



# Risks Newsletter



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Risks is the TUC's weekly online bulletin for safety reps and others, read each week by over 15,000 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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## UNION NEWS

### Safety reps get well active!

The TUC is to train up thousands of workplace safety reps to target prevention efforts at the

work-related health problems that affect over two million workers. A new occupational health guide from TUC and unionlearn, its learning and skills organisation, intends to improve the skills and activity level of safety reps. Over the next year, the TUC hopes that around 15,000 workplace safety reps can be trained using the new educational workbook, 'Occupational health: Dealing with the issues'. The reps will be able to use the guide "to assess the extent of ill-health in their workplaces and work with their employers to find the best ways of making the business a healthier place to work," says TUC. TUC general secretary Brendan Barber said: "Using this workbook, union reps can learn about all the aspects of occupational health. Then they can use it to encourage their employers to do much more to make employees feel they are getting a decent level of support from work when they are ill and again when they are on the road towards a full recovery." Figures released by the Health and Safety Executive in November 2007 revealed a dramatic increase in work related ill-health ([Risks 330](#)).

- [TUC news release. Unionlearn. Personnel Today](#)  
**Computer chip firms in cancer 'fantasy'**

The microelectronics industry is inhabiting an 'Alice in Wonderland' fantasy world when it comes to facing up to possible cancer risks to its staff, the union Unite has warned. It is pressing for the UK computer components and semiconductor industry to initiate industry-wide research into the risks. Following a meeting with Unite, health and safety minister Lord McKenzie wrote to senior executives in the semiconductor industry raising the union's concerns and calling on the industry to fund a national study. However, the industry's response was that "there

is no clear evidence of work-related cancer in the semiconductor industry and does not accept there is a need to conduct an industry-wide study." Peter Skyte, Unite's national officer for the sector, said: "This is in our view an Alice in Wonderland approach. It is precisely because there is no clear evidence that we, the government and the HSE [Health and Safety Executive] see the need for a national study." He added that "government, health and safety agencies and employers must act urgently to reduce any potential cancer risk to stop more people dying in years to come." Unite says previous research including studies covering Scotland and the West Midlands have established there "is sufficient evidence to suggest there may be long-term health risks to current and former workers in the semiconductor, chip and computer sector." A US study by Dr Richard Clapp of Boston University ([Risks 280](#)), who had access to IBM's Corporate Mortality File, found 'significantly greater' than expected numbers of cancer deaths in the sector, including high rates of cancers of the digestive organs, kidneys, brain and central nervous system and malignant melanoma. Amongst women, breast cancer, lung cancer, genital cancer, brain and nervous system cancer rates were all elevated.

- [Unite news release. Global Unions zero cancer campaign](#)

### Protest at HSE's bad move

Unions in the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) have warned its planned HQ move from London to Bootle will lead to a haemorrhage of experienced staff. Over 100 PCS members working at HSE's London HQ joined Workers' Memorial Day protesters outside the building. PCS says of the 320 staff told they would have to move, over 60 staff have already chosen to leave instead and only 12 have expressed an interest in relocating. So far only 28 staff have been recruited in Bootle. It said this means "HSE will lose the competence, knowledge and know-how of a further 250 staff over the next two years."

PCS HSE branch secretary Chris Hurley said: “Management say that savings from moving out of London will enable HSE to improve inspection rates across the country. In fact, London HQ only accounts for 1.5 per cent of total budget. Also, the original business case assumed that 40 per cent of staff would go to the North West. In fact it’s less than 4 per cent. This loss will devastate the organisation. It is time for management to think again before it is too late.” PCS general secretary Mark Serwotka presented a petition to HSE chief executive Geoffrey Podger opposing the move. The union leader commented: “Members in HSE are delivering improvements to the lives of millions in this country. Yet management think it is acceptable to lose these experienced staff. In addition to the personal traumas being imposed on staff, the loss of so much experience puts all workers at risk. This petition ought to cause management to pause and think again about the action they are taking.”

