

Legislation WATCH

THE No.1 RESOURCE FOR WORKPLACE LAW AND HEALTH AND SAFETY

It's not a big deal until it is

Workplace hazards are often ignored until they result in an injury or fatality.

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Brexit:
key updates



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The psychology
behind queueing



SAFETY
MADE
EASY

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Editor

Cheryl Peacock

Designer

Nada Curley

UK General Manager

Sally Felstead

Head Office

14 Wildmere Road
Banbury
OXON
OX16 3JU

Note FROM THE EDITOR...



It's hard to believe that it's been a whole year since the pandemic stopped the world in its tracks. For many of us, it marked the start of a dramatic change in how we live and work. As we approach key dates on the government's roadmap out of lockdown, it won't be long before many more workplaces can reopen their doors. We're here to guide you every step of the way with regular updates to help you stay safe and compliant.

Don't forget you can download every issue of **Legislation Watch Magazine for free**. If you have a question about health and safety or workplace law, why not [Ask the Expert?](#)

Stay safe and healthy.

Cheryl Peacock - Editor

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Contact us:

Freephone 0800 585501
Online www.seton.co.uk
Email sales@seton.co.uk

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Legal UPDATE



4 April 2021 – Increase in Statutory Family-related Pay

The weekly rate of statutory maternity, paternity, adoption, shared parental and parental bereavement pay increases to £151.97 from 4 April 2021.

6 April 2021 – Increase in Statutory Sick Pay

The weekly rate of Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) increases to £96.35 from 6 April 2021.

6 April 2021 – Increase to the National Minimum Wage

From this date, the minimum wage will apply to employees aged under 25 for the first time. For all employees aged 23 and over, it will rise to £8.91 per hour. For those aged 21 or 22, it will be £8.36. For 18 to 20-year-olds, it will be £6.56. For 16 and 17-year-olds, it will be £4.62. There will be a new apprentice rate of £4.30.

6 April 2021 – Extension of IR35

IR35 and any related tax and National Insurance responsibilities will transfer to the agencies or other parties that pay workers' companies, where eligible businesses have contracted services from those workers through third parties. This will affect most large and medium-sized organisations that outsource work.

30 April 2021 – Extension of the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS)

The scheme designed to support furloughed workers through the COVID-19 pandemic is to be extended to 30th September 2021. By this time, all adults are expected to have been offered the vaccine, allowing the economy to reopen in all sectors. Employers should consider how they

are going to move forwards and keep infection risks to a minimum in the workplace.

Further Changes

In addition to the above, legislation to extend maternity-related protection from redundancy for six months after the date at which a mother returns to the workplace is expected to be approved by Parliament.

Enforcement of the gender pay gap reporting duty for the 2020/2021 reporting year is delayed for six months, and does not begin until 5 October 2021.

No date has yet been confirmed for the extension of legislation requiring large companies to produce modern slavery statements, but it is expected that this will happen within the next quarter.

Brexit:

KEY UPDATES

Brexit detailed and established the UK's departure from the EU. This move constituted key changes on many levels, including trading and health and safety.

It is important that industries are aware of what changed and what remained the same.

Workers' rights, working time directives and GDPR

The EU (Withdrawal) Act 2018 affords workers the same workplace protections as before. If foreign employees have worked in the UK for five years or more, they may apply for 'settled status'. This will afford them rights similar to those of citizens, but such applications must be made before 30 June 2021. Working in the UK without this application would be illegal after the stated date.

The working time directive currently applied in the UK incorporates the EU directive passed in 2003. Workers are still limited to a 48-hour work week and need to apply in writing to opt out of this stipulation. Night-shift hours should not exceed eight hours a night. Workers are entitled to 28 paid leave days per year.

The EU's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) of 2016 will not be applied to the UK until 30 June 2021.

Among other things, this regulation regards the transfer of data to and from countries outside the EU as third-party country transfers. After the stated date, the UK will be regarded as a third-party country and data transfers, which include personal data, will be regulated and managed as per the mentioned legislation.

