

KEEP IT SAFE

BFFF QUARTERLY HEALTH & SAFETY NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 2018



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FOREWORD FROM SIMON

Welcome to the October Edition of Keep It Safe

In this edition we look at the HSE work related fatal injuries for 2017/2018. Of the 144 fatalities, 15 were recorded in the manufacturing and transport and storage sectors. The three most common causes of all fatal injuries were workers falling from height (35), stuck by moving vehicle (26) and struck by moving object (23), these figures represent 60% of the overall fatalities in 2017/2018.

In line with the HSE statistics on worker falls from height, BFFF and FSDF are collaborating on a working at height joint seminar. This event takes place on the 4th October and marks a milestone in a working at height project to demonstrate practical access solutions to compliment the preventing falls whilst working on refrigerated vehicles guidance. The collection of presentations will address a shared problem in maintaining mobile refrigeration units throughout the industry. Contact Crystal to book your place as soon as possible.

HSE statistics also mention that annual deaths from Mesothelioma from exposure to work related asbestos totalled 2585 deaths in 2016, figures such as this are thought to remain constant until the end of the decade before starting to decline. In line with these statistics we have managed to secure Wayne Bagnall MBE for our annual Health & Safety Seminar in February. Wayne is considered by his peers to be the leading authority in the field of asbestos applying practical experience underpinned with a master's degree in Construction Health & Safety Management. In addition, feedback from previous events showed many of our members have asked for more on the subject of asbestos.

The Health & Safety Expert group met last month, topics included:

- The new corporate manslaughter guidelines which come into force in November 2018
- The BFFF RIDDOR Distinction Guidance which is currently undergoing Primary Authority Assurance
- Update from the Food and Drink Manufacturer Forum
- New safety initiatives within the member companies

Finally, the meeting closed with Craig Morris of Vulcan inspection services delivered a presentation on the features of the Thermographic Inspections. There were some interesting examples of areas which looked fine to the naked eye, but when looked at with the thermographic camera showed huge temperatures and potentially catastrophic issues.

Please feel free to contact Simon or Crystal for more information on our expert group's work or indeed any of our fire safety work, or if you wish to get involved in the benchmarking statistics or primary authority schemes.

Also, don't forget that all of BFFF's guidance is available on our website here: <http://bfff.co.uk/health-safety/guidance/> along with cases studies here: <http://bfff.co.uk/health-safety/hs-case-studies/>

In the meantime, we hope that you enjoy this edition.

Please contact BFFF if you would like to receive additional / back copies of this newsletter



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We do hope that you find Keep It Safe a valuable read.

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UPCOMING SEMINARS

HEALTH & SAFETY

Join us for the 10th BFFF Health & Safety Seminar.

Join leading industry experts to discuss a wealth of relevant topics currently affecting the sector.

This event is designed to provide members with guidance on a multitude of topical health & safety matters, delivered in through case studies and topical key note speakers.

Topics will include:

- 'Safe Isolation Saves Lives' – Electrical Safety - Louise Taggart
- Wellbeing and Stress - Peter Kelly, Senior Psychologist, HSE
- Noise - Clare Forshaw, Occupational Health & Hygiene Partner, Park H&S
- Key Note Speaker – Wayne Bagnall MBE - Asbestos

WHEN: Thursday 7th February 2019

WHERE: Birmingham Hilton Metropole, Pendigo Way, B40 1PP

COST: £195 + vat for member delegates
£295 + vat for non-member delegates

RESERVE YOUR PLACE:

To request a booking form please email: crystalholmes@bfff.co.uk



NFU Mutual
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FIRE SAFETY

FIRE EXTINGUISHER MYTHS AND TRUTHS

Firefighting equipment is an important part of your fire safety measures. For legal compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (RRO) you must have it where it is necessary. So, the risks found and the size of the premises is the determining factor on what type and how many you need.

Some discuss the opportunity to remove firefighting equipment altogether because “we don’t want our staff fighting fires. Therefore if we only encourage relevant persons to evacuate and give no training on how to use the extinguishers to our employees, they are not necessary.”

Not necessary? The above statement does not consider the risks present within the premises. The RRO is asking for the responsible person to evaluate the risks and reduce them to as low as is reasonably practicable. So to decide on whether extinguishers are needed we should be considering whether the 3 sides of the fire triangle are being brought together. Where those 3 elements cannot come together then extinguishers are not necessary.

Even where the risk assessment did identify that extinguishers were not needed, the responsible person could find themselves taking a trip to court or having a difficult conversation with their insurer following a fire, where no attempt was made to fight that fire and someone was injured. The accepted best practice would be to have extinguishers in your premises and train sufficient members of staff on how to use them and, recognise when to tackle a fire and when to turn away and leave it to the Fire Service.

Powder fire extinguishers are best because they cover all types of fire

Yes powder fire extinguishers do cover the widest range, but they are only the best fire extinguisher in very specific situations (gaseous fire or a combination of fuels including gases). When choosing an extinguisher all aspects of its use should be considered, including other non-fire safety hazards, such as the effect on the user of a powder extinguisher.

Powder extinguishers should not be used in confined spaces (such as boiler or switch rooms) because of the hazards caused by the dust cloud. The user can quickly become disorientated by the pain of breathing in the dust and, visibility because of the thickness of the cloud and dust in their eyes.

Fire Extinguishers are there to help you escape in a fire

The positioning of a fire extinguisher should be such that when someone who discovers a fire thinks about getting a fire extinguisher they have to walk towards an exit. Once the extinguisher has been collected and should you decide that the fire is too big to tackle with it, you could easily evacuate through the nearest exit. If a relevant person needs to use a fire extinguisher to get past a fire, there something is wrong with your fire safety measures and the Fire Authority would likely have grounds to prosecute.

CO2 extinguishers are the best type for electrical fires

Yes they are... With a word of warning, they have particular hazards that you should be aware of.

- The horn will become very cold as the liquid CO2 expands by 450 times into its gaseous form. This equates into your average 2kg extinguisher producing 0.45m³ of gas.
- The asphyxiation risk is very real. Carbon Dioxide is deadly to humans when it reaches 6% concentration in air. After releasing the full contents of a 2kg extinguisher in a room 7.5m³ or smaller, it would be a dangerous place to be. For example a room with a ceiling height of 2.4m; that room would approximately be 1.8m (6ft) square.
- This extinguisher does not cool the fuel; therefore if you have not isolated the electricity before attempting to fight the fire, there is a good chance that it will start again once the CO2 has dissipated.

With enough staff trained and confident to use fire extinguishers the consequences of a small fire can be significantly reduced.

ACTION TO ADDRESS FIRE DOOR ISSUES

Fire doors from 5 suppliers have now been identified as failing to meet requisite fire performance standard following an on-going investigation by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG).

This highlights broader potential failings within the industry and the Government is taking immediate action to address this.

MHCLG began investigating the fire door industry after it was found that a glazed, composite fire door from Grenfell Tower manufactured by Manse Masterdor failed a 30 minute fire resistance test after approximately 15 minutes. Issues were subsequently identified with doors produced by Masterdor Limited (the successor business to Manse Masterdor). Investigations have continued and in the last few days doors from 3 additional manufacturers have failed fire resistance testing when tested on both sides.

MHCLG is writing to all building control bodies highlighting the need to check that existing building regulations guidance on new fire door installations is followed. The guidance sets out the tests which should be performed – including testing doors on both sides – in order to meet building regulations requirements.

The Secretary of State for Communities instructed major fire door suppliers to meet and agree a clear plan of action to tackle the failings which have been identified, with weekly reports on progress.

The government's Independent Expert Panel and the National Fire Chiefs Council have advised that the additional risk to public safety is low, as even when not meeting full resistance standards fire doors will provide some protection from the spread of fire and are part of layered fire protection systems within buildings.