- [PCS news release](#). [Contract Journal](#).

**Unions make work safer**

Trade unions are by far the best vehicle to win better safety at work, transport union RMT has said. The union’s comments came on Workers’ Memorial Day, 28 April, which saw the biggest ever list of commemorative events in the UK and worldwide. RMT said that Britain’s new corporate manslaughter law still lets killer bosses off the hook - and that unions remain workers’ best friend. “After the Southall, Ladbroke Grove, Hatfield and Potters Bar rail crashes that killed 49, 20 years after the Piper Alpha rig disaster saw 167 workers die, five years after four of our members were killed by a runaway trolley at Tebay, profit is still being put ahead of safety,” RMT general secretary Bob Crow said. “The trade union movement has fought for years for a corporate manslaughter law that would finally make individual bosses shoulder responsibility for the needless deaths their negligence causes,” he said, but added the law “will not deliver justice because it won’t put killer bosses in the

dock, and slapping fines on corporations is simply not enough.” The union leader concluded: “The message has to be: if you want to be safer at work, join the union and fight alongside your workmates to make your boss take safety seriously.” Unite called for more rights for union health and safety representatives to maximise this union safety effect. Health and safety officer Rob Miguel said the high injury rates on construction sites showed “we need greater powers for union health and safety representatives to inspect these sites. Increasing their power means reducing the chances of injuries and fatalities in the future.”

- [RMT news release](#). [Unite news release](#). [TUC Workers' Memorial Day webpage](#) and [UK 2008 events listing](#). [Global 28 April webpage](#).

**Dead teen’s family calls for maximum sentence**

Lawyers acting for the family of Daniel Dennis, killed aged 17 after falling through a skylight, have called for company boss Roy Clarke to be given the maximum sentence available to the court. Clarke, the owner of North Eastern Roofing, last month admitted manslaughter after the family’s five year campaign for justice ([Risks 351](#)). A deferred sentencing hearing is scheduled for 6 May. The company boss failed to tell Daniel, who was in his first week at work, not to go onto the roof at the store in Cwmbran, Gwent in April 2003. Daniel’s father, Peter Dennis – who was provided legal support for the case by his union, GMB - had warned the employer that his son had received no safety training and should not work at heights. Thompsons Solicitors, retained by GMB to act for the family, said the case exposes a serious gap in the Corporate Manslaughter and Corporate Homicide Act, which became law on 6 April. The union law firm says Clarke could never have been prosecuted under the Act, even had it been law when Daniel was killed, because he is a sole trader. Mick Antoniwi, the lawyer acting for the Dennis family, said: “We call on the court to hand down the toughest sentence available, to demonstrate that judges are prepared to see

justice is done where an employer is responsible for the death of a worker.” He added: “We welcome the new corporate manslaughter law but will continue to campaign for specific legal duties to be imposed on directors of companies so that they can individually be held to account for the way in which they run their companies.” Allan Garley, regional secretary of the GMB south western region, said: “This case represents a shot across the bows of negligent employers who kill workers. The GMB will pursue those employers who put profit ahead of safety and ensure they are held to account for their actions.”

- [Thompsons Solicitors news release. Western Mail.](#)

### **Dog attack man gets nine months**

A dangerous dog owner has been jailed after his two dogs savaged a Sheffield postal worker. Post union CWU has welcomed the nine month jail term handed down to Jamal Richards at Sheffield Crown Court last week, following the savage mauling of postie Paul Coleman. Judge Alan Goldsack QC jailed Richards after the 19-year-old pleaded guilty to two offences under the 1991 Dangerous Dogs Act. He was also banned from keeping dogs for seven years. Last December, Paul Coleman was carrying out his deliveries when the two bulldog terriers attacked him. The dogs grabbed a leg each and pulled him to the ground tearing “lumps of flesh”. During the prolonged attack, the 40-year-old suffered serious leg, arm and chest injuries and was in hospital for six days, undergoing skin grafts and plastic surgery. The court heard that Mr Coleman has permanent scarring and suffers reduced mobility. Further surgery may be required in the future. The dogs had escaped before and Richards had already been warned about his animals, but, on the day of the attack neither dog was chained up or controlled. Speaking after the case, Paul Coleman said: “Hopefully this will show people they can't leave dogs out to cause damage, because they risk jail if they do.” He said his children were “used to