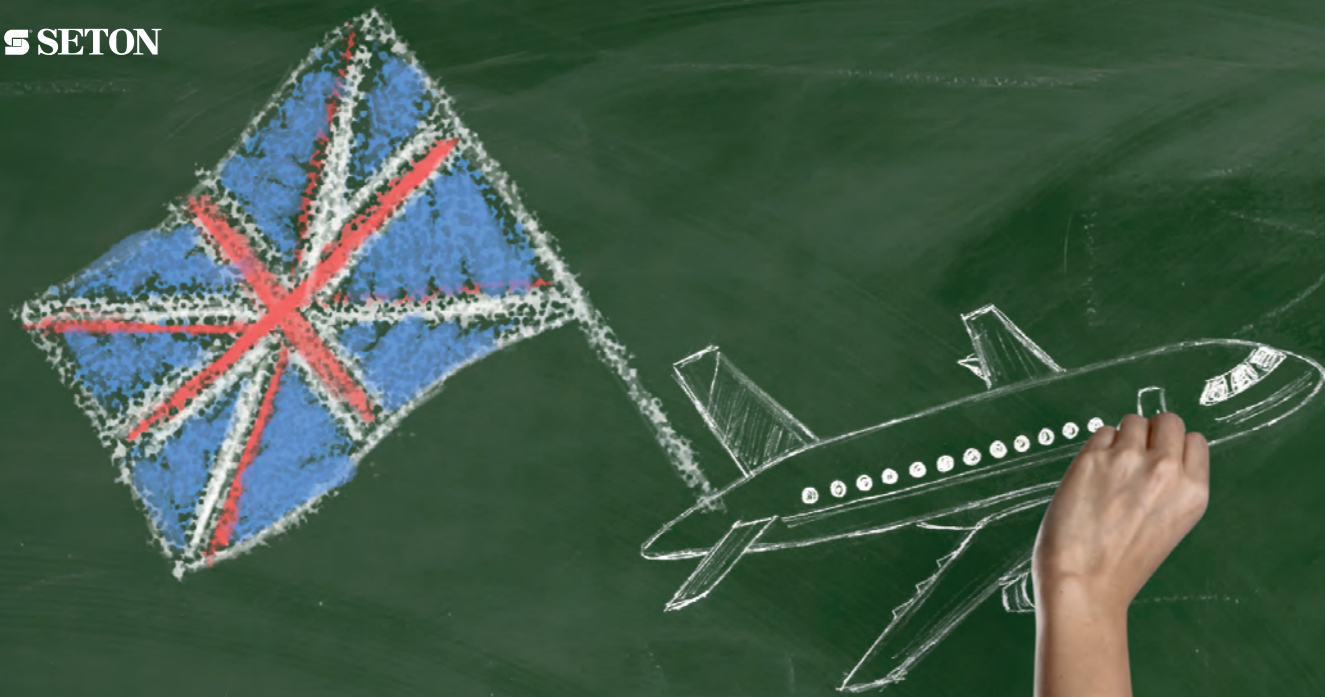
In essence, this means that personal data transfers from the UK will be regarded as not having the required standards of data protection. It is therefore crucial that UK companies brush up on the necessary requirements when data is transferred to and from EU countries to ensure compliance and avoid complications.

Here are the key events for businesses regarding the UK leaving the EU. This should not be considered comprehensive, nor should it be a substitute for research specific to your business and its needs.

- 23 June 2016**
The UK voted to leave the EU.
- 23 January 2020**
The EU Withdrawal Bill became law, outlining a transition period that ended on 31 December 2020.
- 31 January 2020**
Brexit occurred, and the transition period began.
- 31 December 2020**
The transition period ended.
- 1 January 2021**
The UK now operates independently of EU laws and requirements, and under a unique free trade agreement with the EU. The main changes each business needs to look into include:

 - Customs**
Full controls in place for exports from the UK to the EU. See for full guidance.
 - VAT**
Import VAT is due on all goods including those arriving from the EU. UK Low Value Consignment Relief (LVCR) is abolished. Exports to the EU are zero-rated for VAT.
 - Employment**
EU citizens moving to the UK (and UK citizens moving to the EU) for work now need a visa as part of new immigration rules.
 - Conformity/standards**
The UKCA conformity mark must be acquired and used for relevant goods being placed on the market in Great Britain. CE marks can continue to be used across the UK until 1 January 2022.
 - Travel**
Existing 'burgundy' UK passports must have at least six months left until expiry. European Health Insurance Cards can be used until expiry then replaced with the UK Global Health Insurance Card. A visa might be required depending on the country, length of stay and purpose of visit.

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UKCA and CE markings

Products traded within the European Economic Area (EEA) needed the CE – Conformité Européenne – mark. This product mark confirmed that goods complied with health, safety and environmental standards.

Since exiting the EU, the UK Conformity Assessed (UKCA) mark replaced the CE mark on relevant goods. This regulation came into effect on 1 January 2021. Companies have a grace period of 12 months to comply, which means that the CE marking will still be accepted until 1 January 2022. The new UK quality assessment criteria will reflect EU standards.

Different conformity rules will apply to different products. Medical devices, for example, have to carry both marks for two years. You are advised to follow news and updates on marking specifications and regulations to implement the necessary compliance measures.

Chemical safety: UK REACH

Health and safety where chemicals are concerned have always been a priority. The UK affirmed its commitment to the safe and responsible handling of chemicals after exiting the EU. The HSE issued guidelines on regulations that changed regarding the management of chemicals.

One of the most prominent changes was incorporating the EU REACH regulation

into UK legislation. EU REACH – the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals regulation – is the primary control for managing chemicals in the EU. This control includes the management of imports and exports.

The incorporation of this regulation – now known as the UK REACH regulation – enabled the UK to replicate and create a database of registration dossiers. Essentially, this means that companies engaged in chemical operations must abide by both the UK REACH and EU REACH stipulations.

Companies should be aware of some key principles included in the REACH regulation:

- Unregistered substances will not be allowed on the UK market
- Animal testing should only be used as a last option
- The promotion of transparent governance allowing workers access to information
- The precautionary principle should be followed when scientific evidence cannot exclude dangers to the environment or humans.

