

NISO Safety Observer
April 2023; Issue 71

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Newsletter of the National Irish Safety Organisation

April 2023 - Issue 71

Welcome to the April 2023 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 16 January 2023 last and the next edition for NISO members is scheduled for mid April 2023. The last edition of Safety Observer was distributed on 24 February 2023.

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NISO AGM



NISO NEWS

All Ireland Safety Awards

NISO and NISG are now accepting entries to the All Ireland Occupational Safety Awards 2023. For details, entry deadlines, guidance and resources visit <https://safetyawards.ie/>

NISO AGM

The Annual General Meeting of the National Ireland Safety Organisation will take place on 1 April 2023 in the Radisson Blu Hotel & Spa, Sligo.

NISO Golf Classic in Support of Charity

NISO is hosting a special 60th Anniversary Golf Classic at the Heritage Resort in Co. Laois on 23 June 2023. For further details visit niso.ie/product/golf.

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

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IRISH NEWS

HSA appoints new CEO

The Health and Safety Authority (HSA) has announced that Conor O'Brien has been appointed as its new Chief Executive Officer (CEO). Mr. O'Brien was appointed by the Board of the HSA following an open and competitive recruitment process and is scheduled to take up the position in May 2023.

<http://bit.ly/3lz6f1B>

HSA Programme of Work for 2023

The HSA has published its Programme of Work for 2023 which shows an expanded focus for HSA inspections. Although inspections will continue in high risk sectors such as agriculture, construction and health and social care, there is a broader focus now on areas of occupational health and safety. Along with the standard inspection campaigns in high risk industries, the HSA plans to carry out inspections in specific sectors based on evidence led targeted methodology.

<https://bit.ly/42KpnKT>

Nurses' union calls for stronger powers for statutory agencies

The Irish Nurses and Midwives Organisation (INMO) has called for stronger powers for statutory agencies to implement recommendations from reports. The INMO's general secretary said that the powers of statutory agencies like Hqa and the HSA are too weak and that the problems highlighted in reports are still being addressed in the same manner without any change.

<http://bit.ly/40I5cRF>

Farm health and wellbeing

The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine's latest instalment of its Farm Safety campaign aims to create awareness among farmers that if they are feeling under pressure or their health or wellbeing is suffering for any reason, there is help available. Research has found that farmers experience a disproportionate burden of health problems compared to other parts of the population.

<http://bit.ly/3JWoJmb>

Majority of employers not investing in mental health

A new major study from University College Cork has found the 80% of employers in Ireland are not investing in workplace mental health. Researchers say the survey provides the first national picture of the impact of the pandemic on mental health in Irish workplaces. The research is part of a broader international study and compares the prevalence of mental ill health in Irish and English workplaces as well as differences in how employers are responding to these challenges.

<http://bit.ly/3nsTfew>

Review shows Defence Forces is an unsafe working environment

An independent review of the Defence Force shows "again and again" that the people serving, in particular women, are working in systemically unsafe workplaces. Some 88% of female respondents of a survey reported they have experienced one or more forms of sexual harassment compared with 17% of male respondents. The report highlighted a number of key findings including that bullying, harassment, discrimination and sexual harassment continue in the Defence Forces today with increased reports of sexual harassment among serving members.

<http://bit.ly/3M0UThH>

Training requirement for products containing diisocyanates

From 24 August 2023, all workers (employed or self-employed) using mixtures containing diisocyanates (e.g. insulation and filler foams used in construction and vehicle repair) must undergo training. All employers must keep a record of successful completion and ensure its renewal every five years. The restriction aims to reduce the risk of respiratory and dermal sensitisation potentially caused by diisocyanates.

<https://bit.ly/40rwbLx>

Farm Safety tackled in new light in EIP Agri project

A new peer-to-peer mentor approach to farm safety, health and wellbeing has proved extremely successful during a year-long European Innovation Partnership (EIP) agriculture project which targeted farmers in Tipperary, Wexford and Cork. The project investigated farmers' attitudes and behaviours towards farm safety by creating a network for farmers to exchange knowledge, create a buddy system and share safe working spaces.

<http://bit.ly/3FXhOXo>

UK NEWS

UK government out of touch on H&S standards

According to new research, seven in 10 UK businesses are not willing to accept lower health and safety standards as part of the Retained EU Law Bill. A poll of 2,000 UK business owners, supported by the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA), showed that health and safety remains a priority with just seven per cent saying they are willing to accept lower standards. RoSPA is leading a campaign to change the Government's approach to health and safety legislation as part of the Bill.

