

Risks

TUC 

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**HAZARDS
MAGAZINE**

 **Shattered
HSE Lives**
Slips, trips & falls at work 

Hazards at Work
updated second edition
now available

Risks is the TUC's weekly online bulletin for safety reps and others, read each week by over 16,000 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](#)

Editor: [Rory O'Neill](#) of [Hazards](#) magazine. Comments to the TUC at healthandsafety@tuc.org.uk

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Advice shortfall for vulnerable workers

Hard pressed employment advisers are struggling to meet the needs of the UK's most vulnerable workers, a TUC report has revealed. The news comes as the government is seeking to reduce safety enforcement cover to many of the sectors identified in the report as particularly badly affected by employment abuses. Researchers from the Centre for Employment Studies Research at Bristol Business School, commissioned by the TUC's Commission on Vulnerable Employment (CoVE), interviewed employment advisers from Citizens Advice (CABx) and the law centres across the UK. The research highlights the extent of the problems that vulnerable workers face, frequently at the hands of 'repeat offenders'. It found 79 per cent of advisers receive reports of unfair dismissal weekly or more frequently. Two-thirds (67 per cent) receive reports of problems with pay weekly or more frequently and 60 per cent deal with problems with working time or contractual rights weekly or more frequently. These problems are concentrated in low paid sectors where most jobs are held by women, the study found, with agency workers also more likely to report problems. Advisers told the researchers that workers experiencing problems were most likely to work in private care homes, hotels and restaurants, hairdressing and beauty, wholesale and retail, or for cleaning companies. A Better Regulation Executive report on health and safety this month, welcomed by business secretary John Hutton, identified a number of these jobs, including the hotel and restaurant and wholesale and retail sectors as 'low risk', and recommended they receive less attention from the Health and Safety Executive ([Risks 368](#)).

- [TUC news release](#). [CoVE research webpages](#). [Personnel Today](#).

Millions now 'jittery about their jobs'

More than 3.3 million workers, 13 per cent of the workforce, are not confident they will still be in their job in a year's time, according to a new YouGov poll commissioned by the TUC. Workers in medium sized businesses are the least confident with 18 per cent of staff in firms with 50 to 249 workers saying they are not confident of being in their jobs in a year, compared to 12 per cent in big workplaces (more than 1,000 employees). Those in low paid jobs are less secure than those in better paid jobs, the poll found, with the least confident about keeping their job earning between £10,000 and £15,000 and the most confident earning more than £50,000. Union members were more optimistic than non-members, with 48 per cent of trade unionists very confident that they would be in their job in a year's time, compared to 40 per cent of workers not in a union. TUC general secretary Brendan Barber commented: "These poll findings show just how many people are getting worried about losing their job in the current economic slowdown. Of course this does not mean that unemployment will rise by anything like three million, but it does show just how jittery people have become about the economy and their own job." He added: "The economy will inevitably slow this year and next, given the credit crunch and the impact of higher oil, food and commodity prices. But there is a real

danger that if everyone thinks that the downturn will be deeper than it needs to be it will become a self-fulfilling prophecy. These findings add to the growing pressure on the government and economic policy makers to put growth first by doing all they can to restore confidence and boost investment." Job insecurity has been linked to higher rates of work-related accidents, sickness and heart disease ([Risks 260](#)).

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

Injury costs care assistant her job

A care assistant who was hurt whilst lifting a resident at a residential care home in Darlington has been awarded £8,000 compensation from her former employer after losing her job as a result of the injury. In August 2005, GMB member Margaret Yates, now aged 58, was required to help dress an elderly lady who was immobile. Together with a colleague, Mrs Yates had to drag the lady up off the bed at the Grange Residential Care Home whilst reaching around to pull undergarments up, resulting in an injury to her back. Mrs Yates said: "Very often we were dealing with very frail residents who simply couldn't help themselves. On this occasion my colleague and I had to support the full bodyweight of this very elderly lady and I did my best under the circumstances as I would for any of the residents. If I'd known how to dress her or any other of the residents properly, or been given access to training, I would have adopted a safer method instead." A GMB spokesperson said: "Mrs Yates' case highlights certain deficiencies in the private sector in terms of providing training and instruction of staff in safe handling techniques when assisting residents in care homes. This not only puts the staff at risk but there are also issues as to the safety and dignity of the residents."