REACH also applies to all imports, distribution, or usage of chemicals or chemical-based products. These include household cleaning products and chemicals used in industrial processes and electrical appliances. In effect, REACH makes the trader responsible for chemical handling and trading.

The HSE also provides specific guidance on the:

- Authorisation of biocides and biocidal products. A biocide is classed as a chemical that destroys biological organisms or matter. Examples would include pesticides or fungicides
- Classification, labelling and packaging (CLP) of chemicals and chemical substances. For more information visit www.hse.gov.uk/chemical-classification/index.htm.
- Management of pesticides or plant protection products (PPP).

All UK businesses should act prudently and familiarise themselves with health and safety changes and change-related time frames now that Brexit is completed.

1 April 2021

Customs

Sanitary and Phytosanitary controls.

1 July 2021

Customs

From this date, traders importing any goods will have to make either full or supplementary simplified declarations immediately upon import. Arrangements to ease compliance with safety and security come to an end. Importers will need to pay VAT and excise duty where necessary.

By this date, the UK-EU should have finalised a data adequacy agreement enabling the free flow of data between EU and UK businesses in a way compatible with the GDPR.

Employment

From this date you can no longer determine an EU, EEA or Swiss citizens' right to work in the UK using only their passport or ID card. You must instead use the new immigration visa system.

31 December 2021

Rules of Origin declarations

Last day to have Rules of Origin declarations in place for 2021 trade.

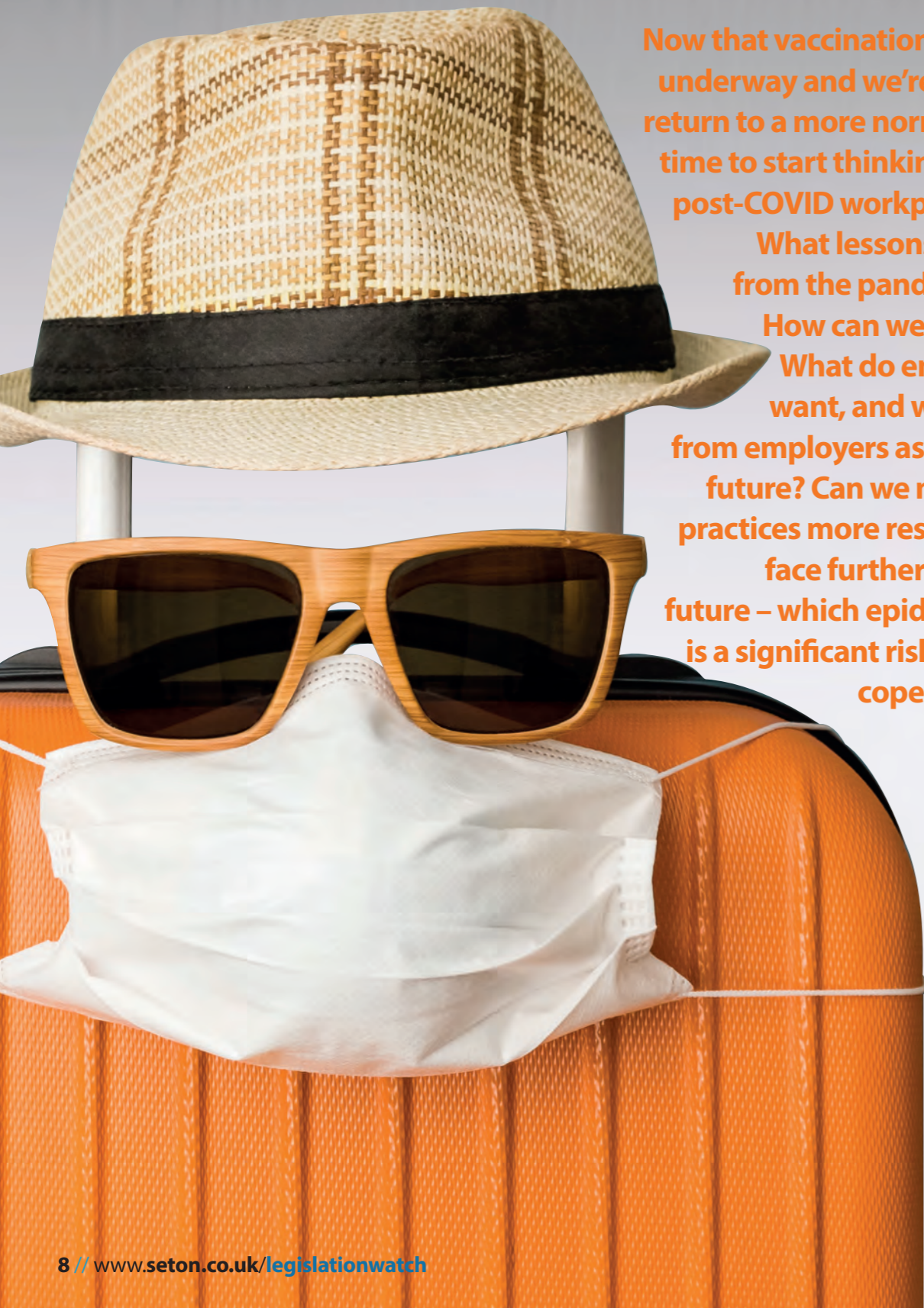
1 January 2022

Conformity/standards

Businesses are no longer able to use CE conformity marks in Great Britain and must use the UKCA conformity mark.

