

NISO Safety Observer
November 2021; Issue 60

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Newsletter of the National Irish Safety Organisation

November 2021 - Issue 60

Welcome to the November 2021 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 30 July 2021 last and the next edition for NISO members is scheduled for November 2021. The last edition of Safety Observer was distributed on 1 October 2021.

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NISO Annual Conference & Trade Exhibition 2021



HEALTH & SAFETY TRAINING

NISO NEWS

NISO Annual Conference & Trade Exhibition

The NISO Annual Conference & Trade Exhibition is taking place on 4 November 2021 in the Great Southern Killarney, Co. Kerry.

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

30th Annual Safety Awards

The 30th Annual Occupational Safety Awards Dinner is taking place on 4 November 2021 in the Great Southern Killarney, Co. Kerry.

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

H&S Training

NISO is continuing to hold both online and classroom-based health & safety training including Mobile & Home Working Assessors Training, DSE/VDU Risk Assessors Training, Safety Representation and Manual Handling Basic.

Further information [HERE...](#)

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Topics... COVID-19 news... Safety news... In the Courts... Inquests... Statistics... Accidents & Fatalities... Safety Alerts... Publications... Resources... Safety in Videos... MCBI reports... Training and Events...

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- Full return to offices delayed until next spring
- Employers urged to prioritise mental health
- Some “green jobs” are dirty and dangerous
- EU-OSHA: One stop shop for vehicle safety

COVID-19 NEWS

Government updates Work Safely Protocol

The Government has published an updated Work Safely Protocol. This updated Protocol remains a robust document which is applicable to all sectors of the economy. It sets out the minimum Public Health infection prevention and control measures required in every place of work to prevent and reduce the spread of COVID-19 following temporary closures and in the ongoing safe operation of workplaces.

<https://bit.ly/3g3u0rV>

Full return to offices delayed until next spring

Tánaiste Leo Varadkar has said the full return to offices is being delayed until next spring in response to rising COVID-19 cases. The National Public Health Emergency Team (NPHE) advised the Government that the return to the workplace should continue on a “phased and cautious basis” but recommended that “all who can work from home should continue to do so”.

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

Workplaces need “go-to” person for COVID concerns

It is essential that each workplace has at least one “go-to” person to address any concerns over returning to work safely during the pandemic, according to the Labour Employer Economic Forum. The consultative group has stressed that all workers and employers have a shared responsibility to adhere to public health guidance after the Government announced that a full return to the office will not be likely until the spring.

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

Long COVID will present issues for employers and employees

According to employment and HR experts, long COVID is set to cause “massive issues” for employers and employees. There is still more unknown than known when it comes to long COVID and it affects people differently. An employment law solicitor has said that whether long COVID is classed as a disability or not will be a key decision.

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

IRISH NEWS

70% of arts workers experience harmful workplace behaviours

A new report has found that there is a culture of harmful workplace behaviours across all sectors of the arts in Ireland. At 70%, the majority of the 1,300 people surveyed had experienced harmful behaviour and 53% had witnessed it, with the majority of those instances reported to have taken place in the workplace. The data shows that, at 67%, the perpetrators were more likely to be men and that women accounted for 42% of the reported incidents.

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

Defence Forces new Chief of Staff’s harassment warning

Harassment of any kind will not be tolerated in the Defence Forces and military leaders will face consequences for not acting to stop it, the newly appointed Chief of Staff has warned. This warning follows the airing of a programme which detailed a wide range of misconduct and abuse against women in the Defence Forces, including allegations of harassment, sexual assault and rape, committed over the course of three decades.

<https://bit.ly/3EntL5r>

Survey reveals bullying levels in solicitor’s profession

More than 1,500 solicitors responded to a survey which found that 43.5% of male

solicitors and 34.5% of female solicitors who responded have experienced bullying. One out of every two female respondents and one out of eight male respondents had experienced sexual harassment. While more than 70% said they had not reported the harassment or bullying they had experienced, this rose to 91% in the case of sexual harassment.