- [Thompsons Solicitors news release.](#)

RMT condemns Tube's 'cavalier' attitude

London Underground union RMT has condemned the company's "cavalier" attitude to safety after it emerged that 23 passengers, including a child, were trapped in a lift at Elephant and Castle station for nearly an hour-and-a-half on Friday night, 22 August. The union says the passengers' ordeal, which began at around 21.30pm, was prolonged unnecessarily because "inexperienced and inadequately trained managers" were drafted in to replace striking station staff. The industrial action was in support of the union's demand for the re-instatement of colleague Jerome Bowes, who was sacked after defending himself against an attack from behind on New Year's Eve. "This incident underlines why we believe it is irresponsible to leave scab managers in charge of any Tube station, not least a busy one with lifts," RMT general secretary Bob Crow said. "Under normal circumstances if it took more than 20 minutes to get people out, managers would be demanding to know why it had taken so long, and if it took more than an hour they would be looking for someone to discipline." The union leader added: "Safety reps tell me that the failsafe systems on the lifts at Elephant and

Castle are unusual, but the people normally staffing the station are familiar with them. Instead of parachuting in scab managers without the training, local experience and knowledge to cope when things go wrong, LUL should be sorting out the injustice to Jerome Bowes that has led to this dispute in the first place.”

- [RMT news release](#).

Angry asbestos activists doorstep ministers

Asbestos activists have taken their campaign for justice for workers with pleural plaques directly to the seats of two prominent Cabinet ministers. The two constituencies targeted on 29 August were the Blackburn seat of justice secretary Jack Straw and the Leeds Central constituency of environment secretary Hilary Benn. Construction union UCATT report's than Benn's constituency has the highest number of asbestos related deaths in Yorkshire. The campaigners say they are disappointed that in a recently published consultation paper on pleural plaques the government said it "is not minded" to overturn a Law Lords decision last October to deny pleural plaques victims compensation. Pleural plaques are scarring of the lung caused by prolonged exposure to asbestos. UCATT says they can cause physical symptoms, with victims suffering from severe mental distress. The union adds that those with pleural plaques have a greatly increased chance of contracting the incurable asbestos-related cancer mesothelioma. The Scottish government has already published a bill to overturn the House of Lord's ruling and make compensation possible for plaques sufferers ([Risks 362](#)). Alan Ritchie, general secretary of UCATT, said: "It would be unfair and intolerable if pleural plaque victims north of the border received compensation, while those in England did not." In July, UCATT targeted the constituencies of foreign secretary David Milliband and business secretary John Hutton, as part of their campaign to overturn the Law Lords decision.

- UCATT news releases on the actions at [Hilary Benn's](#) and [Jack Straw's](#) constituencies. [Building](#).

New bank holiday would benefit businesses

Nearly one million UK businesses could benefit from a new bank holiday with workers also benefiting from improved health and well-being, according to a new TUC report. TUC is calling for a 'Community Day' bank holiday in late October "to celebrate and encourage volunteering and community activity." The TUC report - 'Why the UK can afford a Community Day' - says that many customer-facing businesses, such as those in the retail, hospitality, leisure, tourism and transport sectors, have stronger trading days on bank holidays and could benefit from a new public holiday. These sectors have grown over the last 40 years and now account for nearly a million UK businesses - over one fifth of the total - according to government VAT registrations. The report says that, as well as encouraging people to go on holidays and short breaks, bank holidays lead to more 'days out', which bring in £90 billion worth of spending a year to the economy in England alone. The TUC