Here are the key events for businesses regarding the UK leaving the EU. This should not be considered comprehensive, nor should it be a substitute for research specific to your business and its needs.

The post-COVID workplace



Now that vaccination programmes are underway and we're contemplating a return to a more normal way of life, it's time to start thinking about what the post-COVID workplace will look like.

What lessons have we learned from the pandemic experience? How can we do things better? What do employees actually want, and what do they need from employers as we move into the future? Can we make our working practices more resilient so that if we face further pandemics in the future – which epidemiologists think is a significant risk – we'll be able to cope more effectively?

No going back

The stress caused by the pandemic has been immense, and many people feel a yearning for every aspect of life to go back to the way that it used to be. However, this is one option that we know is impractical. There are three main reasons for this.

Firstly, adjusting to the pandemic has shown us that there were a lot of things

we were doing inefficiently. If you don't make adjustments with this in mind, you can be sure that your competitors will, and then you're going to find yourself struggling.

Secondly, many people who became infected by the virus have not gone back to the way they were. Cases of long COVID are running at about 10%. This means that skilled workers who still have a lot to give could be unable to return to work unless adjustments are made to help them work around their difficulties.

Thirdly, we're going to be living with an increased threat from coronaviruses for a long time. COVID-19 has already

produced several significant mutations, and most virologists think that we will need vaccinations annually to ensure immunity from developing strains. We'll also need to be smarter about infection control in the workplace.

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What we've learned about remote working

When we first made the leap to mass remote working, many business owners worried that productivity would fall. Overall though, home-based working has been a resounding success.

Research by Lenovo found that two-thirds of people around the world believed that they were more productive when working from home, and more than half of them expected to continue and even increase remote working after the pandemic. Rates of overtime increased, but because they were no longer commuting, employees were still able to achieve a better work-life balance.

However, it is important to recognise that while most employees would welcome flexible working, not everybody has been able to make the adjustment in the same way. More than half of parents found it difficult to juggle responsibilities when working from home, but this may be less of a problem now schools have returned to normal. People found it significantly easier to manage if they had a study, spare room or other separate space from which to work. Some struggled to stay motivated and missed having colleagues directly on hand to ask for help, but these problems seemed to decrease over time as individual solutions emerged.

What employees want

One US study found that a startling 98% of employees wanted to retain the option of working remotely, while another found that 72% would be willing to take a pay cut in order to do so. In the US and the UK, 80% of workers said that the experience has improved their quality of life, making them feel healthier and enhancing their family relationships. Hybrid working seems to be the preferred option. Research by HubbleHQ found that three quarters felt that their employers ought to maintain a physical office, and only 15% liked the idea of working from home all the time.

While some employees found self-discipline difficult, others flourished when able to work on a productivity-focused rather than time-focused basis. A downside for some is that the boundaries between work and home life have

become blurred, making it harder for them to 'switch off' and relax or sleep. Others feel that they may be expected to be more 'reachable' out of office hours. This suggests that taking a more individual approach could help employers to get the best out of their staff.

If your employees continue to work from home, you will still be responsible for ensuring that they get proper training and know how to undertake work activities safely. Training in the safe use of display screen equipment (DSE) is particularly important.

If workers still use your premises, even just occasionally, you must ensure that they continue to receive fire awareness training. Further safety training (e.g. manual handling and food safety) must also continue to be delivered as mandated.

What this means for employers

Mercer's global COVID-19 survey found that 90% of participating employers confirmed that productivity within their organisation had remained the same or had increased through remote working.

According to Forbes, statistics collected from leading research institutions worldwide, including Gallup, Harvard University, Global Workplace Analytics and Stanford University, suggest that not only is employee performance increased through remote working, but also that stronger engagement is reflected by 41% lower absenteeism. This data also shows that 54% of employees would select – or move – to a job that offered more flexibility.

In light of this information, employers' attitudes are changing and organisations are looking at ways to introduce flexible or hybrid working to improve employee experience and ensure that they are competitive in attracting the best talent – while potentially reducing workplace overheads, enhancing productivity, and contributing to a more environmentally friendly society.

Working with technology

The shift to home working was difficult for many people because employers didn't always step in to provide computer equipment or use software they found

easy to engage with. Research by Robert Walters found that over half of UK employees wanted their employers to invest in better technology. The change made a big difference to the fortunes of technology companies and drove a wave of innovation, so there are now many more options to choose from, but employers and employees need to talk to each other to find mutually acceptable solutions.

