

Risks

TUC 

e-bulletin

Number 428 – 17 October 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](#)

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

Contents

Union News

Public staff need protection from attacks
'Grave concern' over North Sea helicopters
Register must cover all cranes
Holiday job costs student his leg
New schools fall short on safety

Other news

Job applicants face pavement drug tests
GPs don't want 'fit notes' role
Director fined after pet food firm death
Sugar giant fined after worker drowns
Pupil loses eight fingers in art horror
Hand nailed to pallet prompts prosecution
Firm lands in court after scaffold fall
Firm exposed workers to asthma risk
Women fall victim to deadly asbestos

International News

Australia: Older workers need jobs on site
Australia: Union dumps toilet diaries
Cambodia: Hundreds sickened in garment factory
USA: Dangerous speed up in meatpacking

Resources

Unite guide on shift and night work
Usdaw guide to safety in a recession

Events and Courses

TUC courses for safety reps

Useful Links

Public staff need protection from attacks

There must be decisive action from public sector employers and the Scottish parliament to reduce violent assaults on workers as they do their jobs, UNISON Scotland has said. A UNISON report, 'Violent assaults on public service staff in Scotland', presented last week to the union's annual health and safety conference, found that more than 25,000 assaults on staff were recorded for the year 2008/09. The figures were obtained by the union through freedom of information requests from employers of UNISON members. Although the total is down on the previous year, UNISON says it is concerned that the overall number of assaults on staff remains "stubbornly high." It adds the total for local government has increased. UNISON Scottish organiser Dave Watson said: "To have over 25,000 in a year is shocking. And we are concerned at the continuing increased level of attacks on local government workers. It is clear that where rigorous monitoring and active preventative measures are in place, this has resulted in improvements for the health and safety of our members. But some employers are clearly failing to monitor violent assaults effectively, and as a result are failing to do enough to protect their staff." UNISON Scotland is campaigning for further legislation to protect public service workers from violent assault, as a follow up to the successful campaign for legal protection from assault for emergency workers.

- [UNISON news release.](#)

'Grave concern' over North Sea helicopters

A union representing thousands of offshore workers has said it is "gravely concerned" about a fault affecting helicopters operating over the North Sea. New mechanical problems have been discovered with the Sikorsky S-92 helicopter, the model involved in a fatal crash off Newfoundland earlier this year. According to a Sikorsky internal document, 25 per cent of the S-92s operated in the North Sea have suffered cracked transmission mounts. Transmission failure has emerged as the leading suspect in the crash of an S-92 helicopter in March while it was heading for an oil platform off Canada's Newfoundland coast, killing all but one of the 18 people aboard. Engineers from US-based Sikorsky are being sent to Scotland to establish the reasons for the defect found in the S-92s, which are used to fly oil workers to and from rigs. Unite regional officer Willie Wallace commented: "Unite expresses grave concern at the report from Sikorsky detailing 'a number of cracks in one of the four feet that attach the gearbox to the aircraft', and that 'all the reported cracks have occurred on aircraft in operation in the North Sea'." He added: "Unite seeks reassurances from Sikorsky and the operators of these helicopters that their S-92 helicopter fleet are fit for purpose, flying offshore workers to their place of work. Unite will be raising this with the Health and Safety Executive and the Helicopter Liaison Group on behalf of the offshore workforce." The helicopters were given the all-clear in March after being grounded following the fatal crash in Canada.

- [Press and Journal.](#) [Global and Mail.](#) [BBC News Online.](#)

Register must cover all cranes

UCATT is calling for the creation of a "full comprehensive crane register" to improve safety standards. The construction union's submission to the Health and Safety Executive's (HSE) consultation on creating a tower crane register, which closed this week, argues the register should be fully comprehensive, including all cranes and not just conventional tower cranes. The government decision to introduce a register followed a series of high profile crane collapses, some resulting in fatalities. UCATT says all forms of self-erecting cranes should be registered, adding "there is absolutely no justification for towed tower cranes which operate in a manner very similar to conventional tower cranes not being registered." The union also wants cranes used in other sectors covered, not those used in construction. UCATT says the proposal that a company has up to 14 days to register the erection of a crane online is unacceptable. It wants registration within three days. UCATT general secretary Alan Ritchie said: "The decision to establish a crane register is good news but in order for it to be truly effective it must be truly comprehensive. There must be no half measures or there is a real danger that the safety benefits that the establishment of a register should provide could be weakened." A response to the HSE consultation from the Chartered Institute of Building says the new measures should not form a stand-alone regulation, but should be incorporated into existing regulations.