report also argues that all employers would benefit from the improved productivity, morale, health and well-being that it would give staff. The TUC believes these benefits vastly outweigh the cost of an extra day off work. The report was published ahead of the August bank holiday, after which workers in the UK will have a four month wait for the next bank holiday on Christmas Day. The TUC, along with leading voluntary organisations, is calling for the government to break this gap with a late October 'Community Day'. TUC general secretary Brendan Barber said: "A new bank holiday would be very popular for Britain's workers, who have fewer public holidays than anyone else in Europe except Romania. But it could also bring in much needed revenue to around a million UK businesses." He added: "A Community Day would encourage more people to take up volunteering for a day. In return, employers will have a healthier, happier and more productive workforce. We urge businesses, politicians and community groups to join us in our campaign for a new Community Day bank holiday."

- [TUC news release](#). [BBC News Online](#).
- [Community Day campaign](#). Why the UK can afford a Community Day, TUC report [[pdf](#)].

Other news

Call to link safety fines to share price

A simple change in the law to vary the powers open to Scottish judges in cases of death or injury at work could dramatically change the climate of corporate responsibility, a member of the Scottish parliament has said. SNP MSP Bill Wilson this week launched a consultation on a proposed Member's Bill to allow judges to fine companies on the basis of their share price rather than their running costs, and to give courts the power to scrutinise company books. Mr Wilson, who is backed by corporate accountability and safety campaigns and the Fire Brigades Union Scotland, said he was proposing a minor change to the law in Scotland which could have a major impact because judges currently failed to use their full power to levy swingeing fines for fear that this would be passed on in company closures and redundancies. A system of "equity fines" would instead force publicly quoted firms into share issues to pay off fines, which would hit the shareholders and bosses instead of employees and the public. The MSP said: "Companies found guilty of criminal offences often appear to have only trivial penalties imposed. For example, the fine for criminally causing the death of a worker or member of the public is less than £12,500 in 50 per cent of cases." Louise Adamson, of Families Against Corporate Killers (FACK), who lost her brother in a workplace tragedy, said: "We welcome these proposals for equity fines which will lay the punishment for corporate offending at the feet of those who are ultimately responsible - those running the business - and we hope this can form part of a package of measures to improve health and safety." Ms Adamson said the fine in the ICL/Stockline case amounted to just £50,000 per death, while in England there had been cases involving fines as low as £2 because companies persuaded courts they would be unable to pay ([Risks 360](#)). Even in the case of the Transco blast in Larkhall the £15m fine represented just 2 per cent of the company's profit ([Risks 228](#)).

- [Bill Wilson MSP news release](#) and Criminal Sentencing (Equity Fines) Bill – consultation [[pdf](#)]. [The Herald](#). [Press and Journal](#). [The Scotsman](#).

Scottish Coal fined over deaths

Scottish Coal Company Ltd has been fined £400,000 for health and safety breaches over the deaths of two miners in Ayrshire. It admitted failing to ensure a safe system of working at Pennyvenie open cast mine near Dalmellington. Colin Ferguson, 37, and Brian French, 48, died there last February when their Land Rover was crushed by a 100 tonne capacity dump truck after they drove into the giant vehicle's blindspot. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) said the "entirely preventable" deaths arose from management failures. The fine on the mining giant was imposed after the case was brought before Ayr Sheriff Court. Passing sentence, Sheriff John Montgomery said the company had been guilty of two failures over the deaths. "The first is a failure to provide a safe system of work for the movement of vehicles and plant at the site," he said. "Relatively small vehicles such as the Land Rover in which the two deceased were travelling were not prevented from being operated in close proximity to large vehicles including dump trucks while they were being operated with reduced visual fields thereby creating a risk of collision. The second is a failure to provide the operators of all mobile plant with suitable means of communication or other equipment to reduce the risk of collision and injury." HSE inspector Norrie Buchanan commented: "These two deaths were entirely preventable and arose from the clear failure of Scottish Coal to provide suitable means of communication between different vehicles on site in order to reduce the risk of collisions, as well as a failure to manage vehicles on their site." He added: "Control measures to reduce the risk are easily available at a minimal cost. Installing an additional camera on the side of the dump truck, fitting a raised roof beacon or other means of improving visibility on the Land Rover could prevent similar incidents in the future."

