

# Risks

TUC 

*e-bulletin*

Number 410 – 13 June 2009

**HAZARDS  
MAGAZINE**



**Asbestos -  
The hidden killer**

**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 17,000 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](#)

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### **Union victory on safer needles**

Along running trade union campaign to introduce safer needles and prevent sharps injuries to health workers reached a successful conclusion this week, with the agreement of strict European Union guidelines. Sharps and needlestick injuries in the NHS are estimated to affect as many as 100,000 workers a year. UNISON head of health Karen Jennings led a series of "intense" negotiations at EU level between the European Federation of Public Service Unions (EPSU) and HOSPEEM - the European hospital and healthcare employers' association. The framework agreement signed this week aims to prevent the incidence of injuries with contaminated sharps, protect the workers at risk and establish appropriate response and follow up policies in cases where injuries occur. Karen Jennings said: "Subjecting thousands of NHS workers every year to the terror of dirty needles is unnecessary and inhumane, when safer needles are available and cost very little more. Instead of losing time while the legislation goes through Europe, the Department of Health should take the initiative and start using safer needles and adopting the new prevention guidelines across the UK now." She added: "The cost of providing safer needles is minimal -especially when you add together the cost of treating someone with a needlestick injury - tests, post-exposure treatment, time off and compensation - and all this is nothing compared to the human misery caused by this type of injury." Unions hope EU legislation will follow the guidelines later this year.

- [UNISON news release](#). [EPSU news release](#). [Nursing Times](#).

### **Another dangerous year for trade unionists**

Last year 76 trade unionists were murdered around the world because of their work defending workers' rights. The 2009 ITUC Annual Survey of Trade Union Rights Violations, published this week by the global union confederation, details abuses of workers' rights in 143 countries. It says in addition to those killed, many more trade unionists were attacked, subjected to harassment and intimidation, or arrested. Fewer union activists were killed last year, with deaths falling from 91 in 2007. However, the number of killings in Colombia - the most dangerous place on earth to be a union member - reached 49, an increase of 10 on the previous year. Elsewhere, nine trade unionists were murdered in Guatemala, four were killed in the Philippines and in Venezuela, three in Honduras, two in Nepal and one each in Iraq, Nigeria, Panama, Tunisia and Zimbabwe. In a number of cases, governments were either directly or indirectly involved in the killings. During 2008 governments in nine countries - Burma, Burundi, China, Cuba, Iran, South Korea, Tunisia, Turkey and Zimbabwe - threw trade union activists in prison because of their work to win better rights for working people. Commenting on the survey, TUC general secretary Brendan Barber said: "Around the globe, unscrupulous employers often work hand in hand with corrupt governments to deny people the right to join trade unions and to campaign for higher wages, and safer, fairer work." He added: At a time of global economic downturn, when employers are shedding jobs and putting pressure on workers to accept less pay, employees need a union more than ever to stand

up for them. Yet in some parts of the world, simply becoming a union member and fighting for a better deal for colleagues, can be enough to see individuals thrown into prison, beaten up and at worst, murdered."

- [TUC news release](#). [ITUC news release](#) and [full report](#), and regional reports for [Africa](#), [Americas](#), [Asia](#), [Europe](#) and the [Middle East](#). [ITUC YouTube page](#). [BBC News Online](#). [Financial Times](#).

### **Chimney firm pays out to asbestos victim**

A Unite member who is suffering from asbestos related cancer has received a "substantial" compensation payout. Graham Dancer, 63, from Barnstaple, was diagnosed in 2007 with the incurable cancer mesothelioma, caused by exposure to asbestos while working from 1969 for Selkirk Flue Limited, now owned by Powrmatic. He stopped working for the firm after his diagnosis. He had started work in the warehouse where pipes insulated with asbestos were brought into the factory. He later moved to the production department where he applied asbestos to pipes. "There was so much asbestos dust that you could see a thick layer of it on your tool box," Mr Dancer, who has been told he has just months to live, said. "You could also see it floating in the air. My overalls and hair would be covered in it." The compensation claim was settled out of court in just 17 months. Unite regional secretary Lawrence Faircloth said: "Asbestos has affected the lives of many of our members who were unwittingly exposed to the dangerous dust by negligent employers. We are pleased to have supported this member with his claim for compensation. The swift settlement means he can enjoy peace of mind that his family will be provided for in the future." Amanda Jones from Thompsons Solicitors, who took the case for the union, said: "The backing of his union was instrumental in bringing about the successful conclusion of the claim within his lifetime."