The Secretary of State has also asked National Trading Standards to oversee local investigations which are taking place. MHCLG will also work with third party certification bodies to develop minimum standards of assurance to provide building owners with greater confidence in the fire doors they purchase.

The products which have failed government tests to date were glazed and unglazed doors supplied by Manse Masterdor and Masterdor Limited and glazed composite doors supplied by Specialist Building Products Limited, trading as Permadoor; Solar Windows Limited; and Birtley Group Limited, trading as Bowater by Birtley. All doors that are known to have failed to meet the necessary standards have been withdrawn from the market and the department has informed local trading standards of its findings. Each manufacturer has co-operated fully with the government's investigations, which are continuing.



SAFETY FOCUS

'CHALLENGING' RESCUE OF WAREHOUSE WORKER TRAPPED AFTER RACKING COLLAPSE

It was a rescue which took about nine hours and needed the help of about 100 individuals, and without the use of search dogs and a drone the outcome could have been so different for a warehouse worker who managed to walk away from the scene injury-free.

The worker spent nine hours buried in his forklift truck under about four metres of 20kg blocks of cheese. It happened when racking inside the building fell, trapping the worker, which led to a complicated and extensive search and rescue operation.

Neil Griffiths, group commander for operations for Shropshire Fire & Rescue Service, gave a presentation on the rescue at the Talent in Logistics Conference held at the Telford International Centre.

"I have worked for the service for about 18 years now. I would say this is one of the most unique incidents I have attended in this time, probably more so because it involved quite a lot of resources from outside our county," he said.



Mr Griffiths said that trying to locate the trapped worker and gaining access to the unstable building were among the many challenges the team faced.

"It was a large warehouse with solar panels, which presented a challenge for us. The main thing with them is they remain energised, so the building itself is energised and there is no real way of switching that power off," he said. "If we are trying to use cutting tools to gain access that presents an issue to us. Trying to ensure our crews are safe whilst trying to rescue this individual presented a real problem."

"When I arrived on scene the building was showing signs of collapse. The building was used for the storage of cheese blocks. They were in cardboard packaging in racking. Unfortunately the forklift truck appears to have clipped the racking. A domino effect then occurred. The building was very unstable, creaking and groaning for the entire nine hours of the operation. It was causing us some real concerns.

"It was difficult to commit crews into the building but we wanted to access the building so we could decide how we could locate the individual. There was no CCTV in operation in this particular warehouse, so we had no indication of where the individual in the forklift truck was.



“The other thing we were trying to do is contact him on his mobile telephone – he wasn’t carrying a telephone. At this point we didn’t know if we were in a rescue phase or recovery phase.”

With difficulty in locating the worker, Mr Griffiths said they decided to use search dogs, including Belle, the lifesaving canine that sniffed out the worker buried under hundreds of tonnes of cheese.

The four-year-old urban search and rescue dog from Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service helped find the worker.



Mr Griffiths said: “Plan B was carrying out a thorough and painstaking search, so we decided to employ a canine search. There were two dogs deployed. Unfortunately, one of them sustained an injury, but it was one of the dogs who detected the individual which meant we could create a route and hone in on him and get him out.

“We had not used a drone before and it just so happened that one of our crew members is a professional crew pilot. We were there scratching our heads thinking how are we going to locate the individual so I said go get your drone. He managed to get some good aerial footage and some footage inside, which gave us a clearer picture of what we were dealing with. What we didn’t know at the time is that we needed a special licence. I wouldn’t say we got in trouble but we had some stern conversations with some individuals afterwards. But the drone was instrumental.

Mr Griffiths added: “It was a positive outcome and we did rescue the individual. There was some real concerns that this individual wasn’t going to come out in a good way. But the gentleman was released without any injury whatsoever. It was the protective cage in the forklift truck that protected him. We used more than 100 people to rescue this particular individual. It demonstrated a good example of multi-agency working.”



CASE STUDY

XPO LOGISTICS - ROAD TO ZERO

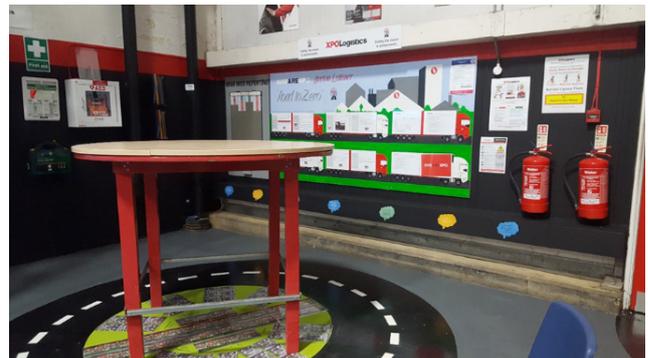
XPO Logistics

To achieve success in health and safety management, there needs to be effective communication up, down and across the organisation. Organisations need to communicate information to their workers on the risk to their health and safety identified in their risk assessments, and the preventive and protective measures necessary to control risk. The information provided should be communicated appropriately.

BFFF recently visited Adrian Cooper (Quality, Health, Safety & Environment Manager) and XPO Logistics at Burton Latimer and found this level of communication being put into practice. Adrian showed us the importance of having the right environment for communicating health & safety information and engaging with employees.

This dedicated area at Burton Latimer facilitates the dissemination of crucial health & safety information relating to the site including induction, training, pre-shift briefings and their near miss reporting initiative 'Road to Zero'.

This area also gives employees the opportunity to give feedback and make suggestions around the sites health & safety.



LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

HSE UPDATES EH40/2005 WORKPLACE EXPOSURE LIMITS GUIDANCE

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) have updated EH40/2005 Workplace Exposure Limits. The latest version includes 31 new and revised Workplace Exposure Limits (WELs) introduced by the 4th Indicative Occupation Exposure Limit Values Directive.

EH40 is the official reference document on WELs to be used alongside The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations 2002, as amended. The document guides those responsible for controlling exposure to hazardous substances at work.

Directive 2017/164 was implemented in Great Britain and Northern Ireland on 21st August 2018.

The guidance can be found here: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/eh40.htm>

GUIDANCE

MENTAL HEALTH AT WORK PLAN

The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA), has published a plan which sets out their vision for mental health and wellbeing at work.

The vision is to: ‘...foster a working culture that recognises and reflects the importance of good mental health and wellbeing and provides effective support when colleagues need it.’

The CMA says it will:

- raise awareness of mental health and wellbeing issues and their impact
- improve understanding of mental health and how it can help itself and each other to promote and maintain good mental health
- ensure CMA leaders and managers have the training and support to enable them to identify when team members may need additional support, build resilience in their teams and create an environment that promotes positive wellbeing
- demonstrate how supporting wellbeing and good mental health will benefit all individuals and the CMA
- identify and tackle stigma and discrimination, as part of the CMA's wider culture of embracing diversity and encouraging all colleagues to bring their whole selves to work
- create and foster a working culture:
 - that promotes good mental health and wellbeing
 - in which everyone feels able to talk about and access the support they need, whether for specific mental health issues or more general wellbeing
 - that proactively considers the impact of how we work and our working environment on our mental health and wellbeing
 - embed mental health and wellbeing considerations into our everyday ways of working and how we manage change
 - provide effective, timely and good quality support to colleagues who are experiencing mental health difficulties.

The document can be read in full here: <https://tinyurl.com/y7cndfol>

MANSLAUGHTER SENTENCES INCREASE UNDER NEW GUIDANCE

The sentences that employers can expect to receive for gross negligence manslaughter have increased under new sentencing guidelines for England and Wales, published today.