- [HSE news release](#). [BBC News Online](#). [Cumnock Chronicle](#).

Site boss denies teen manslaughter

A building site boss has appeared in court to deny the manslaughter of a 15-year-old Essex boy crushed to death at work. Adam Gosling, from Latchingdon, was killed during the demolition of a brick wall at the site in Hadley Wood, Enfield, on 23 April last year. It is alleged he was unsupervised and had attempted the task because a specialist worker had not turned up for work. He was working on the site earning £25 a day with his 18-year-old brother Dean when the pair were asked to demolish the wall. After the wall collapsed, Dean frantically lifted the bricks off his brother with the help of firefighters called to the incident but Adam was pronounced dead at the scene. His boss Colin Holtom, 63, is alleged to have failed to provide him with adequate supervision, training, protective clothing, and risk assessment or warning. He denied a charge of manslaughter by gross negligence in an appearance at the Old Bailey. He also pleaded not guilty to a charge under health and safety law. Darren Fowler, 46, who appeared alongside him in the

dock, denied a similar charge, as well as a further count alleging that he took part in running a company while under a bankruptcy order. Both men were granted bail and are due to face trial on 15 April next year.

- [Construction News](#). [Contract Journal](#). [Rye and Battle Observer](#).

Firm fined after groin injury

A Lincoln firm has been fined after a worker suffered a severe groin injury while moving a 96 kilogram oven. Catering equipment manufacturer Lincat Limited was fined £19,400 and ordered to pay £4,800 costs at Lincoln Magistrates Court after pleading guilty to breaching the Health and Safety at Work Act and two contraventions of the Manual Handling Operations Regulations. Oven assembler Rolf Cinavas and his supervisor were both moving five pizza ovens, one at a time, from a waist-high assembly bench down to ankle-high pallets on the floor, without using any mechanical aids. The employees had not been made aware of how heavy the ovens were or how they should be moved safely, as a suitable risk assessment had not been carried out. Rolf suffered a severe groin injury while moving one of the ovens. HSE inspector Dr Ian James Ellison commented: "These men were unaware that the weight of this product was more than 15 stone. One of the workers also needed almost nine weeks off work because of the incident, which highlights the severity of the injury and the need for a sufficient and suitable risk assessment to be conducted when any sort of manual handling is required." Lindsay Taylor, for Lincat, said that since the accident pizza ovens were now built on pallets and moved onto the floor for further assembly using mechanical lifting equipment. She added that a full-time health and safety manager was now employed and a health and safety committee had been set up.

- [HSE news release](#) and [manual handling assessment guide](#). [Lincolnshire Echo](#).

Action against rogue gangmasters soars

The number of gangmasters whose licences have been revoked has soared. Figures released this week by the Gangmasters Licensing Authority (GLA) reveal 22 gangmasters have had their licences revoked in just over the first quarter of the 2008 financial year. GLA says the revocations send a resounding message to those who abuse their power and their workers – there is no hiding place, the GLA will find you. It says the leap in revocations coincides with GLA's hard-hitting Operation Ajax which was launched by the authority in April to stamp down on worker exploitation and abuse. From April to mid-August 2008, 22 gangmasters' licences were revoked. This compared to 33 in the 2007 financial year, and 15 in 2006. GLA chair Paul Whitehouse said: "These figures show we meant what we said when we launched Operation Ajax to clamp down on those who are abusing the system and their workers. And make no mistake, we will continue this fight. We will not let up on those who think they can make money out of abusing the system and the lives of vulnerable workers." There are 1,186 GLA licences

are held by UK labour providers. Since the authority became operational in 2006, there have been 70 revocations and 42 licence refusals. Unions have pressed for GLA coverage to be extended to other sectors, including construction and care homes. GLA chair Paul Whitehouse has said the watchdog would be "willing and ready to accept the challenge of reducing exploitation elsewhere" ([Risks 356](#)).