seeing a big strong dad, not someone who can't walk across the living room.” CWU national health and safety officer Dave Joyce commented: “The union welcomes the seriousness with which the court treated this case and welcomes the decision of the judge in this case to hand down a sentence of two concurrent nine months jail sentences.” He added: “Imposing custodial sentences is clearly the only deterrent these individuals understand.”

- [CWU news release. Sheffield Telegraph.](#)

### **Injured hand? Please hold the line**

Retail workers who are injured at work don't have to fill in reams of forms any more – at least if they are in the shopworkers' union Usdaw. The union has launched a new injury claim line – FirstCall Usdaw – which promises ‘No forms, no fuss, no delay’. Usdaw says the 24/7 telephone claim line for processing applications for legal assistance in injury and disease cases replaces the old form system, giving a faster and easier service for its 359,000 members. John Hannett, Usdaw general secretary, launched FirstCall Usdaw at the union's annual conference last week. He commented: “Looking after members who have been injured at work is at the heart of the union's work. FirstCall Usdaw will give members the fast modern service they deserve and expect. Usdaw's legal services are a great reason to join the union and FirstCall Usdaw will make access even better.”

- [Udaw news release.](#)

### **Widow gets six figure asbestos payout**

The widow of a Unite member has secured £120,000 in an out of court compensation settlement after her husband died from the asbestos related cancer, mesothelioma. The unnamed 71-year-old from Mold in Wales was exposed to asbestos while working for the

Metropolitan Vickers Electrical Company in Trafford Park, Manchester, now known as AEI. He worked for the firm as an improver apprentice and then a production assistant during 1952 and 1956 and again between 1958 and 1964. In a statement before his death, he said: “I am very shocked at the diagnosis and I just felt completely bewildered and stunned. I cannot believe that this has happened to me. I’m so very worried about what will happen to my wife if I die.” The Unite member, who did not have any children, was the sole carer for his wife, aged 92, and hoped the compensation would pay for her to stay in a care home following his death. Unite regional secretary Catherine Speight commented: “It is important for victims of asbestos related diseases and their family members to claim compensation from the insurers of their former employers to achieve a sense of justice.” Joanne Candlish of Thompsons Solicitors, who handled the case for the union, said: “It is disappointing that we were unable to settle during the client’s lifetime but we hope the compensation will help improve his wife’s quality of life. Mesothelioma is a devastating disease, often being diagnosed at a time when patients are looking forward to enjoying a long retirement or conversely are at their most vulnerable.”

- [Thompsons Solicitors news release.](#)

## **OTHER NEWS**

### **Safety’s not first for many bosses**

Many employers put other business concerns ahead of worker safety, a major employee survey has found. When asked to rank their boss’s business priorities, 31 per cent felt that keeping customers and clients happy was their boss’s top concern. A further 26 per cent believed their boss sees getting work done on time as most important, while another 23 per cent said making money is the main goal of their employer. Only seven per cent said that making sure employees are not hurt or made ill by their work was their boss’s main priority. The

YouGov survey commissioned by safety professionals’ organisation IOSH found that 56 per cent of employees felt health and safety was important to their boss, although 14 per cent felt it was not. The survey, based on responses from a sample of 2,623 employed adults, found over two-thirds (67 per cent) of employees felt health and safety either saved lives or meant people didn’t get ill or hurt at work. IOSH said the findings suggested the majority don’t think it’s about red tape, silly European laws or stopping people getting on with their lives. Ray Hurst, the president of IOSH, commented: “These workers’ views suggest that there’s still a minority of employers out there who simply don’t give a damn about their staff. There are some who still think it’s okay to cut corners and put their staff at risk, and that’s not acceptable. While the vast majority of bosses do take health and safety seriously, workers feel some do not.” He added: “Most people questioned in these surveys are quite clear that health and safety is important to them.”

