

National Irish Safety Organisation

# Update!



*NISO is a not-for-profit voluntary body,  
dedicated to the promotion of health  
and safety in Irish workplaces*

SUMMER 2012

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National Irish Safety Organisation

# Update!

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NISO Update! is issued by the National Irish Safety Organisation (NISO).



Material printed in NISO Update! is not necessarily endorsed by the National Irish Safety Organisation.

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Pauric Corrigan, president,  
National Irish Safety Organisation

## NISO President welcomes applications to 'Small Contractor / Sub Contractor Innovation Award' and 'Safety Representative of the Year Award'.

Now in its third year, the NISO Update electronic format has proved a success with circulation increasing within member organisations by way of internal networks. Earlier this year, the National Irish Safety Organisation (NISO) also launched an electronic newsletter entitled 'The Safety Observer'. The newsletter will keep NISO members updated on what is happening in occupational safety and health.

Our Annual General Meeting (AGM) was held on 21 April last in the Radisson Blu Hotel, Athlone, followed by the All Ireland Safety Quiz Final. The AGM was well attended as was the Safety Quiz Final with the previous entrants and novice trophies both being won by Abbott Ireland Diagnostics Division, Sligo. I would like to congratulate all teams that participated in this year's safety quiz, it is very positive to see such a strong commitment towards health and safety.

### Conference

Our annual conference this year will take place on 5 October in the Radisson Blu Hotel, Sligo. Hosted by our north west region, this year's conference entitled 'Health is Our Wealth', will include a panel of speakers both national and international.

The closing date for submissions to the NISO/Northern Ireland Safety Group (NISG) Annual Safety Awards has now passed with an increase in submission entries. The safety awards will be presented at the gala dinner following our annual conference.

As last year, in conjunction with the Construction Safety Partnership, there will be a 'Small Contractor / Sub Contractor Innovation Award'. This will be awarded to a small contractor who has introduced an innovation/change to the way they operate that has made improvements to health and safety within the last three years. An

application form can be downloaded from the NISO website: [www.niso.ie](http://www.niso.ie). The closing date for entries is Friday 3 August.

The 'NISO Safety Representative of the Year Award 2012, in association with Nifast' will also be presented at the gala dinner on 5 October. The closing date for entries to this award is Friday 3 August. An application form for this award can also be downloaded from the NISO website: [www.niso.ie](http://www.niso.ie).

### 'An Bord Snip Nua'

This time last year I was commenting on the McCarthy 'An Bord Snip Nua' report. Upon reading the Health and Safety Authority's (HSA) 2011 annual report, it is obvious to see that cuts to the HSA's budget are on the way. One could ask the question, who has sanctioned these cuts? It is also plain to see that accidents, both fatal and serious, are on the increase while proactive inspections are on the decrease.

With the increase in fatalities over the past three years, one must question, are the budgetary reductions wise? NISO would like to thank the board of the HSA, its chief executive officer and staff in these challenging times for managing the statutory role of enforcing and maintaining standards in the safety, health and welfare of workers and their workplaces. Health and safety should not be allowed slip back to the dark days of the sixties, seventies and eighties.

Almost fifty years ago, in 1963, the Government put in place the forerunner to NISO, the National Industrial Safety Organisation whose aim was to promote health and safety in industry. This was followed with the formation of the Health and Safety Authority in 1989. These cuts may now lead to undue pressure on the voluntary and statutory bodies in promoting and improving awareness in health and safety standards.

# EU-OSHA Annual Report

In its latest annual report, the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA) continue to reach new audiences with messages about the importance of occupational safety and health (OSH). The annual report also continues to argue that, even in difficult times, devoting time and resources to OSH is an investment, not a cost, and good OSH is good for business.

In her first annual report as director, Dr Christa Sedlatschek said “for many companies, simply surviving in business has become their main focus. Organisations need to remember though that good workplace health and

safety is vital, not only for ethical reasons, but also for economic competitiveness”.

Highlights of the year include the flagship foresight project on green jobs, which aims to anticipate longer-term workplace risks; secondary analysis of the data collected by the European Survey of Enterprises on New and Emerging Risks (ESENER) survey; the official launch of the OiRA risk assessment tool and the last year of the safe maintenance campaign. Discussions have begun relating to the development of the next Agency Strategy, which is due to be adopted in 2013.



The report also shows that the Agency's revenue in 2011 was €14,967,296, almost €1.4 million less than the budgeted revenue. The total budgeted expenditure for 2011 was €16,350,812.

For further information and to download the EU-OSHA report, visit the EU-OSHA website: [www.osha.europa.eu](http://www.osha.europa.eu).

## BBQ Safety



Gas Safe Register is highlighting the importance of safety when using a barbeque (BBQ).

BBQ's have been linked to several campsite deaths caused by carbon monoxide poisoning. If you are planning on using a BBQ, whether it is a disposable one, gas or charcoal, make sure you keep yourself safe and do not put yourself at risk of carbon monoxide poisoning. Follow these top tips for BBQ safety:

✗ Never take a smouldering or lit BBQ into a tent, caravan or cabin. Even if

you have finished cooking, your BBQ should remain outside as it will still give off fumes for some hours after use.

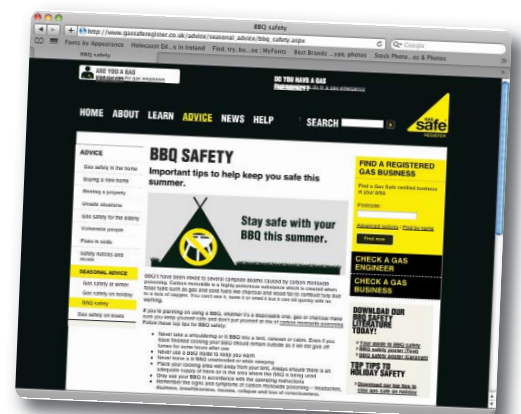
- ✗ Never use a BBQ inside to keep you warm.
- ✗ Never leave a lit BBQ unattended or while sleeping.
- ✓ Place your cooking area well away from your tent. Always ensure there is an adequate supply of fresh air in the area where the BBQ is being used.
- ✓ Only use your BBQ in accordance with the operating instructions.
- ✓ Remember the signs and symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning – headaches, dizziness, breathlessness, nausea, collapse and loss of consciousness.

