



# Risks Newsletter



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## UNION NEWS

## HSE union asks 'who will enforce new rules?'

Health and Safety Executive (HSE) union Prospect has welcomed the new construction, design and management regulations but has raised serious questions about the resource-depleted watchdog's ability to enforce the new rules. It says HSE, the body responsible for inspecting workplaces, is already reeling from massive job cuts and faces a further drive to find 15 per cent cost savings over the next three years. Neil Hope-Collins, chair of Prospect's HSE branch, said: "Any measure to clarify the law is admirable particularly given the 14 per cent increase in construction fatalities, and lives destroyed by major accidents, that we have seen this year. But you have to ask who will enforce the new regulations?" He added that further "efficiency" measures by DWP could mean more long-term job losses. "HSE is simply not inefficient so these cuts will decimate frontline services if applied. For example, this drive for savings means that HSE's construction division alone faces a 10 per cent drop in its share of allocated resources for next year, even before the DWP's efficiency savings are factored in, and that picture is reflected across the organisation." Hope-Collins said that any drive to improve safety has to acknowledge the evidence that enforcing the law, not self-regulation, is the most effective motivator for business to improve health and safety standards. But research already shows that workplaces only receive an HSE inspection once every 13 years, and this figure is likely to increase as reduced staff numbers inevitably impact on the number of workplace inspections that can be undertaken. The union is warning the funding crisis "is threatening to bring HSE to its knees" and wants immediate action to protect occupational health and safety by reducing the financial pressures facing the safety body.

- [Prospect news release](#). [HSE news release](#).
- [HSE construction webpages](#) and [CDM webpage](#).

## Corporate killing action call

Trades unionists have accused Scotland's political parties of a lack of action on corporate killing. STUC general secretary Grahame Smith said levels of workplace injuries and deaths continued to be unacceptable. The organisation has backed a campaign group that wants employers to be held accountable for deaths in work-related incidents. Families Against Corporate Killers (Fack) staged its Scottish launch at the STUC annual congress in Glasgow. Mr Smith said: "All of Scotland's political parties must address the issue of corporate killing to ensure the guilty are brought to justice and Scots workers are given the protection from death and injury they deserve." He added "not one individual company or director in Scotland has been convicted of corporate homicide, an appalling indictment on our Scottish justice system, that is not much better in England and Wales". Dorothy Wright, a Fack campaign member, said: "It is a government's primary duty to protect its citizens' lives - that, we were told, was why we went to war in Iraq and why we need to replace Trident. Why then is government so reluctant and failing so miserably in protecting citizens' lives from rogue companies who kill 1,700 people every single year in work-related incidents, my son being one of the victims? New laws have been announced to enable negligent pet owners to be jailed for ill treating animals, surely humans deserve at least the same respect." Hilda Palmer from Greater Manchester Hazards Centre, who helped to set up Fack, said the group provided a national voice for bereaved families "which we are using to lobby ministers, government and MPs and demand the changes to laws and for the stringent enforcement of health and safety that any civilised country would have but which current government is downgrading."

- STUC news releases on [Fack](#) and [corporate killing](#). [BBC News Online](#).
- [Fack website](#). [Hazards deadly business webpages](#).