- [IOSH news release.](#)

### **Boards must give safety priority**

Companies have been told they have to take safety seriously at board level, or there could be consequences. Health and Safety Executive (HSE) chair Judith Hackitt last week reminded board members and senior business directors to put effective health and safety performance high on their agendas. Speaking at a Capita senior directors’ health and safety briefing in London, she said: “No matter how good the health and safety system, nor how competent those who manage it, without effective board-level leadership and oversight, the competing demands of running a business can push health and safety into a back seat.” Recent incidents such as the explosions at Buncefield and BP’s Texas City refinery clearly show the need for strong health and safety leadership in high hazard industries, the HSE chair indicated. “The challenge now is very much with directors and boards who must seize the opportunity to critically evaluate the

risks in their business and the adequacy of their leadership and to make changes.” In what will be seen by many as the threat of new legal safety duties on directors if boards do not take action voluntarily, Ms Hackitt added: “Directors and boards need to translate words into actions, and deliver - the ball is in their court.” Both Judith Hackitt and health and safety minister Lord McKenzie have indicated that statutory health and safety duties on directors could be introduced if firms fail to employ effective voluntary controls. HSE and the Institute of Directors last year jointly published a voluntary guide, ‘Leading health and safety: leadership actions for directors and board members’. HSE said the “user-friendly” document is written “by directors, for directors.” The impact of the guide will be evaluated by HSE in the second half of 2009. A Select Committee report last week said there was a convincing case for legal safety duties on directors ([Risks 353](#)).

- [HSE news release, leadership conference news release](#) and [leadership webpages](#). [Judith Hackitt podcast](#).

### Another six figure death fine for Corus

An incident that saw a Corus worker crushed to death has cost the company £200,000 in fines and costs – the second time it had received a six figure fine related to a fatality in less than three months. The tragedy happened at the company’s Brinsworth site at Rotherham. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) said a limit switch fitted to the crane was defective, allowing the hoist rope to over-tighten and snap, causing a 260kg block to fall onto strip mill worker Shane Eastwood. The 34-year-old was pronounced dead at the scene on 2 July 2003. HSE inspector David Bradley said: “This was a tragic and entirely avoidable accident. The limit switch fitted to this crane to prevent over hoisting was a safety critical device. It should have been properly maintained in a safe working condition, and regularly tested. The fact that these simple measures were not taken led to this tragic death.” Corus UK Ltd was fined £170,000 for

safety offences and ordered to pay costs of £30,000. In February, Corus was fined £250,000 and told to pay costs of £43,000 following the workplace death of Francis Coles, 42, a worker at its Trostre plant in Llanelli ([Risks 344](#)). It was also fined £125,000 in August last year after a worker suffered horrific, near fatal burns at its Scunthorpe plant ([Risks 320](#)).

- [HSE news release. Builder and Engineer.](#)
- [More on recent Corus deaths and prosecutions.](#)

### Cost-cutting firm cost worker an eye

A Gateshead company that failed to properly maintain machinery or train its staff has been fined £10,500 following an incident that left a worker blind in one eye. Magistrates blamed the horrific incident on bosses looking to save money. Weldex UK employee Norman Fielding, a 49-year-old welder, was lucky to survive when a metal-cutting disc disintegrated and shards smashed through his safety visor and into his left eye. The metal stopped just millimetres from his brain. Chair of the bench Malcolm Ormiston told Gateshead Magistrates’ Court: “The company accepts that it was not following its own procedure. We believe this was to cut costs. The company ignored guidelines. We see no mitigating circumstances.” HSE inspector Martin Baillie, who investigated the 1 August 2007 incident, told the court: “Mr Fielding had not been trained in the use of abrasive wheels. His injuries could easily have been fatal.” Commenting after the case, he said: “All work equipment must be suitable for use, regularly maintained and inspected and only used by people who have received adequate training.” Weldex UK Ltd pleaded guilty to three breaches of the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998. It was fined £3,500 on each charge and ordered to pay £2,832 in costs.