- [Thompsons Solicitors news release](#). [North Devon Gazette](#).

### **Concern at power station safety failings**

A large steel beam was dropped by a crane near workers at Staythorpe power station – the second serious crane incident on the site in three weeks. In the 1 June "serious health and safety incident" a 5 tonne steel beam fell near workers. It followed another incident involving contractor Alstom on the same site, near Newark, on 14 May. In the earlier incident, a 10 tonne pipe fell on a cradle after lifting cables snapped. Phil Davies, GMB national officer for the engineering construction industry, was told about the incidents by GMB shop stewards ahead of talks in London with the engineering construction employers. The talks were on a review of the national agreement covering large infrastructure sites. GMB wants auditing arrangements under the agreement changed "to enable the union to determine at the pre-tender award stage that bidders for work are able to meet the requirements of the National Agreement on pay and conditions." Speaking as he went into the talks, GMB's Phil Davies said: "Alstom promised corrective action after May 14th to prevent a reoccurrence. Whatever Alstom did then was not good

enough. The Health and Safety Executive need to come in to this site and satisfy themselves that those undertaking the lifting on site have the necessary competence to undertake this work safely. Unless decisive action is taken someone will be killed."

- [GMB news release](#). [Nottingham Evening Post](#).

## *Other news*

### **Campaigners blast 'damp squib' strategy**

The Health and Safety Executive's new five-year strategy ([Risks 409](#)) has been described as a "damp squib" by campaigners. Hilda Palmer of the Hazards Campaign criticised the strategy, which urges employers to sign up to a voluntary safety "pledge", for failing to call for either statutory directors' duties or new rights for safety reps. "HSE's 'Be part of the solution' strategy fails to show the leadership and intention to get tough on the employers who create the risks that make people sick, injure them and kill them that a real enforcement agency should exhibit," she said. "It is not what employers say that is important but what they do, and the majority are not consulting workers, not complying with basic risk prevention and are not fully accountable for their actions or omissions. Without a massive injection of resources and real political will to tackle the many non-compliant and criminally negligent employers, it is hard to see how more voluntarism can have any real impact." She added: "The HSE has already gone soft on enforcement and there is a massive lack of deterrence as inspections, investigations of injuries, enforcement notices and prosecutions are all down." Bereaved relatives group Families Against Corporate Killers (FACK) also expressed dismay at the strategy, saying it offers "mostly empty words." It criticised the video used by HSE to promote the strategy, for showcasing steel producer Corus. The firm has been attacked by FACK following the deaths of nine workers in the six years up to 2007, including the son of the founding member of the group. The firm was fined £1.3m after the death of three workers in a 2001 foundry explosion, but received a £74m insurance payout to build a state of the art replacement foundry. "This strategy is a severe disappointment," FACK concluded. HSE is urging organisations to sign up to a five-point safety pledge. However, the Hazards Campaign said the pledge places no hard requirements on signatories and adds it should require firms signing up to commit themselves to measures over and above the "reasonably practicable" legal minimum.

- [Hazards Campaign news release](#). [FACK news release](#). [Construction News](#). [SHP Online](#). [Building](#).
- HSE 'Be part of the solution' [strategy](#) and [pledge](#).

### **Director fined over shaft death**

A construction company and one of its directors have been fined after a Polish worker died in Dundee. Andrezej Freitag, 53, fell down an exhaust shaft at flats being built in the city in May 2008.

Kinross-based Discovery Homes (Scotland) Ltd pleaded guilty at Dundee Sheriff Court to breaching the Health and Safety at Work Act and was fined £5,000. Company director Richard Pratt also pleaded guilty to breaching section 37(1) of the same Act and was fined £4,000. This is only the second successful prosecution of a company director in Scotland in six years for a breach of health and safety legislation. An investigation found there had not been a robust barrier on the edge of the shaft which Mr Freitag fell down. Health and Safety Executive (HSE) inspector Murray Provan said: "This accident was entirely foreseeable and preventable. Mr Freitag died because his employer and the site manager failed to do enough about the risks associated with working at height." The inspector added: "Mr Pratt used the type of barrier normally found at a roadworks site as protection at the top of the shaft, which is totally unsuitable for that purpose. He was in charge from the beginning of works and the standard of health and safety management was Mr Pratt's responsibility. The company's culpability is wholly attributable to his neglect."