### **Inquiry into nuclear staff body parts removal**

An independent investigation has been ordered by the government into claims that nuclear workers who died in the 1960s and 1970s had parts of their bodies removed for medical examination without the knowledge or permission of their families. The inquiry, to be led by Michael Redfern QC, was announced by trade and industry secretary Alistair Darling in the Commons on 18 April. He warned that there was a great deal of confusion around the 65 cases, saying there was “no audit trail” in most cases, and it was “not clear what procedures were followed.” Mr Darling’s statement followed the revelation by the union GMB that former workers at the Sellafield plant in Cumbria and other nuclear sites had tissue, bones and body parts taken. Union leaders said the vital organs of the workers - who had died from cancer - were returned to Sellafield for further research. No findings based on this research, thought to be on radiation dose and cancer, has been published, the unions say. British Nuclear Fuels (BNFL), which operates the sites, confirmed that files remained in 65 cases. Gary Smith, a national officer with the GMB, welcomed the inquiry and added: “Our chief concern is for the families of those who died during this period and the anguish they face.” Prospect general secretary, Paul Noon said: “The government has recognised the need for speed and openness in clarifying exactly what happened. For the sake of the families that is vitally important. Michael Redfern is an excellent choice because of his experience of the Alder Hey inquiry but we still need to see the terms of reference.” Amicus national officer Dougie Rooney said “our immediate concern is that all the families involved are able to find out exactly what happened to their loved ones.” At the request of the Sellafield trade unions, British Nuclear Fuels on 19 April set up a helpline to give advice and information for the families of any worker who may have been affected.

- [GMB news release](#). [Prospect news release](#) and [updated release](#). [Amicus news release](#). [The](#)

[Guardian](#). [BBC News Online](#). [The Scotsman](#). [Sky News](#). [The Times](#).

### **Safety warning on rail privatisation**

Transport for London (TfL) is drifting blindly into a “dangerous” fragmentation of key parts of the London rail network, rail union RMT has warned. It says the planned privatisation of the extended East London Line operations and a “frighteningly complex hybrid” of Tube and rail networks will inevitably undermine safety. Passengers on the East London Tube Line were handed postcards on 12 April highlighting safety fears ahead of the planned privatisation of the service. RMT general secretary Bob Crow said: “At least eight components will be involved in running the new service - two responsible for signalling, two for infrastructure maintenance, two for infrastructure renewals, one for train and station operations and one for train maintenance. It seems that precious few lessons have been learned from the nightmare fragmentation of national rail privatisation or the disastrous part-privatisation of Tube infrastructure, because the same dangerous formula is being lined up for London Rail.” He added: “It is not too late to step back from a grave mistake and keep the East London Line's operations as a unified part of the Tube network.”

- [RMT news release](#). [BBC News Online](#).

### **School bosses must pay for safety breaches**

School bosses must pay where they fail to observe legal safety duties, teaching union NASUWT has said. Commenting on the publication last week of two NASUWT survey reports on health and safety in schools and colleges, the union’s general secretary Chris Keates said they “confirm that too many employers are flouting their legal responsibilities to protect the health, safety and welfare of staff.

It is a national disgrace that schools and pupils are being placed at risk as a result of the failure of employers to undertake their statutory health and safety duties.” The surveys found over four in 10 teachers (42 per cent) report their employer does not undertake regular checks of workplace hazards. A quarter of teachers reported regular fire drills are not conducted. NASUWT said in premises where asbestos problems was present, nearly three quarters (73 per cent) of teachers reported that the asbestos hazard was not properly marked, more than half said that the problem was not properly contained (51 per cent), and around four-fifths reported that there was no proper plan in place for its removal (79 per cent). Chris Keates concluded: “Regrettably, too many teachers experience accidents and injury whilst at work which could have been prevented. Employers that breach statutory provisions on workplace health and safety, must now be made to face the consequences.”

- [NASUWT news release.](#)

**Councils must ensure sites are safe**

Construction union UCATT has urged councils to improve safety on major construction and regeneration schemes, following a spate of deaths late last year at a site in Camden, London. Scaffolder Ralph “Barney” Kennedy was electrocuted by a live wire while working on the Mayford estate in September 2006 ([Risks 285](#)). It was earlier reported that two other workers were also electrocuted on the same premises. The union points to a lack of safety on major regeneration projects run by local authorities. It says while the work is not carried out directly by the council, local authorities have a “moral duty” to ensure the correct safety standards. Alan Ritchie, general secretary of UCATT, said: “This tragedy underlines once again that if corners are cut on construction sites then it is all too common for deaths and serious injuries to occur. Councils must ensure that their safety provisions are beyond reproach. They cannot simply wash their hands of their responsibilities and blame others for their failings.” Tony