- [HSE news release. The Journal. Building.](#)

### Glass firm fined after worker severs artery

A company has been fined after a worker severed an artery after falling from a ladder while repairing a window. Carlisle Glass Ltd was fined £10,000 by Carlisle magistrates and ordered to pay costs of £1,100 after admitting the safety breach. Health and Safety Executive (HSE) inspector Mhairi Duffy said the employee had removed large pieces of broken glass and was using a hacking tool and a hammer to remove the old putty from the frame when the ladder slipped and he severed an artery and two tendons on his left hand. The inspector said the ladder was not secured and the employee had not received any training in the use of ladders. The ladder was not suitable for this type of the work as the employee was unable to hold on properly while working. She said: “This was an entirely avoidable incident and the consequences could have been far worse. The injured person has undergone physiotherapy, but still suffers from some mobility loss and loss of grip. The injured person had not received any training in the use of ladders and in this case more suitable access equipment should have been used.” Ms Duffy added: “This prosecution should serve as a warning of the dangers working at height and to ensure that employers take their responsibilities seriously.”

- [HSE news release](#) and [ladders webpages. News and Star.](#)

### Finger loss costs glue firm £9,000

A Corby firm has been fined after a worker lost part of her middle finger in a machine. Melissa Graham, 31, was working for glue manufacturer Chemence Ltd when the 18 July 2007 incident occurred. The firm was fined £9,000 and ordered to pay £1,835.60 costs at Corby Magistrates Court after pleading guilty to breaches of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 and the Provision and Use of Work Equipment

Regulations 1998. Ms Graham was placing empty aluminium tubes for glue inside a machine, when it jammed. As she attempted to clear the jam, her hand was drawn into the machine. She pressed the stop button, but it failed to work. Two other workers tried to press the emergency stop button but Ms Graham’s left middle finger would not come free and was virtually amputated at the last joint. After being trapped for over an hour she was taken to hospital by air ambulance, but medics could not reattach her finger. HSE inspector Rowena Dossett said: “This incident could have been avoided if Chemence Ltd had made a suitable and sufficient risk assessment and employees made aware of the dangers associated with the machine and its deceptively slow speed. It only took a second for each holder to advance which did not give Melissa Graham enough time to remove her finger.” She added: “Employers must ensure that sufficient risk assessments are made and that all employees are made aware of the dangers of the machinery they work with and that dangerous moving parts of machinery are guarded. If this had been the case here Melissa Graham would not have suffered such a horrendous incident.”

- [HSE news release.](#)

### Quarry fined after rock smashes head

A Bromsgrove company has been fined £5,000 after an employee suffered a serious injury when a 66lb lump of sandstone fell on his head. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) prosecuted Wildmoor Quarry Products Ltd following the 21 March 2007 incident. Timothy Palmer had been working overtime at a power operated machine and went to clean it out when the large block of sandstone fell approximately 20ft (6 metres), striking him on the back of the head. John Williams, chair of Wildmoor Quarry, pleaded guilty to a safety breach. The court heard he had provided safety hard hats, but did not enforce their use, and that protective screens were not properly maintained. Speaking after the case, HSE investigating inspector Ian Williamson said:

“Assessing risks and implementing safe systems of work, particularly on moving machinery, often only requires simple control measures but, in this case, screens, which may have prevented the boulder from entering the machine, were not sufficiently maintained. It is also obvious that workers should wear suitable head protection in an environment where there are large, heavy, materials swiftly moving along at high level.” Wildmoor Quarry Products Ltd was fined a total of £5,000 and ordered to pay costs of £3,520 at Bromsgrove and Redditch Magistrates’ Court.

