considered a very high dose rate and measurement was beyond the capabilities of normal hand-held monitoring equipment.” He said: “The risk of such exposure was undoubtedly present - at Cookridge, during the journey and at Sellafield.” He added that the radiation leak took the form of a narrow “beam”, which was fortunately directed vertically into the ground. The result would have been much worse if the beam had escaped horizontally, he said.

- [HSE news release. This is money. BBC News Online.](#)

Fog of vapour 'behind oil blasts'

A fog of petrol fumes and water vapour 200 yards wide moved across the Buncefield oil depot minutes before December's blasts, according to a preliminary report from investigators. But exactly what led to the cloud or caused it to ignite is not yet known. The devastation from the blasts, which wrecked the depot in Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire, and caused major damage to homes, has held up investigators. The blasts injured 43 people, but no-one was killed. The investigation, which was ordered jointly by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and the Environment Agency, has been described as the

“most wide-ranging” of its kind since the Potters Bar rail crash inquiry in 2002. Eyewitnesses have reported seeing a low-lying mist by one of the protective “bunds” surrounding petrol tanks at the west of site, near the neighbouring industrial estate, prior to the first blast on 11 December. Taf Powell, the lead investigator at the Buncefield site, said: “This mixture flowed very quickly and ignited with the force we have seen.” HSE has also revealed it was investigating a similar, but smaller, leak at the depot two or three weeks before the blasts. The safety watchdog has notified more than 1,000 fuel storage sites, including 100 oil depots of the same type as Buncefield, of a safety and inspection drive. But residents are angry that the HSE is investigating its own performance in the run-up to the blast, and are demanding a public inquiry. The report team has been accused of operating behind closed doors. Mike Penning, Tory MP for Hemel Hempstead, said that HSE was in effect “investigating themselves”.

- [Major Incident Investigation Board news release. Buncefield investigation webpage.](#) The Buncefield investigation: progress report, HSE – [full report and covering letter. The Times.](#) [Herts Advertiser.](#) [BBC News Online.](#)

Lives 'devastated' by tinnitus

Research into the effects of tinnitus - a buzzing or ringing in the ears - shows that it has a profound impact on all aspects of people's lives, and reveals that more than one in five affected people believe the condition was caused by noise at work. The findings come from an online survey of 900 sufferers carried out by two leading charities in the field of hearing loss. They found the 23 per cent who hadn't told their work colleagues about their tinnitus said this was because they were concerned it might affect their job prospects. Over one in five (22 per cent) respondents thought that workplace noise caused their tinnitus. More than 40 per cent said their condition had a negative effect on their personal relationships. The research was carried out by the Royal National Institute for Deaf People

(RNID) and the British Tinnitus Association (BTA) to mark the start of the first National Tinnitus Week. “The results of the survey confirm the devastating effect that tinnitus has on the relationships and work lives of thousands of people in the UK,” said RNID’s Karen Brunger. BTA chair Ewart Davies said: “Although tinnitus is not life-threatening, it can be very stressful. It is important for people to know that the BTA and RNID can offer the support and advice that is needed to take control of the condition.” They say although tinnitus cannot be cured, it can be managed by using sound therapy to distract people from the buzzing or ringing, or habituation therapy to alter sound response systems. People are also advised to practise relaxation and to consider using a hearing aid if they also suffer hearing loss. It is estimated that 4.7m people in the UK experience tinnitus in one or both ears.

- [RNID news release](#) and [tinnitus week webpages](#). [BBC News Online](#).
- British Tinnitus Association webpages, [National Tinnitus Week](#), 20-26 February. [TUC noise webpages](#).

