

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](#).