Microsoft's Human Factors Labs found that most people start to feel tired by remote meetings after 30 to 40 minutes and become stressed about two hours into a day that's going to be full of such meetings. Individuals report difficulty in concentrating and say that they struggle with not being able to make eye contact through platforms such as Zoom. Of course, looking at any kind of screen for too long is bad for the eyes, so employers have a responsibility to make sure that their employees are using equipment appropriately and taking regular breaks.

When cyber-security specialists Centrifly asked employees what they thought about the security implications of home working, 71% said that they thought they faced a greater risk of a security breach and 46% have already found that they were subject to more phishing attempts. A worrying 27% had not received any additional training on how to stay cyber-safe at home, suggesting that a substantial number of businesses have major security holes. Those businesses that intend to continue with home working should immediately think about how they might make it more secure.

Changing office needs

If business owners do choose to maintain physical offices, should those offices be the same as they were in the past? If you're moving to a hybrid system of working, you could potentially move to smaller premises and bring in employees on different days instead of all at once. Of course, if you do this, you will need to update your fire safety procedures in order to keep careful track of who is there, and when, so that you can be sure that everybody is accounted for in the event of a fire or similar emergency.

In order to keep employees safe from



infection and reduce related anxiety, employers will need to review office cleaning practices and consider increased use of PPE. Ventilation systems will need to be looked at to see if they can be made safer. There will also need to be a new focus on employee wellness, ensuring that anybody who feels ill can take time off without worrying about being penalised for it. This will reduce the risk of them passing on infections to others.

The world of work is going to be very different post-pandemic, but if we learn our lessons well, we can make it safer, more secure, and a much more positive experience for all involved.

Seton recommends...

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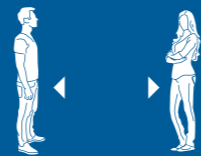
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Ask **the** expert...

Do you have a question related to Health & Safety or Workplace Law?
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What statutory inspections are required by law for our plant and equipment?

One of our workers has had an accident, is it reportable under RIDDOR?

What do we need to cover when we deliver H&S training?

How to 'Ask the expert'


1. Go to www.seton.co.uk/legislationwatch
2. Click on the red 'Ask the expert' tab at top of page
3. Enter your question on the form
4. We will respond via email within 72 hours!



Hand hygiene: finding facts

The COVID-19 pandemic has cast a new light on hand hygiene practices. The world suddenly wondered about the proper time it takes to get hands clean, and what to touch and not to touch. We have explored some of the most intriguing facts surrounding hand hygiene.

Elevator buttons have **22%** more germs than toilet seats



Traces of **FAECAL MATTER** are present on mobile phones, credit cards and banknotes.

Only **33%** of people use soap when washing hands

The recommended handwashing time is **20 seconds**.
The average handwashing time amounts to just **6 seconds**



People wash hands **more** in the **morning** than in the evening

People are reluctant to wash their hands in **dirty sinks**

Damp hands spread germs much faster than dry hands




Proper and regular handwashing routines can **prevent** up to **1 million deaths** per year

Only **5%** of people apply correct handwashing techniques



About **80%** of infectious diseases are passed on through touch



(Sources: All Portable Sinks, The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, High Speed Training)

It's not a big deal until it is

Workplace hazards are often not reported. Consequently, these risks are not resolved, resulting in injuries or even fatalities.



Statistics released by the HSE indirectly reflect the outcomes of unaddressed hazards in the workplace. These findings indicate that 693,000 employees were injured and 111 killed at workplaces in the UK during the 2019/2020 period. Incidents leading to injury and death have detrimental consequences. More often than not, unfortunate events can be prevented by reporting an observed hazard in the workplace.

The Accident Advice Helpline conducted a survey to determine the reporting frequency of workplace hazards. A total of 25% of respondents reported experiencing an injury, or knowing of someone who was injured in the workplace. Despite these occurrences, one in six people do not report an observed risk.

Common workplace hazards

Every workplace has health and safety pitfalls, which can generally be categorised as:

- Biological hazards – bacteria, viruses, mould, bodily fluids, sewage, etc. that may impact health
- Physical hazards – environmental factors such as adverse weather conditions, height, noise, and radiation. It also includes hazards that create unsafe working conditions such as slip, trip, and fall hazards
- Ergonomic hazards – a result of work activities that are physically straining or can result in musculoskeletal injuries
- Chemical hazards – exposure to any hazardous substances that can cause harm
- Psychosocial hazards – work-related circumstances that can impact an employee's mental health or wellbeing.

Employees may not be able to control or manage the risks associated with some of these categories. However, every employee can report a hazard when identifying it. Some of the most common workplace hazards can be easily addressed if reported, these include:

- Spillages, uneven flooring or trailing wires
- Unsafe working practices when operating machinery
- Using the wrong equipment for the wrong tasks or activities
- Disregard for health and safety apparel and equipment
- Working at heights without taking the required health and safety precautions.

Why, if the most common workplace hazards are observable, identifiable and, most importantly, preventable, do people neglect to report these risks?