<https://bit.ly/3jKh8JX>

New ways to combat workplace sexual harassment

The Dublin Rape Crisis Centre (DRCC) has published a research paper aimed at finding solutions to workplace sexual harassment in Ireland. Included in the research paper is a survey of survivors of sexual harassment, 60% of whom said they had been harassed at work. Some of the solutions suggested by a law firm include a series of reforms of the existing legal frameworks regarding sexual harassment, legal mechanisms centred on the experiences of survivors should be implemented, the creation of an anonymous helpline to report abuse as well as offering information and advice, among others.

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

Employers urged to prioritise mental health supports

New research shows that over the course of the pandemic employees' overall mental wellbeing has deteriorated and many are looking to find work in an environment that prioritises good mental health. Among 18-34 year olds, 45% are planning to change their jobs in the coming year and one in three of these are seeking an employer that provides adequate mental health resources to support better mental wellbeing.

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

Migrant fishermen report exploitative working conditions

A report funded by the International Transport Workers' Federation was recently launched which looked at the treatment of non-EEA male migrant workers in the Irish fishing industry. The report found that respondents experienced racist insults and verbal abuse, felt unsafe on the ships where they work, received very low wages and worked extremely long hours with few breaks.

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

Launch of the Acceleration of Wear and Tear Allowances

Martin Heydon TD, Minister of State with responsibility for Farm Safety, has announced the launch of the Acceleration of Wear and Tear Allowances for Farm

Safety Equipment Scheme. This follows the signing of the commencement order to allow for accelerated capital allowances on qualifying farm safety and adaptation equipment. Minister Heydon has also worked with the Minister for Finance, Paschal Donohoe TD, to introduce accelerated capital allowances for certain farm safety and adaptive equipment for farmers with disabilities.

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

HSA Choose Safety programme launched

The HSA's Choose Safety programme for Transition Year and senior cycle students in post-primary schools and further education was launched in September for the academic year 2021/22. Choose Safety introduces students to the principles of workplace health and safety and offers a practical health and safety preparation for the world of work.

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

Working from home gives better work/life balance

New research has found that 47% of employees working remotely said they had a better work life balance since the outbreak of the pandemic. One in five respondents said they never have time to take breaks, while a quarter claimed that, while they do take regular breaks, they don't take any exercise. Of the 1,000 workers surveyed, 30% said they do not believe their workspace is compliant with occupational health standards.

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

EUROPEAN NEWS

Bolshoi performer dies in accident on stage

A performer at Moscow's renowned Bolshoi theatre was killed in an accident on stage during an opera. The incident occurred during a set change. Investigators are probing the circumstances surrounding the death of the 37-year-old performer.

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

Violence in Italy over COVID-19 workplace rules

Violence has erupted in Italy amid protests over the country's new COVID-19 workplace health pass requirement. Italy became the first major European economy to require all workers, from hairdressers to factory workers, to present proof of vaccination, a negative test within the past 48 hours or proof of having been cured recently of COVID-19 to enter workplaces.

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

US NEWS

Assistant director on “Rust” subject of 2019 safety complaint

A crew member has said she raised safety concerns in the past about the assistant director who authorities say unwittingly handed actor Alec Baldwin a prop gun that killed a cinematographer on the set of the movie "Rust". The crew member said in a statement that she filed an internal complaint with the executive producers of a 2019 series over concerns about the assistant director's behaviour on set, which included a disregard of safety protocols for weapons and pyrotechnics.

<https://bit.ly/3pMVE6>

WORLD NEWS

ILO adopts code of practice on H&S in clothes manufacturing

Experts from governments and employers' and workers' organisations have adopted a code of practice on safety and health in textiles, clothing, leather and footwear manufacturing - the first for these industries. The code provides comprehensive and practical advice on how to eliminate, reduce and control all major hazards and risks including chemical substances, ergonomic and physical hazards, tools, machines and equipment, as well as building and fire safety. More than 60 million workers around the globe will benefit from the new code, which will be of particular importance to developing countries and emerging economies.

