

National Irish Safety Organisation

# Update!



Celebrating  
**50**  
years

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

SPRING 2014

## **New Biological Agents Code of Practice**

Safety Quiz Results

NISO AGM

National Irish Safety Organisation

# Update!

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# NISO President Reports

This time last year, I expressed concern regarding the continual reduction in the Health and Safety Authority's (HSA) budget by central Government. The HSA *Programme of Work 2014* shows a cut of 27% in the HSA's budget since 2008, this must raise grave concerns over health and safety standards in Irish workplaces.

With the promised upturn in the economy and the continual announcement of new jobs, the question must be asked has the Government funded the Authority to be proactive and ready for the promised upturn?

NISO will continue to work with the HSA in promoting a proactive culture of health and safety in the Irish workplace.

## Seminars

NISO has held a number of successful seminars and workshops in the first quarter of 2014. In February, the NISO western region hosted a farm safety seminar in both Castlebar and Loughrea, with 92 farmers in attendance. For supporting the seminar, I would like to thank Pat Griffin, HSA; Ciaran Roche, FBD; Professor Michael J. Hynes, National University of Ireland, Galway; Chris McCormack, Athlone Institute of Technology; John McNamara, Teagasc; Peter Gohery; and sponsor Aurivo Co-op. This is a perfect example of how both the voluntary and statutory organisations can promote occupational health and safety jointly.

A further round of farm safety seminars are planned for the Autumn, while health and

safety representative workshops are due to commence in the near future.

## AGM

NISO held its 22nd Annual General Meeting (AGM) on Saturday 5 April in the Hotel Westport, Westport, Co Mayo, followed by the All Ireland Safety Quiz Final. The AGM was well attended and both the president's and honorary secretary's reports reflected on the work of NISO over the last twelve months.

A report given by the honorary treasurer, Des Brandon, reported that NISO recorded a surplus of €87,478 for the year and concluded that NISO is in a sound financial standing. I would like to thank all members who attended our AGM.

At an executive committee meeting following the AGM, I was elected president for a fourth time. It is an honour to be president of this great organisation and also to be the second longest serving president in the history of NISO. I would like to thank all members for their support and dedication and I look forward to meeting you at NISO events throughout the year.

I would like to extend my congratulations to the winners and runners up of the 41st All Ireland Safety Quiz Final. This year's previous entrants winner was Bord na Mona Littleton representing the mid west region, while the runner up was Alkermes Pharma Ireland Limited representing the midland region. Winner of the novice category was Abbott Ireland Diagnostics Division, Longford, representing the midland region, while the



Pauric Corrigan, president,  
National Irish Safety Organisation

runner up was Zimmer Orthopedics Manufacturing Limited representing the mid west region.

Well done to all the teams representing the eight regions and Northern Ireland in reaching the All Ireland Safety Quiz Final. Every team was a winner in their own region. A big thanks to all who helped and supported the events on Saturday 5 April.

## Conference

I am delighted to announce that NISO and the HSA will hold a joint safety conference in 2014. The conference will take place in the Mullingar Park Hotel, Mullingar on Thursday 2 and Friday 3 October. The conference will be followed on the Friday evening by a gala dinner and safety awards presentation.

This year NISO and Northern Ireland Safety Group (NISG), in conjunction with the HSA and Health and Safety Executive Northern Ireland (HSENI), will launch a new occupational health award. The award will be based on a successful submission that demonstrates a company's proactive and functioning occupational health programme for the protection of their employees. The closing date for Awards submissions is 30 April.

# HSA Programme of Work 2014

NISO president, Pauric Corrigan, commented in the NISO Update last year that government cuts to the Health and Safety Authority's (HSA) budget will lead to a reduction in staffing and resources available to monitor, support and enforce health and safety in the Irish workplace. The impact of these cuts are now reflected in the HSA's *Programme of Work 2014*.

According to the programme of work, the HSA aim to carry out 9,120 inspections in 2014. This represents a 20% reduction in the number of inspections carried out in 2013 and a 26% reduction on the 2012 figure. The majority of inspections in 2014 will focus on agriculture (2,900) and construction (2,500). These are followed by manufacturing with 700 inspections, wholesale and retail with 550 inspections and transport and storage with 520 inspections. The Authority will also carry out cross-

sectorial inspections: 800 BeSMART Awareness inspections and 100 slips, trips and falls inspections.

In the foreword of the *Programme of Work 2014*, Martin O'Halloran, chief executive of the HSA, writes on the challenges faced by the Authority. He says the demand for services is still running at high levels but like other public sector bodies, the staff and financial resources of the HSA are reducing.