Reasons why people don't report workplace hazards

The reasons why people neglect to report workplace hazards are varied and many. It seems that people are untroubled about possible dangers in the workplace. However, StaySafe found that most reasons are generic and applicable across all sectors and industries. Following is a list of the main reasons why workplace hazards are not reported:

- The reporting process is time-consuming and burdens already busy work schedules
- If identified hazards do not directly impact people or their work activities, these hazards are ignored
- Some think that reporting a workplace hazard is not their duty or responsibility
- A percentage stated that they were unfamiliar with reporting procedures (e.g. who reports should be made to)
- Some felt that they would be victimised for reporting problems and others confessed that they were told not to report a workplace hazard.

People often feel that a hazard is not serious and that nothing will come of it – until it is too late.

When a hazard becomes a problem

Most companies have solid health and safety protocols in place. In reality, however, safety guidelines are often just words on paper and not applied operating practices in the workplace.

A workplace hazard can be ignored as a danger until it is the cause of injury or death. This problem then escalates exponentially and becomes a great, and often urgent, issue. Eventually, an ignored workplace hazard has physical, moral, legal and financial ramifications. Creating awareness among employees is a positive step towards workplace hazard reporting.

The BIG pothole problem

Potholes are a familiar sight on road surfaces around the world. The expansion and contraction – or continual freezing and thawing – of subsurface water causes the formation of potholes. Changing weather conditions, poor road infrastructure, heavy traffic, or heavy vehicles can all contribute to pothole formations.

Summer and winter extremes have caused significant damage to the UK's local roads. The Asphalt Industry Alliance determined that the UK needs 10 years and £12bn to make its roads safe again. The government, being liable for the upkeep of UK roads, budgeted half of this amount up to 2021.

Employer responsibilities regarding potholes

Apart from the government, employers, and by implication health and safety officers, are liable for the upkeep of road surfaces and car parks in and around workplaces. Under the Workplace (Health, Safety & Welfare) Regulations 1992, an employer must ensure the working environment is safe both for employees and visitors. A car park that has unrepaired potholes in it could pose a significant risk to those who use it.

The HSE confirms these responsibilities:

- Road surfaces must be suitable for the intended traffic and driving purposes.
- Potholes, being a risk that can cause injuries and property damage, must be reported and fixed.
- Roads and car parks must provide the required grip for both people and vehicles.
- Road and car park surfaces must comply with set standards.

Ignoring these obligations can result in costly claims and injuries.



Dangers of unattended potholes

Autoglass conducted a survey that gained information from 3,000 road users regarding the causes of road accidents. The survey discovered that:

- Unsavoury road conditions such as potholes cause roughly 45% of road accidents
- A standard, daily travelling route contains an average of 13 potholes
- Roughly 30% of road users drive over or into potholes because these hazards are not visible
- Nearly all road users would like clear warning signs to indicate the presence of potholes.

Hitting a pothole not only results in expensive vehicle repairs, but can also cause personal injuries. Motorcyclists and cyclists are more likely to suffer serious or fatal injuries as they are more exposed. Cycling UK confirmed this eventuality by reporting that 22 cyclists were killed and 368 severely injured due to poor road conditions between 2007 and 2016. These statistics, gained from police incident reports, paint an alarming picture.

In 2019, UK citizens launched no less than 700,000 complaints about potholes. The problem seems to be escalating amid budget cuts, the coronavirus and a global economic crisis.

Fix and maintain

The statistics and case studies are clear about the consequences of unfixed potholes. No employer wants the encumbrance of compensation claims or on-site injuries.

Interesting pothole facts

Annoying and hazardous as they may be, here are some interesting facts about those potted holes:

- It would take 53,353 Ford Focuses – chopped into tiny bits – to fill 2,202,000 potholes.
- In the UK, there is a pothole for every mile of road.
- Devon reported a six-foot-wide pothole that the residents nicknamed the 'swimming pool'.
- A hole is not a pothole unless it is 40mm deep.
- Irishman Liam Keane went for a swim in a pothole approximately five feet deep. He did note that it was "very, very cold".
- The UK has a National Pothole Day, which is celebrated annually. During this momentous event, tribute is paid to 'deceased' wheel covers that succumbed to mortal wounds sustained in encounters with potholes.
- Two councillors threw a birthday party for a pothole in West Sussex. Despite numerous pleas, the pothole remained unfixed for two years. However, the 'birthday' celebrations drew the necessary attention, and the pothole was filled the very next day.

Case Study

Linder Myers Solicitors successfully concluded a settlement in favour of its client against an employer. The employee was a forklift driver. The yard surfaces were in disrepair and dotted with potholes. The employee raised the matter with the employer, but no action was taken. Consequently, the employee suffered injuries and was awarded £6,500.

Seton recommends...



Style No. KF-PR

THE PSYCHOLOGY BEHIND

Queueing



Queueing – forming lines and waiting your turn – is a universal experience and part of everyday life. Negative queueing experiences impact customer satisfaction, which, in turn, affects how a business is perceived and supported.

Businesses rely on both physical and virtual queues to order the flow of customer traffic. Negative queueing experiences lead to disgruntled customers and possible ‘queue rage’.