If you are using a gas BBQ or gas camping equipment, follow these extra tips to help you stay safe:

- ✓ Check that the appliance is in good order, undamaged and that hoses are properly attached and undamaged. If in doubt get the hoses replaced or don't use it.
- ✓ Make sure the gas taps are turned off before changing the gas cylinder and do it in the open air.

- ✗ Don't over-tighten joints.
- ✓ When you have finished cooking, turn off the gas cylinder before you turn off the BBQ controls – this means any gas in the pipeline will be used up.
- ✓ Read the manufacturer's instructions about how to check for gas escapes from hoses or pipework, e.g. brushing leak detection solution around all joints and looking for bubbles.
- ✗ Never take a gas stove, light or heater into a tent, caravan or cabin.

For further information on gas safety and seasonal advice, visit the Gas Safe Register website: [www.gassaferegister.co.uk](http://www.gassaferegister.co.uk). Information on gas safety can also be found at the Bord Gáis Networks website: [www.bordgaisnetworks.ie](http://www.bordgaisnetworks.ie).





# HSA Annual Report and Statistics Summary

The Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, Richard Bruton, T.D., launched the 2011 Annual Report and Statistics Summary of the Health and Safety Authority (HSA). The statistics summary shows that 54 people were killed in workplace accidents in 2011, an increase of six from the 48 fatalities in 2010.

Launching the reports, Minister Bruton said, “the Authority has used its constrained resources in areas that need them the most and during 2011 continued to target sectors with high injury rates; however I am very concerned about the continued rise in

workplace fatalities. Every workplace fatality is avoidable and represents a terrible tragedy for a family and a community. Combating workplace fatalities represents a huge challenge for both the HSA and employers and I will continue to assist them in any way I can”.

The chief executive of the HSA, Martin O’Halloran, said, “our essential belief is that nobody’s health and safety should be harmed by work activity. We know, from our accident investigations that many of the 54 fatal accidents reported last year were preventable. While some work can be hazardous, good health and



safety practice does save lives. Those companies which are successful in protecting the safety, health and welfare of their staff are also successful in business”.

Please see page eight for a summary of the HSA annual report and statistics.

## Good Practice Awards

The European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA) are inviting nominations for the European Good Practice Awards in occupational safety and health 2012–2013. As a key element of the Healthy Workplaces Campaign, the award is aimed at promoting the mutual collaboration between managers and employees in preventing occupational risks.

The Good Practice Awards are coordinated at the national level by the Agency’s Network of Focal Points. The Health and Safety Authority (HSA) acts as the National Focal Point for Ireland with the support and representation of a range of stakeholder bodies. The HSA will be taking entries for the awards up until 3 October 2012. Two national winners will be selected from the entries: one from organisations with less than 100 employees, and one from those organisations with 100 employees or more.

Please see page ten for further information on the Good Practice Awards.



## NISO AGM

Delivering the presidential address at the National Irish Safety Organisation (NISO) annual general meeting (AGM), NISO president Pauric Corrigan said that even though the downturn in the economy continues, NISO is continuing to recruit new members and recorded a small increase in membership last year.

Mr Corrigan said that the organisation is now in a “stable financial position”. Figures were given showing that the organisation has halved its debt and recorded a surplus for the year. NISO is represented on Health and Safety Authority (HSA) regional committees and REACH committees, on the Construction Safety Partnership, the ETCL, and the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work’s Irish Focal Point.

Speaking at the AGM, NISO honorary secretary, Harry Galvin welcomed the Government’s decision not to merge the HSA into a new employment rights body. Mr Galvin said “the HSA has been a success story since it was established and NISO was concerned when it heard reports of proposals for the merger last year”.

Both Mr Corrigan and Mr Galvin expressed their thanks to Martin O’Halloran and the HSA for their support during the year. Mr Corrigan also thanked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, Richard Bruton, T.D., and his officials for their support.

In 2013 NISO will celebrate its 50th anniversary. The 2013 annual conference will be held in Galway. This year’s conference will be held in Sligo on Friday 5 October.

## NISO Announce Speakers for 2012 Conference

The National Irish Safety Organisation (NISO) are delighted to announce a host of prestigious speakers of both national and international renown for its 49th annual conference. The conference, titled 'Safety and Health is Your Wealth', will take place in the Radisson Blu Hotel, Sligo on Friday 5 October.

Speakers at this year's conference include:

**Lucinda Creighton, T.D.**, Minister for European Affairs.

**Conor Faughnan**, Director of Consumer Affairs, AA Ireland.

**Joanne Harmon**, Education Manager, Health and Safety Authority.

**Dr Gerry Lane**,

Consultant in Emergency Medicine, HSE, Letterkenny General Hospital.

**David Mahedy**, Director of Sport, University of Limerick.

**Patricia Murray**, Senior Psychologist (Organisational) / Inspector, Health and Safety Authority.

**Tom Stephenson**, Group HSE Director, Balcas Timber Limited.

**Dr Su Wang**, Specialist Occupational Physician, International Institute Risk and Safety Management.

To register your interest in the NISO annual conference, please email: [conference@niso.ie](mailto:conference@niso.ie), with your contact details and state 'register of interest for annual conference 2012' in the subject line.

Conference Supported by: Health and Safety Authority. Conference Sponsors include: Abbott Ireland, Bord Gáis Networks, Kilcawley Construction, Shell E&P Ireland Ltd. Awards Sponsors include: Construction Industry Federation, Construction Safety Partnership.

## Road Safety during the Summer Holidays



It's that time of year again, when thousands of primary schoolchildren around the country begin their summer holidays. The Road Safety Authority (RSA) is asking road users to watch out for children when using the roads, as there will be an increase in children playing, walking and cycling on the roads.