<http://bit.ly/3ndIAW7>

Man admits H&S charges linked to niece's death

A man accused of causing his teenage niece's manslaughter in a tragic farm accident has admitted health and safety offences. The man had been due to go on trial accused of the manslaughter of his 14-year-old niece who was knocked down by a tractor driven by another child. Following legal discussions and defence applications fresh counts were added to the indictment and the manslaughter charge was left on the books. The man entered a guilty plea to permitting a child to operate machinery and he also admitted that he failed to

ensure, as far as was reasonably practicable, that other persons were not exposed to risks to their health or safety on the date of the accident. The judge adjourned sentencing until May 2023 ordering that a pre-sentence probation report be prepared in the meantime.

<http://bit.ly/3Z5Xda6>

HSE launches “Asbestos & You” campaign

The UK’s HSE has launched a new campaign to remind people working in construction trades to manage the risks associated with asbestos. Despite being banned in 1999, 5,000 people a year still die from asbestos-related diseases due to the decades delay between exposure and the symptoms of the disease appearing. Asbestos exposure is still the single greatest cause of work-related deaths in Great Britain with those carrying out repairs or refurbishment work being at higher risk of disturbing asbestos, especially when working in houses. The campaign will target all tradespeople with a focus on younger workers in trades and those who started their careers from the 2000, after the use of asbestos was banned so they know the risk still remains.

<http://bit.ly/3Z4V4LH>

Work pressure causing junior doctors’ panic attacks

NHS junior doctors suffer panic attacks and feelings of desperation because they get so stressed from the pressure they are under at work, research has found. Some also reported experiencing intrusive thoughts, migraines and hair loss as a direct result of trying to give patients high-quality treatment in hospitals struggling with serious staff shortages. A spokesperson for the Department of Health and Social Care commented that “supporting the mental health and wellbeing of the NHS workforce is a priority” and added that “the NHS will publish a long-term workforce plans this spring to recruit and retain more staff and make the NHS a great place to work”.

<http://bit.ly/40ocKDd>

Mechanics warned of life-threatening dangers

Leading voices in motor vehicle repair have teamed up with the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) to warn of the dangers of working under vehicles without proper equipment. Figures recorded by the HSE over a five-year period show that 13 workers in the motor vehicle repair industry were killed when work took place under a vehicle that wasn’t properly supported. Four more workers have been crushed to death by an incorrectly supported vehicle since April

2022. The HSE has guidance on working safely under motor vehicles being repaired and has also issued a safety alert for air suspension systems on vehicles.

<http://bit.ly/3IFuECB>

Most dangerous jobs in the UK

A new study by Forbes Advisor has found that being a firefighter is most dangerous job in the UK with over 47,000 injuries over the past five years. The second and third most dangerous jobs are police officer and warehouse worker. Using government data the experts compiled the list of the most dangerous jobs based on the number of deaths and injuries over five years in each profession.

<https://bit.ly/3JDj2rR>

Supermarket chain fined £3.5m after death of employee

A large supermarket chain has been fined £3.5million after an employee with epilepsy died when he fell from the stairs during a seizure. The 27-year-old man suffered catastrophic head injuries at one of the supermarket's stores. He had been using the staircase to access his locker on the first floor of the shop. The Crown Court heard that the man died three-and-a-half months after his mother had told managers of the risk due to his frequent seizures. The man died in hospital 12 days after the fall having never regained consciousness. The supermarket denied three health and safety charges but was convicted by the jury. It had admitted a fourth charge before the trial.

<http://bit.ly/3z5dAZK>

Company fined £2.3m after workers put at risk of death

A major pipeline transportation company has been fined £2.3million for safety breaches after its employees were exposed to risk of serious injury and even death while working on a leaking pipeline containing petrol under pressure. An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) into the incident found that the company failed to properly identify and control the risks associated with carrying out a pipeline repair. The company was found guilty of offences contrary to sections of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 following a trial at the Crown Court. A fine of £2.3million and costs of £157,431 was handed down by the judge.

<http://bit.ly/3KdOG0t>

Company fined £120k after worker fell to death from roof

A company has been fined £120,000 after a 36-year-old man died following a fall from the roof of a building site. The father-of-one and another worker were using ropes to install a lighting protection system to the front of an office block being converted into flats. The man was lowering access equipment from the roof using a rope attached to a frame at roof level and a handrail at ground level. As he did so, both he and the frame fell from the roof to the ground. His employer pleaded guilty to a breach of health and safety legislation and was fined £120,000 and ordered to pay £5,448.51 in costs at the Magistrates' Court. <http://bit.ly/40y2FUp>

EUROPEAN NEWS

New occupational exposure limits for lead and diisocyanates

The European Commission has taken action to further improve the protection of workers from the health risks linked to the exposure to dangerous chemicals. In particular, the Commission proposes to amend two Directives with the aim of further lowering the exposure limit for lead and introducing first-ever exposure limits for diisocyanates. In the case of lead, a significantly reduced exposure limit will help prevent health issues of workers, for example reproductive functions and foetal development. For diisocyanates, a new exposure limit will prevent cases of asthma and other respiratory diseases.