O’Brien, secretary of the Construction Safety Campaign, which joined family members outside a St Pancras Magistrate’s Court inquest this week into Barney Kennedy’s death, which returned an open verdict on 17 April, said: “This was another preventable tragedy. Sadly Barney’s death is another statistic in the year where we see a massive 30 per cent increase in the numbers of construction workers killed at work - up from 59 to 78.” He added: “This will not change until the government reverses its deregulatory programme and puts much more resources into the enforcement of our safety laws; implements corporate manslaughter laws that will actually jail negligent employers; allows more councils to do this kind of work in-house and gives workers stronger rights to defend themselves against the worst excesses of the penny pinching employers. The government currently plans to do none of this.”

- [Personnel Today.](#)

**Joint bid to combat abuse of Tesco staff**

Retail union Usdaw and Tesco have joined forces to combat abusive shoppers. Under the initiative, posters will be put up in every store warning abusive customers that staff have the right to work in a safe environment. Tesco chief executive Sir Terry Leahy has agreed that the posters will be prominently displayed behind the customer service desk, reminding customers that violent or abusive behaviour is not tolerated. The initiative forms part of Usdaw’s Freedom From Fear campaign, which the union says has helped reduce retail assaults and abuse over the last four years. “We’re delighted that Tesco and Usdaw have worked together to develop these posters designed to remind a small minority of customers that their abusive behaviour will not be tolerated,” said Usdaw general secretary John Hannett. “The notices behind customer service desks remind customers that Tesco provides a safe environment for staff and customers so any physical assaults or verbal abuse will not be tolerated.” He added: “The fact that Tesco’s chief executive and Usdaw’s general secretary

have come together to launch this initiative shows the battle to stamp out abuse aimed at hard working staff is being taken seriously from the top down.”

- [Udaw news release](#) and [Freedom from Fear campaign](#).

## OTHER NEWS

### Childhood exposure caused asbestos disease

A woman exposed to asbestos when she played as a child in the basement of a London council flat has received a six-figure payout after developing the incurable cancer mesothelioma. As a teenager Cheryl Marsh, 49, played in the boiler rooms in the basement of her parent's council flat in the Brecknock Estate, Islington. She was also exposed to asbestos later when employed by Islington Borough Council social services department where she worked on a motorcycle scheme. Cheryl was diagnosed with the asbestos-related cancer in 2004. She said: “I want to make more people aware of this disease. It's not just old men who get mesothelioma. Young men and women who have never worked in industry can also contract it too, with the same devastating effects.” Her solicitor John Hall, of personal injury law firm Thompsons, said: “Many people mistakenly believe mesothelioma is a disease which only affects elderly men who previously worked in engineering or construction. However we are now seeing an increasing number of tragic cases where asbestos has devastated the lives of very young people, like Cheryl.” He added: “Cheryl is an inspirational woman who continues to fight the disease while continuing to work in a challenging role as a police officer. She has to be admired for her courage. Her case was not straightforward but we were determined to win her battle to obtain compensation.”

- [Thompsons Solicitors news release](#). [TUC asbestos webpages](#).