Mr Noel Brett, chief executive of the RSA had this message for road users: "With schools closing for the summer, there will be more children spending time outdoors. I am asking road users to be extra cautious when using the roads, especially in built-up areas. Look out for children who might be playing, walking or cycling on or near the road. Remember, children are our most vulnerable road-users because of their age and the fact that they are not able to recognise danger like adults. So make sure you pay extra attention when children are nearby and slow down to cope with the unexpected".

For further information on road safety, visit the RSA website: [www.rsa.ie](http://www.rsa.ie).

## European Safety Week

European Safety Week 2012 takes place week beginning 22 October with the theme of 'Working Together for Risk Prevention'. The healthy workplaces campaign encourages managers, workers and other stakeholders to join forces to improve safety and health.

The 'Working Together for Risk Prevention' campaign focuses on: risk prevention, managing risks, encouraging top managers to actively engage in risk reduction, encouraging

workers and their representatives to work with managers to reduce risks.

For further information on European Safety Week 2012, visit the Health and Safety Authority (HSA) website: [www.hsa.ie](http://www.hsa.ie), and the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA) website: [www.osha.europa.eu](http://www.osha.europa.eu). Resources for European Safety Week can be downloaded from the EU-OSHA website or by contacting the HSA at 1890 289 389.

## Abbott Ireland Diagnostics Division achieve double at Quiz Final

Abbott Ireland Diagnostics Division from Sligo won both the Previous Entrants and Novices' categories of the All Ireland Safety Quiz Finals. The competition was held in Athlone this year and was a great success with eight teams participating in each category of the finals. Each team had successfully won through from their regional Quiz Finals held over the previous two months.

Addressing the special prize-giving dinner, NISO president

Pauric Corrigan pointed to the fantastic commitment demonstrated by the teams participating in the event, as it marked for him the strong health and safety culture present in the sponsoring companies. He particularly thanked the participating companies' managers for their support and encouragement to their teams.

For further information on this year's All Ireland Safety Quiz Finals, please see page nine.

# Claims - management

There is a very close and clear link to accidents, claims, payments and insurance premiums. Employer liability and public liability premiums are not simply plucked from the sky, they are carefully calculated to take into account several factors including:

- **Market conditions** - Over the past number of years, there has been tremendous competition in the insurance market. There has been more choice for the policyholder, premiums have fallen, insurers have been fighting for market share and chasing premiums downwards. Now however, there has been a hardening of the market. Premiums are rising, insurers are getting more choosy and in some cases are becoming risk averse. All this means that a good claims experience or claims record is vital for the employer. Firms that have a poor record will be hardest hit. It is important at all stages to have a good claims experience, but never more so when insurance market conditions are tough. Employers must invest in health and safety.
- **Scale, scope and potential hazards of the operation** - There is less chance of a large liability claim coming from a sweet shop than the local car repair workshop, where there is more lifting of heavy weights. Again, investment in health and safety is required to educate employees of the hazards applicable to the job.



- **Claims experience** - If there is what the insurer calls a 'bad claims experience', that is either a frequency of claims or a few large claims, then this spells bad news for the policyholder. If there is a frequency of claims, it usually means that standards of housekeeping and management are poor. If there are a few large claims, then perhaps the employer has not learned from any of the previous claims/accidents.
- **Quality of the management team** - If management are safety conscious, it tends to filter through to the employees. If management are simply interested in profit at any cost, then that also filters through.

## Useful evidence has a short shelf life

Accident scenes can change and will change, site

conditions will change, witnesses can change jobs and memories fade, therefore, what is done in the immediate aftermath of the accident has an effect on the outcome and cost of a claim.

Reasons for investigating accidents include:

- To find out the cause and try to prevent future similar incidents.
- The employer needs to fulfil any legal requirements such as notifying the Health and Safety Authority and to determine if there has been any breach of safety regulations that might result in a prosecution.
- The insurer needs to determine the final cost of the claim to the policy and needs to gather all the information they can, to enable them to process the claim.

The person carrying out the investigation for the employer must be someone

who has some knowledge as to how the process operates. It might be a supervisor or a co-worker that has the trust of the employer. The investigator will need to find out:

- If the injured person was distracted somehow, and if yes, why and how?
- Was a safe work procedure being followed?
- Were all safety devices, guards, etc. in place?
- Was the worker trained?

The investigation should include reporting the accident to the designated person in the organisation, they in turn shall report to the broker or insurer. The investigation report should state if first aid was provided to the injured person and note the treatment. The cause of the accident and a plan for corrective action to prevent any similar incident arising in the future should also be included in the report.



## Accident investigation

What might have caused the accident? We need to look at the task, environment, material, personnel and management.

- **Task** – Was a safe procedure used? Is there a better procedure available? Were the appropriate tools used and more importantly, were they available? Were safety devices working?
- **Environment** – The situation at the time of the accident is important, not the normal or standard practice employed. What was the weather like? What was the temperature? Was it too noisy, too dark or too bright? Were hazardous gases, fumes or dusts present? What was the general standard of housekeeping at the time?
- **Material** - Was there a failure of equipment? Was the machinery poorly designed or altered by the employer? Were hazardous substances involved and were they clearly marked? Was a less hazardous substitute available and if so, why was it not used? Was the raw material being used substandard? Was personal protective equipment (PPE) used and more importantly, was PPE available?
- **Personnel** – The main purpose here is NOT to blame fellow employees, but human weakness must be considered so that we can learn for the future. Was the worker experienced and was s/he adequately trained? Can the worker physically do the work, or should s/he have had assistance? Was the worker tired or under stress, either domestic or

work related, or in today's climate, could s/he be under financial stress? What was the worker's general state of health?

The person investigating the accident/incident must get the full details of all witnesses. If someone in the vicinity denies witnessing the incident, take what is called a negative statement from them. A statement such as "I was working near the scene of the accident but I saw nothing" is better to have that early on, rather than s/he remembers later on and gives evidence against you.