- [HSE news release](#) and [quarries webpage](#). [Bromsgrove Advertiser](#).

### Worker narrowly escapes quarry death

A quarry company and one of its employees have been fined after an incident which “could have killed” a worker. Northumberland firm W&M Thompson (Quarries) Ltd and foreman Alan Armstrong admitted breaching safety regulations when they appeared at Bishop Auckland Magistrates’ Court. The case followed an investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) into the incident at the Bishop Middleham quarry in County Durham on 1 May last year. David Luke, 28, of Trimdon in County Durham, was using equipment to suppress dust, when his clothes became caught in a machine. He was dragged towards it and was only saved when his clothes ripped and released him. Earlier, a metal guard, which would have prevented the incident, had been removed by Alan Armstrong because it was broken. Mr Luke, who is still employed by the company, was in hospital for six days. He suffered severe bruising to his body and back, three cracked ribs and bruised lungs. HSE inspector Martin Baillie, who investigated the incident, told the court if Mr Luke’s clothing had not ripped, he could have been killed. He added that a risk assessment in 2004 had identified the need for daily, recorded checks on the machinery. “It is reasonable to expect that had the damage to the guarding been identified during earlier checks, the problem would have been rectified prior to this incident,” he said. The

court fined W&M Thompson (Quarries) Ltd £3,000 and £1,756 in costs. Alan Armstrong, who had instructed Mr Luke to operate the unguarded machine, was fined £1,200 and ordered to pay £500 costs.

- [HSE news release](#). [The Journal](#).

## INTERNATIONAL NEWS

### Global: New union push on work cancers

Union bodies worldwide are increasing the pressure for an end to workplace cancer risks. Australian national union federation ACTU this week launched a zero cancer campaign. It says more than 1.5 million workers may be exposed to cancer-causing substances on the job without even knowing it. ACTU president Sharan Burrow launched the three-year campaign to eliminate cancer-causing substances from the workplace on Workers’ Memorial Day, 28 April. She said the problem “isn’t related to any one occupation,” adding: “There are some occupations clearly that are more likely to come in contact with products that can create cancer, but right across the board... wherever people are liable to be working with products that we don’t know enough about.” Ms Burrow called for a government-led national inquiry and more research into cancer-causing substances in workplaces. ACTU was one of the organisations participating last week in a global occupational cancer prevention conference in Stirling, Scotland. Top experts and union specialists and reps from around the world attended the event. Fiona Murie, health and safety director of the global building union federation BWI, told delegates there was a “vicious cycle” caused by the “social invisibility” of work-related cancers. There was no information or training on cancer prevention, no recognition of its occupational origins and no proper treatment, compensation or regulation, she said.

- [BWI news release](#). [News.com.au](#). [ABC News](#).

- [Global Unions occupational cancer prevention campaign.](#)

carbon nanotube, Journal of Toxicological Sciences, volume 33, number 1, pages 105-116, 2008 [[pdf](#)].

**Australia: Union alert on formaldehyde cancers**

Australia's biggest building union is calling on the federal government to start an urgent investigation into the use of formaldehyde in household products. CFMEU said formaldehyde poses a real cancer risk to workers and must be subject to stringent laws. The union added high levels of the dangerous carcinogen – it has the International Agency for Research on Cancer’s (IARC) top ‘group 1’ rating - could be found in thousands of Australian homes as it is used in particle board and furniture. CFMEU health and safety coordinator, Martin Kingham, said members had reported a range of health effects from short-term exposure including asthma, breathing difficulties, skin irritation, severe eczema and dizziness. “With the combination of both those short-term exposures but also the potential of increased cancer risks with long-term exposure that’s a convincing argument that we should be using the safest standard possible here in Australia,” he said. He added that there is a voluntary formaldehyde content standard that Australian manufacturers comply with, but imported particle and chip boards often contain up to four times the acceptable level. Only legislation will stop the import of products containing unacceptable levels of formaldehyde, he said, adding: “All foreign imports should measure up to Australian standards to ensure the health and safety of all Australians are not jeopardised.” Concerns are increasing about the range and volumes of carcinogen exposures at work – including the rapid introduction of new materials. New research has found carbon nanotubes can cause mesothelioma in mice, a cancer previously associated almost exclusively with asbestos exposures.