### Ignore HSE enforcement notice and pay

A company director and a building firm have become the latest organisation to receive safety penalties for ignoring HSE enforcement notices. William Beach, a director of Techlink Enterprises Ltd, an office furniture manufacturer, was charged with offences related to failing to comply with two improvement notices. Ormskirk Magistrates’ Court fined him £2,000 and ordered him to pay £1,000 costs. HSE Inspector Lisa Bailey said: “The improvement notices offered the opportunity to carry out the work that needed to be done to ensure that employees didn’t suffer ill health because of the wood dust in the air and that a hand rail was fitted to the mezzanine level.” She added: “When HSE returned the work had not been carried out and this prosecution has resulted. Improvement notices are only issued where action needs to be taken for the safety and protection of employees. In this case a company director did not ensure the work was carried out when the improvement notices were issued, leaving the health and safety of staff at risk.” In a second case, County Durham building company Dunelm Property Services Ltd (DPSL) was fined a total of £44,000 at Sunderland Magistrates’ Court for failure to comply with improvement notices served on a housing construction site where the company was principal contractor, in February and March 2006. Acting principal HSE inspector Rob Hirst said: “Failure to comply with statutory requirements is a serious matter and failing to address the requirements of an improvement notice is very serious indeed. HSE will take appropriate enforcement action in such cases.” The company had failed to remedy poor traffic management on the site. In February, builder Shabir Naseem received community service and a fine for breaching an HSE prohibition notice ([Risks 295](#)). The courts can jail offenders who fail to obey an HSE enforcement notice.

- HSE news releases on the [William Beach](#) and [DPSL](#) fines.

### BP investors turn on Browne over pay package

BP investors have approved a pay report which guarantees a multi-million pound payout to beleaguered chief executive Lord Browne – despite a substantial shareholders’ revolt over a string of safety and environmental blunders which had led to deaths and an enormous financial and reputational cost to the company ([Risks 300](#)). Lord Browne will leave BP with a £5.3m pay-off in July and a £21.7m pension, as well as millions of pounds in shares due under the incentive plan. Opposition from individual shareholders to the directors’ pay deal overshadowed the company’s annual general meeting last week. The Pensions Investment Research Consultancy (PIRC), which advises pension funds and fund managers, had expressed “significant concerns” over the plan and had advised members to vote against the report. A vote on the oil giant’s remuneration report - in which the most contentious element was Lord Browne’s pay-off - saw 17 per cent of the shareholders vote against. A further 5 per cent of shareholders abstained. Addressing the meeting, Lord Browne said the March 2005 Texas City refinery explosion in which 15 workers died and 170 were injured was the “saddest and darkest” day of his life with BP and said that building a company which was a leader in process safety would be a “fitting memorial” to the workers who died. He said: “Safety has been for many years our top priority. Given that fact, the events of the last two years have been truly humbling.” Audience response to the speech was muted, with only polite applause. A series of reports into the disaster, have found that safety was not in fact the company’s top priority, with one from the official chemical safety board concluding it had a “corporate blindspot” on safety. Failings by Lord Browne and BP’s London based global board were highlighted in the reports ([Risks 299](#)).

- [BBC News Online](#). [The Independent](#).
- [Find out more about BP’s safety record](#).

### Work cancer studies underestimate real risks

A study of cancer risk in workers exposed to metalworking fluids suggests common study approaches systematically under-estimate the true extent of the problem. US researchers say failure to take adequate account of the time lag between exposure and development of an occupational cancer – the latency period – means a significant proportion of work-related cancers can be missed. The Harvard University team looked at the exposure–response relationship between metalworking fluid exposure in the car industry and rectal cancer. They found when their study took account of the time lag effect, the proportion of cancers found to be caused by work was almost 50 per cent higher. The authors conclude their analysis “has shown stronger evidence for a causal association between straight metalworking fluid and rectal cancer than was previously described using standard analytical methods.” They recommend their methods should be applied to other cancer studies. Global union federations have made occupational cancer prevention a key theme for Workers’ Memorial Day, 28 April. They say there is a worldwide epidemic of occupational cancer claiming at least one life every 52 seconds, but warn this tragedy is being ignored or seriously underestimated by both official regulators and employers. They indicate that the Health and Safety Executive’s figure of 4 per cent of all cancers caused by work is certainly less than half and could be just one quarter of the true toll.