- **Management** – At the end of the day, management holds the legal responsibility for safety in the workplace. Failures of management systems can often be a cause in the accident. Is there a proper health and safety statement in place? Are safety rules understood by all staff? Were all procedures being enforced? Was there adequate supervision? Is the risk assessment updated whenever a new practice is employed?

Hearsay evidence is of no real use. I have attended many sites where I am told that s/he wasn't hurt at all and his/her family are always claiming or have previous claims. There is not much point in you believing that unless you have firm evidence. Your insurers have access to a database where they can check previous claims history. It only contains claims that have been made, not all incidents. If a claim has been made against an insurer or a public body, then there is every chance that it is recorded on this database.

Your policy conditions require you to report all incidents that *could* give rise to a claim, not just those that *will* give rise to a claim. If you do not report an incident/accident, then indemnity could be refused. Certainly all correspondence received from a solicitor or the Injury Board must be forwarded to the insurer. Failure to do so may cause the insurer to refuse to indemnify. Should that happen, the employer is on their own and must deal with the claim out of their own funds.

## Legal system

Now we will discuss the Irish legal system. In criminal law, the case must be proven beyond all reasonable doubt. In civil law, the claimant must show that on the balance of probabilities, the defendant did something wrong to cause the injury. This is a crucial point. If an employee is suing as a result of an accident, s/he must simply show that 'on the balance of probabilities', the incident happened as described. The employee does not have to prove this 'beyond all reasonable doubt'.

You cannot stop claims being made against you. The injured employee is entitled to bring a claim arising out of an injury. The employee must first apply via the Injuries Board, then if not happy can pursue through the courts. The employer can minimise the exposure and can improve standards at minimal cost. The employer, along with the insurer, can analyse the claims made against him/her in the past and if there is a pattern or a high incidence of specific type of claim, then address that. It may be that there is a high incidence of slips and falls; if this is the case, perhaps there needs to be an improvement in housekeeping, change floor covering or simply provide mats at strategic locations. If

there is a large incidence of back or straining injuries, then perhaps there should be an investment in training, especially in manual handling.

## Costs

At the end of the day, the judge hearing the case is the final arbiter of the case. I can call a case wrong. I might be wrong in apportioning blame, or in the figure I settle at. I am human. The judge is also human and can be wrong.

There is very little you can do in the event of a wrong decision in the courts. Yes, the case can be appealed to the next higher court, however, this results in further costs to the insurer. Costs are a huge factor and can actually be a multiple of the award. Costs in the Cork Circuit court area are 12.5% of the award plus €1,500 if the case is an assessment and 12.5% of the award plus €2,500 if liability is contested. High court costs are higher again. I have known a case in the high court to settle at €20K with costs coming in at €140K because of the complexity of the case and the expert witness expenses.

Can we reduce costs? Yes, it is in all our interests. Lower claims costs means lower premiums. It also means that in the current climate, employers can stay in business and keep employee numbers up. Investing in health and safety does not just mean reduced insurance premiums for companies, it will also mean increased productivity, less sickness-related absences and better morale amongst staff.

*This is an edited version of the presentation made by Vincent Dower, claims investigator with a leading Irish insurer, at a NISO regional seminar.*

# HSA Annual Report and Statistics Summary



Brian O'Connor, health and safety specialist, National Irish Safety Organisation

Last year the HSA carried out 15,340 workplace inspections and investigations (a reduction of 8.3% compared to the previous year), issued 535 Improvement Notices and 436 Prohibition Notices, brought 32 prosecutions to a conclusion and sent 35 new cases to the Director of Public Prosecutions for direction. Sentences in successful prosecutions resulted in total fines of €819,700 and five suspended custodial sentences were handed down. A further custodial sentence was substituted by 150 hours of community service.

In the same year, 54 people were killed in workplace accidents, an increase of six on the 2010 figure of 48. Of the 54 workplace fatalities in 2011, 25 were self employed, six were members of the public and one was a family member.

The HSA recorded an operating surplus of €486,922, an increase of €174,031 from the 2010 surplus of €312,891. In the foreword to the report, the Authority's chief executive, Martin O'Halloran described 2011 as another challenging year for the Authority, made all the more challenging by reductions in staff and budgets. Despite these challenges, 2011 was also a year of achievement

**Brian O'Connor, health and safety specialist at NISO, summarises the *Health and Safety Authority's (HSA) Annual Report 2011 and Summary of Workplace Injury, Illness and Fatality Statistics 2010-2011*.**

for the Authority, one key achievement being the reduction of administrative burden through the Taking Care of Business and BeSMART programmes.

## Inspections

Despite a decrease of over 1,000 inspections in the construction sector, construction still accounts for 28.7% (4,409) of the total amount of inspections in 2011, more than any other sector. The number of inspections in the agriculture, forestry and fishing sector increased from 1,754 in 2010 to 3,222 in 2011, an increase of 84%, accounting for 21% of the total amount of inspections in 2011. Wholesale/retail have the third highest level of inspections (2,055), followed by transportation and storage (1,323) and manufacturing (1,449).

## Fatal Injury Statistics

The agriculture, forestry and fishing sector reported the highest number of worker fatalities for the fourth consecutive year with 27 fatalities. This did however represent a reduction on the 2010 figure of 29. The 2011 figure comprised of 22 farming and five fishing fatalities. There were no forestry fatalities for the first time since 2007.

Seven people in the transport/storage sector died in workplace accidents in 2011 and six fatalities occurred in construction. The other fatalities were in utilities (3), manufacturing (2), wholesale/retail (2), professional/scientific (2) and one each in the accommodation/food services,

public administration/defence, healthcare and arts/entertainment sectors.

Loss of control of means of transport or handling equipment was the most common cause of workplace deaths in 2011, with nine such fatal accidents recorded. This was followed by falls from height (7) and loss of control of machine (6). Elderly workers continue to figure highly in workplace fatalities, with 26% (14) of the 2011 fatalities involving persons aged 65 years and over. Farming represents 11 of these fatalities involving persons aged 65 years and over, an increase of four from the 2010 figure of seven.

