



The Safety Observer



Newsletter of the National Irish Safety Organisation

July 2020 - Issue 49

Welcome to the July 2020 edition of **The Safety Observer**, the newsletter of the National Irish Safety Organisation. The Safety Observer contains information that is current, informative and useful to subscribers. We keep you up to date on what is happening in occupational safety and health. NISO Update, the quarterly magazine, was circulated on 7 April 2020 last and the next edition for NISO members is scheduled for mid July 2020. The last edition of Safety Observer was distributed on 28 May 2020.

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The NISO Observer Newsletter is sent to **NISO Members** and **email subscribers only**. Your colleagues may have to subscribe to the NISO mailing list again to receive email communications from National Irish Safety Organisation. Please forward this newsletter on to any colleagues or friends who may need to subscribe again.

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All Ireland
**Occupational
Safety Quiz
2020**

**NISO
ANNUAL
GENERAL
MEETING
2020**

**HEALTH AND SAFETY
TRAINING**

NISO NEWS

All Ireland Occupational Safety Awards

The Safety Awards Presentation Ceremony has been deferred to Friday, **22 January 2021** in the Great Southern Killarney, Co. Kerry.

Early Bird Deadline: 31 July 2020

Standard Deadline: 25 September 2020

Find out more [HERE...](#)

All Ireland Occupational Safety Quiz

The Safety Quiz Finals have now been deferred until Saturday, **17 October 2020** in the Tullamore Court Hotel, Tullamore, Co. Offaly. The remaining Regional Quiz Heats will be rescheduled in due course.

Find out more [HERE...](#)

NISO Annual General Meeting

The AGM of The National Irish Safety Organisation will take place at 2PM on **Thursday, 30 July 2020** at the **Red Cow Moran Hotel**, Naas Road, Dublin 22, D22 YX80.

Find out more [HERE...](#)

NISO Health & Safety Training

NISO has now resumed most of its health and safety courses which will take place in classroom and online. Training includes Safe Pass, Mobile Workers Assessor Training, Safety Representation, NISO Certificate in Safety, Health and Welfare at Work, Manual Handling and more.

View upcoming courses/book online [HERE...](#)

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In this issue... [COVID-19 news...](#) [Safety news...](#) [In the Courts...](#) [Statistics...](#) [Safety Alerts...](#) [Guidance...](#)
[Resources...](#) [Safety Commentary/Opinion...](#) [Training and Events](#)

COVID-19 NEWS

HSA carry out almost 1,000 COVID-19 inspections

The HSA confirmed it has carried out almost 1,000 inspections in the two weeks since the first phase of economy reopening on 18 May. According to the HSA, based on an initial analysis of the inspections, compliance with the Return to Work Safely protocol is high and employers are generally taking a responsible and proactive approach. It found that approximately three-quarters of employers have a COVID-19 response plan in place and almost nine in 10 employers have completed employee induction training, as required by the protocol.

<https://bit.ly/3hDv067>

Meat plants with C19 outbreaks inspected by HSA

The HSA has inspected 13 of the 20 meat plants that have been affected by outbreaks of COVID-19. In addition to the 13 plants, the HSA has also inspected three other plants not affected by COVID-19. The HSA's role involves ensuring that the "Return to Work" safety protocols are being adhered to.

<https://bit.ly/30Wyuub>

HSA's COVID-19 powers of enforcement are "considerable"

Compliance officers are warning that businesses could face strict enforcement measures including closure for non-compliance with the COVID-19 "Return to Work Protocol". The Association of Compliance Officers Ireland (ACOI) said there can be no mistaking that the HSA's powers of enforcement are considerable.

<https://bit.ly/2N504O7>

INMO calls for COVID-19 to be classified as a work injury

The Irish Nurses and Midwives Organisation (INMO) is calling for COVID-19 to be classified as a “work-acquired injury” to enable the HSA to investigate the high infection rate among healthcare staff. Figures show that 88% of healthcare workers with COVID-19 contracted the virus at work. A third of all 25,385 confirmed cases up to 30 May were healthcare workers with nurses accounting for the largest single group of workers infected.