The Sentencing Council has drawn up comprehensive guidelines for manslaughter cases for the first time, covering everything from an assault to a workplace fatality caused by a negligent employer.

The body said that defendants found guilty in gross negligence cases - where, for example, an employer's long-standing and serious disregard for the safety of employees, motivated by cost-cutting, has led to someone being killed - are likely to see their sentences increase.

Current sentencing practice in these sorts of cases is lower in the context of overall sentence levels for manslaughter than for other types.

Gross negligence manslaughter occurs when the offender is in breach of a duty of care towards the victim which causes the death of the victim and amounts to a criminal act or omission. The circumstances vary greatly. In a work setting, it could cover employers who completely disregard the safety of employees.

A total of 10 offenders were sentenced for this offence in 2016.

More comprehensive guidance

The Sentencing Council said the guidelines ensure comprehensive guidance where previously it was very limited. Until now, there has been a guideline only for corporate manslaughter, which comes under the Council's health and safety offences guideline, and a guideline by the Council's predecessor body for manslaughter by reason of provocation, which is now out of date following legislative changes to the partial defences to murder.

Fines in corporate manslaughter cases are now proportional to company turnover, resulting in much bigger fines for some firms.

Sentencing Council member Lord Justice Holroyde said: "Manslaughter offences vary hugely – some cases are not far from being an accident, while others may be just short of murder. While no sentence can make up for the loss of life, this guideline will help ensure sentencing that properly reflects the culpability of the offender and the unique facts of each case."

The guideline will come into force in courts on 1 November 2018.

Justice Minister Rory Stewart said: "Manslaughter is an extremely serious offence, causing immeasurable pain to families who lose their loved ones.

"So it is vital our courts have clear, consistent guidance in these often complex cases – such as when both individuals and employers are involved.

"These guidelines will make sure sentences reflect the severity of the crime, helping protect workers and keep communities safe."



What is this standard about?

ISO 50001 helps organisations use energy more efficiently and integrate better energy management into business strategy. It does this by outlining how to implement and maintain an energy management system (EnMS) that continually improves the organization's energy performance and saves money.

Who is this standard for?

It's for use by any organisation, regardless of its type, size, complexity, geographical location, organizational culture or the products and services it provides. Specifically, the standard will be used by:

- any organization wanting to improve energy management to reduce costs and carbon emissions
- any organisation wishing to implement an energy management system
- those who want to develop a deeper understanding of internationally recognized best practice for energy management
- users of ISO 14001 who would like to develop their energy management systems.

Why should you use this standard?

Implementing an EnMS provides a systematic approach necessary to continually improve energy performance. Once in place, an EnMS enables an organisation to set and achieve objectives and energy targets, take action to improve its energy performance and benefit from efficiency and costs savings as a result.

It will help organisations to reduce energy costs, grow more sustainably, become more resilient and comply with legislation. The standard:

- applies to activities affecting energy performance that are managed and controlled by the organisation
- applies irrespective of the quantity, use, or types of energy consumed
- requires demonstration of continual energy performance improvement but does not define levels of energy performance improvement to be achieved
- can be used independently, or be aligned or integrated with other management systems.

What's changed since the last update?

This revision incorporates ISO's new high-level structure (HLS) of terms, definitions and headings, thus bringing the 2018 standard into line with the other key management systems standards. It makes this version compatible and easier to integrate with ISO 9001 and ISO 14001, which are now also in the HLS format.

Other key changes and benefits include:

- a stronger emphasis on the responsibility of leadership
- clarification of key concepts related to energy performance
- improved sections on data collection and normalisation
- additional minor revisions reflecting seven years of using the standard in the real world.

You can download the guide in full here: <https://tinyurl.com/y76dae2n>



HSE WORK-RELATED FATAL INJURIES

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has released its annual figures for work-related fatal injuries for 2017/18, as well as the number of people known to have died from the asbestos-related cancer, mesothelioma, in 2016. The figures can be found here: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/fatals.htm>

The provisional annual data for work-related fatal injuries revealed that 144 workers were fatally injured between April 2017 and March 2018 (a rate of 0.45 per 100,000 workers).

Although this represents an increase of nine fatalities from 2016/17, there has been a long-term reduction in the number of fatalities since 1981 and the number has remained broadly level in recent years.

HSE Chair Martin Temple said: “Despite the fact that Britain’s health and safety record is the envy of much of the world, the increase in the number of workers fatally injured is clearly a source of concern.

“Published in the same week as the 30th anniversary of the Piper Alpha disaster, the figures serve as a reminder of why health and safety is so important and that we must not become complacent as we continue on our mission to prevent all forms of injury, death and ill health at work.”

The new figures show how fatal injuries are spread across the different industrial sectors:

- 38 fatal injuries to construction workers were recorded, accounting for the largest share of any industry. The annual average rate over the last five years in construction is around four times as high as the all industry rate.
- 29 fatal injuries to agricultural workers were recorded. This sector continues to account for a large share of the annual fatality count. It has the highest rate of fatal injury of all the main industry sectors, around 18 times as high as the all industry rate.
- 12 fatal injuries to waste and recycling workers were recorded. Despite being a relatively small sector in terms of employment, the annual average fatal injury rate over the last five years is around 16 times as high as the all industry rate.
- 15 fatal injuries were recorded in both the manufacturing and the transport and storage sectors. Both industries have an annual average rate of fatal injury around 1.5 – 2 times the rate across all industries over the last five years.

The three most common causes of fatal injuries continue to be due to; workers falling from height (35), being struck by a moving vehicle (26) and being struck by a moving object (23), accounting for nearly 60 per cent of fatal injuries in 2017/18.

The new figures also highlight the risks to older workers; 40 per cent of fatal injuries in 2017/18 were to workers aged 60 or over, even though such workers made up only around 10 per cent of the workforce.

In addition, there were also 100 members of the public fatally injured in incidents connected to work in 2017/18 with just over half of these fatalities occurring on railways.

Mesothelioma, contracted through past exposure to asbestos and one of the few work-related diseases where deaths can be counted directly, killed 2,595 in Great Britain in 2016. The current figures are largely a consequence of occupational asbestos exposures that occurred before 1980. Annual deaths are expected to remain broadly at current levels for the rest of the decade before beginning to decline.

A fuller assessment of work related ill-health and injuries, drawing on HSE’s full range of data sources, will be provided as part of the annual Health and Safety Statistics release on 31 October 2018.



COMPANIES MUST MANAGE WELLBEING AS THEY MANAGE SAFETY

Organisations need to assess the risk for wellbeing in the same manner as they currently assess the risk to safety, according to Dr Caroline Yeoman, Operations Director at OCAID Wellbeing.

Speaking at the Safety and Health Expo, Dr Yeoman said firms need to “demystify stress” and instead take an approach to wellbeing “that we know already works for safety”.

“Stress is to wellbeing what accidents are to safety,” said Dr Yeoman. “If I ask you ‘do you manage accidents, you would say no, I manage safety’. So why do you manage stress?”

Dr Yeoman said stress shows “there is something that is missing in an organisation. For me, that’s a failure of any wellbeing strategy,” she added. “Often what we do is put in interventions without thinking about them beforehand. We hand out bikes, bananas and yoga. We think they will do something, but there’s very little empirical evidence that any of that works.

“When we are looking at stress, we are picking up those people in the organisation who are suffering in some way.

“My view is we should be going back to root causes and say ‘what can we do to change this, so these people are not being made ill by work’. There will always be issues outside work which will impinge on our work. We could suffer from stress, however good our environment is, but we can do so much more in managing stress causes in our workplace.”

Dr Yeoman said many companies have a wellbeing culture that is limited to “ad hoc” one-off events and promotions, which focus on the individual and ignore root causes.