<http://bit.ly/3Zb83LV>

Women more likely to face workplace sexual harassment than men

New research has found that European women aged 18–34 are nearly four times more likely to experience unwanted sexual attention in the workplace compared with men of the same age, and 10 times more likely than men over 50. The analysis looked into adverse social behaviour at work including bullying, harassment, violence, verbal abuse or threats and unwanted sexual attention. The study found that unwanted sexual attention was even more acute for frontline workers, especially employees who deal directly with customers.

<http://bit.ly/3ndWwOG>

Authorities and ECHA push for compliance with authorisation duties

The Enforcement Forum's EU-wide project on inspections of REACH authorisation duties found that the majority of users, mainly SMEs, already comply with the authorisation requirement to control risks. Enforcement measures taken by authorities during the project aim to push companies

towards compliance. During this project, the enforcement authorities of 28 countries carried out 690 inspections at 516 organisations. While the enforcement authorities found that there is clear room for improvement in the levels of compliance with the specific authorisation requirements, the results show that most downstream users adhere to the fundamental authorisation duties.

<http://bit.ly/3TNCZAS>

GENERAL SAFETY NEWS

EU to introduce alcohol limit for novice drivers

The European Transport Safety Council (ETSC) has welcomed significant changes to EU rules on driving licences and cross-border enforcement of traffic offences which could significantly reduce injuries and deaths among novice drivers and help ensure dangerous drivers face penalties for a wider range of traffic offences committed across borders. Among the changes proposed, novice drivers would be subject to a zero-tolerance alcohol limit for a minimum of two years after passing their test.

<https://bit.ly/3LE5hvc>

IN THE COURTS

Aviation services company fined €250k following fatal accident

An aviation services company has been fined €250,000 following a fatal workplace accident at an airport. The company pleaded guilty to offences under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005. The prosecution arose after an employee of the company suffered personal injuries and died when he fell from a height whilst carrying out cargo offloading operations without adequate or safe fall prevention systems or measures in place.

<http://bit.ly/40ENJnh>

Painter awarded €95k after falling through countertop hole in café

A painter/decorator who injured his leg while spray-painting the ceiling of a café has been awarded more than €95,000 by the High Court. The man sued the construction company that had subcontracted him to carry out the painting work at the café. The 59-year-old man claimed the defendant failed to provide a safe place to work. The man claimed that while he was trying to access part of the ceiling to paint it, he fell through a hole in a countertop which had been cut out

for a sink and which had been covered with black plastic. The company denied the claims and pleaded contributory negligence. He was awarded €159,530.66 in general and special damages, however, in view of findings which stated that the claimant was 40% liable in contributory negligence, the award was reduced to €95,718.40.

<http://bit.ly/42Ladol>

Cork company fined €90k following workplace fatality

A company in Co. Cork has been fined €90,000 for breaches of health and safety legislation. The company pleaded guilty to three counts of breaches to health and safety legislation in relation to a fatal incident in which an employee was fatally injured. The fatality occurred when the man was struck and driven over by a loading shovel operating in a storage yard on the premises.

<http://bit.ly/40dsU2F>

Care assistant awarded €60k following workplace injury

A 27-year-old woman has been awarded more than €60,000 by the High Court after she injured her back while trying to lift a patient onto a trolley bed while working as a healthcare assistant at a Regional Hospital. Following the accident, the woman was off work with a back injury for a number of months. The judge found that she had suffered a minor to moderate back injury which had improved over the past four-and-a-half years but which nonetheless persisted for that length of time. The judge awarded €35,000 for general pain and suffering to date and assessed damages for future pain and suffering at €22,500. Together with agreed special damages of €2,772 this brought the total award to €60,272.

<http://bit.ly/40FyrPq>

Airport sales assistant awarded €40k after slip

A airport sales assistant has been awarded over €40,000 damages by the Civil Circuit Court after she slipped and fell on a greasy floor and landed heavily on her left side. The woman attended an emergency department two weeks after the fall when the pain still hadn't subsided and discovered that she had broken her elbow. The woman sued the airport cleaning company which had been assigned to the main public area. The judge awarded general damages of €37,500 together with €3,414 in special damages.