<https://bit.ly/37C4N36>

Zero COVID-19 cases among Irish prison inmates

The Irish Prison Service (IPS) has submitted a paper to the World Health Organization as a model of best practice for keeping COVID-19 out of prisons. This article takes a look at how the IPS managed its remarkable feat of keeping the virus out of its settings and what can be learned from its management of COVID-19.

<https://bit.ly/2YNycmO>

Special Committee on COVID-19 Response - debate

Transcript from the debate on “Reopening the Economy: Supports for Business” by the Oireachtas Special Committee on COVID-19 Response featuring the CEOs of Ibec and ISME.

<https://bit.ly/2Y7CGWu>

Ireland’s health workers have world’s highest rate of COVID-19

Ireland has the highest rate of infection from coronavirus of all health workers globally, the Oireachtas Covid-19 committee has been told. The General Secretary of the Irish Nurses and Midwives Organisation (INMO) has described the figures as “an absolute scandal” and has called on the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation to alter regulations to include COVID-19 as an occupationally acquired illness.

<https://bit.ly/2Vu6udW>

IRISH NEWS

74% of male farmers at higher risk of heart attack or stroke

A major study of farmers’ health has found that 74% of male farmers have four, or more, risk factors for cardiovascular disease. This means they are three times more likely to have an acute cardiac event (stroke or heart attack)

compared to those with fewer risk factors. The data from this research is being analysed to identify the best ways of supporting farmers to adopt and maintain healthier lifestyles.

<https://bit.ly/3ghWlcB>

Ageing tractor fleet a factor in farm fatalities

Almost 40pc of the tractors in use on farms are over 20 years old, and these ageing machines may be a factor in the high level of deaths among elderly farmers, safety experts have warned. With the data only based on taxed vehicles, the actual age profile of tractors used on Irish farms is likely to be much older.

<https://bit.ly/2Afjgpl>

One hundred spitting incidents against gardaí reported since April

There have been 100 incidents of people spitting or coughing on members of An Garda Síochána since between 8 April and 13 June 2020. During that period gardaí have had to use anti-spit guards 75 times. The Garda Commissioner has described the attacks as a “serious concern”.

<https://bit.ly/2CYnvqB>

Tipperary students’ farm safety video goes nationwide

A pioneering initiative from a group of students and their teachers from a Co. Tipperary secondary school is set to be rolled out nationwide. From a community that has been deeply and personally affected by farm accidents, five students embarked on a mission to change the culture of farm safety. Together they launched the “Open Your Eyes to Farm Safety” campaign through organising a tractor run and making a video.

<https://bit.ly/3e9SZHH>

UK NEWS

Company fined £1.1m after worker falls from height

A London-based refurbishment company has been fined £1.1m after an engineer suffered serious injuries when he fell from height. The worker climbed onto an internal roof and was inspecting a leak from an extension ladder when the ladder slipped away from him and he fell almost three metres into the gap between the internal roof and the external wall. The worker suffered serious injuries. An investigation by the UK’s Health and Safety Executive found that

reasonably practicable measures had not been taken to prevent a fall from the internal roof. The company was fined £1.1m and ordered to pay costs of £68,116.18.

<https://bit.ly/2N5xl6c>

COVID-19: Which key workers are most at risk?

Research findings published by the House of Commons Library outlines which workers have experienced the biggest health risk, and breaks these groups down by ethnicity, gender, country of birth, disability status, household type and rates of pay. The article says that key workers more likely than average to be from a BAME (Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic) background, be women, born outside the UK and paid less than the average UK income.

<https://bit.ly/3dd4zk3>

HSE releases annual workplace fatality figures for 2019/20

The UK's Health and Safety Executive has released its annual figures for the number of work-related fatalities in 2019/20. The provisional annual data for work-related fatal accidents revealed that 111 workers were fatally injured between April 2019 and March 2020, the lowest on record, with a fall of 38 deaths from the previous year.