- [UCATT news release](#). [Construction News](#). [HSE crane consultation](#).

Holiday job costs student his leg

A university student lost his right leg below the knee after he was pinned by a forklift truck during his holiday job. Mitesh Patel, 21, from Wembley in Middlesex was working for Tile Depot when the incident happened in June 2008. He had taken the sales job over the summer holidays to help pay for his business studies degree at Hertfordshire University. A work colleague was using the forklift truck without any previous training and rammed into Mitesh. The truck's rear end swung round and pinned Mitesh's leg against a gas tank. Despite eight hours of surgery doctors were unable to save his leg. It was amputated below the knee. Mitesh's mother, a member of the GMB, contacted the union and started a claim for compensation under the union's Friends and Family Scheme. Tile Depot admitted liability and a "substantial" settlement was agreed. Mitesh said: "Dealing with my injuries was difficult at first but I've learnt that you have to just pick yourself up and get on with things." He added: "I am looking forward to being able to use my new prosthesis which this compensation will allow me to buy." GMB regional secretary Richard Ascough commented: "This is a good example of the many benefits of union membership. Had it not been for the Friends and Family Scheme, Mitesh would have found it difficult to pursue compensation."

- [Thompsons Solicitors news release](#).

New schools fall short on safety

Many new schools are being built without proper consideration for the safety and welfare of those who will use them, teaching union NASUWT has said. The union was commenting after the BBC revealed many new schools in England lack sprinkler systems despite government guidance that all schools should have them. NASUWT general secretary Chris Keates said: "The NASUWT has been raising consistently the apparent disregard being paid at local level in some of the new build schools to guidance and regulations designed to ensure a safe and appropriate environment." She added: "Union members have raised a catalogue of issues that illustrate a failure by designers, builders and those signing off plans at local authority and school level to ensure that the new builds rectify problems of the past and are fully fit for purpose. Reports have been received of some schools being built without staffrooms, without separate toilet provision for pupils, staff and visitors and without measures being taken to ensure appropriate temperature control." She said the government's Building Schools for the Future programme is transforming the learning and working environment for thousands of pupils and teachers. But she added: "Much more rigour is clearly needed at local level in scrutinising plans and designs to ensure safety and value for public money."

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

Other news

Job applicants face pavement drug tests

Jobseekers were subjected to "degrading" drug tests in a Scottish street by a top recruitment firm. People who were interviewed for 120 posts with Greenock-based cabling firm Sanmina were left astonished when some were escorted outside Greenock Jobcentre by staff from Pertemps for mouth swabs to be taken - as cars drove past and pedestrians walked by. The tests were taken outside the Jobcentre because Pertemps did not have permission to conduct them inside during interviews. One job hunter told the Greenock Telegraph he had been "mortified" by the experience. He said he had just been told Pertemps wanted to carry out a drugs test, when the interviewer "put her coat on and I followed, then we were outside the building, which I thought was strange. Then she handed me the swab to put in my mouth." He added: "I didn't want to do it but went along with it because I needed the job - I was totally embarrassed. People were walking by and it was yards away from the main road." Jim McCourt, of the Inverclyde Advice and Employment Rights Centre, said the practice amounted to "nothing other than sheer exploitation. This is victimising vulnerable workers and simply should not be permitted in law." Pertemps issued a full apology for conducting the outdoor drug tests. The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) says drug testing is rarely justified except in certain, very limited, safety critical situations and adds under data protection law there must be strict measures to maintain privacy.

- [Greenock Telegraph](#). [Sunday Post](#). [The Sun](#). [More on the ICO code on workers' health information](#).