“There’s a danger that some organisations are becoming obsessed with individual level interventions to the point that they have so many, they don’t actually have a strategy,” she told delegates at Safety and Health Expo.

“They are often based around national days. I’ve worked with a lot of organisations whose wellbeing strategy is a series of one-off activities. With the best will in the world, that will not change a culture or stop people getting ill in the first place. All it is doing is saying if things go wrong, here’s what you need to do to get better.

“It’s not a bad place to be, but what I would like to see is organisations moving further on and onto risk management.”

She added that it was also important that companies engage with their staff to find out what the root causes of stress are and what kind of improvements they would like to see.

“We often work with small groups of employees and they often come up with some really nifty solutions that do not cost anything,” she explained.

It might be a just a small change, but for the employees involved it can make a massive difference. Often, we come down from on high, and we tell people what we are doing to do around wellbeing, rather than asking them what the risks to their wellbeing are. We ask people about the risks to their safety but we don’t ask ‘what is it about this job that makes you unhappy?’

“When we see our organisation cares for us we naturally want to do more and for the right reasons. That’s where you see improved productivity, quality and safety. Often when we are talking to organisations about why wellbeing is so important that’s what sells it to senior leadership team. It makes really good business sense. Why wouldn’t you want to look at wellbeing and engagement as a way getting to where you want to as a business?”

The European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA) has published its Annual Activity Report 2017.

Each financial year, EU-OSHA's Director prepares a report on the Agency's activities during the past year. It follows the structure of the annual management plan, giving an account of the delivery of the key objectives and activities that were outlined in the plan. It also examines the resources that were used in achieving the Agency's objectives. The annual activity report also functions as the Director's management report, covering, for example, the implementation of the internal control standards. EU-OSHA's Governing Board analyses and assesses the activity report.

Effective

In 2017 the Governing Board initiated a discussion on the strategic directions to take beyond 2020. The discussions were based on the outcome of the mid-term evaluation of the 2014-2020 Strategic Programme commissioned in 2016. The evaluation concluded that the majority of EU-OSHA's stakeholders consider the plan effective for short- and medium-term planning, and that this contributes to the high quality of the Agency's outputs. The review also found the plan's objectives to be relevant to OSH-related policy priorities. Following this positive evaluation, at its meeting in June, the Board agreed to update and extend the existing strategy to 2023.

Campaign

The Healthy Workplaces at All Ages Campaign came to an end, having addressed one of the main challenges identified by EU policy documents. With a view to ensure sustained support to medium, small and micro enterprises, the Agency has continued to develop practical tools and guidelines to enable them to comply with OSH legislation in their countries and carry out good quality risk assessment through the OiRA (Online interactive risk assessment) tool while identifying good practices and promoting their exchange.

Support

The Agency has supported the European Commission on a variety of tasks, including the process aimed at the establishment of an EU OSH info system – which EU-OSHA will take over as from 2019. Other issues included the preparation of the Vesafe e-guide on work-related vehicle risks (WRVRs) and the work is underway on a workplace guide on MSD and psychosocial risks, which has been finalised in early 2018. EU-OSHA is also involved in the consultation meetings related to the discussions on the amendments to the Carcinogens directive.

The full report is available here: <https://tinyurl.com/yb6m874p>



STRESS INDICATOR TOOL: WHITE PAPER

HSE's Stress Indicator Tool (SIT) measures the attitudes and perceptions of employees towards work-related stress.

Complementing HSE's Management Standards for Stress approach, the tool features a survey of thirty-five questions that ask about six key areas of work that, if not managed properly, are known to be potential causes of workplace stress.

The SIT provides a quick and easy way to determine the extent to which work-related stress is a problem in your organisation, and the likely root causes.

White Paper: Managing work-related stress as part of a prevention culture

This White Paper aims to help reader's understand how the SIT can be used as part of a preventative approach to managing work-related stress.

Work-related stress is one of the most commonly reported causes of occupational ill health in Great Britain, accounting for 40% of all work-related ill health cases, and 49% of all working days lost due to ill health in 2016/17, according to the White Paper.

A health and safety, occupational health or human resources professional probably already knows that proactively preventing the conditions that create stress - rather than waiting for staff to go off sick or leave - is better for your business, not only ethically but also in terms of productivity and efficiency. The White Paper questions how to go about conveying this to the decision makers within a business to allow investment in resources to help manage it before it becomes an issue.

It is suggested that decision makers are usually motivated by one of three arguments; the legal, moral or financial. Thus, constructing a case around each of these three arguments may help to convince the decision makers within a business, it says.

The White Paper can be accessed here: <https://tinyurl.com/y8qcozl6>



HEALTH AND SAFETY AND THE ROLE OF LOCAL COUNCILS

A report on local authority health and safety enforcement has been published by the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Occupational Safety and Health.

The report summarises a number of issues that the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Occupational Safety and Health has looked at in relation to the role of local Government in health and safety regulation and makes a number of recommendations. The All-Party Group only considered the role of local government in respect of its obligations as an inspector and enforcer of occupational health and safety regulation and not its responsibilities as an employer or contractor.

It notes that the number of inspections done by local authorities have fallen dramatically since 2010. The number of pro-active inspections fell by 97 per cent between 2010 and 2016, however these have not been replaced by reactive inspections and the overall number of inspections and other interventions fell by 65 per cent.

The report attributes several reasons to this decline; one is that the HSE now directs the enforcement activity of local authorities and requires them only to make proactive inspections under very limited circumstances. The 2013 Enforcement Code specifically requires local authorities not to inspect except under certain strict circumstances. Yet even before the code was introduced proactive inspections had fallen by 86 per cent. In part this was due to earlier, 2011 guidance.

The All-Party Group also considered:

- the impact of falling financial resources on enforcement activity
- the role of inspectors
- consistency of inspection. This was highlighted in the 2011 Lofstedt report into health and safety which recommended that legislation is changed to give HSE the authority to direct all local authority health and safety inspection and enforcement activity, in order to ensure that it was consistent and targeted towards the riskiest workplaces. That resulted in the 2013 Enforcement Code
- primary authority scheme: this enables businesses to form a statutory partnership with a single LA. The two then agree advice and “assured guidance”
- fee for intervention: the All-Party Group is concerned that the fee regime has not been extended to local authority enforcement. This is a major inconsistency and could prove to be an incentive to local councils to improve their levels of enforcement activity
- trading standards and health and safety
- future role of local authorities: the All-Party Group believes that local councils play an important role in enforcement and, through their experience in enforcement in other areas, often have new insights that they can bring to the role. They are also more likely to be responsive to local circumstances.

Recommendations

The All-Party Group recognises the financial restraints that many local councils are working under and the many competing demands on their services. It is recommended that:

- the HSE ensure that local government priorities on inspection reflect the current HSE strategy with greater emphasis on health, rather than just safety
- consideration should be given to ensuring that all new premises or enterprises covered by local authority enforcement activities receive a proactive visit at the earliest opportunity
- the HSE should provide some framework for consistency of approach in good primary authorities working and ensure greater scrutiny of the scheme
- that “fee for intervention” should be extended to local authorities
- information on the health and safety inspection and enforcement performance of individual authorities should be more easily available, including historical comparisons
- the HSE Local Authority Unit should consider whether they can improve intelligence on effective local authority enforcement activity and do more to share examples of good practice
- the HSE should look at ensuring that workplaces do not have duplicate LA and HSE health and safety enforcement in different parts of their operation by either amending the enforcement regulations or making greater use of flexible warranting.

The full report is available here: <https://tinyurl.com/y77w5k66>



TALKING ABOUT DEPRESSION IN WORKPLACE INCREASES PRODUCTIVITY

Employees who feel able to speak openly about their depression with their managers are more productive at work than employees whose managers avoid talking to them about their condition, according to research from the Personal Social Services Research Unit.