<https://bit.ly/3goArnJ>

EUROPEAN NEWS

Workplace safety not in Commissions top 40 priorities

Trade unions have expressed concern that the European Commission has no official plans to make workplaces safer, particularly in the wake of the COVID-19 outbreak. An updated work programme recently published by the Commission includes 43 new initiatives but omitted improvements to health and safety from the document. Not including COVID-19 related workplace illness and fatalities, there are still approximately 4,000 workplace fatalities and 100,000 deaths from work-related cancers in the EU annually.

<https://bit.ly/3dh4jRg>

14th Annual Road Safety Performance Index Report

Out of the 32 countries monitored by the European Transport Safety Council (ETSC) Road Safety Performance Index (PIN) programme, 16 reduced road deaths in 2019. The best results were achieved by Luxembourg with a 39%

decrease, followed by Sweden with a 32% decrease. Road deaths increased in 12 countries, while progress stagnated in four.

<https://bit.ly/31wvJC>

Study finds 1 in 12 plays games behind the wheel

A recent survey for the Institute for Road Safety Research in the Netherlands has found that drivers are increasingly playing games while driving: 8.2 percent admitted to sometimes playing games while driving in 2019, up from 3 percent in a 2017 survey.

<https://bit.ly/3dV6rhT>

GENERAL SAFETY NEWS

HIQA received 280 complaints on nursing homes

Newly released documents reveal that the Health Information and Quality Authority received 280 complaints about nursing homes during the first two months of the COVID-19 pandemic. Most of the complaints related to concerns about staffing issues and infection prevention and control within the care homes, and the lack of communication about the welfare of residents with relatives.

<https://bit.ly/2YLo92Y>

Ireland second best for road safety in EU

Ireland was the second best-performing country in the EU in 2019 in terms of road safety, according to preliminary figures published recently by the European Commission. The number of road fatalities in the Republic has fallen one third over the last decade with the lowest point recorded in 2018 when 140 people lost their lives as a result of fatal incidents involving vehicles on public roads.

<https://bit.ly/2BhRV6H>

FATALITIES AND ACCIDENTS

Garda murdered in Co. Roscommon

A Detective Garda has been shot dead while on duty in Co. Roscommon. The Detective was killed in an altercation in which his service pistol was used against him with 15 shots fired, several of which struck the deceased. A murder investigation is now underway and a man in his 40s was arrested at the scene.

The Detective Garda received a state funeral with the President and Taoiseach paying tribute.

<https://bit.ly/2ZuSrGg>

Man killed in farm accident in Co. Kilkenny

A man has died following a farm accident in Co. Kilkenny. It is understood the incident involved a combine harvester. An Garda Síochána attended the scene and the HSA is investigating the circumstance of the fatality.

<https://bit.ly/3ggnuwe>

Man killed in Co. Galway farm accident

A man in his mid-70s has been killed in a farm accident involving a tractor in Co. Galway. The man was taken to University Hospital Galway where he was pronounced dead. The HSA has launched an investigation into the incident.

<https://bit.ly/31BssQa>

Man killed in farm accident in Co. Longford

A man in his 50s has been killed in an accident on a farm in Co. Longford. It is understood the man was working on machinery at the time of the accident. The HSA has launched an investigation into the incident.

<https://bit.ly/2ZpsWX4>

Man in his 70s killed in farm accident in Co. Cork

A man in his 70s has been killed in a farm accident in Co. Cork. It is understood that the man's quad bike may have overturned on rough terrain. He was pronounced dead at the scene. The HSA has launched an investigation into the incident.

<https://bit.ly/2YPoJwQ>

Man dies in Co. Cork farm accident

A man in his 60s has died in a farm accident in Co. Cork. The man was pronounced dead at the scene despite efforts by emergency services to help him. It is understood that he suffered critical crush-type injuries. An Garda Síochána has described the death as a tragic accident and the HSA has launched an investigation into the incident.