- GLA news release [[pdf](#)].

The asbestos industry's deadly lies

The deaths of tens of thousands of UK workers from asbestos disease was not an unanticipated tragedy, but resulted from a sophisticated political and public relations campaign to prolong the use of the deadly fibre. Ed Howker, writing in the *New Statesman* this week, reveals the extent of the support asbestos giant Turner and Newall (T&N) received from government officials and politicians. One government medical adviser is recorded as advising T&N to keep quiet about the cancer dangers of their product. In correspondence between two directors of the plant, the opinion of Professor Archie Cochrane, director of epidemiology at the Medical Research Council, was noted: "In tackling a problem of this nature [mesothelioma] one should either be completely frank with everyone or maintain complete secrecy - it is the latter that he feels is best at the moment." To assist in the cover up, the company employed public relation firm Hill and Knowlton, credited with writing the playbook on "product defence" in its highly effective defence of the tobacco industry. In 1968, T&N circulated a confidential five-point plan prepared by Hill and Knowlton entitled 'Putting the case for asbestos.' Its purpose was to enable staff to field questions about asbestos cancer. It began, in capital letters: "Never be the first to raise the health question." The government, meanwhile, brushed aside health concerns, fearing a risk to jobs. The company also had the loyal support of then Rochdale MP Cyril Smith, a sometime company shareholder who claimed in the Commons to be basing his comments on his own detailed research, but who in fact had asked T&N to draft a speech delivered in the House. The *New Statesman* article brings the story up to the moment, revealing how a bankruptcy ruse and other company manoeuvring continue to deny its asbestos disease victims the compensation they are due.

- [New Statesman](#).

Payout plans for injured officers

Proposals that would dramatically increase payouts to 'totally disabled' police officers but that could see many injured officers lose out have been announced by the government. The officers suffering the most severe injuries in the line of duty will be eligible for a payment of five times their average pensionable salary. But those who suffer only a slight loss of earning capacity will not receive injury pensions. The proposals, which are being sent to forces across the UK for consultation, also specifically extend injury benefits to officers wounded in a terrorist attack. Under the plans,

officers who are totally disabled as a result of an injury will be eligible for a payment of five times their average pensionable salary, an increase from the current limit of four times their pay. But benefits will no longer be paid to officers hurt on their journey to or from work and those who suffer only a slight loss of earning capacity will not receive injury pensions. The Met Police Federation said the number of officers set to gain from the changes is "absolutely minuscule". Policing minister Tony McNulty said the focus had to be on those who were more seriously injured or killed.

- [BBC News Online. Review of Police Injury Benefits.](#)

Police fear officer death charge

Police bosses in Manchester have set up a £1m 'contingency fund' to pay for possible fines and legal costs after an officer was shot dead by a colleague during a training session, according to a report by the Manchester Evening News (MEN). A probe by the Independent Police Complaints Commission, with support from the Health and Safety Executive, is expected to identify a series of blunders which led to the death in June of PC Ian Terry. He was hit in the chest with a 'non-lethal' round used to overpower suspects while playing the role of a fleeing criminal during a training exercise. He was not wearing body armour when he was hit with RIP (Round Irritant Personnel) ammunition while sitting in a car. The shotgun cartridge, designed to deliver CS gas, was filled with white powder. MEN reports that police sources say it is highly likely that Greater Manchester Police (GMP) will be prosecuted by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). It says there is also a possibility that the officer who fired the gun could face manslaughter charges and GMP a corporate manslaughter charge. A confidential report to Greater Manchester Police Authority says there is "potential for civil and or criminal/regulatory proceedings." The report adds that the penalty and legal costs of a successful prosecution would be between £200,000 and £700,000 depending on the charges and plea - and members accepted that a contingency fund of £1m be set aside. Corporate manslaughter carries the potential for unlimited fines. The report says GMP would be guilty if its activities were managed "in a way which causes a person's death and amounts to a gross breach of a relevant duty of care owed by the force to the deceased."

