



UNISON Health & Safety Newsletter



Welcome to the North West Edition
of UNISON's Health & Safety Newsletter

Issue 1
January 2011

HELLO AND WELCOME

Hello and welcome to the first newsletter produced by UNISON's North West Health & Safety Committee. The aim of the newsletter is make members aware of the work of the Health & Safety Committee and to ensure that Health and Safety issues are not compromised within the workplace despite all the job and spending cuts.



Lord Young's Review of Health & Safety

The last few months have been particularly troubling for those of us active within Trade Unions involved in health and safety. We have seen a prolonged attack in this area over a number of years but this has culminated in two events recently. Firstly the publication of the "Common Sense: Common Safety" report by Lord Young of Graffham, and secondly the announcement stemming from the Comprehensive Spending Review of 35% cuts to the HSE over the next 4 years.

Lord Young outrageously said "People Occasionally get killed. Its unfortunate, but its part of life". He only allowed three weeks for research into the issue and took about ten weeks to prepare his report.

The result of his deliberations were a number of recommendations that do nothing to improve the quality of health and safety in Britain, and in the areas where UNISON are active, have the potential to substantially weaken it.

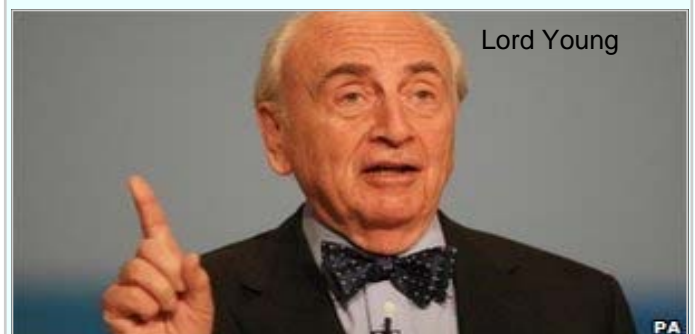
He proposes that we should see offices, schools and shops as "low risk". As such they would not require detailed risk assessments but rather we should adopt a more mechanistic approach – tick box forms!! These are starting to appear on the HSE Website and from what I have seen fall well short of what we would want!!

He wants to exempt employers who have staff working from home and self employed people from undertaking risk assessments. In schools, parents will be asked to sign a one off catch all form for all external school activities such as educational visits, and the introduction of a simplified risk assessment for classrooms. He also suggests that there should be a shift from risk management to risk benefit.

From my perspective Young and the other Con Dem politicians have, yet again, proved that they know nothing about the real costs of their policies on working people. In my view the recommendations from Young are a recipe for a disastrous increase in workplace accidents.

This is compounded by the spending cuts. The HSE has already been hit hard over the last few years and have reached an all time low on inspections and enforcement activities. This will further reduce this activity and leave us all the poorer for it. This situation is no better in the Environmental Health Departments. Local Authorities are facing cuts of up to 30%. It is up to each Local authority to determine how those cuts will be delivered, however the Environmental Health Departments are likely to be seen as fair gain, given the Young Report, and therefore ripe for culling so that other services are given a little more protection..

We as Trade Unionists are in a good position to fight back. Firstly we should all join the UNISON supported Hazards Campaign "We didn't vote to die at work" – get posters and put them up. Buy and wear the T-shirt, talk to colleagues and most importantly recruit them!! Become active in the Union, take on the role of a Safety Rep and insist on proper risk assessments. Consult with both colleagues and management – show them that as far as UNISON is concerned, Health and safety is important. Let colleagues know what we are doing to further the cause of health and safety. Show them that the Trade Union is relevant and important and is determined to fight all the way to ensure that their health, safety and welfare is not marginalised, trivialised or constrained by a tick box mechanistic approach that will fall short of providing the proper protection that our Members deserve.



Lord Young

Nick Green Chair of UNISON North West Health & Safety Committee

INTERNATIONAL WORKERS MEMORIAL DAY THURSDAY 28 APRIL 2011

REMEMBER THE DEAD...FIGHT FOR THE LIVING

What kills more people worldwide than war?.....work!

Every year in this country alone, millions of people are made ill by their work, up to 50,000 die of work-related illnesses, 1,500 to 1,600 are killed in work related incidents and thousands are injured. Almost all of this ill-health, injury and death could be and should be prevented by employers removing or controlling the risks that cause them, but every day, poor workplace conditions create a great risk to our lives and our health. Workplaces with trade union safety reps are safer and healthier. Worldwide, 2.2 million people are unnecessarily killed by work every year. Ensure you join in by marking International Workers Memorial Day in campaigning for good, safe, healthy jobs in all workplaces, that don't cost the earth and a society based on the need of the many rather than the greed of the few. We need to make sure that workers health and safety is not compromised during the job losses and cuts in services. We need to make safer workplaces not only for ourselves, but for the next generation.