GPs don't want 'fit notes' role

Less than 10 per cent of London GPs feel confident that they could operate the new style 'fit notes' system the government proposes to introduce in the spring of 2010. Londonwide LMCs, the organisation representing over 6,000 family doctors in the capital, says a "staggering" 96 per cent of GPs have received no training regarding the new 'fit note' system and nearly threequarters do not think that the new system will be manageable in terms of both time and resources. It adds that 86 per cent of the capital's GPs "are concerned about the implementation of a 'fit note' that would see them having to make judgments about complex areas of their patients working lives that they have little or no knowledge of." Its survey of 452 GPs across London found 95 per cent do not feel that they are the appropriate person to complete fit notes and 81 per cent believe this role "sits with occupational health doctors who are best able to make these complex judgements about a patient's ability to work in certain roles." Dr Michelle Drage, joint chief executive of Londonwide LMCs, said: "We are our patients' advocates and taking on this role would jeopardise that relationship. Ninety-five per cent of GPs in London don't think that they are the appropriate person to complete these fit notes, which the government propose to put in place by next spring. Making judgments about a person's ability to do certain types of work and not others has always been the role of the occupational health sector and over 81 per cent of GPs feel that this sector remains best placed to make these judgments." She said the proposals need "really serious reworking", adding: "We are here to make assessments about our patients' illnesses, not divert our scarce resources into running an occupational health service for employers at our patients' and the taxpayers' expense."

- [Londonwide LMCs news release](#). [Evening Standard](#).

Director fined after pet food firm death

The operations director of a pet food firm where a worker was crushed to death has been fined £10,000 and ordered to pay £4,000 costs for criminal safety breaches related to the death. Philip Thompson, 50, was responsible for protecting workers' safety at Butcher's Pet Care in Crick when engineer John O'Connor, 38, was crushed in a canning machine. Mr O'Connor died after he tried to unblock a jammed stacking machine at the pet food canning plant in November 2003. He was killed after he entered a palletising machine without first turning it off. Once he had unblocked it, the machine automatically restarted and crushed him to death. Thompson, who was also the director with responsibility for health and safety, pleaded guilty to breaching work equipment regulations in failing in his role as a director to ensure that effective measures were taken to prevent access to dangerous parts of machinery. The machine should have been fully-enclosed with an interlock system to prevent anyone gaining access until the power is shut off. HSE principal inspector Neil Craig said: "This tragic loss of life could have

been so easily avoided had Mr Thompson properly fulfilled his duties as a director. This was far from being an isolated incident. The unfenced gap between the stair rails had been there for nearly two years and it had become common practice for employees to nip through it to fix problems on the machine in an effort keep the production line running, anyone of whom could have suffered the same fate as Mr O'Connor." He added: "This level of fine should serve as a stark warning to company directors to take their responsibilities for health and safety seriously and to reinforce the message that they cannot hide behind the organisation."

- [HSE news release](#). [Northampton Chronicle and Echo](#) and [related article](#).

Sugar giant fined after worker drowns

Tate and Lyle has been fined £270,000 after a contractor was killed on one of its ships in the Thames. Keith Webb, 53, drowned when his bulldozer crashed into the river while unloading raw sugar from a vessel at the company's riverside wharf in Newham, London. The company, which was prosecuted by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), pleaded guilty to criminal breaches of safety law related to the March 2004 tragedy. Tate and Lyle was also ordered to pay £90,000 in legal costs at Southwark Crown Court last week. Mr Webb was in the bulldozer when it fell from a crane as it was being lowered into the hold of a ship. The lug connecting the lifting chain to the crane snapped, sending the bulldozer crashing into the vessel and toppling into the water. Mr Webb, who worked for Acclaim Logistics Ltd, died from drowning, a post mortem found. A Health and Safety Executive (HSE) investigation identified a series of failures in Tate and Lyle's management of its operations at the dock. These included its failure to provide and manage proper means of access to the ships being unloaded and failure to manage and control staff and contractors. HSE inspector John Crookes said: "In failing to identify and address these inadequacies before they led to the death of a worker, Tate and Lyle's performance fell well below what could be reasonably expected of them." Mr Webb's widow Avril, who was present in court, said: "Although Keith died five years ago, for me, it's like yesterday. My husband was ripped from my life, from our family's lives. There was no illness to prepare us for our loss. I'm still trying to fill the huge void left by his death, still trying to pick up the threads of a life that I can no longer enjoy. I am half of a whole person. I am no longer part of a couple."

- [HSE news release](#). [East London Advertiser](#).