- [Manchester Evening News.](#)

International News

Global: Social injustice is a major killer

Social factors including poor working conditions are to blame for huge variations in ill-health and life expectancy around the world, an international commission has concluded. The World Health Organisation (WHO) convened commission carried out a three-year analysis of the "social determinants" of health. Its report concludes

"social injustice is killing people on a grand scale". It adds that the "toxic combination of bad policies, economics, and politics is, in large measure, responsible for the fact that a majority of people in the world do not enjoy the good health that is biologically possible." Poor work is identified as major contributory factor to health inequities. In a section on fair employment and decent work, the Commission calls for: full and fair employment and decent work to be a central goal of national and international social and economic policy-making; economic and social policies that ensure secure work for men and women with a living wage that takes into account the real and current cost of healthy living; all workers to be protected through international core labour standards and policies; and improved working conditions for all workers. The Commission adds that people also need protection in case of specific shocks, such as illness, disability, and loss of income or work.

- [WHO news release](#) and Closing the gap in a generation: Health equity through action on the social determinants of health, [WHO report webpages](#). [BBC News Online](#).

Nepal: Union victory for murdered bus driver

A planned national strike by transport workers in Nepal was called off after the government agreed to provide the family of a murdered bus driver with compensation. Transport workers represented by three unions walked out across the eastern region of Nepal on 8 August. They were calling for compensation for the family of bus driver Krishna Khawas, who was murdered by a gang of criminals on 7 August while driving a passenger bus at night. On 16 August, after eight days of strike action, the government and unions agreed on a six-point plan, which includes providing the family of Khawas with 1 million Nepalese rupees (£7,800) and arranging free education for his children. As part of the agreement, the government also agreed to bring the perpetrators of the crime to justice and to step up security for transport workers, particularly along highways. A nationwide strike that was scheduled to begin on 17 August was suspended. Commenting on the agreement, Ajay Kumar Rai, president of the Nepal Transport Workers' Union, said: "This agreement has been achieved as a result of all three unions speaking with one voice."

- [ITF news report](#).

South Africa: Mine union protest at rash of deaths

The National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) in South Africa has said a rash of deaths at mining giants AngloGold and AngloPlatinum are pivotal proof that the country is in need of rigid safety regulations. The spate of fatalities came earlier this month, in the same week the Chamber of Mines lobbied against tougher criminal penalties and corporate liability for workplace safety crimes during public hearings of the proposed Mine Health and Safety Amendment Bill. Four miners died at the firms in the week starting 12 August. AngloGold workers set up a Day of Mourning for 21 August, but it was met with a company "no work, no pay" rule, which infuriated

the national NUM. "It is within our African culture to mourn and workers will continue to mourn for their deceased colleagues whether or not the companies accept the practice," said NUM general secretary Frans Baleni. The NUM is backing the introduction of new legislation that would lift maximum fines from R200,000 (£14,000) to R1 million (£70,000) on mining deaths, as well as place criminal liabilities on company officials.

- [NUM news release](#). [ICEM news report](#).

Thailand: Paralysed migrant worker fights for victims

A migrant worker seriously injured on a Thai construction site is challenging the country's compensation agency for denying compensation to migrant workers. Nang Noom Mai Seng, 37, this week started a Supreme Court legal action against the Social Security Office's (SSO) continued refusal to provide her accident compensation from the Workmen's Compensation Fund (WCF). Nang Noom contends an existing SSO policy denying registered migrants like herself access to the WCF is both illegal and discriminatory. She was paralysed from the waist down in a December 2006 accident on a Chiangmai hotel construction site. In July 2007 Chiangmai SSO refused her request for accident compensation from the WCF. An appeal was rejected in January 2008. Nang Noom petitioned Region Five Labour Court in February 2008 arguing SSO's guidance was illegal, discriminatory and in breach of both the Thai Constitution and international conventions ratified by the Thai government. In July this year, the court rejected her petition. Nang Noom is supported by the Human Rights and Development Foundation (HRDF), which says the legal challenge is a test case for developing formal work accident compensation systems for all migrant workers in Thailand. Somchai Homlaor, secretary general of HRDF, commented: "This Supreme Court challenge by Nang Noom is on behalf of two million mostly Burmese migrants currently working in Thailand in dirty and dangerous conditions." Somchai added: "The current system for compensating migrant work accident victims is failing and illustrates that the SSO is neglecting to perform its legal duties for the benefit of migrant workers."