## Non-fatal injury and illness

There were 6,956 non-fatal injuries reported to the Authority in 2011. Manual handling related injuries continue to account for one third of all reported injuries, followed by slip, trip and fall incidents on the same level (17%). Incidents where aggression, fright, shock or violence is a trigger increased to 7%, while falls from height and body movement (no physical stress) accounted for 5% each. The most injured body part continues to be the back (22%), with finger injuries accounting for 10%, leg injuries 8%, ankle and hand injuries 7% each and arm and shoulder injuries 6% each.

The most common type of injury in 2011 was dislocation, sprain or strain with 32%, followed by wound or superficial injury accounting for 29%. In terms of economic sector, human health and social work activities continue to account

for the largest percentage of non-fatal injury reports (20%), followed by manufacturing (15%), public administration and defence; compulsory social security (14%) and transportation and storage (13%).

According to the Central Statistics Office, there were an estimated 704,494 workdays lost due to occupational illness in 2010 and 666,553 days due to injury. This estimated 1,371,047 workdays lost due to occupational injuries and illnesses in 2010 is almost double the number of estimated days lost in 2009 (746,900). Female workers continue to have lower injury and illness rates than male workers, although rates for both genders did increase in 2010 from the 2008 figures. Young workers continue to display some of the highest injury rates, while the 55-64 years age group recorded the highest rate of illness.

For further information and to download the *Annual Report 2011 and Summary of Workplace Injury, Illness and Fatality Statistics 2010-2011*, please visit the HSA website: [www.hsa.ie](http://www.hsa.ie).





# Quiz 2012 Finals

## All Ireland Results

### Previous Entrants Category Winners



Abbott Ireland Diagnostics Division, All Ireland Previous Entrants Category Winner

**1st Place: Abbott Ireland Diagnostics Division** (representing the north west region)  
Mark Carey, Orla Moore, Ciaran O'Donnell, Conor Sheridan

**2nd Place: Endesa Ireland** (representing the south east region)  
Melissa Morrissey, John Joe Murphy, Tony Murphy, Tommy Thompson

**3rd Place: Abbott Ireland Nutrition Division** (representing the north east region)  
Benny Igoe, Terry Lennon, Noel Quinn, Rose Rogers

### Novice Category Winners



Abbott Ireland Diagnostics Division, All Ireland Novice Category Winner

**1st Place: Abbott Ireland Diagnostics Division** (representing the north west region)  
Darragh McQuaid, James O'Sullivan, Shane Sills, Anne Marie Tuohy

**2nd Place: PepsiCo Carrigaline** (representing the south region)  
Paul Coomey, Bobby O'Sullivan, Sean Reyford, Jason Shawe

**3rd Place: Bord na Móna Littleton** (representing the mid west region)  
Kieran Bourke, Andy Cooney, Tom Fanning, Tommy Maguire

### Other participating teams were:

#### PREVIOUS ENTRANTS CATEGORY TEAMS

**Balcas Timber** (representing Northern Ireland)  
Gordie Elliott, Keith Gallagher, Gerry McDermot, Joseph McMulkin

**Cold Chon (Galway) Ltd.** (representing the west region)  
Eileen Cooley, Liam Henry, Sean Og Leydon, Tom Walsh

**Covidien** (representing the midland region)  
Michael Lohan, Margaret Redmond, Monica Redmond, Michael Woods

**ESB Turlough Hill** (representing the east region)  
Ronan Barry, Niall O'Neill, Tony Pierce, Dave Sexton

**TLI** (representing the mid west region)  
Mairead Fitzmaurice, Brendan O'Driscoll, Diarmuid O'Redan, John Sheahan

#### NOVICE CATEGORY TEAMS

**Abbott Ireland Nutrition Division** (representing the north east region)  
Stephanie Clarke, Derek Cleere, Rebecca Hally, Marcus Pearson

**Bristol-Myers Squibb Ireland** (representing the east region)  
Christine Ahern, Martin Casserly, Michael Collins, Frances Perez Colomina

**Macra na Feirme** (representing the midland region)  
Raymond Bourke, John Carroll, Padraig Kenny, Colin O'Rourke

**P. D. Lydon Ltd.** (representing the west region)  
Bernard Joyce, Emma Murphy, Damien Sweeney, Carol Wall

**Sierra** (representing the south east region)  
Dave Byrne, Russell O'Halloran, Michael Payne



Endesa Ireland, All Ireland Previous Entrants Category Runner-Up



The first Offaly Macra na Feirme team that participated in the NISO All Ireland Occupational Safety Quiz Finals. Also in the picture is John Flanagan, Mary Rooney and Mary Byrne (NISO midland region committee); Marcella Corcoran Kennedy, T.D; Paucir Corrigan, NISO President

# European Good Practice Awards 2012



Gavin Lonergan, head of communications, HSA

Gavin Lonergan, head of communications with the Health and Safety Authority (HSA), writes about this year's Good Practice Awards, a key element of the 2012-2013 European Healthy Workplaces Campaign.

Workplace health and safety is good for business, good for workers and good for the economy and society as a whole. It can be easy to lose sight of these facts when deadlines or production targets are looming. But in such moments, it is more important than ever to be aware of risks in the workplace.

Each year, more than 5,500 people across the EU lose their lives as a result of workplace accidents (Eurostat). Last year in Ireland 54 workplace deaths were reported to the HSA with many thousands suffering injuries. With those shocking statistics in mind the theme of the 2012-2013 EU Healthy Workplaces campaign is 'Working together for risk prevention'.

## Working Together for Risk Prevention

Prevention is the cornerstone of Europe's approach to managing risks. In practice, this means analysing work processes to identify short and long-term risks and then taking action to either eliminate or mitigate them. In simple terms, prevention is about managing work-related risks with the ultimate aim of

reducing the number of and eliminating work-related accidents and occupational illnesses.

Ultimate responsibility for managing risk lies with employers and top management, but their efforts are bound to fail without active worker participation. For these reasons, this campaign places special emphasis on the importance of leadership by top management and owners working in tandem with active worker participation. The most effective results are obtained when there is close cooperation and engagement with workers and their representatives. For this reason, the 2012-2013 campaign has two main elements.