Pupil loses eight fingers in art horror

ALincolnshire school's governing body has been fined £16,500 after a 16-year-old girl lost most of her fingers when she put her hands in a bucket of plaster of Paris during a school art lesson. The teenager was attempting to make a sculpture of her own hands during an art and design class on 31 January 2007, Boston magistrates court was told. The plaster set around her hands and neither staff nor paramedics could get it off during the lesson at Giles school, in Boston. The court was told that temperatures up to

60 degrees celsius can be generated in large quantities of plaster and the girl, who was referred to in court only as student X, suffered terrible burns. Plastic surgeons conducted 12 operations, but she was left with no digits on her left hand and just two fingers on the right. The foundation school's governing body admitted breaching health and safety regulations and also failing to report the incident to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). The court was told HSE only found out about the incident six weeks later, from the girl's plastic surgeon. In addition to the fine, the school's governing body was ordered to pay £2,500 costs. HSE said the school's governing body was deemed responsible and not the local authority because the school has foundation status and so is not governed by the local authority. HSE inspector Jo Anderson said: "The message we want the public to understand is that risk assessments in educational establishments must not be viewed as burdensome, but instead, paramount to pupil safety." She added: "Governing bodies of foundation schools must realise the importance of the implementation of health and safety measures to prevent further incidents which can have such a drastic effect on students' lives."

- [HSE news release](#). [Daily Mirror](#). [The Guardian](#). [The Independent](#).

Hand nailed to pallet prompts prosecution

A Herefordshire builders' merchant has been prosecuted after a worker had his hand pulled in to a machine and nailed to a pallet. Pontrilas Timber and Builders' Merchants Ltd of Pontrilas, Herefordshire, was fined £3,500 and ordered to pay £8,973 costs at Hereford Magistrates Court. The company had pleaded guilty to breaching the work equipment regulations. The employee, who was operating an automatic wooden pallet making machine on 28 March 2008, had his right hand drawn into the machine when it started unexpectedly. It was trapped beneath a beam of nailing hammers, then nailed through the hand and wrist to the top of a pallet. There was no guard or protective device across the front of the machine to prevent access to dangerous moving parts of the machinery. HSE inspector Luke Messenger said: "This was a horrific incident that could have been easily prevented. Automated machinery like this, where people are required to feed materials in, always runs the risk of trapping arms and hands. Guards or protective devices should be provided." He added: "The fact the machinery started unexpectedly was an added complication, but with the proper safety precautions in place, the injured party's hands wouldn't have been able to be pulled inside."

- [HSE news release](#). [Building](#). [Construction News](#).

Firm lands in court after scaffold fall

A safety warning has been issued to construction companies after a Liverpool worker was seriously injured in a fall from unstable scaffolding. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) prosecuted John Doyle Construction Ltd following the incident at the Hilton Hotel construction site in central Liverpool in July 2007. The company

pleaded guilty to breaching the work at height regulations and was fined £3,500 and costs of £13,244 at Liverpool Magistrates' Court last week. The court heard that employees at John Doyle Construction were moving a scaffolding tower when it overturned and fell down an embankment. Employee Gerard Baccino, who was removing lifting chains from the top of the scaffolding, fell approximately six metres to the ground. Mr Baccino, a 49-year-old father of three, suffered back injuries in the fall and fractured his pelvis and chest. The incident had a long-term psychological effect on him, and he has been unable to return to work. HSE investigating inspector Mark Cuff said: "This incident was entirely avoidable and was caused by John Doyle Construction asking Mr Baccino to work at the top of a structure that was inherently unstable." Mr Baccino, who had only been working for John Doyle Construction for a few days when the incident happened, said: "I started working for the company on the Monday and the incident happened four days later. We were moving the scaffolding tower to a new location on the site when one of the lifting chains got caught." He added: "I've been in a lot of pain since the incident, and will never be able to do manual work again. Construction companies have to start listening more to their workers and stop thinking that they know all the answers."