<https://bit.ly/38hZc2c>

Man rushed to hospital following fall from roof

A 21-year-old man is in a serious condition in hospital after falling from the roof of a shed on a farm in Co. Donegal. He was rushed to hospital in Donegal and was later transferred to Beaumont Hospital in Dublin. An Garda Síochána and the HSA are carrying out investigations into the incident.

<https://bit.ly/3ggnuwe>

Security guard stabbed in Co. Kildare

A man has been arrested after a security guard was stabbed in a supermarket in Co. Kildare. The incident happened when the security guard, who is in his 30s, approached a man who had observed trying to steal an item. The man stabbed the security guard before fleeing the scene. He was later arrested by An Garda Síochána and the security guard, who received non-life threatening injuries, was treated at the scene.

<https://bit.ly/2Zk3ORe>

Two teenagers seriously injured following dirt bike collision

Two teenage boys have suffered injuries described as serious but non-life threatening in a dirt bike collision in Co. Clare. One teenager was airlifted to hospital while the second boy was taken to hospital by road. A multi-agency rescue operation attended the scene and the HSA was notified of the incident.

<https://bit.ly/2BVFSff>

IN THE COURTS

Truck driver who killed pedestrian jailed for 3 years

A truck driver who broke a red light and killed a pedestrian has been jailed for three years. The driver said that he mistook the pedestrian green light for a filter light to turn left. The driver pleaded guilty to dangerous driving causing deaths at the Dublin Circuit Criminal Court. The judge noted a number of mitigating factors including the driver's remorse and guilty plea and said that the appropriate sentence was three years, suspending the final two. She also disqualified him from driving for six years.

<https://bit.ly/38kyS7u>

Farmer fined after contractor fell 22ft from building

A farmer has been fined in Carlow District Court after pleading guilty to breaching health and safety regulations after a contractor fell 22 feet from an agri building. The farmer was fined €1,500 and was ordered to pay prosecution

costs of €1,500 for breaches of health and safety legislation. The farmer had failed to appoint a Project Supervisor Construction Stage (PSCS) to coordinate the various construction work activities to ensure the safety of all persons on site and compliance with the regulations.

<https://bit.ly/2NUk0DH>

STATISTICS

Twenty-nine people have been killed in workplace accidents since 1 January 2020 - Correct at 30 June 2020. Source: www.hsa.ie

<http://bit.ly/2U9LQRV>

SAFETY ALERTS

Use of face masks designated KN95

The UK's Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has issued a safety alert regarding face masks designated KN95. The HSE warns that a substantial number of face masks claiming to be of KN95 standard provide an inadequate level of protection and are likely to be poor quality products accompanied by fraudulent paperwork. The HSE advise that KN95 must not be used as PPE at work as their effectiveness cannot be assured.

<https://bit.ly/3ii18wh>

PUBLICATIONS

Smart PPE: intelligent protection for the future

EU-OSHA article on the emergence of smart personal protective equipment (PPE) for the workplace. This article outlines the challenges that stakeholders face such as the need to establish standards and an appropriate framework for testing and certification.

<https://bit.ly/2Bmhq6T>

RESEARCH/STUDIES

Strategies for tackling work-related MSDs

A new report from the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA) identifies 25 varied initiatives used in 14 countries highlighting what can be done to prevent MSDs, particularly in SMEs. The research reveals several

key elements important for effective policy-level interventions, including the commitment and participation of all stakeholders at all levels, promoting the adoption of preventive measures through positive incentives and the consideration of ergonomics.

<https://bit.ly/2VAIKFc>

Preventing work-related MSDs - report

A new report from EU-OSHA's multiannual project exploring research, policy and practice on the prevention of work-related MSDs. The purpose of this research is to support the development of strategies to tackle this highly prevalent occupational safety and health issue in Europe's workplaces. The research identifies a number of gaps at policy and workplace levels, explaining why work-related MSDs are still a major problem despite efforts to prevent them.

<https://bit.ly/31LQ8Sf>

GUIDANCE

Tourism: Guidelines for re-opening businesses published

Fáilte Ireland has published a series of guidelines for re-opening tailored to the various sectors of the Irish tourism industry. The guidelines provide comprehensive advice on re-opening for business owners, with an emphasis placed on the safety and wellbeing of employers, employees and customers.