- [CFMEU news release. ABC News.](#)
- Atsuya Takagi and others. Induction of mesothelioma in p53+/- mouse by intraperitoneal application of multi-wall

**Morocco: Murder charge call after fire deaths**

Moroccan police have arrested the owner and manager of a Casablanca mattress factory engulfed by a fire that killed at least 55 people. The global union federation for the garment sector, ITGLWF, had earlier called for murder charges to be brought against those responsible. An emergency officer said managers at the Rosamor factory had locked in staff during work hours to stop theft, trapping them in the fire on 26 April. Windows were also barred and fire extinguishers were empty. ITGLWF said all those culpable in the deaths should be charged - not only the owners, but also officials in government ministries and agencies who had ignored worker abuse and safety hazards in the factory. “This was an accident waiting to happen and could have occurred at hundreds of locations in Morocco and tens of thousands across the world where textiles and household textiles’ manufacturers exploit workers and ignore basic safety standards while the authorities turn a blind eye to death trap factories,” said ITGLWF general secretary Neil Kearney. “Death trap workplaces and irresponsible employers should have no role in economic and industrial development. The Moroccan authorities must now undertake an urgent review of all workplace conditions including factory safety, immediately suspend the operation of all facilities deemed dangerous, bring charges against all enterprises in breach of labour legislation, including wages and hours laws and safety standards and put in place a time-bound programme of legal compliance for every industrial workplace.”

- [ITGLWF news release. ITUC news release. ABC News.](#)

**USA: Latinos worst affected by deaths hike**

Workplace fatalities have increased sharply for Latino and immigrant workers in the US, according to a shocking new report. The new edition of 'Death on the job: The toll of neglect', published by the US national union federation AFL-CIO, reports that 2006 fatal injuries among Latino workers increased by seven per cent, with 990 fatalities. This is the highest number of Latino worker deaths ever reported. The total number of fatal workplace injuries in the US was 5,840, an increase from the year before. On average, 16 workers were fatally injured each day. "It's clear that the workplace safety net has more holes than fabric, and it is costing too many American workers their lives," said AFL-CIO president John Sweeney. "Our nation's workplaces have gotten more dangerous, not safer, under president Bush." He said the next president and Congress must strengthen safety legislation, strengthen the safety enforcement agency OSHA and introduce "tougher civil and criminal penalties". The report said the current level of federal and state OSHA inspectors provides one inspector for every 63,913 workers. This compares to a benchmark of one labour inspector for every 10,000 workers recommended by the International Labour Organisation for industrialised countries. At current staffing levels, it would take 133 years to inspect all the nation's workplaces, the report said.

- [AFL-CIO news release.](#)

## RESOURCES

### HSE migrant worker webpages

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has improved its multi-lingual migrant worker webpages to provide guidance for workers from overseas and their employers. Announcing the upgrade on Workers' Memorial Day, Geoffrey Podger, chief executive of HSE, said: "The website is a valuable tool for overseas workers and their employers and will help them to understand their roles and responsibilities under

British health and safety law." HSE says the pages for workers have been translated into several languages, and are also available in English.

- [HSE news release and migrant workers webpages.](#)

## EVENTS AND COURSES

### TUC courses for safety reps

#### COURSES FOR APRIL TO JULY 2008

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

### 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](#).
- **Subscribe** to [Hazards](#) magazine, supported by the TUC as a key source of information for union safety reps.
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