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

Firm exposed workers to asthma risk

A Gateshead company has been fined after exposing its workers to hazardous soldering fumes. Turbo Power Systems Ltd was fined £3,000 last week at Gateshead Magistrates' Court and ordered to pay £3,000 costs after it pleaded guilty to three breaches of health and safety legislation. Employees of Turbo Power Systems Ltd at its Gateshead plant were found to have been exposed to solder flux fumes, known to cause asthma, between May 2007 and May 2008. Some workers carried out up to five and a half hours of soldering a day, working predominantly with rosin-based solder wire. HSE inspector Andrea Robbins said: "It is well established that exposure to rosin-based solder flux fumes can lead to the development of occupational asthma. It was therefore entirely foreseeable that failure by the company to implement appropriate assessment, control measures to reduce exposure to these fumes, and a failure to have health surveillance would put their employees at risk." The inspector added: "The company has now introduced a range of improvements including the use on a non-rosin based solder flux where possible and provision of local extraction ventilation, and a programme of health surveillance."

- [HSE news release.](#)

Women fall victim to deadly asbestos

The deaths of a garment worker and a school cleaner from the asbestos cancer mesothelioma highlights how it's not just men in traditional dusty jobs that are at risk from the fatal fibre. The family of the former Surrey school cleaner, who died from mesothelioma

aged 81 in June 2008, received a £110,000 payout. The grandmother, whose name has not been released, had been exposed to asbestos while working at Welling Secondary School in Welling, Kent, between 1972 and 1988. She was responsible for cleaning a building which had asbestos-containing internal partition walls. The asbestos had become disturbed due to damage caused by drawing pins and general wear and tear. A Leeds widower received £100,000 in compensation after his wife, who had been a garment worker, died from the same cancer. The 77-year-old, whose name has also been withheld, worked for Joseph Mays in Holbeck for 30 years. The company made men's clothes and she worked in the lining department from 1947 to 1978. She worked at a Hoffman Press which had asbestos components. She also worked near steam pipes which were covered with asbestos and were often repaired while she and others continued to work alongside.

- Thompsons Solicitors news releases on the [school cleaner](#) and [garment worker](#) deaths.

International News

Australia: Older workers need jobs on site

There should be quotas of "mature-age" workers introduced on major government building projects in recognition of the gruelling and job threatening effect physical work can have over a working lifetime, the Australian construction union CFMEU has said. The union has told Australia's government urgent action is necessary to address the nation's "demographic time bomb." The CFMEU campaign, unveiled this week at the union's national conference, aims to end what it says are the "days of mature-age workers being thrown out like broken toys." Dave Noonan, the national secretary of the union's construction division, said: "What's needed is a new approach, one that recognises that construction workers may have a limit on the physical strain they can place on their bodies, but there is no limit to their capacity to build excellence through sharing their experience, knowledge and skills." He added: "The days of mature-age workers being thrown out like broken toys must end as part of the resolution to tackle the demographic time bomb, but also as a matter of social justice." Mr Noonan said many of the jobs once reserved for mature-age building workers, such as gatemen, traffic controllers and hoist drivers, were being taken by labour-hire employees and backpackers. "Many mature-age workers could be involved in job planning, training younger workers, ensuring sites are safe, recycling and sustainability," he said. "What we need is to ensure that a job in construction is a career for life and not one that is terminated as soon as a worker turns 50."

- [CFMEU news release](#). [ABC News](#). [The Australian](#). [Sydney Morning Herald](#)

Australia: Union dumps toilet diaries

A requirement on staff at an Australian government call centre to observe a three-minute time limit when using the toilet and to keep diary entries of how long they spent in the bathroom has been

dumped after union pressure. Managers at the Medicare Australia call centre were even following staff into bathrooms to hurry them along, workers said. The policy was dropped this week after intervention from the union CPSU. Managers had ordered all staff to fill out the length of toilet breaks in a "compliance diary", threatening staff who failed to spend 92 per cent of their time on the phone with counselling and disciplinary action. Worker complained of team leaders regularly "popping in" while staff were going to the toilet because they were deemed to have taken too long, staff being lectured for failing to enter into a diary a one-minute toilet trip and management suggesting staff only use the bathroom at certain times. Workers also criticised the policy because it logged time spent on work activities, including faxing and emailing customer forms, processing claims and completing other paperwork, as time spent off the phones, so eating into the toilet break allowance. After Medicare Australia decided to scrap the policy, CPSU congratulated staff for challenging the "one size fits all policy", saying it had failed to take into account the individual health issues of employees, not to mention privacy. "Medicare workers are relieved that management has overturned this demeaning practice, but you have to wonder how it ever got to this stage," CPSU deputy national president Lisa Newman said. "Every worker, no matter what their job is, deserves to be treated with dignity at work."