<http://bit.ly/3INIiKv>

Pilot awarded over €30k for finger crush injury

A pilot who suffered a finger crush injury when a door slammed against him in high winds while he was on an air bridge has been awarded €30,600 in damages against his employer and the operator of a major airport. The judge in the Circuit Civil Court told the pilot that he was 50% responsible for the accident and reduced the award to €15,300 and costs, telling both defendants they could equally share the pay-out.

<http://bit.ly/3KavhNV>

Garda body launches action over rosters

The Association of Garda Sergeants and Inspectors (AGSI) has launched a High Court action against the Garda Commissioner over rosters. The AGSI claims that proposed new rosters to replace those which were introduced as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic will adversely impact on its members' health, safety and family lives. The AGSI says that while it has engaged in talks and is committed to agreeing new rostering arrangements, work time proposals put to the representative body last year are not acceptable. The association wants the court to injunct the Commissioner from unilaterally imposing a new rostering schedule on its 2,500 members later this year.

<http://bit.ly/3TOJ3sK>

INQUESTS

Man killed during first day of motorcycle lessons

A Wexford man suffered fatal injuries during his first motorcycle lesson after colliding with a wall at a training compound, an inquest has heard. The 48-year-old father of three died in hospital a few hours after being transported by air ambulance from the compound where he had been taking professional driving lessons. The incident was investigated by An Garda Síochána and the HSA. Based on the evidence, the coroner returned a verdict of accidental death.

<http://bit.ly/40eqOGw>

STATISTICS

Five people have been killed in workplace accidents since 1 January 2023 - Correct at 10 February 2023. Source: www.hsa.ie

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

SAFETY ALERTS

Safety Alert for Modmo E-Bikes

The HSA has been made aware of a Safety Recall of Modmo E-Bikes. The manufacturer “Modmo Technologies Limited” (“Modmo”) is carrying out a recall of the Saigon, Saigon+ and Saigon S electric bikes. The safety concern identified is a risk that the battery lock cap on the bike may disengage while in use and cause the battery unit to drop out. This in turn may post a falling hazard for users.

<http://bit.ly/3JOwQjk>

Safe Use of Emery Cloth

The Health and Safety Executive for Northern Ireland (HSENI) has issued a safety alert on the safe use of emery cloth following a number of incidents in which workers have become entangled in rotating machinery, each as a result of a worker’s hand becoming caught on rotating machinery when using emery cloth and / or wearing gloves. The purpose of this safety alert is to raise awareness of the risks associated with the use of emery cloth on rotating machinery.

<http://bit.ly/3JXKH89>

PUBLICATIONS

Building safe spaces: domestic violence and the workplace

The effects of domestic violence on survivors’ lives are seldom confined to where it takes place, with the majority of victims experiencing disruptions to their career as a consequence. The negative impact of abuse on their health, productivity and overall wellbeing can also affect their co-workers and employers. This discussion paper outlines how domestic violence is a workplace issue and provides examples of legal and policy frameworks at EU and national levels. It also recommends useful workplace measures that can support survivors effectively and help combat abuse.

<http://bit.ly/3Z4QI7u>

Guidance on Technical Land Use Planning Advice

New publication from the HSA, this guidance document interprets the HSA’s policy on the technical land use planning (TLUP) advice requirements under the Seveso III Directive. It was revised in February 2023 to include an amended

section 3.4 covering Hydrogen Installations.

<http://bit.ly/42NVCc0>

Psychosocial risks at work and cardiovascular diseases

Over four out of ten European workers report that their work stress levels have increased due to the pandemic. This strain, along with other psychosocial risk factors like job insecurity, long working hours and bullying, increase the risk of developing heart diseases and strokes. EU-OSHA has published a new discussion paper, “The Links Between Exposure to Work-Related Psychosocial risk Factors and Cardiovascular Disease” which presents the relation between the two and offers recommendations on how to prevent them.

<http://bit.ly/3ZemcYE>

The role of prevention services to ensure better OSH practices

A new discussion paper from the EU-OSHA examines the role of prevention services in supporting compliance with OSH standards in the European Union. It identifies gaps in knowledge and key issues for professional practice in OSH, along with the challenges for policy and research.

<http://bit.ly/3nqW6ai>

GUIDANCE

Reminder to think SAFE at calving time

In this article a farmer shares his experience of a farm accident involving an animal on his farm around calving time and reminds farmers to think SAFE during calving season.