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

### **A dead rabbit gets swifter, better justice**

Safety campaigners have reacted furiously after the death of a rabbit was treated more seriously by the courts than the death of a construction worker. Families Against Corporate Killers (FACK), which speaks for the bereaved relatives of workplace fatality victims, was speaking out after Discovery Homes (Scotland) Ltd was fined £5,000 and the firm's director Richard Pratt £4,000 on 8 June after the death of employee Andrezej Freitag. On the same day Steven Appleton was jailed for causing unnecessary suffering to a rabbit at Magistrates Court in Caerphilly after he stamped it to death. He received a six month custodial sentence. FACK member Sharon Norman, whose father Gordon Field was crushed to death at work, has written to prime minister Gordon Brown to protest. She said: "When I read the two news reports and the outrageously different penalties handed down by our courts to the killer of a rabbit and the killers of a man, I was so angry and I had to email the prime minister. I asked him to explain to me how this could be right." She added: "Every year many more people are given custodial and suspended sentences for animal cruelty than have ever been given such sentences for killing a worker. We don't condone animal cruelty but cruelty to people that devastates families must surely be more serious?" She added it took three years after her dad was killed at work for his negligent employer to be fined, "yet the rabbit killer was tried, convicted and sentenced in a few months."

- [FACK news release](#) and [website](#). The death at work of Gordon Field, Sharon Norman's father [[pdf](#)]. [Contract Journal](#). [BBC News Online](#)

### **Shame of site firm's double conviction**

Construction firm Bouygues UK has said the two safety convictions it received in court over the past week – including one for the death

of a worker – were “deeply regrettable”. The company was fined £160,000 on 8 June, with costs of £21,698.20, after employee Robert Caston was killed when stuck by a reversing vehicle at Eastbury School, in Barking, London in June 2005. On 3 June 2009 it was fined £18,000 and costs of £2,796 over an incident where a carpenter suffered a fractured collarbone and ribs in a five metre fall. The incident occurred in Waltham Forest in 2007. A statement from Bouygues said: “The events that took place at Barking in 2005 and Waltham Forest in 2007 are deeply regrettable. As a construction organisation Bouygues UK is committed to health and safety at every level and has undertaken a thorough investigation of the health and safety processes employed across the company to prevent this kind of event from happening again. In both cases, Bouygues UK has co-operated fully with the Health and Safety Executive and will continue to do so for all health and safety matters.”

- HSE news releases on the [8 June 2009](#) and [3 June 2009](#) fines. [Construction News](#).

### **Heat exhaustion killed silo worker**

The parents of Scunthorpe worker Paul Sharp, who collapsed and died while working in a fat silo, have told of their heartache after their son’s death. Gainsborough-based Silocheck Limited was fined £30,000 at Swindon Crown Court last week after admitting breaching two counts of the Confined Spaces Regulations 1997. The firm was also ordered to pay £15,000 costs. Mr Sharp, 30, died while working for the company on 10 August 2006. He collapsed from heat exhaustion during cleaning work inside a fat silo at Southern Valley Feeds Limited, in Calne, Wiltshire. Mr Sharp's mother, Lucy Sharp, 53, said: “I think there is some sort of closure with it because they will have to follow very strict health and safety guidelines before they can send anyone else down those silos.” Mr Sharp's father, Tony Sharp, 57, added: “As for grievance, there is no law in this land that can compensate us for it.” Mr Sharp had been with the firm for just five weeks before the tragedy. Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Ian Whittles said: “This tragic incident highlights the importance of appropriate training and emergency arrangements, especially when working within confined spaces. In this case, there were no appropriate systems of work, particularly with regard to access. For example, had there been a winch available, then rescuing Mr Sharp from inside the silo would have been much quicker and easier.” He added: “One of the biggest risks of working in confined spaces is 'the element of surprise'. Often, workers are caught unawares because of the many hidden dangers. This is why it is so important to have safety systems in place.”

- [HSE news release](#). [Scunthorpe Telegraph](#).