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

Cambodia: Hundreds sickened in garment factory

More than 500 workers at a Phnom Penh garment factory collapsed on 12 October after they were exposed to a chemical spray. Chea Mony, president of the Free Trade Union of the Workers of the Kingdom of Cambodia, said staff at the Willbes Cambodia Ltd factory in Dagkor province were overcome because the air was filled with "an unbearable chemical smell." Some press reports said workers also suffered from vomiting. The factory had been closed on Saturday to allow garments to be sprayed with a chemical to make them more durable. "We want the garment factory to take responsibility for this," the union leader said. Hem Darith, deputy governor of Dangkor district, said ambulances transported the affected people to various clinics and state hospitals. "There were many ambulances," he said. "I could not count the number of victims." Environment and labour officials launched an immediate investigation and found that the factory, which employs about 2,500 people, wasn't properly ventilated.

- [Phnom Penh Post.](#)

USA: Dangerous speed up in meatpacking

Four years after a government report found slaughterhouse workers in the US faced more than double the injury rate of manufacturing as a whole, a new survey suggests conditions have deteriorated still further. The findings come in a report released by the public interest law centre Nebraska Appleseed, which surveyed 455 people

working in the Nebraska's meatpacking industry. The state produces one out of every four steaks and hamburgers in the United States. The report paints a disturbing picture of an industry in overdrive. Almost threequarters (73 per cent) of workers surveyed stated that the speed of the line had increased in the past year and more than six out of 10 (62 per cent) said they had been injured in the past year. While 14 per cent of workers reported some safety improvements during the past year, 52 per cent reported their workplace had become less safe in certain ways during the same period. Many workers who contributed to the report said they experienced psychological damage due to supervisors' screaming, and humiliation after loss of bladder control when they were denied access to a bathroom. "For the sake of community and economic sustainability as well as a sense of basic decency, the public wants to know that meat is produced under safe conditions for the human beings doing the work," said Becky Gould, executive director of Nebraska Appleseed. "The question is, what are the next steps we will take?"

- [Working In These Times](#). 'The Speed Kills You': The voice of Nebraska's meatpacking workers', Nebraska Appleseed, October 2009 [[pdf](#)].

Resources

Unite guide on shift and night work

The union Unite has issued new guidance on how union reps can organise shift- and nightwork to best protect health. The guide says: "A world increasingly working around the clock raises an issue which is of increasing concern for Unite – the health and safety implications for members who work shifts and at night." It says while many thousands of Unite members work shifts, including nights, by choice, many do so because they are obliged to under their contract or for economic reasons. The union says its factsheet "is designed to highlight health and safety issues arising from shift working and night working, give an overview of the official advice and relevant legislation and provide advice to members when negotiating agreements and other arrangements to help prevent injury and ill-health." The Unite guide includes information on health effects, the law and on what union safety reps can do.

- Shiftwork and nightwork: Unite health and safety briefing [[pdf](#)]

Usdaw guide to safety in a recession

Usdaw has sent each of its 4,600 health and safety reps a leaflet reminding them of the importance of using their legal functions to defend health and safety standards in the current down-turn. 'Hard times - protecting health and safety standards in a recession' points out why health and safety standards can slip when the money is tight. It says this could be through cutbacks in maintenance, keeping decrepit gear and machines in use, cutting staffing so survivors are under increased pressure or paring back safety training. Any harmful effects could be amplified if safety reps find it

harder to get time off to do their safety role and to get trained, or if under-pressure managers feel less inclined to listen to safety concerns, it warns. The Usdaw guide gives a five-step plan for safety reps. It says safety reps should: set dates for safety inspections a year ahead; make sure members know who they are and how to contact them; keep in contact with other reps; take part in health and safety committee and related meetings; and "don't take no for an answer."

- [Usdaw news release](#). Hard times - protecting health and safety standards in a recession [[pdf](#)].

Events and Courses

TUC courses for safety reps

COURSES FOR AUGUST to OCTOBER 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 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