Published in the medical journal BMJ Open, the research also reveals that employees with depression, whose managers do not offer them support, take more days off of work.

Dr Sara Evans Lacko, Associate Professorial Research Fellow and co-author of the paper, said: “Mental illnesses, including depression, have a huge personal and economic impact. Our research shows that where employers create a culture of avoidance around talking about depression, employees themselves end up avoiding work and even when they return to work they are not as productive as they could be. Such situations could be transformed by managers providing more proactive support to people dealing with these issues.”

The study looked at depression in the workplace in 15 countries, including the UK, and is the first to compare openness about depression and workplace productivity in high income countries with middle and low income countries. The researchers found that more employees living in high income countries reported a diagnosis of depression.

People living in Mexico were most likely to report that their manager had offered to help with their depression (67%). This was in contrast with Japan where only 16 per cent of those questioned said their managers had offered proactive support. In Great Britain, the figure was 53%.

People living in South Korea (30%) and China (27%) were most likely to say their manager had avoided talking about their depression. Denmark had the most supportive managers with only two per cent of respondents saying that their manager had avoided the issue. In Great Britain the figure was 3%.

Individuals with higher levels of education took more days off than those with lower levels of education, as did those working in smaller companies in comparison to those who work in larger companies.

Dr Sara Evans Lacko said: “Depression is an invisible illness and, up to a certain point, people can conceal it. A manager might recognise that an employee’s performance is suffering but not the reason behind that, or they may feel that the issue is too taboo to discuss openly. More training and better workplace policies could help managers to recognise symptoms sooner and provide support – helping the individual and reducing the cost to employers at the same time.”

Other research has found that about 70% of people with mental illness, including depression, conceal their condition, fear of stigma and discrimination in finding and keeping jobs contributes to this fear. One in 6.8 people experience mental health problems in the workplace (14.7%).

The researchers analysed data from the Global IDEA (Impact of Depression in the Workplace in Europe Audit) and online research panels.



IOSH RESPONDS TO AGE DISCRIMINATION REPORT

Older workers are “a valuable resource” who make “a positive contribution” to businesses. That is according to IOSH in response to a report which suggests over-50s are being discriminated against.

IOSH is calling on employers to deliver proactive age management, including better designed work and workplace adjustment; training, retraining and redeployment; flexible working; and phased retirement.

The report, published by the Women and Equalities Committee in the UK, said that more than half a million people aged 50 or over who want to work are unable to do so because the law on age discrimination isn't being enforced.

They also recommend that the Equality and Human Rights Commission “must be clearer that “prejudice, unconscious bias and casual ageism in the workplace” is illegal.

Responding to the report, Judith McNulty-Green, IOSH's Technical Information Manager, said: “Older workers are a valuable resource and make a positive contribution to organisations. Age diversity at work brings benefits to individuals, workplaces and wider society, such as a broader range of skills and experience; opportunities for skill-transfer and mentoring; reduced staff turnover; and improved staff morale.

“IOSH believes that good working conditions throughout working lives benefit workers, businesses and society. Working lives are getting longer and therefore supporting healthy extended careers and workability for all ages is vital.

“We know good work is good for physical and mental health and that effective occupational safety and health management can help ensure all workers can fulfil their potential.”

However, extended working lives increases the likelihood of workers with chronic health conditions as well as longer exposure to hazards. Employers must be able to manage these risks. The Committee's report is available here: <https://tinyurl.com/y9hdyh6k>

EA RESPOND TO DEFRA CONSULTATION ON ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE

Defra has consulted on environmental principles and governance after the UK leaves EU.

The Environment Agency welcomes government proposals to:

- put a set of environmental principles into UK law
- establish a new independent body to hold the government to account

Taken together, and with the sustained work of the Environment Agency and other bodies, the Environment Agency believes these new arrangements will help protect and enhance the environment for future generations. The Environment Agency welcomes the government's agreement in the EU(Withdrawal) Act 2018 that the environmental principles should be set out in primary legislation. They endorse the principles identified.

The Environment Agency supports the proposal for a new independent body that's accountable to Parliament. They welcome the government's agreement that this body will have proportionate enforcement powers against Ministers of the Crown, including the ability to initiate legal proceedings. This will help ensure that the new body can hold the government to account when the UK leaves the EU.

The Environment Agency agrees that the new body should not replace or duplicate the role of other bodies, including the Environment Agency.

The full Environment Agency response can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/y775gctv>

BSI GUIDANCE TO TACKLE WORKPLACE MENTAL HEALTH 'CRISIS'

The British Standards Institute (BSI) has launched a new code of practice for organisations to help tackle a crisis in the mental health and wellbeing of Britain's workforce.

The code of practice, PAS 3002, provides recommendations to establish, promote, maintain and review the health and wellbeing of workers within an organisation. It considers how health and wellbeing should be incorporated into the working environment and how leadership can ensure health and wellbeing related services are available to employees.

The document recommends five key principles to form the basis of an organisation's approach:

1. capitalise on diversity and inclusion as an organisational strength
2. proactively support the physical and psychological health and wellbeing of workers
3. foster a work culture that offers strong, ethical relationships, a collaborative and communicative management style, and an organisational culture in which learning and development are encouraged
4. ensure jobs are designed so that they offer meaningful work
5. support good people management policies and practices.

The underpinning ethos of PAS 3002 is that it is evidence-based in material referred to and in the way organisational data is used. The document aims to be a supplement to provide a benchmark for organisations around the world regardless of jurisdiction, size and sector in relation to the health and wellbeing of its workers and so help to improve the health of the working population.

Development of the code of practice was spurred by increasing stress in the workplace and an increased awareness of mental illness; growing support and encouragement for a diverse workforce; an increasingly ageing workforce and a trend towards employees staying in work for longer.

Anne Hayes, Head of Governance and Resilience at BSI, said: "Health and wellbeing should be everyone's concern within an organisation. Increasingly, organisations are being asked to meet their responsibilities in relation to health and wellbeing in order to provide healthy workplaces and to protect people from harm.

"Enhancing employee wellbeing and engagement is at heart of this code of practice, and PAS 3002 provides guidance for organisations to provide early intervention to help prevent people being absent for health reasons and to use the workplace to promote individual health and wellbeing."

NUMBER OF WORK ABSENCES FALL AS PRESENTEEISM RISES

The number of lost working days due to absence has fallen to a record low number, according to recent figures by the Office for National Statistics, which shows that UK workers have taken an average number of just 4.1 sick days in 2017, compared with 7.2 days in 1993.

Earlier in the year, a CIPD survey showed that the number of people who are coming into work when they are ill – also known as 'presenteeism' – has more than tripled since 2010. Eighty-six per cent of employees admitting they had observed presenteeism in the workplace.

Research by the Centre for Mental Health shows that presenteeism among those with mental health issues alone is estimated to cost the UK economy £15.1 billion a year, compared with £8.4 billion a year for absenteeism.

Ciara Morrison, head of HR and talent at Instant Offices, said: "The phenomenon itself is not new. Nonetheless, it has recently become the subject of interest in studies. According to Dr Cary Cooper of Manchester University, who first used the term, it results from job insecurity brought on by the downsizing and restructuring in the 1990s. When employees believe they are at risk of losing their jobs, they feel an urgency to put in more hours, or at least appear to be working longer."

EMPLOYEE INVOLVEMENT IN WORKPLACE PLANNING DECREASING

Employee involvement in the planning, implementation and evaluation of their workplace is decreasing, despite a trend towards delivering 'employee-centric' offices, a recent report has claimed.