Look out on the UNISON north west regional website/NW TUC website nearer the date for further details of the Manchester Workers Memorial Day Event or for an event near you :-

www.unisonnw.org.uk

www.tuc.org.uk/tuc/regions_info_northwest.cfm

Contact your local branch to see if they are holding a WMD event. Workers Memorial Day is a government recognised day, fly your workplace flags half mast, make sure you tell your colleagues, family and friends to join in. Your life and health may depend on it!!



Greater Manchester Hazards Centre (GMHC) is a small voluntary organisation in existence since 1987, funded by the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities and the Community Fund, plus affiliations, donations and fees.

Affiliates receive a copy of Hazardous Times newsletter. We are a part of the national Hazards Campaign, a network of organisations that campaigns for safer workplaces and improvements in worker's health, safety and welfare. Our asbestos group has taken the lead in a national campaign to defend the interests of asbestos victims and for reform of the state benefits system for asbestos victims. We promote International Workers Memorial Day. We also work with sister organisations in Europe. One of the current national campaigns running at the moment is the "We didn't Vote to Die at Work" campaign, see <http://www.hazards.org/votetodie/index.htm> for further details.

Information and advice on health and safety in the workplace- GMHC can provide information on the law, your rights, scientific and technical details and advice on how to tackle problems on health and safety in your workplace. This service is free to workers, safety reps and community groups in the North West.

North West TUC Safety Reps Network - GMHC run this network of safety reps on behalf of the TUC. Go to the website and join in the discussion forum to share info with other safety reps and get help to solve your workplace H&S problems.

For further details please see our website

www.gmhazards.org.uk or please ring

0161 636 7557

**Hazards
Campaign**



Want to see something in this publication? Send your suggestions and ideas to a.lysons@unison.co.uk



On 26 March 2011, thousands of people will join the TUC march in London, to tell the government that savage spending cuts are unnecessary and unfair. We don't believe the coalition when they say "we are all in this together" - their public service cuts will hit the most vulnerable the hardest.

For more information, go to www.unison.org.uk/million



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- 28 February - International RSI (Repetitive Strain Injury) Day
- 9 March - National No Smoking Day
- 24 March - UNISON's National H & S Seminar
- 26 March - March in March, Hyde Park, London
- 24 March - World TB Day
- 28 April - International Workers Memorial Day



Want to know more about union health and safety courses? check out the websites below:

<http://www.unisonnw.org.uk/courses/calendar.asp>

<http://www.unionlearn.org.uk/index.cfm/raot/>





HEALTH & SAFETY REPS REQUIRED WE NEED YOU!

Make your workplace safe

Every year thousands of people suffer accidents and ill-health at work. Most of this is avoidable. In a survey, most members identified health safety as the most important workplace issue for them.

Health and Safety in our workplaces is a vital issue for each and every one of us. Your employer has a legal duty to provide you with a safe working environment and safe working practices. If they do not, UNISON is here to challenge them. The job is important and very rewarding.

This work depends on us having local safety representatives in every workplace. Why not become one?

Can anyone become a UNISON Safety Rep?

Yes, if you are a UNISON member and even if you are already a steward. It does not matter if you work full or part-time, as long as:

- You are employed in that workplace
- The members vote for you
- The union informs your employer in writing that you are a UNISON safety rep

What does the job involve?

If you decide to become a rep, your job will be to look after the health and safety needs of the UNISON members who work with you.

You will have powers to:

- Investigate complaints on behalf of members
- Address problems you notice or that members bring to your attention
- Carry out health and safety inspections of your workplace at least four times a year
- Demand information if it affects the health and safety of your members
- Have time off with pay to do your job as a health and safety rep and to attend trade union courses

The regulations which give you these rights also make it very clear that you are not legally liable for anything you do or fail to do as a safety rep.

Do you want to find out more?

If you are interested in knowing more about becoming a health and safety rep, contact your branch secretary or branch health and safety officer now. They can give you full details the work involved, time off facilities and training provisions.

UNISON needs as much support as we can get to keep up the pressure for decent working conditions more than ever, especially in these times of cut backs where your health and safety is not considered a priority. So if any of your colleagues are not yet in UNISON, why not encourage them to join?

Health & Safety – UNISON’s commitment

In UNISON, health and safety will always be a major priority

We’ll use our experience to campaign to ensure that all our members’ working conditions meet proper health and safety standards.

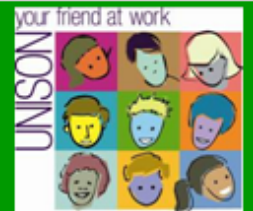
Every year we will be taking up hundreds of cases of management neglect in the workplace.

Our commitment to good health and safety will make employers sit up and take notice.

Interested?

For further information, ask your branch secretary or branch health & safety officer for details or contact by post Angela Lysons at UNISON Regional Office, Arena Point, 1 Hunts Bank, Manchester, M3 1UN or email a.lysons@unison.co.uk





Please fill in this application form form in BLOCK CAPITALS and send it to the address shown below.