BT smoking ban goes from offices to vans

Telecoms giant BT is to ban its workers from smoking in its offices and vans. The company is introducing the ban on 26 March, as legislation outlawing smoking in the workplace comes into effect in Scotland, but more than a year before it comes into force in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. From next month BT's 100,000 employees across the world, including 20,000 outside the UK, will not be allowed to smoke on company premises or in vans bearing the BT logo. Designated smoking rooms will be closed and converted to offices, store rooms or put to other use. The provision of external shelters for smokers will be assessed but staff will be discouraged from having a cigarette outside BT buildings. The company's offices have been smoke free for a number of years but special smoking rooms have been provided and workers

have been allowed to light up in company vehicles. Dr Paul Litchfield, BT's chief medical officer, said the ban went no further than the legislation due to take effect in Scotland and that it had seemed “a nonsense” to have one rule for employees in Dumfries and another for those in Carlisle. He added that the ban was just part of the strategy, and that employees would receive information and support when giving up. BT union CWU said it “has been engaged with BT on this matter and is supportive of the principle of a smoke-free working environment.” It added however that “we have a number of outstanding concerns that are still in the process of being addressed.”

- [The Guardian](#). [The Times](#). [BBC News Online](#). [CWU news release](#).
- [TUC smoking webpages](#). [Hazards smoking news and resources](#).

Safety survives in new EU services law

The European Parliament has adopted a watered-down bill to open Europe's services market to cross-border competition after a protracted struggle between free marketeers and supporters of social protection. High among union concerns was a threat to safety standards if the original proposals had been carried. The EU legislature adopted a heavily amended version by 394 votes to 215 with 33 abstentions after voting to remove the most disputed “country of origin” principle, under which companies that provide services in another EU state would have been allowed to do so under their home country rules only. The amended law means companies will be free to provide services in any EU country but must respect the labour, health, safety and environmental standards of the host country - often stricter in western Europe than in the new east European member states. David Cockroft, general secretary of global transport unions’ federation ITF, said: “It's a positive result, and a first win for the campaign led by the European trade union movement and concerned MEPs. Our fears that jobs, health and

safety, working conditions and the environment would be jeopardised by a rush to the bottom have been heard and acted on.” TUC general secretary Brendan Barber said: “This is a major victory for social Europe delivered primarily by union campaigning across the EU.” The directive will now be discussed by member states at a summit in March.

- [TUC news release](#). [REHS news release](#). [ITF news release](#). [STUC news release](#). [UNISON news release](#). [GMB news release](#). [ETUC news release](#). [BBC News Online](#).

Asbestos cancers continue to kill

A widower who was exposed to asbestos during his job as a flooring specialist died many years later because of his contact with the deadly fibres. At an inquest earlier this month into the death of George Thompson, Herts Coroner Edward Thomas recorded a verdict of death by industrial disease. Mr Thompson died in October last year, aged 77. He was diagnosed in August 2005 as suffering from a malignant mesothelioma, an extremely aggressive and painful asbestos cancer now killing about 2,000 UK workers each year. John McLoughlin, of Braunstone, Leicester, has been told he has contracted the deadly cancer. He is now suing his former employer, T E Cundy and Son, for damages. A High Court writ issued by Mr McLoughlin's lawyers states that he became ill with the disease after being exposed to deadly asbestos dust and fibres. Mr McLoughlin worked for the company as a painter and decorator at various commercial premises between 1962 and 1968, and again from 1973 and 1982. According to the claim, he was exposed to asbestos dust and fibres from asbestos roof sheeting, and lagging on pipes and boilers. David Cass, from law firm Irwin Mitchell, said T E Cundy and Son was wound down in 1997. He said lawyers would now track down the firm's former insurance company, and make a claim.

- [Herts Advertiser](#). [Leicester Mercury](#).
- [TUC asbestos webpages](#). [Hazards asbestos news and resources](#). [Hazards cancer webpages](#).

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Free the Musim Mas 6!