<https://bit.ly/2ZvhZ9Q>

Some “green jobs” are dirty and dangerous

With the increasing calls to protect the environment and prevent climate change through means such as decarbonising the global economy and reducing landfill waste, this article takes a look at some of the dangers associated with “green jobs” that are often overlooked.

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

FATALITIES AND ACCIDENTS

Man dies in workplace accident in Kerry

A man in his 50s has died in a workplace accident in Co. Kerry. The man was working on a house when he collapsed. Gardaí attended the scene and the HSA

have been notified of the fatality.

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

Man killed in workplace accident in Dublin

A man in his 30s has been killed at a quarry and recycling facility in Co. Dublin. It is understood that the man had been involved in an accident involving a quarry vehicle. Emergency services attended but the man was pronounced dead at the scene. The HSA and an Garda Síochána are investigating the incident.

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

IN THE COURTS

H&S trainer loses €60k action against supermarket

A health and safety trainer, who allegedly showed reckless disregard for his own safety by lifting weights he would advise others not to lift, has lost a €60k damages claim against a major supermarket and has been ordered to pay the store's significant legal costs. The man, who was a qualified manual handling trainer for the supermarket, claimed he had injured his back when lifting a heavy pack of water bottles. He said he had suffered pain in his lower back and left leg but continued on through his shift. The judge dismissed his claim, saying that he had been adequately trained and had diverged from that extensive training given by the supermarket against whom she could not find any evidence of negligence or breach of duty.

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

Employee awarded €30k for racial discrimination

A black Nigerian national, who was allegedly called a chimpanzee and subjected to monkey noises by his team leader, has been awarded €30,000 for racial discrimination. At the time of the two alleged racist incidents the man was working as a warehouse operative through a recruitment agency. The deputy chairman at the Labour Court ordered the recruitment agency to pay out the sum and found that the firm is "vicariously liable for the harassment in question".

<https://bit.ly/2ZsOcP6>

Nurse brings High Court action over stress and sleeping difficulties

A psychiatric nurse has brought a High Court action claiming she suffered stress and sleeping difficulties as a result of the HSE's decisions to admit unsuitable violent and aggressive patients to the high support unit where she worked. The nurse claimed the decision to admit those patients meant she, other staff and other patients were

exposed to a danger to their health and safety. The HSE denies the claims. The nurse alleges two incidents occurred which had a profound effect on her and that she was exposed to a continual risk to injury in the course of her employment and did not feel safe at work. The case has yet to come to trial.

<https://bit.ly/3jObQx3>

INQUESTS

Farmer killed after tractor's hydraulics fail

An inquest has heard how a father of four was tragically killed when a tractor plough he was undertaking maintenance work on collapsed on him after its hydraulics system failed. A post-mortem carried out on the deceased found that he had died from fatal crush injuries. A HSA investigation found that faults linked to the tractor's hydraulics system allied to the absence of an axle stand resulted in the deceased becoming trapped and pinned to the ground. A verdict of accidental death was recorded.

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

STATISTICS

Twenty-eight people have been killed in workplace accidents since 1 January 2021 - Correct at 29 October 2021. Source: www.hsa.ie

<http://bit.ly/34bJFyp>

SAFETY ALERTS

Personal Protective Equipment - Petzl Products

The HSA wishes to advise owners/users of a Safety Alert issued by Petzl for Personal Protective Equipment products - ZIGZAG/ZIGZAG+/ZILLON. This is as a result of customer returns alerting of slippage with new or slightly used ZIGZAG / ZIGZAG PLUS / ZILLON products. This production variance causes premature wear of the release levers, resulting in slippage that can be observed after a few months of use, or on new products. With immediate effect, the products involved should no longer be used until an immediate inspection and tests are carried out as per Petzl Safety Alert-Product Notice.

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

Product safety alert: Ocean Reef dual tank valve

Safety Alert from the HSE UK. The Ocean Reef dual tank valve has been placed on the latest public product safety database recommending that it should not be used. The product poses a serious risk of asphyxiation as the results from testing indicated that the dual tank valve restricted the flow of gas to the mask and diver. It is also not CE marked and there is no Declaration of Conformity. The product does not meet the Personal Protective Equipment (Enforcement) Regulations 2018. The HSE UK recommends owners stop using this product immediately and contact the distributor you purchased from, to request redress.