<https://bit.ly/3inoEYY>

RESOURCES

COVID-19 templates, checklists and posters

The HSA has prepared checklists and templates to help employers, business owners and managers to get their businesses up and running again and to inform workers about what they need to do to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace. The checklists are based on the government's Return to Work Safely Protocol.

<https://bit.ly/3giF82t>

New tool to support COVID-19 workplace risk assessment

EU-OSHA's Online Interactive Risk Assessment platform (OiRA) has developed a tailored tool to support safely returning to work. This interactive tool can help

identify, assess and manage the risks posed by COVID-19 to ensure that workers come back to a safe and healthy work environment. The COVID-19 OiRA tool is available for national OiRA partners for adaptation to their national regulations and situations.

<https://bit.ly/2ZrVKOI>

Role of Lead Worker Representative(s) Poster

Information poster from the HSA outlining the role of the Lead Worker Representative(s) under the Government's COVID-19 Return to Work Safely Protocol.

<https://bit.ly/2YPQJQP>

MSDs and prolonged static standing

OSHWiki article from EU-OSHA on musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) and prolonged static standing. According to European statistics, one in five workers in the EU spends most of their working time standing up. This OSHwiki article looks at the risk factors and research about prolonged static standing, presents the symptoms and health complaints and offered solutions to workers and employers to prevent these.

<https://bit.ly/3gkpzY4>

Psychosocial risk assessment of returning to work - Podcast

Podcast episode presented by HSA Senior Psychologist Patricia Murray discussing the "Psychosocial risk assessment of returning to work under COVID-19".

<https://bit.ly/2CTzy8j>

MSDs: Early intervention in the workplace

Musculoskeletal Disorders (MSDs) are one of the biggest causes of work absence (50%) and early retirement in Europe but when managed early, MSDs are less likely to lead to long-term work loss. This new article looks at the necessary prerequisites for early intervention and presents cases of successful interventions and good practice examples.

<https://bit.ly/3dS0Nx4>

COVID-19 Phase 3 of reopening resources

As Ireland has entered Phase 3 of the Government's Roadmap for Reopening Society and Business, updated posters and information are now available.

<https://bit.ly/3bD2q12>

New MSD Online Assessment Tool

The HSE (UK) has launched a new MSD Online Assessment Tool / Manual Handling Assessment Tool. The new MSD tool is an all-in-one digital solution for the HSE's well renowned MAC tool. Live webinar demonstrations for use of the tools are scheduled in July and August.

<https://bit.ly/3e002Cc>

SAFETY COMMENTARY/OPINION

“Carers are frontline workers too” - one carer's story

One carer describes the challenge of working as a full time family carer during the COVID-19 pandemic.

<https://bit.ly/3dT2sIV>

Mental health in the workplace and the new normal

Some advice and guidance on how to protect workers' mental health as the economy begins to open up and people are going back to work.

<https://bit.ly/2VG1NOI>

How workplace bullying costs Ireland €239m every year

This multimedia article takes a look at recent research from NUI Galway which has revealed that workplace bullying costs the Irish economy €239 million every year. Includes analysis of the research, RTE TV and Radio interviews and reports on the topic of workplace bullying.

<https://bit.ly/3eUrtOP>

TRAINING AND EVENTS

Training scheduled at NISO Training Centre, Dublin 12 OR Online

Upcoming dates for all courses will be confirmed in due course.