1. YOUR PERSONAL DETAILS

Mr/Ms/Ms/Ms/Other	First Name	Other Initial
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Surname	Date of Birth / /
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Home address:

Postcode Home ☎

National Insurance No. (from your payslip)

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How would you describe your ethnic origin?

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bangladeshi | <input type="checkbox"/> Asian Other | <input type="checkbox"/> Black Other |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese | <input type="checkbox"/> Black African | <input type="checkbox"/> White UK |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Indian | <input type="checkbox"/> Black | <input type="checkbox"/> Irish |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pakistani | <input type="checkbox"/> Caribbean | <input type="checkbox"/> White Other |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Asian UK | <input type="checkbox"/> Black UK | |

Please tick this box if you require materials in a different form at (e.g. large print or Braille) - be sure to supply contact details below

Please give a telephone number/voice/text/email address for UNISON to contact you - indicate if work or home

2. YOUR EMPLOYMENT DETAILS

Employer's Name

Job Title/Occupation

Department/Section

Workplace Address:

Postcode ☎

Payroll No.

**When completed please send to:
UNISON NW Regional Centre
Freepost (MR9713)
Arena Point, 1 Hunts Bank
Manchester, M3 9PD**

3. WHAT YOU WILL PAY FROM 1 OCTOBER 2003

Please tick your earnings before stoppages

Weekly Pay	Annual Pay	✓	Band	Per Week	Per Month
Up to £38.47	Up to £2,000	<input type="checkbox"/>	A	£0.30	£1.30
£38.48-£96.16	£2,001-£5,000	<input type="checkbox"/>	B	£0.81	£3.50
£96.17-£153.84	£5,001-£8,000	<input type="checkbox"/>	C	£1.22	£5.30
£153.85-£211.53	£8,001-£11,000	<input type="checkbox"/>	D	£1.52	£6.60
£211.54-£269.23	£11,001-£14,000	<input type="checkbox"/>	E	£1.81	£7.85
£269.24-£326.92	£14,001-£17,000	<input type="checkbox"/>	F	£2.24	£9.70
£326.93-£384.61	£17,001-£20,000	<input type="checkbox"/>	G	£2.65	£11.50
£384.62-£480.76	£20,001-£25,000	<input type="checkbox"/>	H	£3.23	£14.00
£480.77-£576.92	£25,000-£30,000	<input type="checkbox"/>	I	£3.98	£17.25
£576.93-£673.08	£30,001-£35,000	<input type="checkbox"/>	J	£4.68	£20.30
£673.08 +	Over £35,000	<input type="checkbox"/>	K	£5.19	£22.50

Please tick the appropriate box to indicate how often you are paid

- Weekly
 Fortnightly
 Four Weekly
 Monthly

Please tick this box if you are a student member in full-time education (including student nurses or modern Apprentices). Your subscription is £10 per year.

4. POLITICAL FUND

UNISON'S Affiliated Political Fund (APF) is used to campaign for and promote UNISON policy and the need for quality public services within the Labour Party, locally and nationally, in Parliament and Europe. UNISON APF affiliates to the Labour Party.

UNISON'S General Political Fund (GPF) is used to pay for campaigning at branch, regional and national level of the union and for research and lobbying in Parliament and Europe. It is independent of support for any political party.

It is important that you indicate a choice of fund by ticking one of the boxes below.

Your subscription shown above includes a political fund payment so you do not pay any more by being in one of the funds.

5. YOUR AUTHORISATION

- I wish to join UNISON and accept its rules and constitution.
- I authorise deduction of UNISON subscriptions from my salary/wages at the rate determined by UNISON in accordance with its rules to be paid over to them on my behalf and I authorise my employer to provide to UNISON information to keep my records up to date.
- I authorise deduction of the following political fund payment as part of my subscriptions: *Tick one box only*

- Affiliated Political Fund
General Political Fund

Now please sign and date below.

Signature

Date

If you have been a member of a trade union before, please state which one below:

DATA PROTECTION
UNISON will process your membership information together with other information of an administrative, statistical analysis, conducting ballots and other statutory requirement purposes. We may also send you newsletters, journals and surveys and let you know about educational and campaigning matters. We will disclose your information to our service providers and agents for these purposes.

If you do not want to receive any mailings from UNISON besides those required by statute as shown in bold above, please tick this box.

We may share your information with organisations with whom we have a business relationship for your benefit. We, or they may contact you by mail, telephone, SMS, fax or e-mail to let you know about goods, services or promotions which we think may be of interest to you.

If you do not wish to receive such information please tick this box.

If you tick either of these boxes then you will be removed from the appropriate mailing lists as quickly as possible due for administrative reasons; this may take a couple of months.

Members of the North West Regional Health & Safety Committee are:

- | | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Nick Green (Chair) | Joan Eatock | Margaret Seraj |
| Jimmy Challoner (Vice Chair) | John Jones | Maureen Howarth |
| Heather Pitman | John Mackey | Rie Hitchmough |
| Jeanette Foster | Lesley Anderton | |