- Elizabeth J Malloy, Katie L Miller and Ellen A Eisen. Rectal cancer and exposure to metalworking fluids in the automobile manufacturing industry, *Occupational and Environmental Medicine*, volume 64, pages 244-249, 2007 [[abstract](#)]. [Related editorial](#).
- Hazards [work and cancer](#) webpages and [Work cancer prevention kit](#). [IMF cancer webpages](#).

### Working flat out and feeling fed up

Millions of UK workers are likely to be suffering from depression and panic attacks because they are so stressed out by their jobs. This is one of the key findings of the latest 24-7 survey - a national research project conducted by the Work Life Balance Centre and the universities of Keele, Coventry and Wolverhampton. The internet-based poll has found that two-thirds of respondents had been made ill by work, with 48 per cent of these suffering from depression, and 43 per cent suffering from anxiety or panic attacks. Eight in 10 respondents said they had a problem juggling the competing demands of work and home, with the same proportion at times feeling they could not cope with the demands placed upon them. Women (69.6 per cent) were even more likely to feel this way than men (63 per cent) although both figures have increased in the last 12 months. A third of employees resent the hours they work, and more than a quarter miss family and social occasions for work. Julie Hurst, director of the Work Life Balance Centre said: "Our relationship with work continues to be a complex one. On the one hand people have reported many positives about enjoying their jobs. At the same time however the levels of depression and anxiety have been increasing. Depression and anxiety have become a silent epidemic in the workplace and yet there is so much that can be done to reduce both problems." She added: "I would urge all employers to look carefully at these issues and arrange access to the appropriate forms of help, as it is in the long term interests of the business to support healthy, and ultimately productive, employees."

- Work Life Balance Centre news release [[pdf](#)] and [full 24-7 survey report](#).

## INTERNATIONAL NEWS

### **Australia: Safety suffers after government attack**

Industrial relations reforms in Australia have resulted in widespread breaches of occupational health and safety law, official figures shows. Almost a third (30 per cent) of all Australian Workplace Agreements (AWAs) – individual contracts introduced by the right-wing Howard government in a bid to undermine unions – allow workers no rest breaks during their scheduled hours of work. "This is not only harsh and unfair – it is criminal," said Brian Boyd, secretary of the Victorian Trades Hall Council. "Workers are protected by occupational health and safety law." He added: "We aren't machines and employers shouldn't treat us as such. This is just another example of how harsh and unjust John Howard's workplace laws are. Howard isn't content with helping employers slash the family pay packet and time with our families. Now he is encouraging employers to break health and safety law." He called on WorkSafe-Victoria, the state's workplace safety watchdog, to prosecute any employer found to have contravened safety rules in workplace agreements. In March, the Victorian Safety Institute of Australia said the industrial relations reforms pose the "biggest threat to the safety of Australian workers since asbestos" ([Risks 299](#)).

- [VTHC news release](#).

### **China: Labourers dying in race for Olympic deadline**

Labourers from poor rural areas of China, some in their teens and often lacking the most basic safety equipment, are working seven day weeks for less than £20 to complete the facilities for next year's Beijing Olympics. Six workers were killed late last month on an Olympics project, the construction of a subway tunnel. The state-owned company carrying out the project was accused of a cover-up after the six were buried in a partial collapse of the tunnel, waiting eight hours to report the accident while carrying out its own rescue attempt. According to the Beijing Times, supervisors took away workers' mobile phones to prevent word leaking out. The first the authorities learned of the accident was when a

worker from nearby Henan province secretly called police in his home town, and they relayed the information to Beijing. The Telegraph, reporting on the accident earlier this month, said state-run construction firms have a particularly poor record on safety and other aspects of worker relations. “It's one of the worst industries,” said Robin Munro, who monitors worker conditions for China Labour Bulletin in Hong Kong. He said among the migrant workforce “there's a very high accident rate and very few of them have employment contracts, so they are not covered by medical insurance, supposed to be mandatory.” He suggested the cover-up might be a sign that corners had been cut in the work or that bribes had been paid, but also of the fear companies had of the wrath of the government should anything tarnish the country's Olympics image. This happened at the 2004 Athens Olympics, where up to 40 workers died in the rush to complete the Olympic facilities and infrastructure ([Risks 169](#)).