[Safety Representation](#) (ONLINE), NISO Certificate (2 day); 7-8 July 2020 [Book online](#)

[Manual Handling Basic](#), NISO Certificate (half day); 9 & 23 July 2020 [Book online](#)

[Safe Pass](#), SOLAS (1 day); 17, 22, 24, 29, 31 July 2020 [Book online](#)

Upcoming Dates TBC

[Manual Handling Instruction](#) QQI L6 (5 day)

[Mobile Working Assessor Course](#), NISO Certificate (1 day)

[VDU/DSE Assessor Training](#), NISO Certificate (1 day)

Regional Courses

[NISO Certificate in Health, Safety and Welfare at Work](#) (13 wks/2 hrs p/wk)

Cork: CSN College of Further Education Cork; 14 September 2020 [Book online](#)

Dublin: NISO Training Centre, Dublin 12; 15 September 2020 [Book online](#)

Limerick: Limerick IT, Moylish Campus; 15 September 2020 [Book online](#)

Mayo: GMIT Castlebar Campus; 15 September 2020 [Book online](#)

Tralee: Venue TBC; 15 September 2020 [Book online](#)

Waterford: Waterford IT; 15 September 2020 [Book online](#)

Westmeath: Athlone IT; 21 September 2020 [Book online](#)

Working at Height and Scaffolding COP - Seminar

Galway and Dublin dates/venues to be rescheduled in due course

Promoting Health and Wellbeing in the Workplace - Workshop

Dundalk, Limerick, Dublin, Cork and Athlone dates/venues to be rescheduled in due course

All Ireland Occupational Safety Quiz - Regional Heats

[Western](#) 13 February 2020; Oranmore Lodge Hotel, Oranmore, Co. Galway
[Already Held]

[Southern](#) 3 March 2020; Radisson Blu Hotel & Spa, Little Island, Cork [Already Held]

[North East](#) 5 March 2020; The Errigal Hotel, Cootehill, Co. Cavan [Already Held]

[NISG Northern Ireland](#) 6 March 2020; Wellington Park Hotel, Belfast; Contact info@nisg.org.uk [Already Held]

Regional Quizzes to be rescheduled in due course

Midland Region [covering counties Laois, Longford, Offaly, Westmeath]

North West Region [covering counties Donegal, Leitrim, Sligo]

Eastern Region [covering counties Dublin, Kildare, Wicklow]

South Eastern Region [covering counties Carlow, Kilkenny, Tipperary South, Waterford, Wexford]

Mid West Region [covering counties Clare, Limerick, Tipperary North]

National Events

[NISO Annual General Meeting](#), Red Cow Moran Hotel, Naas Road, Dublin 22;
30 July 2020

[NISO/NISG All Ireland Safety Quiz Finals](#), Tullamore Court Hotel, Tullamore,
Co. Offaly; 17 October 2020

[NISO/NISG All Ireland Safety Awards](#), Great Southern Killarney; 22 January
2021

[NISO/NISG All Ireland Safety Awards](#) Early Bird Deadline: 31 July 2020

[NISO/NISG All Ireland Safety Awards](#) Standard Deadline: 25 September 2020

[57th Annual NISO Conference](#) Cancelled for 2020

[Trade Exhibition of H&S Products and Services](#) Cancelled for 2020



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2020 SAFETY AWARDS

Closing date for entries: 25 September 2020
Early bird closing date: 31 July 2020
29th Annual NISO / NISG All Ireland Occupational
Safety Awards Ceremony and Dinner: 22 January 2021
Great Southern Killarney

CLICK ME for further information or visit
safetyawards.ie

NISO OSH CERT COURSE



NISO Certificate in Safety, Health and Welfare at Work
One two hour evening per week over 13 weeks in **Dublin**.

Commencing 6.30pm on Tuesday, 15 September 2020

Also at 7pm in the following locations:

Cork (14 September); **GMIT Castlebar** (15 September);

LIT Limerick (15 September); **Tralee** (15 September);

WIT Waterford (15 September); **AIT Athlone** (21

September).

CLICK ME to register online or call 01 465 9760

OSH TRAINING



All courses listed available to be delivered in **Dublin**,
nationwide or in-house on request.

NISO Certificate in Safety, Health and Welfare at Work |

Safe Pass | Health & Safety Representation QQI L5 |

Manual Handling Instruction | Manual Handling Basic |

Risk Assessment | Safety Rep | VDU/DSE Assessor |

Introduction to H&S for the Non Safety Specialist

CLICK ME to view all upcoming courses