Six trade unionists facing lengthy jail terms in Indonesia need your support. The charges stem from a strike and demonstration last year at the PT Musim Mas palm oil plantation and refinery in Palalawan. High on the list of grievances leading to the dispute were health and safety concerns in the notoriously hazardous and pesticide intensive industry. Five of the group were found guilty and sentenced by the court on 3 February. Union chairperson Robin Kimbi and regional secretary Masry Sebayang were sentenced to 2 years' imprisonment. Union leaders Suyahman, Safrudin, and Akhen Pane each received one year and two months. Sruhas Towo, the sixth union leader arrested later in connection with the strike and demonstration, is currently on trial. Headquartered in Medan, Musim Mas operates the world's largest palm oil refinery. Global union federations IUF, representing foodworkers, and BWI, representing construction and timber workers, are calling for international solidarity action. They say the jailed unionists are prisoners of conscience, imprisoned solely for their trade union work, which the company and the authorities are attempting to criminalise. International support is urgently needed.

- [Send an online protest letter](#) to the President of the Republic of Indonesia, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono. [IUF further information](#). [BWI news alert](#).

China: Economic liberalisation leads to more hazards

Safety standards in China’s workplaces are falling because liberalisation of the economy has seen state safety regulators take a back seat. As the country began to move towards a market economy in the early 1980s, the government's role in ensuring workplace safety was gradually transferred to companies. But, reports China Daily, many of them have lowered input into worker safety in order to reduce operating costs. It says the problem is more acute in private companies, where workplace accidents happen frequently. As part of its efforts to decrease work-related diseases, the General Administration of Work Safety – the ministry level official safety body - is working to draw up new regulations. Migrant workers are at the greatest threat of contracting occupational diseases, health authorities in China have said. According to the latest statistics from the Ministry of Health, around 90 per cent of the patients suffering from work-related diseases are migrant workers.

- [China Daily](#).

USA: USW exposes DuPont's "safety failures"

A new union website accuses multinational chemical giant DuPont of safety failings at its US plants and of promoting a flawed workplace safety programme. The United Steelworkers (USW) launched the DuPont Safety Revealed site last week. It includes an interactive ‘Toxic Map’ that pinpoints where the chemical giant may be putting communities at risk of chemical exposure. A statement says: “When it comes to the health and safety of workers and communities, DuPont can talk the talk, but can it walk the walk? With slick public relations campaigns and questionable safety and health awards [[Risks 226](#)], DuPont has created an image as 'one of the safest companies in the world.' Behind the propaganda facade, though, lurks an atrocious and shocking record of pollution, community sickness and worker hazards.” The website exposes “untold safety failures” and is highly critical of the ‘DuPont STOP’ behavioural safety programme, used

inside the company and sold as a commercial product to other firms including a number operating in the UK. The union says the system is guilty of “blaming workers for on-the-job accidents and encouraging a system of non-reporting of worker injuries.” Major companies using the system include General Motors, ExxonMobil, Department of Energy, NASA and American Airlines.

- [USW news release. DuPont Safety Revealed website.](#)
- [The truth about behavioural safety.](#)

USA: Digging up new ways to kill miners

Lax safety enforcement and roof collapses and explosions are not the only deadly factors in US mines. Official hearings last week heard Mike Wright, health and safety director of the steelworkers’ union USW, testify about the business-friendly administration's proposal to delay for five years implementation of a regulation that would reduce mine workers’ risk of getting cancer or heart disease from exposure to diesel fumes. Wright told the panel that in addition to saving lives, a new standard would compel industry to find new and innovative solutions to health and safety problems. The mine industry opposed the rule, disputing evidence about how diesel fumes affect health, how diesel particulates should be measured and what level of reduction is feasible. An industry front organisation called the Mining Awareness Resource Group Diesel Coalition filed two lawsuits to stall progress. According to Wright, this isn’t the only recent example of the industry lobby getting its wish from the Bush administration. He said: “This administration has made it clear that it believes in ‘voluntary compliance.’ Well, we all believe in voluntary compliance, but every mine inspector – indeed every parent – knows that the way you get voluntary compliance is through strict enforcement. You can’t have the one without the other. Yet this administration persists in seeing voluntary compliance and strict enforcement as

incompatible. A favourite phrase is that 'we have replaced confrontation with cooperation'. The Sago mine could have used a little more confrontation" ([Risks 239](#)). Twelve miners died in the January disaster.