- [The Independent](#). [The Telegraph](#).

### **Global: Groups reject ‘voluntary’ nano checks**

The environmental and occupational risks posed by exposure to nano products must not be subject to only voluntary controls, a broad-based coalition has warned. The national and international trade union and civil society groups last week issued a joint public statement condemning efforts by DuPont Chemical Company and the influential US Environmental Defense (ED, formerly Environmental Defense Fund) to promote a voluntary “risk assessment” framework for nanotechnology. The groups say that at a time when a growing number of labour and citizens' groups are calling attention to the potential risks of nanotechnology, and the urgent need for an international regulatory framework based on the precautionary principle, DuPont and ED will be promoting their voluntary programme to public and regulatory agencies in the US and abroad. “Voluntary regulations”, the coalition letter notes, “have often been used to delay or weaken rigorous regulation and should

be seen as a tactic to delay needed regulation and forestall public involvement.” Global farm and food trade union federation IUF says commercial products containing engineered nanoparticles - products based on manipulating natural and synthetic materials at the atomic and molecular level - are being rapidly introduced “despite the fact that at present there is no known method for limiting, controlling or even measuring human exposure to nanomaterials and processes in or outside the workplace.” Last month, a report by the UK government’s leading scientific advisers warned the government it had failed to fund adequate research into potential health risks posed by nanotechnology ([Risks 300](#)) in its haste to support nano product development and use.

- [IUF news release](#) and full text of letter [[pdf](#)]. [ETC news release](#).

### **Nicaragua/USA: Pesticide company settles sterility case**

A Southern California chemical company has agreed to pay \$300,000 (£150,000) to Nicaraguan field workers who filed a lawsuit alleging one of the firm's pesticides caused them to become sterile. Lawyers for the plaintiffs announced the settlement with Amvac Chemical Corp during a 15 April rally in Chinandega, Nicaragua. The agreement still requires final approval by a Los Angeles judge. In court papers, the company said the settlement was a “compromise of disputed claims” and denied any wrongdoing. “This is the point of the spear,” said Juan Dominguez, the Los Angeles lawyer who filed the suit, which also names Dow Chemical Co. and Dole Fruit Co. as defendants. The remaining case is scheduled for trial next month. Under the settlement with Amvac, thirteen workers will get payments ranging from \$2,000 (£1,000) to \$60,000 (£30,000), depending on when they worked and their injuries. The workers contend they were sterilised while exposed to a pesticide called DBCP on banana plantations nearly three decades ago, according to the suit. Each of the companies has denied any workers were harmed

by the pesticide, which was manufactured by Dow and Amvac and used by Dole on plantations in Latin America ([Risks 205](#)). The chemical is no longer made or used. In 1997, Dow, Shell Group and Occidental Chemical Corp settled one suit with 26,000 workers in Latin America and elsewhere.

- [Los Angeles Times](#). [ABC 7 News](#). [San Diego Union Tribune](#).

### USA: Unions win action on cement risks

A union legal challenge has won stricter controls on cancer and other risks posed by a constituent of portland cement. The ubiquitous site material contains hexavalent chromium (chrome 6), a known carcinogen and powerful allergen. But in 2006, when the official US safety agency OSHA issued exposure standards for chrome 6 — which is also found in many other compounds, including stainless steel — the agency did not include exposure to portland cement in the standard. Last week, however, Building and Construction Trades Department (BCTD) of national union federation AFL-CIO announced that OSHA had reached a settlement with the BCTD, The Laborers union (LIUNA) and Teamsters (IBT) to inspect US construction sites to ensure safety procedures are in place to reduce worker exposure to portland cement. The three groups sued OSHA in April 2006 when it did not include exposure to portland cement in the chrome 6 standard, even though the unions and BCTD submitted evidence and testified during the rule-making process about the dangerous health effects of exposure. OSHA inspectors are now required to check whether proper washing facilities and supplies, personal protective equipment, access to material safety data sheets, adequate worker training and accurate injury and illness record keeping are in place. BCTD president Edward C Sullivan commented: “Ultimately, the real winners are the workers because they will have the level of protection on the job that the regulations were meant to secure almost 40 years ago. He added: “OSHA now

must see that employers comply with the regulations.”