Firstly, it encourages managers to show leadership in safety and health by genuinely consulting with their workforce and by following the best available risk prevention strategies. Secondly, it encourages workers and their representatives to share ideas and work with their managers to improve safety and health for everyone.

## Good Practice Awards

As part of its European Campaign for Safety and Health at Work, the European Agency makes Good Practice Awards to

businesses and organisations that devise innovative, practical solutions to workplace safety and health problems. The Good Practice Awards is one of the main elements of the Healthy Workplaces Campaign and this year is designed to highlight the best examples of managers and employees working together for risk prevention.

The awards aim to demonstrate the benefits of following good safety and health practices. Winners will be expected to show strong management leadership and active worker participation in safety and

health activities and judges will be looking for the best examples of mutual collaboration and benefit.

The awards will recognise companies or organisations that have made outstanding and innovative contributions towards encouraging managers and employees to actively work together to enhance workplace safety and health. The competition is an effective method to promote and encourage practical solutions in workplaces, and to share this good practice. Every workplace is different, so good practice must be adapted to different



situations. However, ideas and methods can be used across sectors and countries, regardless of the type and size of organisation. In the past, award-winning initiatives have ranged from devising a safer approach to scaffolding for the construction industry, to a scheme that reduces exposure to noise in nightclubs. The awards aim to demonstrate, by example, the benefits of following good safety and health practices to all European employers and workers, and to intermediaries including the social partners, OSH professionals and practitioners, and others providing assistance and information at workplace level.

#### Who can take part?

The competition is open to all organisations including:

- Individual organisations in the public and private sector.
- Managers, supervisors and workers.
- Trade unions and safety representatives.
- Training providers and the education community.

Judges will be looking for evidence of:

- Genuine and effective leadership and worker participation.
- Effective participation of workers and their representatives.
- Full support of senior management.
- Interventions aimed at

the workplace.

- Successful implementation.
- Real and demonstrable improvements in safety and health.
- Account being taken of workplace diversity.
- Sustainability over time.
- Transferability to other workplaces.

Entries for the awards are now being taken. Two national winners will be selected from the entries: one from organisations with less than 100 employees, and one from those organisations with 100 employees or more. The two Irish winners will then go forward to the European leg of the competition where they will be judged against

other national winners. If successful at the European stage, winners will receive their awards at a ceremony during the Irish EU Presidency in Dublin Castle in the spring of 2013.

The closing date for entries is 3 October 2012. Further details on how to enter can be found on the HSA website: [www.hsa.ie](http://www.hsa.ie), telephone the HSA on 1890 289 389 or email [annette\\_slater@hsa.ie](mailto:annette_slater@hsa.ie).

Materials for European Safety Week including various brochures, leaflets, posters etc. around the theme of '*Working together for risk prevention*' are also now available from the HSA by phoning 1890 289 389.



## Looking for a professional OHS qualification tailored to the needs of business?



**You might be considering a career in health and safety, or may be a full-time or part-time safety professional. Either way, to be effective in your role, it is vital to develop and maintain the skills and expertise that enable you to promote best practice.**

IBEC's HETAC (Level 7) Special Purpose Award Certificate and Diploma courses, which are IOSH accredited, can help you to do just that - with the added bonus that either qualification can be completed over a single academic year. Although they are rigorously grounded in theory, their key objective is to broaden your project management skills through the practical application of Health and Safety standards to the workplace. You will also obtain valuable insights into how the health and safety role can constructively interact with other functions such as human resources and operations management.

■ 10 day Certificate programme commences November 2012

■ 30 day Diploma programme commences October 2012

To book your place or to find out more please visit [www.ibectraining.ie](http://www.ibectraining.ie)

You can also speak directly to Ann Hare in our OHS team on 01 605 1527 or email us at [ohs@ibec.ie](mailto:ohs@ibec.ie)

#### TESTIMONIALS FOR THE CERTIFICATE PROGRAMME

"...a must for those "Competent Persons" in an organisation who have responsibility for the Safety Function"

John Cahill,  
Human Resource and Safety Manager, Weener Plastics

"The experience and knowledge brought by the IBEC H&S Executives instilled in me a real passion for the job we do. Attending the course has benefitted our business in many ways including reduction in insurance claims and good staff morale. Our teams know we take health and safety very seriously."

Lorraine Bedford,  
Group Health and Safety Manager, Brown Thomas Group



# International event to mark thirty years of IOSH in Ireland



Declan Gibney, chair, IOSH Ireland branch

**A one-off event featuring high profile international speakers is to mark the Institution of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH) Ireland branch's 30th anniversary.**

The international safety and health symposium 2012, on November 8 and 9 this year, will play host to key figures from health and safety related organisations, discussing new developments and Government-led changes, such as the upcoming corporate manslaughter legislation in Ireland.

## **Moving forward**

Held at Clontarf Castle, Dublin, the conference title is *'Moving forward – through innovation and leadership'* and features the director of the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work, Dr Christa Sedlatschek, as chair and keynote speaker. Among those addressing delegates are Health and Safety Authority (HSA) chief executive Martin O'Halloran, UK Health and Safety Executive (HSE) chair Judith Hackitt and George Lucas, chair of HSE Northern Ireland.

Declan Gibney, IOSH Ireland branch chair and symposium working party

member, said, "this is a landmark event for the branch, underlining 30 years of health and safety leadership from IOSH members across the country, who have made a real impact in improving the working lives of people here. We're looking forward to hearing some of the latest news from the world of health and safety and upcoming changes like the Corporate Manslaughter Act, which will impact the working lives of people in Ireland, especially those in the higher risk industries such as the rural industries, construction and manufacturing".

Founded in 1982 with just a handful of members, IOSH Ireland branch now has a membership of over 1,700 and exists to provide a hub for health and safety professionals to drive up standards in workplace health and safety, sharing best practices and new ideas.