- [HRDF news release](#).

USA: OSHA fiddles while workers die

A top US union safety official has accused the government of fiddling workplace death figures. Workplace fatalities figures released last week showed a 6 per cent fall in 2007. The report said there were 5,488 fatal work injuries last year, down from 5,840 in 2006 and 6,217 in 1992. Labour secretary Elaine L Chao said in a statement that the new data showed that the Bush administration's programmes to protect workers' safety were working and noted that this was the lowest number of fatalities in recorded Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA) history. The OSHA strategy has involved business-friendly voluntary measures at the expense of safety inspections and enforcement action.

However, Eric Frumin, health and safety coordinator for Change to Win, a federation of seven US unions, said Chao's interpretation was misleading because the sharp drop in workplace transportation deaths, one of the causes of the overall drop in fatalities, largely fell under the jurisdiction of state and federal transportation agencies, not OSHA. Moreover, Frumin pointed to a series of fatal construction accidents in Las Vegas and a death at an industrial laundry plant in Tulsa, all of which occurred in 2007, as evidence that OSHA was still not adequately enforcing its own regulations. According to the report, produced by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the four US occupations with the highest fatality rates in 2007 were fishing workers, loggers, aircraft pilots and flight engineers, and structural iron and steel workers. An International Labour Office analysis last year put the US workplace fatality rate at over six times that of the UK. The US was in the bottom five of 24 'established market economies' evaluated in the report.

- [BLS news release](#). [OSHA news release](#). [New York Times](#).

RESOURCES

TUC Organising at Work guide

It's unions that brought you the weekend, safer workplaces, shorter hours, better wages and leave entitlements and greater equality at work. But winning and maintaining better working conditions is only a possibility if people are organised – and that means unions recruiting new members and increasing the effectiveness of organised workplaces. 'Organising at work - Building stronger unions in the workplace' is a new resource from the TUC to assist workplace union reps and activists. It contains ideas to help union reps build union strength and increase the effectiveness of the union and participation in union activity by members. The resource complements TUC 'Organising for health and safety' guide.

- [TUC publication alert](#). Organising at work - Building stronger unions in the workplace [[pdf](#)]. Print copies can be ordered by emailing [Joanne Adams](#) in the TUC's Organisation and Recruitment Team.
- Also see the [TUC health and safety organisation webpages](#) and Organising for health and safety: A TUC resource for use in the workplace [[pdf](#)].
- [Organising event](#): Building stronger unions: Organising the future, Tuesday, 14 October 2008, TUC, Congress House, Great Russell Street, London WC1B 3LS. To register for attendance and to receive further details of this event, [email](#) or phone Joanne Adams on 0207 467 1361.

Events and Courses

European Works Hazards Conference

If you enjoyed this year's Hazards Conference in Keele then why not try the European Hazards Conference. It is to be held in Bologna October 10th to 12th 2008. The format is similar to that for Hazards Conferences held in UK. The cost is €510 for single room, €420 + €85 for single room extra night and €105 shared room extra night. Additional meals cost are also available and full details are on page 10 of the information pack attached. Flight costs to Bologna or Milan (about 1-2hrs away) around about £100 to £150 return flight costs including taxes, can be found on the web from most major UK airports. The deadline for registration is 31st August. If you want to attend, or want more information then e-mail mail@gmhazards.org.uk to book your place now [marked for the attention of Caroline Bedale]. If you fancy a weekend in Italy sharing health and safety and related issues with our brothers and sisters from Europe, then don't miss this opportunity

- Details and registration form <http://www.ewhn.eu/>

TUC Courses & Useful links – as previous issues

Useful Links

- Visit the TUC 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