Issues with an important focus in the HSA's programme of work in 2014 include: agriculture; work related vehicle safety; healthcare; taking care of business; chemical management under the Chemicals Act; control of major accident hazards at COMAH and Sub-COMAH sites; representation of Irish interest at international and EU fora; pro-active workplace inspections; accident investigations.



The HSA *Programme of Work 2014* can be downloaded from the HSA website: [www.hsa.ie](http://www.hsa.ie).

## HSA Inspection Statistics (2008 - 2014)

2014	9,120 (target)
2013	11,350
2012	12,297
2011	13,759
2010	15,333
2009	17,430
2008	16,009

## Injuries Board process record number of claims

The Injuries Board Annual Review 2013 shows that the Board processed a record number of claims and awarded a record €243.5m in compensation payments.

The Injuries Board assesses personal injury claims and makes awards relating to motor, employer and public liability accidents, without the need for litigation. Last year, the Board delivered a direct saving of €72m on the cost of processing injury claims. This brings the estimated saving on legal and administrative costs associated with claims to approximately €1bn since the establishment of the Injuries Board in 2004.

The number of new claims received by the Injuries Board increased by 5.8% last year driven by an 8.2% increase in motor claims. According to the Boards Annual Review, the number of

personal injury awards increased by 5.1% compared to 2012 while the total value of these awards increased by 11.7%.

The Annual Review reveals that the Injuries Board:

- Received 31,311 new claims in 2013, compared to 28,962 in 2012, and 27,669 in 2011;
- Made 10,656 awards in 2013, compared to 10,136 in 2012 and 9,833 in 2011;
- Made awards with a total value of €243.5m in 2013, compared to €217.9m in 2012 and €209.8m in 2011;
- Made an average award of €22,847 in 2013, compared to €21,502 in

2012 and €21,339 in 2011;

- The average time to process a claim in 2013 was 7.4 months, compared to 7.2 months in 2012 and 2011.

Seventy-five percent of the total awards in 2013 were for motor liability claims, with the average award being €21,730. 8% of the total awards in 2013 were for employer's liability, with the average award being €28,886. Public liability claims accounted for the remaining 17% of total awards in 2013, with the average award being €25,120.

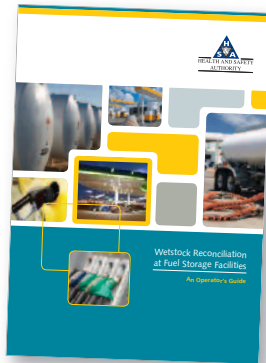
For further information on the Annual Review 2013, please view the Injuries Board website: [www.injuriesboard.ie](http://www.injuriesboard.ie).



# HSA publications

## Wetstock Reconciliation at Fuel Storage Facilities - An Operator's Guide

This best practice document on wetstock inventory control replaces the previous HSA guidance on wetstock inventory control for petrol stations and has been updated to include all types of fuel and incorporate current best practice.

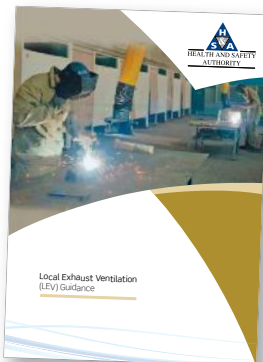


The purpose of the guidance is to assist petrol station operators to: control fuel losses on their site in order to minimise any adverse impacts on safety and the local community and environment; ensure compliance with the law, and; save costs due to fuel losses, all of which are good for business. Efficient and effective wetstock management control will facilitate operators in complying with a range of legal requirements including Mineral Oil Regulations and relevant safety and environmental legislation.

The guide includes the risks involved in wetstock management; how to calculate wetstock figures; calculating the variance trend and detecting a change in variance and; loss investigation and risk assessment.

## Local Exhaust Ventilation (LEV) Guidance

This guidance is written for employers, managers, employees and their safety representatives and those who provide, install and maintain local exhaust ventilation (LEV) systems. Suppliers must provide LEV that is fit for purpose, while employers (the LEV owner) must ensure controls are adequate. Everyone, including suppliers and users of the LEV,

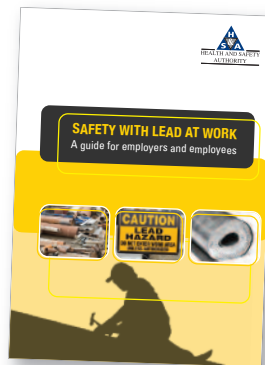


must be competent in the use of the LEV system.

The guide explains the various types of LEV, factors to consider when selecting a LEV and the information and training required for employees. The guide also outlines the importance of record keeping and the need for examining and monitoring the LEV.