## **OSH Person of the Year Award**

Each year, the branch also names its Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) Person of the Year Award winner, celebrating those who are thought leaders on the subject, or who have

made an outstanding personal contribution to health and safety in the workplace. Now in its fourth year, the award will be presented during the symposium on Thursday 9 November and the branch is already calling on people to nominate worthy recipients.

"This award is about recognising our health and safety heroes who go that extra mile either to develop new and better ways of protecting workers, who

have become leaders in the field, or those who've simply gone beyond the call of duty in their job to protect fellow employees. We've had some fantastic winners in past years and with the pedigree of health and safety professionals we have here in Ireland, I believe 2012 will be no different," Mr Gibney added.

For more information on the events, please visit the IOSH website: [www.iosh.co.uk](http://www.iosh.co.uk).



# Help on lone working, first aid and fire wardens

Brian O'Connor answers members' queries.



Brian O'Connor, health and safety specialist, National Irish Safety Organisation



## Question 1

**I work in the healthcare sector and very often my occupation involves lone working. There is a risk of violence and aggression in my work environment and I believe that there is a greater potential for harm due to lone working. Taking account of the risks involved, is it safe for one person to work alone in this environment?**

## Answer 1

As per the *Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005*, the employer must undertake a risk assessment of the workplace. The risk assessment will identify the potential hazards faced by

lone workers and assess the associated risks. Measures to avoid or control such risks will also be included in the risk assessment.

When assessing if it is safe for an employee to work alone, the employer must ask questions such as:

- Can one person control the risks of the job?
- Is the person medically fit and suitable to work alone?
- Is the person competent to work alone?
- Is additional training required?
- How can the person be supervised?

In order to secure the safety of lone workers, an

employer shall determine, following a risk assessment, the most appropriate controls in consultation with employees. Possible measures to minimise the risk to lone workers include:

- Provide lone workers with a client history prior to the visit including any relevant background information.
- A mode of communication such as a mobile phone.
- Periodic checks.
- Health surveillance.
- Automatic warning devices such as a panic alarm.
- Instruction and training in attitude recognition, de-escalation and break-away techniques.
- Appropriate appointment times made for new patients to avoid lone working.
- Second person in attendance when determined by the risk assessment.

For further information on lone working in healthcare, please view the publication *Guidance on Lone Working in the Healthcare Sector*. This document is available to download from the Health and Safety Authority website: [www.hsa.ie](http://www.hsa.ie).

## Question 2

**I work in a small office with five permanent staff and one part-time staff. There is no major hazard present in the workplace; in fact, the main hazard would probably be the use of display screen equipment. As it is a low risk work environment, is there a requirement for a trained occupational first aider?**

## Answer 2

It is recommended in the *Guide to the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations 2007, Chapter 2 of Part 7: First Aid* that a workplace (other than a factory, construction site, mine or quarry) with a maximum number of up to 99 employees present at any one time, provide one first aider if the safety statement and risk assessment shows it necessary.

This means you must carry out a risk assessment to decide if an occupational first aider is needed, and if so, how many should be provided. When carrying out such a risk assessment you must consider the



following factors:

- Hazards present,
- Risks involved with these hazards,
- Maximum severity posed (this could be a minor injury or permanent disability),
- Frequency and number of people that are exposed to this hazard,
- Probability that this hazard could cause harm,
- Time it would take for medical assistance to get to the workplace (the recommended number of occupational first aiders should be doubled, if the workplace is more than one hour away from medical assistance),
- Controls that are already in place,

- Additional controls required.

A risk assessment will also assist in deciding what first aid equipment should be provided.

For further information on the recommended numbers of occupational first aiders, please view the *Guide to the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations 2007, Chapter 2 of Part 7: First Aid*. This document is available to download from the Health and Safety Authority website: [www.hsa.ie](http://www.hsa.ie).

**Question 3**  
I am finding it difficult to establish the number of fire wardens required in a

workplace. Can you please tell me how many fire wardens should be provided in a building?

### Answer 3

The number of fire wardens will be dependent on the risk assessment. A risk assessment involves the identification of hazards and assessing the risks presented by these hazards.

In determining the number of fire wardens required, as per the risk assessment, you will need to consider the size of the building and the complexity of its layout.

For example, a large building with many rooms and complicated escape

routes may need to have each floor divided into sweep areas and a fire warden provided in each sweep area. However, a small building with only one floor, depending on the risk assessment, may only require one fire warden and a deputy fire warden to cover absence.

Other factors to consider in deciding the number of fire wardens required include annual leave, the nature of peoples' work as it may involve them leaving the building as part of their occupation, the number of staff in the building during operating hours and the number of assembly points.

Brian O'Connor BSc  
OSH, MSc EHS





Ted O'Keeffe, operations manager,  
National Irish Safety Organisation

### Statutory Instruments Road Traffic (Ordinary Speed Limits — Buses, Heavy Goods Vehicles, Etc.) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 (S.I. No. 75 of 2012)

These regulations, signed by the Minister for Transport, were introduced with effect from 1 April 2012 and give effect to increasing the ordinary speed limit prescribed for Heavy Goods Vehicles from 80 kilometres per hour to 90 kilometres per hour, when driven on a motorway.

**Limitation of Emissions of Volatile Organic Compounds due to the use of Organic Solvents in Certain Paints, Varnishes and Vehicle Refinishing Products (Amendment) Regulations 2012 [S.I. No. 186 of 2012].** These regulations, signed by Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government on 31 May, transpose Directive 2010/79/EU on the limitation of emissions of volatile organic compounds (VOCs). Directive 2010/79/EU amends Directive 2004/42/EC by inserting a new Annex III concerning analytical methods used to determine the VOC content of certain products

### Signals of Distress (Ships) Rules 2012 (S.I. No. 170 of 2012)

These rules, signed by the Minister for Transport on 24 May 2012, prescribe the distress signals for ships and specify the circumstances in which such signals may be used.

## New Irish legislation and resource guides April 2012 - June 2012

The above legislation can be downloaded from the NISO website: [www.niso.ie](http://www.niso.ie), under Resources/Recent Legislation.