The study, entitled 'The Once Alternative Workplace Strategies', was undertaken and released by Advanced Workplace Associates (AWA), Global Workplace Analytics and Haworth Inc, and supported by the IFMA Workplace Evolutionaries. It represents the views of 130 organisations and over 2.3 million employees. The aim was to explore the drivers and perceived benefits of alternative workplace programmes, uncovering the leadership and workplace strategy implications for organisational leaders.

Having surveyed 130 organisations representing over 2.3m employees globally, the research pinpoints five leading trends within today's workplaces, and compares the findings to the initial research from more than a decade ago.

One of the key trends is that despite the focus on designing and delivering employee-centric workplaces, employee involvement is decreasing. As alternative workplace programmes increase in size and maturity, the report shows employee involvement in the planning, implementation and evaluation has significantly decreased. This runs contrary to what the researchers have found works best: the more people involved in the process, the more likely they are to accept and own it.

Chris Hood, research lead and one of the directors at Advanced Workplace Associates comments on the results stating: "Workplace innovation is a litmus test for management quality and leadership. This isn't about real estate, it's actually about people and business outcomes. Unfortunately, however, the results of this global study demonstrate that a high percentage of companies still see this as a real estate initiative and not the opportunity to reinvent their businesses in deeper and more transformational ways."

EFFECTIVENESS OF MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID TRAINING IN THE WORKPLACE

The Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) training programme was first developed to train the public in providing help to adults with mental ill-health problems. Recently there has been an increase in undertaking MHFA training in workplace settings.

A MHFA training programme was first developed in Australia to train the public in providing help to adults with mental ill-health problems. Great Britain has subsequently take up MHFA training with a recent increase in such training workplace settings.

In order to understand the strength of the available evidence on the effectiveness of MHFA in the workplace, a rapid scoping evidence review was undertaken for the HSE that considered three research questions on the impact, influence and application of MHFA training in workplaces.

The scoping evidence review considered three research questions on the impact, influence and application of MHFA training. The review found that:

- there are only a small number of published occupational studies that have addressed mental health first aid (MHFA) and these had design and quality limitations
- there is limited evidence that the content of MHFA training has been adapted for workplace circumstances
- there is consistent evidence that MHFA training raises employees' awareness of mental ill health conditions, including signs and symptoms
- there is limited evidence that MHFA training leads to sustained improvement in the ability of those trained to help colleagues experiencing mental ill-health
- there is no evidence that the introduction of MHFA training has improved the organisational management of mental health in workplaces.

The full report is available here: <https://tinyurl.com/y733gmny>

Prince William, Duke of Cambridge, has launched a new Mental Health at Work programme. A new online gateway was launched on 11th September to help companies improve staff wellbeing, as new research reveals almost half of Brits have experienced mental health problems at work.

The Mental Health at Work website (found here: <https://www.mentalhealthatwork.org.uk/>) has been developed by Prince William and MIND, with support from The Royal Foundation, Heads Together and 11 other organisations.

It brings together information, advice, resources and training that employers can use to improve wellbeing and give employees the mental health support they need.

Speaking at the launch, Prince William said: “If we’re going to improve the mental health of our nation, we need to improve things at work. People spend more time at work than almost anywhere else, yet research shows that it’s also the place where we are least comfortable talking about mental health.

“We need to tackle two big problems. We need to stop people feeling as if they need to hide and we need to make sure that anyone with any responsibility for others at work knows what to do.

“It just takes one person to change the way a company thinks about mental health. Sadly, we know that too many businesses simply don’t know where to turn. They want to help, but sometimes they don’t know how.

“I’m delighted that the Royal Foundation have supported Mind to create such a valuable tool. If you are a business owner, a team leader, a line manager, you work in HR or just believe in supporting the wellbeing of your colleagues, Mental Health at Work can help.”

Increase

In addition, a recent report published by the CBI found that two in three (63%) of businesses saw workplace health and wellbeing as an important issue, but most find it difficult to take practical actions because they are unclear about what works.

The CBI survey data also reveals that there has been a four-fold increase in the number of UK firms with 5% or more of their workforce disclosing a mental health condition – from 11% in 2013 to 40% in 2017.

Yet more than four in five businesses (84%) say that they feel their employees are less comfortable talking about mental health compared to physical health at work.

“Over the last few years employers have begun to take staff wellbeing more seriously and we know that many are doing great work around mental health in the workplace,” said MIND Chief Executive, Paul Farmer.



MENTAL HEALTH AT WORK

THE MODERN SLAVERY REPORT

Charges for modern slavery offences have risen by more than a quarter in the last year according to recently published figures from the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS).

In 2017/18, 239 suspects were charged with modern slavery offences, a 27% rise from the year before. And referrals to the CPS from police and other agencies have also risen by a third to 355 – the highest ever recorded. The increase, which has been part of a dedicated drive to clamp down on slavery related crime, has also seen 185 modern slavery and human trafficking convictions in 2017/18.

The figures have been published in the first CPS Modern Slavery report. The report highlights CPS efforts to disrupt, prosecute and improve our response to both modern slavery and human trafficking. In February, the CPS played host to prosecutors from 15 countries from Europe, Africa and South America, to make sure an effective global network is in place to tackle cross border cases.

Alison Saunders, Director of Public Prosecutions said: “Modern slavery has a devastating, lasting impact on its victims. There is no place in our society for those who enslave others, whether for work, sexual or criminal exploitation or domestic servitude.

“We are working in partnership with police and other partners from the outset to make sure we can build robust cases and deliver justice for victims. These cases are growing in size and complexity – that’s why we have given our prosecutors extensive extra training. Reducing the burden on victims and witnesses has been a key part of this training.

“Our international summit earlier this year brought together expert prosecutors from 15 countries worldwide to make sure we have a committed global response to tackling these horrendous crimes.”

The report demonstrates emerging trends in modern slavery crimes, including the emergence of ‘county lines’ offending - the trafficking and exploitation of young people by drug gangs in the United Kingdom. The report is available here: <https://tinyurl.com/y7uvbqmc>

WORKPLACE SURVEILLANCE

The TUC has published a report which looks at surveillance at work noting that when workplace monitoring is justified and used fairly, it can protect the health and safety of workers and improve business practices. When used badly or inappropriately, however, it becomes symptomatic of an employer’s lack of trust in staff, which in turn demoralises workers and can make staff miserable. Excessive surveillance can also be intrusive and interfere with people’s basic rights to privacy and dignity at work.

The research set out to establish the situation around workplace surveillance so that bad practice in workplace monitoring can be addressed.

The research revealed that:

- over half of workers (56 per cent) think it’s likely that they’re being monitored at work
- workplace monitoring is more likely to be happening to younger workers and employees in large companies
- two-thirds of workers (66 per cent) are concerned that workplace surveillance could be used in a discriminatory way if left unregulated
- 70% think that surveillance is likely to become more common in the future.

The report suggests that trade unions should have a legal right to be consulted on and to agree in advance the use of electronic monitoring and surveillance at work. It adds that the government should ensure employers can only monitor their staff for legitimate reasons that protect the interests of workers.

Read the report in full here: <https://tinyurl.com/y8jo7vku>

TRANSPORT & ROAD RISK

FLEET RISK SURVEY: OPERATORS FAILING BASIC COMPLIANCE CHECKS

Almost one in five fleets do not carry out walk-around checks on vehicles, a new survey suggests.

The study into fleet risk, conducted by ProVision CameraMatics, showed many fleets are putting themselves at undue risk by not adhering to basic compliance.

Reassuringly, almost two-thirds of respondents (63%) did say they conduct a walk-around check on paper, but ProVision said this can introduce disconnects and delays in reporting that may cause issues.

Electronic records are easier to maintain and review, it said. It means that fault reports are instantly relayed to the fleet manager, ensuring that compliance is maximised. This is especially important where a critical fault (such as issues with lights, brakes or key electrics) are reported. It also ensures that all data is saved in one place, online and accessible.