<https://bit.ly/3Bo26iW>

PUBLICATIONS

Platform work: what are the OSH risks?

A new literature review by EU-OSHA maps the challenges that digital platform workers face - from inadequate social protection and digital surveillance to job and income security. It examines the impact of these challenges on occupational safety and health (OSH), and looks at new initiatives and legislation aimed at preventing and managing OSH risks.

<https://bit.ly/3w1hh0n>

Controlling noise at work (L108): updated edition published

The HSE UK has published the third edition of Controlling noise at work (L108) which is aimed at employers and other duty holders. This guidance gives detailed advice on assessing risks, practical noise control, how to select and use hearing protection, what to consider when buying and hiring equipment and how to develop health surveillance procedures.

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

RESOURCES

EU-OSHA: One stop shop for vehicle safety

EU-OSHA's online guide to good practice for managing work-related vehicle risks in the EU, with a specific focus on workplace transport, driving for work and working on or near a road. This webpage enables users to filter by type of vehicle, risk and area of work for ease of use and to tailor to your own needs.

<https://bit.ly/3vSZ2dj>

Supporting compliance with OSH regulations: ongoing research

EU-OSHA has published a new web section outlining research it is carrying out (2021–2024) to analyse the factors affecting compliance and how it can be improved, particularly among micro and small enterprises. The research aims to examine the different types of support available to organisations and effective strategies and practices adopted by OSH regulators, with an overarching review and in-depth studies exploring how the state, market forces and supply chains (with a particular focus on the agri-food and construction sectors) influence compliance.

<https://bit.ly/3vS36Lb>

SAFETY COMMENTARY/OPINION

What to do when your boss is a bully?

This article offers advice for anyone whose boss is a bully.

<https://bit.ly/3Bngp7i>

Why out of hours work emails are bad for your health

Employees who responded to work messages outside of work hours report higher levels of psychological distress and exhaustion. This article, which includes links to TV broadcasts and interviews on the subject, takes a look at how digital communication impacts work stress, work-life balance, sleep and health.

<https://bit.ly/3nTR3JN>

LEGISLATION UPDATE

Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Construction) (Amendment) Regulations 2021 (S.I. No. 528 of 2021).

The purpose of these Regulations is to gradually bring to an end the extended validity of safety awareness registration cards provided for by the introduction of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Construction) (Amendment) Regulations 2020 (S.I. No. 102 of 2020).

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

SAFETY IN VIDEOS

EU-OSHA: Napo in Lighten the Load - 2021

This series of short films shows Napo confronting different work situations and is suitable for all workers, including migrant and temporary workers.

<https://bit.ly/3bkL6zq>

MCIB REPORTS

Report into an incident involving an Olympic-style rowing boat near the Salmon Weir, Limerick, by the Marine Casualty Investigation Board.

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

TRAINING AND EVENTS

Training scheduled at NISO Training Centre, Dublin 12 OR Online

[DSE-VDU Risk Assessor Course](#) (ONLINE) NISO Certificate (1 day); 9 November; 6

December [BOOK NOW](#)

[Manual Handling Basic](#), NISO Certificate (half day); 29 November; 13 December [BOOK NOW](#)

[Safety Representation](#) (ONLINE), NISO Certificate (2 day); Date TBC

[Mobile & Home Working Assessor Course](#) (ONLINE) NISO Certificate (1 day); Date TBC

Regional Courses

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

TUS Limerick: 26 January 2022

TUS Athlone: 7 February 2022

Nationwide: 15 February 2022

National Events

[57th Annual NISO Conference](#), Killarney, Co. Kerry; 4 November 2021

[Trade Exhibition of H&S Products and Services](#) Killarney, Co. Kerry; 4 November 2021

[30th NISO/NISG All Ireland Safety Awards Presentation](#), Killarney, Co. Kerry; 4 November 2021

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