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# Has health and safety really gone mad?

Latest statistics suggest we need better health and safety, not less

### Ill health

- In 2008/09 an estimated 1.2 million people, who worked in the last twelve months suffered from ill health which they thought was work related\*
- Musculoskeletal disorders are the most common type of work-related illness but mental ill health gives rise to more working days lost
- Figures for the last three years show that a yearly average of around 5500 cases were assessed for industrial injuries disablement benefit (IIDB). The largest categories were vibration white finger, carpal tunnel syndrome and respiratory diseases associated with past exposures to substances such as asbestos and coal dust
- The annual number of work related cancer deaths is likely to be more than 8000
- About 4000 cancer deaths each year are due to past exposure to asbestos
- In 2007 there were 96 deaths from asbestosis (as underlying cause), and 156 from other types of pneumoconiosis, mostly due to coal dust and silica
- Around 15% of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD – including bronchitis and emphysema) may be work related. This suggests there could be some 4000 COPD deaths each year due to past occupational exposures to fumes, chemicals and dusts
- The annual number of mesothelioma deaths has increased from 153, in 1968, to 2056, in 2007

### Deaths and injury

- 413 people have died in the workplace over the last two years
- 131,895 employees were injured in 2008/09 \*\*
- There were 27 594 major injuries to employees reported in 2008/09. Over one third were caused by slipping or tripping
- There were 104 301 other injuries to employees causing absence from work of more than 3 days. Around two fifths were caused by handling, lifting or carrying, and a quarter due to slipping or tripping

### Deaths in the workplace – 2008/09

- Agriculture: 26 (5.7 deaths per 100 000 workers)
- Construction: 53 (2.4 deaths per 100 000 workers)
- Manufacturing: 32 (1.1 deaths per 100 000 workers)
- Services: 63 (0.3 deaths per 100 000 workers)

### Working days lost

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- 29.3 million working days were lost in 2008/09, 24.6 million due to work-related ill health and 4.7 million due to workplace injury

### Key

\*Labour Force Survey (LFS)

\*\* Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR)

All other statistics provided by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE)

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