The study also highlighted the difference in responses between those who have invested in cameras for their fleet and those that haven't when it comes to carrying out vehicle checks.

When the results were filtered to those respondents without cameras and with cameras, fleet operators that invest in cameras are more likely to insist on vehicle checks and far more likely to do so using electronic means rather than paper (41% versus 18%).

Further, filtering the data to only those respondents who invested in higher-end multiple cameras, the difference was starker, with zero respondents saying they do not carry out vehicle checks, although more do so using paper than electronic means.

The data seems to indicate a correlation between understanding risk, and so investing in risk avoidance/management technology and following best-practice compliance.

The study also found that just 20% of fleets questioned had cameras in all vehicles and half had no cameras installed at all.

Of those with cameras, 42% were relying on single windscreen-mounted dashcams, without data analysis tools or any reporting functions.

The results come from ProVision's newly developed Fleet Risk Assessment Tool, an interactive survey tool, designed to help commercial fleet operators accurately evaluate individual business risk exposure. The tool gives each respondent immediate personalised insights into how to improve safety and reduce risk to their fleet and provided ProVision with the anonymous data for the study.

The survey focuses on the extent to which key technologies, including cameras, are adopted, as well as how best practice and reporting on incidents are implemented by fleets.

Data from the Fleet Risk Assessment Tool, hosted on the ProVision website, was mined from September 2017 to January 2018, with an accompanying comprehensive report created. This was designed to provide clarity for those reviewing and assessing safety procedures and transport policy and offer insight into the nature of risk.

The data was used to create a 'Risk Score' grading for those who took part based on the procedures and hardware each fleet has in place to manage risk. The results showed more than six out of 10 respondents had a risk score above 70%.

Key findings

- 17% of respondents do not carry out walk-around checks 15% admitted not having any accident reporting process
- 20% had cameras in all vehicles and 50% of respondents had no cameras installed
- 42% of those with cameras only had a single windscreen-mounted dashcam
- 52% reported that their cameras did not alert them of hardware failures
- 80% reported they did not have remote access to camera footage.

The highlights of the findings can be viewed, and the full report, along with infographic versions of the key data, downloaded here: <https://tinyurl.com/ya6b7pny>

The Fleet Risk Assessment Tool can be accessed here: <https://tinyurl.com/yb9z72kg>

BUSINESSES CALL FOR CAUTION OVER LOW EMISSION VAN TAX BREAK

Tax breaks for low emission vans could 'unfairly impact small businesses' and should be postponed until more models are commercially available to the market, industry bodies have claimed.

The British Vehicle Rental and Leasing Association (BVRLA) and Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) made the comments in response to a consultation by the Treasury on proposals to change the Vehicle Excise Duty (VED) tax rate to incentivise businesses to switch to lower emission vans.

The proposals, which were consulted on in the early summer, would see Van VED changed from being charged at a flat rate of around £250, to being graduated in the first year for new vans based on CO2 emissions.

Under the planned changes, vans with CO2 emissions between 1-50g/km would pay a proposed first year rate of £10, followed by a standard rate of £125. In comparison, vans with higher emissions would pay between £25 and £500 in first VED, followed by a standard rate of £255.

Types of vans that might be eligible for the lower tax rate could include electric, hybrid, hydrogen or gas powered models.

Excise duty

Further discount could be offered based on the number of zero-tailpipe emission miles a van can achieve, while vans with zero tailpipe emissions – such as battery electric or hydrogen models – would avoid VED altogether.

According to the Treasury, around 75% of vans purchased in 2016-2017 emitted over 150g/km of CO2, while only 0.4% of vans purchased that same year were ultra-low emission vehicles. As a result of the proposals, most van purchases would pay less tax in the first year, the Treasury claims.

However, according to the BVRLA and FSB, there are currently a lack of low emission vans available to the market that are available at a similar cost to their Euro VI diesel equivalents – a fact that would ultimately cost small businesses which typically have less capital to invest in new vehicles.

The organisations have suggested the government should incentivise manufacturers to produce a more affordable range of greener vans across all vehicle weight ranges, by offering greater cash incentives to produce the vehicles.

Commenting on the consultation, BVRLA chief executive Gerry Keaney, said: "BVRLA members are keen to embrace lower emission vehicles and want to play a part in improving the UK's air quality.

“The government’s approach will have the unintended consequence of penalising hard-working businesses. By heavily focusing on leveraging taxation the government is missing a trick to incentivise the much-needed production of a greater number of affordable, low emission vans. Van users in the UK currently don’t have much choice across all weight ranges.

“By allowing older, more polluting vans to continue to be taxed at a lower rate than newer, more efficient diesel vans the Government is sending the wrong signal and is failing to reward those making cleaner choices.”

Businesses

According to FSB policy chairman Martin McTague around two thirds of the organisation’s small business members rely on vans for transport and deliveries.

“Without these vehicles, they cannot provide their vital services throughout the UK, including those operating in busy town centres,” he added. “Small businesses are keen to play their part in improving air quality, but they continue to face barriers to adopting new, cleaner forms of transport, including the high cost of replacement vehicles and lack of charging infrastructure.”

Following the conclusion of its consultation on the changes to the Van VED at the end of June, the Treasury is expected to outline its full proposals in the autumn.



LONDON TO MAKE 20MPH THE DEFAULT SPEED LIMIT

The mayor of London has announced plans to make 20mph (+/- 30 km/h) the default speed limit in the city as part of a new Vision Zero road safety action plan.

The speed limits will be accompanied by redesigned streets, speed cameras and on-street enforcement as part of a Safe System approach.

As well as the work on speed limits, the mayor has set a target of reducing the numbers killed or seriously injured on London’s roads by 65% by 2022, based on the 2005-9 level. A separate target for zero people to be killed by or in a London bus has been set for 2030.

All new buses in London will be fitted with Intelligent Speed Assistance technology from this year, following successful trials, and the city will also trial Automated Emergency Braking for buses, as well as improving direct and indirect vision for drivers.

There are also plans to introduce a star-rating system for lorries, that will result in lorries not fitted with the latest safety technologies from being banned from the city.

More information is available here: <http://content.tfl.gov.uk/vision-zero-action-plan.pdf>



'DON'T BE A SPACE INVADER' – HIGHWAYS ENGLAND CAMPAIGN

Stay safe, stay back - that is the message from Highways England as it reveals the extent - and impact - of tailgating on the country's major roads and motorways.

New figures show that one in eight of all road casualties are caused by people who drive too close to the vehicle in front, with more than 100 people killed or seriously injured each year.

While a small minority of tailgating is deliberate, most is unintentional by drivers who are simply unaware they are dangerously invading someone else's space.

So a safety campaign launched on 17th September uses the well-known Space Invader video game character to alert drivers to the anti-social nature and risks of tailgating.

A survey by Highways England reveals that tailgating is the biggest single bugbear that drivers have about other road users. And in-car research - using dashcams, facial recognition, emotion tracking and heart monitors - reveals that a driver's typical reaction to someone who tailgates them is surprise, anger and contempt, with a spike in heart rate.

Nearly 9 out of 10 people say they have either been tailgated or seen it. And more than a quarter of drivers admitted to tailgating.

The 'Don't be a Space Invader - stay safe, stay back' campaign is supported by former Formula 1 world champion Nigel Mansell, who is President of the Institute of Advanced Motorists RoadSmart. He said: "Tailgating is a driving habit I utterly deplore. Not only is it aggressive and intimidating, but it can lead to a crash with a tragic outcome.

"There is absolutely no upside to it – you will not get to your destination faster, you are not a skilled driver for doing it, and you are putting so many innocent people at risk. So I very much back this campaign to highlight the dangers of tailgating."