### **Two in five teachers sick with stress**

More than two out of five teachers (43.9 per cent) have suffered from stress related illnesses, a new poll has revealed. The Teachers

TV survey, based on responses from 772 primary and secondary school teachers, found a quarter of the affected teachers said they have lived with anxiety (27.1 per cent), with others suffering from depression and insomnia. Some teachers said they had endured stress-related ME and angina. More than four out of five teachers (82.3 per cent) questioned in the survey said they believe teaching is more stressful than work in other fields and over half of teachers (55.7 per cent) have considered leaving the profession because of the stress of teaching, up by 5 per cent since 2006. Stress is also negatively affecting their ability to do their job, with more than a quarter of teachers (26.1 per cent) having taken at least a day off work as a result of stress in the last 12 months. This has doubled since Teachers TV's last poll on stress, carried out in 2006. At the time just over one in eight (13 per cent) teachers had taken a day off work as a result of stress. Commenting on the findings, Chris Keates, general secretary of teaching union NASUWT, said the findings "confirm the results of similar surveys, including those undertaken by the NASUWT. What is needed, however, is not a plethora of surveys but urgent action by employers on the clear evidence that teachers are suffering high levels of stress." She added: "The critical issue is to tackle excessive workload and working hours and to secure the contractual entitlement teachers have to a satisfactory work/life balance. The changes made to the teachers' contract over the last six years have all been designed to do just that, but still too many schools are not ensuring that teachers receive these benefits and entitlements to protect their health and enable them to work effectively."

- [Teachers TV news release.](#) [NASUWT news release.](#)

### **Job problems drove school head to suicide**

A headmaster hanged himself after discovering that the parents of a pupil were bringing a tribunal complaint about his school, an inquest has heard. Neil Sears was found hanging from a heating pipe in the boiler room at Meadowgate School, in Wisbech, Cambridgeshire, on 20 January this year. The 52-year-old, who had taught at the school for 13 years, left a note on a fax machine, which read: "I just give up, sorry." An inquest at Wisbech Courthouse heard how earlier that day he had received a fax about a tribunal, which was to be brought by parents of a pupil who believed their child's needs were not being met at Meadowgate. Mr Sears' wife, Karen, who was a learning support assistant at the school, became concerned after he did not return home. She and Carolyn Dobson, the deputy head, returned to the school and discovered the father-of-two's body. Coroner Mr William Morris said: "It is one of the saddest cases I have ever had to deal with. I think there is absolutely no doubt, that he was an excellent headmaster." He said Mr Sears had taken deliberate steps to end his life and had to conclude that he killed himself. It was revealed that a few colleagues knew of a previous incident shortly after Mr Sears became headteacher when he left a note saying he couldn't cope. Mr Sears had walked out of the school at the time but it was decided that it would not be mentioned again. The annual conference of teaching union NUT in April heard stress related mental illness was blighting schools. Delegates heard teachers in England and Wales have a 40 per cent greater risk of suicide than the general population. A 2008 report from the trade union safety

journal *Hazards* documented a series of cases of teachers taking their own lives as a result of overwork and stress.

- [The Telegraph](#). [Wisbech Standard](#). [Norfolk Eastern Daily Press](#). [Peterborough Today](#). [Hazards occupational suicide webpages](#).

### **Bullying probe after teacher dies**

A member of staff has been suspended after bullying allegations were raised at an inquest into a teacher's death. Britt Pilton, 29, collapsed and died at High Greave Junior School in Rotherham in February, an inquest heard. The coroner recorded a narrative verdict, saying Ms Pilton died from the effects of bulimia which arose out of long-standing anxiety at the school. Rotherham council said a member of staff had been suspended while an inquiry into the allegations was held. The inquest heard Ms Pilton had been prescribed anti-depressant drugs. During the six to 12 months before her death her anxiety increased because of the stress she was under at the school, the inquest heard. It was told Ms Pilton was scared that she would be forced out of her job by bullying behaviour. Ms Pilton, who was due to marry this summer, died despite staff efforts to revive her. Rotherham coroner Nicola Mundy recorded the narrative verdict last week. A spokesperson for Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council said: "We have been made aware of the allegations of bullying and these are being investigated by ourselves and the school. We take all such allegations seriously, as bullying of any kind is not tolerated in our schools." She added: "We can confirm that a member of staff at the school has been suspended, as a neutral act, pending the outcome of our investigation into these allegations."