- [Washington Post](#). [Confined Space](#).

EVENTS AND COURSES

Action Mesothelioma Day, 27 February

Unions and asbestos disease organisations are backing a national Action Mesothelioma Day on 27 February. The day aims to highlight the issue of mesothelioma - or meso - an asbestos cancer which already kills almost 2,000 people each year in the UK, or about one every five hours. The British Lung Foundation, which is coordinating the action day, wants organisations and individuals to sign up to an 'Action Mesothelioma Charter'.

- [Action Mesothelioma Day](#). [Sign the Action Mesothelioma Charter](#). Ask your MP to support the [Action Mesothelioma](#) campaign.
- Hazards [asbestos](#) and [cancer](#) news and resources.
- Glasgow: [International Asbestos Conference](#), Clydebank Town Hall, 27 February 2006 Further details: [Janice Strain](#), Clydebank Asbestos Group, 8 Crown Avenue, Clydebank, Glasgow, Scotland, G81 3BW. Attendance is free. Tel: 0141 951 1008.
- Newcastle: [Mesothelioma seminar](#), Magpie Suite, St James' Park, Newcastle upon Tyne, 9am-1pm, 27 February 2006. [Further details](#): Email [The Mick Knighton Mesothelioma Research Fund](#). Attendance is free.

- Liverpool: [Mesothelioma Action Day Public meeting](#), 1pm-3pm, 27 February, Liverpool Town Hall. Further details, from Merseyside Asbestos Victims Support Group, [email](#) or telephone 0151 236 1895.
- Manchester: Mesothelioma Action Day Public meeting [[pdf](#)], 1pm-3pm, 27 February, Manchester Town Hall (Great Hall). Further details, from Greater Manchester Asbestos Victims Support Group by [email](#) or telephone 0161 636 7555.

International RSI Awareness Day, 28 February



International RSI Day, the last day of February - the 28th or 29th, depending on the year - is when unions and campaigners highlight the work hazards that cause strain injuries, undertake workplace activities on strains prevention and press for preventive action by employers and governments. This year the global campaign day falls on Tuesday 28 February.

- [TUC RSI webpages](#) and guide, [RSI - the basics](#). [International RSI Day](#).
- Do something at work on RSI Day - [Hazards guide to bodymapping](#) and other workplace safety tools.

Worked to the bone seminar, 15 March, London

An Institute of Employment Rights organised half-day seminar on 15 March will examine the original purpose of the Working Time Directive, the impact of working time regulations in the UK, measures to end the UK's opt-out from the 48-hour working hours ceiling, and how the regulations can be improved. IER says the seminar will be of interest to trade unionists, employment lawyers, personnel specialists,

academics and students and those concerned with the development of public policy.

- [Worked to the bone: Regulating the UK's long hours culture](#), 1.30pm to 4.15pm, Wednesday 15 March 2006, NATFHE Centre, Britannia Street, London WC1. Seminar flyer and booking form [[pdf](#)]. IER subscribers and members £45.00; trade unions £60.00; commercial £120.00. Send a cheque payable to IER, to the Institute of Employment Rights, 177 Abbeville Road, London SW4 9RL. Further details from [Phelim Mac Cafferty](#), telephone 020 7498 6919.

TUC courses for safety reps

COURSES FOR JANUARY TO MARCH 2006

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

COURSES FOR APRIL TO JULY 2006

- [South East](#),

USEFUL LINKS

- **Visit** the TUC 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](#).
- **Subscribe** to [Hazards](#) magazine, supported by the TUC as a key source of information for union safety reps.
- **What's new** in the [HSC/E](#) and the [European Agency](#).
- [HSE Books](#), PO Box 1999, Sudbury, Suffolk CO10 2WA. Tel: 01787 881165; fax: 01787 313995