History of queueing

Agner Krarup Erlang, a mathematician and engineer, was the first to introduce the theory of queueing early in the 20th century. His research aimed to determine acceptable telephone waiting times and the manpower required to manage differing call volumes.

Erlang’s research instigated further investigations into queueing systems – examining both the statistics and the psychology behind queueing. John D.C. Little created the formula to calculate queueing times.

Studies revealed some interesting facts and perceptions about queue psychology:

- Men are more likely to abandon queueing than women. It is alleged that men inflate actual time after two minutes, whereas women do so after three minutes

- Waiting time perceptually lengthens and inflates – feels mentally longer than it actually is – with each minute exceeding a three-minute waiting period. Once the five-minute mark is breached, perceived waiting time doubles
- If there is no indication of how long a wait will be, people perceive waiting periods to be 23% longer.

Why is it important to create a good waiting experience?

Queues are unavoidable and part of almost any business serving customers. Businesses rely on queueing systems to

manage customer flows and determine staffing requirements. The HSE emphasised the importance of crowd control and queueing barriers at public venues such as railway stations, sports stadiums and fairgrounds.

Understanding queueing psychology and the effect of perceived waiting times helps businesses to plan effective queueing and waiting systems. The psychology behind queueing explored optimising waiting periods and turning these into positive customer experiences. This research indicated that people respond more to the waiting experience than the actual length of the wait.

What can businesses do to control both the flow of customer traffic and create positive waiting experiences?

Occupied versus unoccupied time

People perceive that time passes more quickly when they are busy with either physical or mental activities. If customers have nothing to do during waiting times, negative thoughts will spill over into negative experiences and reactions. According to Professor Richard Larson, perceived waiting time is longer than actual waiting time. Therefore, it is all about the customer’s perception of the wait and not the actual wait.

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Businesses must explore creative ways to occupy and distract waiting customers. These creative solutions will vary from business to business but may include displaying information signs and eye-catching posters.

Start the process

Unattended customers tend to become disgruntled customers. This discontent can soon 'infect' other customers. It is therefore good business to start the process of customer service as soon as possible. People feel that once a process is initiated, the wait is over. A few examples include:

- The restaurant business – immediately give customers menus after seating them
- Online queuing – use progress bars to show customers where they are in the queue.

How long is the wait?

People want to know how long they have to wait for something. Clear communication on the length of queuing times helps regulate customer expectations and planning.

Explain the wait

Customers want to know why they have to wait, if they have to wait. Providing reasons for a wait – especially in online waiting rooms where customers cannot 'see' the reasons – keeps customers informed and involved. These reasons should be

specific. A message such as 'technical difficulties' is vague and frustrating.

Queueing fairness

FIFO – first in, first out (or first come, first served) – is a cardinal rule in queueing. People want fair queue control and to know that their places are safe. Allowing queue-cutting and doing favours may ultimately result in queue rage. The applicable barriers and markings help to ensure fair queueing systems.

Control queueing anxiety

People have an innate tendency to question their decisions. Businesses with multiple queues may increase customer anxiety as customers will (in all likelihood) think that the other lines are moving faster and believe that they chose the wrong line. This phenomenon was even studied and documented as Erma Bombeck's Law.

Businesses can manage queueing anxiety by communicating clear waiting times. It is better to overestimate waiting times. Customers being served earlier than anticipated feel rewarded, and this leads to higher customer satisfaction.

Understanding queue psychology helps to implement effective queueing systems. In turn, effective queueing systems – whether virtual or actual – lead to increased customer satisfaction.

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- Integrated anti-trip feet
- Custom signage

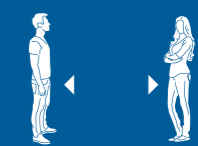
A practical and sturdy solution, which is easy to transport, store and can be deployed in seconds!



Hands.



Face.



Space.

Q&As

Q&As



Q. When we are able to reopen our workplace, can we ask our employees to take responsibility for cleaning their own work areas? We would provide the cleaning equipment such as disinfectant wipes and PPE.

A. Employers can ask employees to take responsibility for cleaning their work areas, and in many organisations, this is already common with clean as you go practices in place. Where this is not defined within an employee's role and responsibilities it would usually be covered by a catch all statement in an employee's contract, such as 'any other reasonable duties as required'.

Given the current COVID-19 pandemic asking employees to take responsibility for cleaning their own areas would be considered reasonable, but should be done in consultation with them so that they have the ability to input and provide feedback on procedures. With this in mind it would be expected that most employees will embrace the opportunity to protect themselves and others given the continued risk of COVID-19 transmission, but such duties are backed by legislation such as the Health and Safety at Work Act, 1974 under which an employee must take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves, others and co-operate with an employer to enable legal compliance.

An assessment of the risks posed by employees cleaning their own work areas must be conducted. In particular, many disinfectants are classified as skin irritants and as such exposure can cause health effects such as inflammation, including dermatitis. It is therefore vital that appropriate and effective control measures are implemented to minimise harm of such activities.



Q. Can my employer require me to have the COVID vaccine or could it be made a contractual requirement in the future if I were to apply for a different job?