- [BBC News Online](#). [The Sun](#). [Daily Mirror](#). [Daily Mail](#)

### **Asbestos victims expose insurance 'disgrace'**

Asbestos victims, their families and workplace justice campaigners have taken their campaign for justice to a major insurance industry event. Protesters greeted industry representatives attending the Association of British Insurers (ABI) conference in London on 9 June. They were calling for a change to employers' liability insurance rules to provide for an insurance fund of last resort, where the insurer holding an employer's policy cannot be identified. The All Party Parliamentary Group on Occupational Safety and Health has already backed the change. The Asbestos Victims Support Groups Forum, which coordinated the protest, says insurers escape liability for untraced premiums. It adds that the "discredited" ABI insurance tracing scheme success rate for tracing post-1972 policyholders was only 39 per cent and for post-1999 traces only 41 per cent. Ronald Tetlow, who is seriously ill with mesothelioma, an incurable tumour caused by asbestos, is support the forum's campaign. "I worked for an established engineering company, Henry Crossley (Packings) Ltd in Bolton, which was taken over in 1988," he said: "I cannot accept that my company did not have insurance when I worked for them until 1970. A court ordered £111,000 in compensation, which I had hoped to leave to provide

for my children, but the insurers cannot be traced. The compensation system is nothing but a lottery. It is a disgrace." Tony Whitston, chair of the forum, said: "If motor traffic victims are compensated for the flagrant law breaking of non-insured drivers, there is no reason why dying asbestos victims should not be compensated where premiums, which have been bought and paid for, simply cannot be traced. Insurers are getting away with murder."

- [Unite news report](#). [Irwin Mitchell Solicitors news release](#). [Daily Mirror](#).
- [Asbestos Forum](#).

### **Ballerinas face work hazards**

Professional ballerinas, like highly driven young female athletes, face quadruple work-related health threats - disordered eating, menstrual dysfunction, the bone-thinning disease osteoporosis, and early signs of cardiovascular disease. It's known as the "female athlete tetrad," Dr Anne Hoch of The Medical College of Wisconsin in Milwaukee told Reuters Health, and it starts with disordered eating. Female athletes who don't eat enough to make up for the energy they expend during long workouts, may stop getting their period as a consequence, Hoch explained. These two components of the female athlete tetrad put them at higher risk for the other two - cardiovascular problems and bone density deficits - often seen in much older, postmenopausal women, she noted. At the American College of Sports Medicine meeting, Hoch reported on a study of 22 professional ballerinas from the Milwaukee Ballet Company. Their average age was 23 and their average weight was 114 pounds. Eighty-six per cent of the dancers had at least one component of the female athlete tetrad and 14 per cent had all four components. Based on responses to a questionnaire, 36 per cent of the dancers had disordered eating habits and 77 per cent were in a calorie deficit. "They were not eating enough calories for the amount they were dancing," Hoch said. Over a quarter (27 per cent) of the dancers were currently not having periods.

- [Fox News](#)

### **Yvette Cooper is new work secretary**

Yvette Cooper has been named by Gordon Brown as his new work and pensions secretary after James Purnell's resignation last week. She will take the reins on issues such as welfare reform and the construction deaths inquiry and the introduction of a mandatory tower crane register. The Department of Work and Pensions also oversees the work of the Health and Safety Executive. Jim Knight becomes minister responsible for employment and welfare reform and Lord McKenzie of Luton remains the health and safety minister. Yvette Cooper said: "This is a difficult time. But my priority is to get on with the business of helping families and pensioners up and down the country, lifting people out of poverty and helping people find jobs. In the 80s and 90s, a generation of young people was abandoned to long term unemployment. I'm determined that won't happen again."

- [DWP news release](#). [Construction News](#)

## *International News*

### **Afghanistan: Child labour risk ever present**

A quarter of all 7- to 14-year-old children in Afghanistan are at risk of leaving school and drifting into exploitative work situations, according to a new report by a Kabul-based think-tank. The report by the Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit (AREU), published in late May, called for interventions to stop children from entering work, better quality education and more employment opportunities for adults. The cost of education, lack of role models and family pressures were cited as reasons why children often ended up being exploited in backstreet workshops, factories or as domestic servants. "Child labour is a serious problem in Afghanistan, linked to the high incidence of poverty. While the study showed poverty alone does not drive families to put children into work, it does raise the risk that children will work," AREU director Paula Kantor said. According to the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), 24 per cent of Afghan children aged 7-14 are in employment. Afghanistan is one of 14 countries that have not signed the International Labour Organisation's 1999 Convention 182 on the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour.

- [IRIN News](#).
- [ILO news release](#) and [World Day Against Child Labour, 12 June](#).