<http://bit.ly/42rcLrP>

RESOURCES

EU-OSHA’s new OSHwiki is now live

OSHwiki, EU-OSHA’s collaborative online encyclopaedia of information on occupational safety and health has been revamped for a more user-friendly experience. With a new look and feel and improved navigation, it is now easier to find the information you need. Users can explore by theme or search by keyword.

<https://bit.ly/3TK5DmA>

CASE STUDIES

New case studies on ergonomic good practice

The HSA, in conjunction with organisations across the health, manufacturing, education and construction sectors, has published case studies to highlight economic good practice initiatives in Ireland. Some of the case studies have also been recognised at a European level. The organisations utilised a variety of risk assessment tools including the HSE UK Mac Tool, Rappelled Tool and Art Tool to assess, manage and mitigate risk in carrying out work activities which involves manual handling.

<https://bit.ly/3zeCd6E>

PUBLIC ENQUIRY

European Commission public consultation on four EU agencies

The European Commission has launched a public consultation to gather evidence on the performance and wider impacts of four decentralised EU agencies: EU-OSHA, Eurofound, Cedefop and ETF, both individually and from a cross-cutting perspective. The consultation will contribute to the evaluation study carried out on behalf of the European Commission that is currently underway. The public consultation is available in all official languages and is open until 25 May 2023.

<http://bit.ly/3LXFRcx>

Submitted restrictions under consideration

European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) public consultation on the restriction on the manufacture, placing on the market and use of Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). End of consultation date is 25 September 2023.

<http://bit.ly/40Z5e27>

SAFETY IN VIDEOS

Electrical Safety on Farms

Minister Martin Heydon T.D. and Minister Neale Richmond T.D. have together launched an Electrical Safety Video for Irish farmers. The video was produced by the Farm Safety Partnership Advisory Committee (FSPAC) and shows John Stone, a dairy farmer from Co. Meath, demonstrating the changes he has made and the checks he carries out around electricity to make his farm safer. The

FSPAC is an advisory committee to the board of the HSA.

<https://bit.ly/3ze6eU2>

Video captures rare happy ending following mine collapse

A video showing nine miners unexpectedly popping out of a collapsed gold mine and tumbling down a steep slope as onlookers cry out in joy has gone viral in Democratic Republic of Congo, a rare happy ending to an all-too-common story.

<http://bit.ly/3TRO7MY>

SAFETY PODCASTS

EU enforcement project

Podcast from the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) - EU enforcement project: full compliance with EU chemicals law needed.

<http://bit.ly/42PQm7Y>

NISO TRAINING AND EVENTS

CPD Certificates in Safety Management at Work (Certified by Technological University Dublin)

Hybrid - NISO Training Centre, Dublin 12 and/or Online

CPD Certificate: Accident Investigation; 24 - 28 April 2023 [BOOK NOW](#)

CPD Certificate: Fire Safety Manager I; 15 - 19 May 2023 [BOOK NOW](#)

CPD Certificate: Fire Safety Manager II; 26 - 30 June 2023 [BOOK NOW](#)

Training scheduled at NISO Training Centre, Dublin 12 AND/OR Online

[DSE-VDU Risk Assessor Course](#) (Online); NISO Certificate (1 day); 13 April [BOOK NOW](#)

[Manual Handling Basic](#) NISO Certificate (half day); 21 April [BOOK NOW](#)

[Safety Representation](#) (Online); NISO Certificate (2 day); 2 - 3 May [BOOK NOW](#)

[Mobile & Home Working Assessor](#) (HYBRID); NISO Certificate (1 day); Dates TBC

[Safe Pass](#); SOLAS (1 day); Dates TBC

Safety Awards Deadlines - [Further details](#)

Early bird deadline: 28 April 2023 @ 17.00hrs

Standard deadline: 2 June 2023 @ 17.00hrs

Late entry deadline: 23 June 2023 @ 17.00hrs (subject to additional approval and additional fee)

Health & Safety Webinars (Free)

Open for bookings soon at niso.ie/shop

Trigger Thumb; 11.00hrs; 31 March 2023 [Register here](#)

Production v Protection; 11.00hrs; 5 May 2023

Errors, Mistakes and Violations; 11.00hrs; 26 May 2023

Plan - Do - Check - Act; 11.00hrs; 30 June 2023

National Events

Annual NISO AGM; Radisson Blu Hotel & Spa, Sligo; 1 April 2023

All Ireland Safety Quiz Finals; Radisson Blu Hotel & Spa, Sligo; 1 April 2023

NISO Annual Safety Conference; The Great Southern, Killarney, Co. Kerry; 13 October 2023

NISO/NISO Safety Awards Ceremony; The Great Southern, Killarney, Co. Kerry; 13 October 2023

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