A. An employer cannot compel an employee to have a COVID vaccination, however they may encourage immunisation where appropriate, as a means to reducing risk to both the employee and others.

An employer can request for existing contractual terms to be changed, such as to add vaccination in to the terms, however this must be agreed by the employee. If an employer was to enforce this without agreement leading to resignation it would constitute unfair dismissal, although unfair dismissal can only be challenged by an employee if they are pregnant or have 2 or more years of service in the UK. In the event that an employee is unable to be vaccinated due to medical or religious grounds and their employer dismisses them because of this then it would be considered discrimination and can be legally challenged.

Although some employers have already indicated that they are considering vaccination as a condition for the hiring of new employees in the future, particularly in industries where there is an increased risk from COVID-19, so far this is the exception rather than the rule. Future international travel restrictions based on vaccinations may also be a consideration, although at present the extent of this remains unknown.

News ROUND UP

April 2021



Waste and recycling company fined

A 22-year-old employee sustained serious injuries to his arm when it became entangled in the automatic roof sheeting mechanism of a visiting articulated truck. Johnsons Scrap Metal Limited pleaded guilty to breaching section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, has been fined £10,000 and ordered to pay costs of £4,000.



Businesses could be doing more to improve hygiene

A survey carried out by Pelsis Group on 2,007 people in the UK shows how Covid-19 has shifted the nation's attitude towards hygiene. The survey revealed that 88% of people want to see UK businesses implementing stringent hygiene regimes with 87% saying the hygiene of places they visit is now more important to them than before the pandemic.



British Safety Council urges Government to withdraw advert

The government has released an advert urging the nation to stay home with the strapline 'every online meeting is making a difference'. But the British Safety Council is urging the government to withdraw the advert immediately as it uses a picture of a woman sitting on a sofa cross-legged using a laptop. They said the advert 'shows a complete lack of understanding around health and safety'.

Employee fatality at whiskey distillers

Irish Distillers Ltd has been fined €40,000 after an employee suffered fatal injuries when a forklift involved in the staging process came into contact with him. The company pleaded guilty to breaches of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 and the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work General Application Regulations 2007.



The impact of home working on mental health

A report by Lloyd's Register, 'Employee well-being during a pandemic', found that employees have major concerns disclosing mental health conditions. Worldwide, 48% felt it could negatively impact their career progression, with 19% unsure. One in four said that nothing had been done by their employer to provide additional support in terms of mental health and well-being.



Ladders seized by Trading Standards

A suspicious shipment of telescopic ladders was intercepted by Trading Standards at Felixstowe port in February 2021. The ladders were labelled 'EN 131', implying that they complied with the European standard for ladders. However, missing information such as contact details, product codes, and manufacture dates, plus the presence of an illegal 'CE' mark, raised suspicions.



Shocking report reveals fire safety concerns

JLA's 2021 Fire Safety Accountability Report has revealed that more than half (53%) of those responsible for fire safety agree that they could be doing more to protect people in their building from fire risk. Only 38% of the respondents agree they are doing enough to ensure the building is fire safe.



70,000 fines issued for breaching COVID-19 rules

Figures published by the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) show that 68,952 Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) have been issued since lockdown regulations came into force in England. This includes 582 FPNs to businesses for breaches of regulations including failures to enforce face masks, unlawfully staying open and hosting large gatherings, or not sticking to table service rules.



HSE issues safety plea to farmers

The deaths of 3 farmers over 4 days led to the HSE issuing a plea to farmers to review their health and safety policies. Although deaths in the industry fell last year, this reinforces that farming is still one of the most dangerous professions.



Government bans old tyres

On 1 February 2021, it became illegal for tyres aged over 10 years old to be used on the front steered axles of HGVs, buses, coaches, or all single wheels fitted to a minibus (9 to 16 passenger seats.) If inspected at a DVSA enforcement check, tyres aged over 10 years old found on these vehicles will be considered dangerous and attract an 'S' marked immediate prohibition notice.



Knowledge Centre: Help & Advice

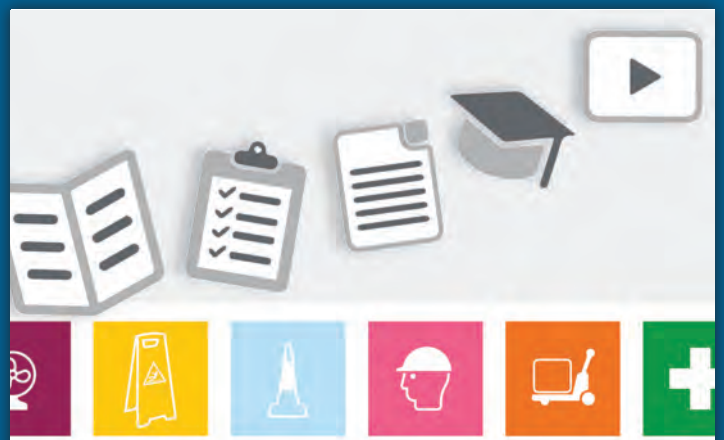
Vital information on health and safety legislation, detailed product guides and the latest hot topics and industry news.



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