### Public Consultation

#### Draft "Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road (ADR)"

#### A Guide for Business

The Health and Safety Authority (HSA) requests comments and observations on this draft Guide for Business. The guidance is aimed at businesses that are involved in the consignment, loading/unloading and carriage of dangerous goods by road. The closing date for receiving submissions is 5pm on Tuesday 7 August 2012. The draft Guide for Business can be downloaded from the HSA website: [www.hsa.ie](http://www.hsa.ie).

### Publications, Guides and Information

#### HSA Annual Report and Statistics 2011

The HSA has produced its Annual Report for 2011. During the year there were 32 prosecutions for health and safety breaches with penalties including five suspended sentences and €819,700 in fines imposed.

#### Summary of Workplace Injury, Illness and Fatality Statistics 2011- 2011

54 workplace fatalities were reported to the Authority 2011. It was the second year in a row that there was an increase since the lowest recorded figure of 43 fatalities in 2009. There were

6,956 non-fatal injuries reported to the Authority in 2011, a 5% decrease on the number reported in 2010.

#### HSA Programme of Work 2012

The HSA has published its priorities for 2012 in its four key areas of Workplace Compliance, Prevention Services, Chemicals and Corporate Services in addition to emphasising its six key strategic goals.

*The listed resources are available from the HSA website: [www.hsa.ie](http://www.hsa.ie).*

Readers should refer to the source legislation and guides for the complete information and not rely solely on this guide.

### LATEST STATISTICS

EMPLOYMENT SECTOR	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
A - Agriculture, forestry and fishing	13	27	29	13	22
B - Mining and quarrying	0	1	0	2	1
C - Manufacturing	0	2	2	1	6
D - Electricity; gas, steam and air conditioning supply	0	0	0	0	0
E - Water supply, sewerage, waste management and remediation activities	1	3	2	0	2
F - Construction	3	6	6	10	15
G - Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and personal goods	2	2	4	2	3
H - Transportation and storage	1	7	3	6	3
I - Accommodation and food service activities	0	1	0	1	0
J - Information and communication	0	0	0	0	0
K - Financial and insurance activities	0	0	0	0	0
L - Real estate activities	0	0	0	0	0
M- Professional, scientific and technical activities	0	2	0	1	1
N - Administrative and support service activities	0	0	0	1	0
O - Public administration and defence; compulsory social security	0	1	0	2	1
P - Education	0	0	0	2	0
Q - Human health and social work activities	0	1	1	1	0
R - Arts, entertainment and recreation	0	1	1	0	1
S - Other service activities	0	0	0	1	2
<b>Total fatalities</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>57</b>

The latest workplace fatality statistics as of 16 July 2012 show there were 20 fatalities so far this year.

Source: [www.hsa.ie](http://www.hsa.ie)

# National Irish Safety Organisation Events Diary



Please keep an eye on our website: [www.niso.ie](http://www.niso.ie), for forthcoming courses in 2012.

## 1. Courses scheduled at NISO Training Centre, Ballymount, Dublin 12

**Safety and Health at Work, D20165, FETAC Level 5**  
(Course Length: 10 weeks, Tuesdays from 2pm - 6pm, plus a 1.5 hours exam)  
Commences 9 October

**Safe Pass Course**  
(Course Length: 1 day)  
20 July / 10 August / 24 August

**Health and Safety Representation Course, L22487, FETAC Level 5**  
(Course Length: 3 days)  
17, 18, 19 September

**Manual Handling Instructor Course, 6N0233, FETAC Level 6**  
(Course Length: 5 days)  
10, 11, 12 & 17, 18 September

**VDU/DSE Assessors Course**  
(Course Length: 1 day)  
21 August

**Basic Manual Handling Course**  
(Course Length: Half day)  
29 August

## 2. Courses and events in the regions

### MIDLAND REGION

**Course: NISO Introduction to Occupational Safety and Health**  
Venue: Athlone Institute of Technology  
(Course Length: 13 weeks, Mondays for 2 hours)  
Commencing date to be confirmed  
Contact: [midland@niso.ie](mailto:midland@niso.ie)

### MIDWEST REGION

**Course: NISO Introduction to Occupational Safety and Health**  
Venue: Limerick Institute of Technology  
(Course Length: 13 weeks, Tuesdays for 2 hours)

Commencing date to be confirmed  
Contact: [midwest@niso.ie](mailto:midwest@niso.ie) or  
[www.lit.ie/LifelongLearning/Courses/](http://www.lit.ie/LifelongLearning/Courses/)

### NORTH EAST REGION

**Course: NISO Introduction to Occupational Safety and Health**  
Venue: Dundalk Institute of Technology  
(Course Length: 13 weeks, Tuesdays for 2 hours)

Commencing date to be confirmed  
Contact: [northeast@niso.ie](mailto:northeast@niso.ie)

## 3. National Events

**NISO Annual Conference and Trade Exhibition**  
Venue: Radisson Blu, Sligo  
5 October 2012

**NISO / NISG Health and Safety Awards Ceremony**  
Venue: Radisson Blu, Sligo  
5 October 2012

## 4. Safety Awards

### Small Contractor / Sub Contractor Innovation Award (NISO in association with the Construction Safety Partnership)



**Closing date for entries: Friday 3 August**

This will be awarded to a small contractor who has introduced an innovation/change to the way they operate that has made improvements to health and safety within the last three years.

For further information and to download an application form, visit the NISO website: [www.niso.ie](http://www.niso.ie)

### Safety Representative of the Year Award (NISO in association with Nifast)

**Closing date for entries: Friday 3 August**

Entries are being accepted from Safety Representatives who have made contributions that resulted in positive advances in workplace health and safety.

To nominate someone or to enter directly, please complete the entry form available from the NISO website: [www.niso.ie](http://www.niso.ie)



NISO, A11 Calmount Park, Calmount Avenue, Ballymount, Dublin 12.  
Tel: 01 465 9760 Fax: 01 465 9765 Email: [info@niso.ie](mailto:info@niso.ie) Website: [www.niso.ie](http://www.niso.ie)