### **Australia: Deadly grounds for a sit down protest**

Prolonged sitting is killing Australian workers – both blue and white collar – and even 30 minutes' exercise a day may be insufficient protection from this growing occupational health and safety hazard. New Australian research shows hours of sedentary activity, like typing emails or sitting at a quality control station, are associated with higher cardio-metabolic health risks that are independent of time spent in moderate-to-vigorous intensity physical activity. "Although many Australians have adopted the recommendation of getting at least 30 minutes of moderate to vigorous activity on at least five days of the week, we've been getting more overweight," University of Queensland research fellow Genevieve Healy said. "The most plausible explanation is that 30 minutes constitutes a very small proportion of waking hours. It's equally important to look at what the person is doing for the remaining 15-and-a-half hours of the day. A person who follows the guidelines of 30 minutes of brisk walking and spends the other 97 per cent of waking hours sitting is 'physically active' according to public health guidelines. However, the term 'active couch potato' is probably more appropriate." The researcher added: "Sedentary behaviour has been embedded into many workplaces: computers and labour-saving devices have replaced much of the need to stand up and move about at work, as well as the physical activity involved in manual handling tasks." Dr Healy will present her findings to the Queensland Safety Conference on 18 June.

- [Queensland Safety Conference news release.](#)

### **China: Iron mine landslide 'buries dozens'**

A landslide in south-western China last week buried dozens of people, according to state media reports. Fifty mine workers and nine residents were initially thought buried by the landslide, in an iron-ore mining area of the Chongqing region. Later reports said nine bodies had been recovered and a further 63 were still missing. The landslide happened in a mountainous area of Wulong county, the official news agency Xinhua said. The news agency said millions of cubic metres of rock flooded a valley, burying an iron ore plant and six houses in Tiekuang township, and cutting power and communication lines. It is not clear what caused the tragedy, but an official with the Chongqing work safety supervision bureau told Associated Press that the landslide did not appear to have been caused by the work at the mine. This was contradicted by later reports. Deadly incidents in China's mines are common, due to poor safety standards, illegal mining and the rush to feed the demand from one of the world's fastest-growing economies. Chinese authorities said earlier this year that the number of both mining deaths and accidents fell in 2008. Xinhua said there were more than 400,000 accidents last year. One of these was a landslide in Shanxi that killed 254 people when a dam holding back waste from an illegal mine collapsed, flooding a community. Thirty-four officials were dismissed over the incident.

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

### **Japan: Record numbers worked to death**

Record numbers of Japanese workers were worked to death last year, according to official compensation figures. A total of 269 cases qualified for state compensation last year, one up on the preceding year and a record high for the third straight year. According to the Health, Labour and Welfare Ministry, among the cases approved for state compensation were 66 work-related suicides (karojisatsu) or attempted suicides. This was down 15 on the previous year, but was still the second highest ever annual toll, according to the ministry. Meanwhile, the deaths of 158 workers from brain or heart disease (karoshi) were recognised as caused by overwork in the reporting year, up 16. Commenting on the figures, a ministry official said: "They indicate working conditions are still in a tough state." According to the ministry figures, 927 people claimed workers' compensation for mental illness in the 2008 financial year, with 269 of the claims accepted. Of the 269 successful claims, 28 per cent were in workers in their 30s, and 26 per cent in their 20s and 40s, respectively. Among the 66 suicides or attempted suicides, 24 were in their 50s, 15 in their 40s and 11 in their 30s.

- [Japan Today.](#)

## Resources

### **Hazards on Facebook**

*Hazards* magazine, the workers' health and safety journal, has now got a dedicated Facebook group. It took the plunge after a one-off, single issue Facebook group set up close to the 28 April Workers' Memorial Day proved an unexpected hit, with hundreds quickly signing on from across the globe. "The new page is designed to complement our existing webpage," said *Hazards* web editor Jawad Qasrawi. "It gives safety reps and campaigners an opportunity to exchange ideas on key issues of the day. Discussions at the moment deal with the new HSE strategy, occupational cancer, corporate safety crimes and the union safety effect." He added that safety reps that sign up to the new Facebook group will be able to get timely updates on key issues affecting union safety reps and campaigners.

- [Hazards on Facebook](#). [Hazards magazine](#)

## Events and Courses

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

COURSES FOR APRIL TO JUNE 2009

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

## Useful Links

- Visit the TUC [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.
- 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