- [BCTD news release](#) and full text of the settlement agreement [[pdf](#)]. [AFL-CIO Now](#).

## RESOURCES

### Help asbestos victims, buy this DVD

The real price paid for Britain’s lengthy use of asbestos is spelled out in a new DVD from the Forum of Asbestos Victim Support Groups. Elizabeth Bradford, a teacher, Yvonne Lowe, a school caretaker and Andrew Burns, a 37-year-old who was exposed to asbestos as an apprentice electrician, are among those who explain the everyday circumstances that led to them developing mesothelioma, a condition which usually kills within two years. The short film – it runs for just over eight minutes - is also available on YouTube, where it received over 6,000 viewings in its first few weeks online. It was also screened on BBC’s outdoor big screens on 27 February, Action Mesothelioma day. The DVD is an exceptionally well-produced and devastatingly effective resource. And it is a resource that should be seen at union conferences, safety training sessions, branch and safety committee and local group meetings nationwide. Purchasing a copy also helps support the essential work of asbestos victim support groups.

- ‘Mesothelioma: The human face of an asbestos tragedy’ is available for £5.60 (the price includes postage and packing, cheques payable to ‘GMAVSG’) from [Tony Whitston](#), GMHC, Windrush Millennium Centre, 70 Alexandra Road, Manchester, M16 7WD. Tel: 0161 636 7555.

### New cancer prevention newsletter

The UK-based Cancer Prevention and Education Society has launched a quarterly online newsletter which includes excellent summaries of recent news on occupational and environmental cancer risks. The charity's website is also a useful resource for anyone concerned about cancer prevention.

- [Cancer Prevention and Education Society. Sign up to the Society's mailing list](#)

## EVENTS AND COURSES

### **Seminar on the US 9/11 attacks, London, 24 April**

Jonathan Bennett was in New York City when the World Trade Center was attacked on 11 September 2001; he was there when the federal, state and city governments reassured New Yorkers that the air was fit to breathe and that it was business as usual. Now, Jonathan Bennett is in the UK and will tell Londoners at a lunchtime seminar on 24 April what was really in the air in the hours, days and weeks after the buildings were destroyed. With current estimates of 600,000 plus individuals to be affected by contamination-related diseases, he will argue early screening and free medical treatment for those affected is both a moral and civic obligation for both emergency responders and ordinary New Yorkers. Laurie Kazan-Allen, coordinator of the International Ban Asbestos Secretariat (IBAS) and a co-organiser of the event, said: "The story of how elected officials put profit before safety and spin before truth will resonate with UK citizens. Jonathan Bennett and the NY Committee for Occupational Safety and Health were pivotal in working with citizens' groups and NGOs in New York in the hours and days after 9/11 to expose government 'science' as fatally flawed and reassuring press statements as untrue."

- The seminar will be held from 12:45-2:00 pm, Tuesday 24 April 2007 in Room G3, the

London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, 50 Bedford Square, London. Further information: [Laurie Kazan-Allen](#), telephone 0208 958 3887. [Amicus event alert](#). [NYCOSH website](#).

### **TUC courses for safety reps**

#### **HEALTH & SAFETY COURSES**

- [Northern](#), [Southern & Eastern](#), [Yorkshire & Humber](#), [South West](#), [Midlands](#), [Scotland](#), [Wales](#)