Highways England says good drivers leave plenty of safe space for themselves and others.

Richard Leonard, Head of Road Safety at Highways England, commented: "If you get too close to the car in front, you won't be able to react and stop in time if they suddenly brake.

"Tailgating makes the driver in front feel targeted and victimised, distracting their attention from the road ahead and making them more likely to make a mistake.

"It is intimidating and frightening if you're on the receiving end. If that leads to a collision, then people in both vehicles could end up seriously injured or killed. We want everyone to travel safely, so the advice is - stay safe, stay back."

The Highway Code says that drivers should allow at least a two second gap, which should be doubled on wet roads. If you are tailgated, then avoid speeding up, slowing down or staring in the rear-view mirror. Reduce the risk to yourself by driving normally, signalling clearly and allowing people to overtake.

Being a Space Invader can also cost you money. One insurance company reports that almost a quarter of accident claims between January and August this year involved either a policy holder's or a third party's vehicle being hit from behind.



DRIVERS FAILING POLICE ROADSIDE EYE TESTS WILL LOSE LICENCES

Motorists who fail an eyesight test after being stopped by police will have their licences revoked on the spot under a new crackdown.

During September, three police forces – Thames Valley, Hampshire and the West Midlands – will require all drivers stopped to read a number plate from 20 metres.

If they are unable to, then the police officers in those areas will implement their powers to request an urgent revocation of a licence through the DVLA if they believe the safety of other road users will be at risk if that motorist remains on the road.

Thousands of drivers are believed to get behind the wheel of a vehicle each day and as well as removing dangerous drivers from the roads, the scheme will allow police to collect data on the extent of the problem. Sgt Rob Heard, from the Hampshire force, said: “Not being able to see a hazard or react to a situation quickly enough can have catastrophic consequences.”

He added that eyesight checks would be carried out “at every opportunity”.

Under current rules, a learner driver must be able to read a number plate from 20 metres under the practical part of their test.

However, once someone has obtained a licence, it is up to them to assess their own vision and inform the DVLA if they have an eyesight problem.

Joshua Harris, campaigns director for road safety charity Brake, said: “It is frankly madness that there is no mandatory requirement on drivers to have an eye test throughout the course on their driving life.

“Only by introducing rigorous and professional eye tests can we fully tackle the problem of unsafe drivers.”

Road safety charity IAM Roadsmart has also welcomed the crackdown on drivers’ eyesight.

Neil Greig, director of policy and research, said: “Law abiding drivers have nothing to fear from this – but we believe that extending the range of checks that the police could and should be doing will help remove many more unsafe drivers from our roads.

“They should be, as a matter of course, examining the following five key items: driving licence, MOT, vehicle insurance, drink/drugs and now eyesight.

“Adding a vision test to the standard list of roadside checks will be a sharp warning to those drivers who chose not to wear their glasses, or not get their eyesight checked, that the enforcement is now out there to back up the regulations.

“Our message is simple. Don’t risk it.”



ENFORCEMENT

COMPANY SENTENCED AFTER WORKER LEFT WITH MULTIPLE INJURIES

A Cheshire-based trailer manufacturing company has been fined after a worker was struck by a load on a fork lift truck and left with multiple injuries.

Manchester Magistrates' Court heard how an employee was in the process of lifting a stack of three trailer chassis using a fork lift truck, when a load shifted on the forks and struck another employee. The injured employee suffered from four spinal fractures, a broken left scapula, a broken rib and wounds to his head, shoulder, and ankle.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found the work had not been properly planned and there was no safe system of work in place. The company should have made sure the stack of chassis was secure and stable on the forks and would not shift when the load was raised. Simple steps such as identifying the correct centre of gravity and ensuring the forks were placed at that point, providing employees with refresher training on lifting loads and removing the need for the stack to be steadied by hand, would have controlled the risk and prevented the employee's injuries.

The company pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2 (1) of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and has been fined £12,000 and ordered to pay costs of £1,745.16.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Roger Clarke said: "The incident could so easily have been avoided by simply putting in place the correct control measures and safe working practices.

"Companies should be aware that HSE will not hesitate to take appropriate enforcement action against those that fall below the required standards."



£1.2M FINE AFTER WORKER DIES IN TRANSPORT ACCIDENT

A logistics company has been fined after a worker died when he was trapped between a trailer and his vehicle. On 22 January 2016, the employee was fatally injured whilst attempting to attach a trailer to his vehicle. The trailer was parked on a slight slope, which was enough to allow it to roll forward. The employee then became trapped.

Investigating, the HSE found safety management arrangements for coupling trailers to vehicles failed to take account of the slope.

The company pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2 (1) of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. It was fined £1.5 million with costs of £32,823.35.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Karl Raw said: "Had [the business] taken the slope into account, simple measures could have been taken that would have prevented this incident. Workplace transport remains a high risk environment, and this case serves as a reminder to industry that assessments of sites should be specific and identify the hazards unique to each yard. It is also a reminder that the slope a vehicle is parked on does not need to be steep for incidents to occur.

"This was a tragic and wholly avoidable incident, caused by the failure of the company to adopt robust management action in both planning and monitoring of the workplace and workplace actions at this site."

£200K FINE AFTER WORKER LOSES ARM

A Yorkshire transportation and storage company has been sentenced for safety breaches after a worker suffered injuries leading to the loss of his left arm.

A lorry driver was delivering wheat when it tipped onto the floor of a shed through the open rear door of the trailer. Whilst walking to the rear of the trailer, the driver lost his footing in a heap of grain, which was formed by the load being discharged, and put his hand out to steady himself; his left arm came into contact with a rotating auger and was drawn in.

The HSE's investigation found that a crucial interlocking device was not functioning at the time of the incident, allowing the auger to run when the tailgate was open. It also found that the emergency stop device for the discharge mechanism failed to function, as it was operated through the same circuitry.

The firm pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 11 (3)(C) of the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 and was fined £200,000 with costs of £531.40.

After the hearing, HSE inspector Julian Franklin commented: "The driver's injuries are life changing. The trailer was fitted with a safety system to prevent exactly this type of incident; it could so easily have been avoided by simply carrying out regular checks to ensure safety devices and systems remain working. This is something that many hauliers already do as part of their vehicle checks."

800KG LIFT CRUSHED WORKER'S FOOT

A worker had to have two toes partially amputated when an automated storage retrieval system (ASRS) lift dropped and trapped his foot.

On 28 April 2017, employees were replacing sensors on the lift. The work involved replacing sensors on the lift part of the equipment, which weighed approximately 800kg. The workers had activated the emergency stop circuit and presumed this would prevent the machine operating while the work was carried out. But power to the control panel was switched on.

An employee was replacing the sensors when the lift unexpectedly dropped, trapping his foot between the lift and the frame of the truck on which he was standing. The emergency services were called and the fire and rescue service had to release him from under the lift.

The man's injuries were so severe that his second and third toes had to be cut back to the knuckle and his other three required explorative surgery.

An investigation by Oldham Council found that the refurbishment work had been poorly planned and inadequately risk assessed, including the work being carried out on the equipment when it had power.

The local authority prosecuted the Northamptonshire-based firm, which provides warehouse management, under Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work Act and Regulation 3(1) (a) of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.

The company pleaded guilty to the two charges at Tameside Magistrates' Court and was fined was fined £12,000 for each offence plus £8,705.40 costs. There was also a victim surcharge of £170.

Councillor Arooj Shah, Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services, said: "This was an extremely serious incident that left the employee involved seriously injured.

"This case highlights the need for businesses to ensure that they provide a safe environment for their workers and that all possible steps are taken to make sure this happens. We'll take action against any company that causes accidents and injury through such negligence."

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