## Safety with Lead at Work - A guide for employers and employees

Lead exposure is one of the oldest known occupational hazards. The two routes of entry for lead in to the body are inhalation of dusts or fumes containing lead and the ingestion (swallowing) of lead containing materials.



Lead is very toxic to the human body and prolonged or repeated exposure causes damage to the nervous system, kidneys, blood and it is suspected of causing cancer. Lead is found in many different products including rolled lead sheeting, paints, glass, solder, plastic and rubber compounds.

The guide outlines the controls to take when working with lead, the role of health surveillance and key points for both employers and employees.

## Guide to the European Union (Prevention of Sharps Injuries in the Healthcare Sector) Regulations 2014

The purpose of this guide is to provide practical information on the implementation of the European Union (Prevention of Sharps Injuries in the Healthcare Sector) Regulations 2014. The information is



aimed at employers, managers, employees, safety representatives, health and safety practitioners and other interested parties in the healthcare sector.

The regulations place duties on employers and employees to assess the risks of sharps injuries, select appropriate controls, implement those controls and have in place arrangements for accident reporting and care of an injured employee. The guide includes the three key steps in a risk assessment and the controls to eliminate or reduce the risk when using sharps.

All listed publications from the Health and Safety Authority (HSA) are available to download from the HSA website: [www.hsa.ie](http://www.hsa.ie).

## NISO and HSA Safety Conference 2014

Speaking at the National Irish Safety Organisation (NISO) AGM on 5 April, NISO president, Pauric Corrigan, announced that NISO and the Health and Safety Authority (HSA) will hold a joint safety conference in 2014.

The conference will be a day and a half event and will take place in Mullingar Park Hotel, Mullingar, Co Westmeath on Thursday 2 and Friday 3 October. According to Corrigan, "the conference demonstrates the continued strengthening of the relationship between NISO and the HSA and is just one example of how NISO can work with the Authority to promote a proactive culture of health and safety in the Irish workplace".

If you are interested in attending the first ever joint NISO and HSA safety conference, then please email your interest to [conference@niso.ie](mailto:conference@niso.ie), stating 'Conference 2014 Interest' in the subject line.

# NISO Farm Safety seminar



NISO Farm Safety seminars informs participants of the dangers posed to the farming community and practical controls to avoid/reduce the risks. The seminar, hosted by the western region of the National Irish Safety Organisation (NISO), took place in both Castlebar and Loughrea in February.

Peter Gohery, a farmer and farm accident victim, began the seminar by speaking about his own experience of a farm accident involving a PTO shaft and the impact it had on his life. It can often be very easy to overlook safety controls on the farm and this was the basis for the presentation delivered by John McNamara, national health and safety specialist at Teagasc. McNamara demonstrated how necessary safety controls can be identified for the farm by using the Agriculture Code of Practice.

Lone working and stress are issues encountered by the farming community. Chris McCormack, lecturer at Athlone Institute of Technology, told delegates to avoid lone working if possible and to ensure you are physically and mentally fit for

work before engaging with a task. Ciarán Roche, risk manager at FBD informed delegates of available tractor skills training and the FBD farm multiperil policy. He urged delegates to ensure they have employer's liability, public liability and personal accident cover and told farmers that they should display a sign saying no unauthorised entry at the entrance from public roads.

According to professor Michael J. Hynes, National University of Ireland, Galway, the information on a chemical container's label is critical for farmers. Professor Hynes told delegates the 16 headings required on a safety data sheet and displayed the hazard symbols and pictograms that accompany the chemical label. Professor Hynes also told delegates to keep chemicals in their original containers and not to pour them into smaller bottles.

The seminar was closed by Pat Griffin, senior inspector with the Health and Safety Authority (HSA), who spoke on inspection requirements and action farmers should take to ensure their farm is a safe place of work.

Resources on farm safety can be downloaded free of charge from the HSA website: [www.hsa.ie](http://www.hsa.ie).

## Workers' Memorial Day – 28 April

Protecting workers around the world through strong regulation, enforcement and union rights is the theme for Workers' Memorial Day 2014. The ICTU will this year commemorate Workers' Memorial Day with an event on 28 April at the Communications Workers Union's offices in Dublin, where a plaque will be erected in memory of workers who died at work.

Workers' Memorial Day is held every year to remember all those who have suffered or died because of their work while at the same time ensuring that such tragedies are not repeated.



# World Day for Safety and Health at Work

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) celebrates the World Day for Safety and Health at Work on 28 April to promote the prevention of occupational accidents and diseases globally. It is an awareness-raising campaign intended to focus international attention on emerging trends in the field of occupational safety and health and on the magnitude of work-related injuries, diseases and fatalities worldwide.

## Chemicals

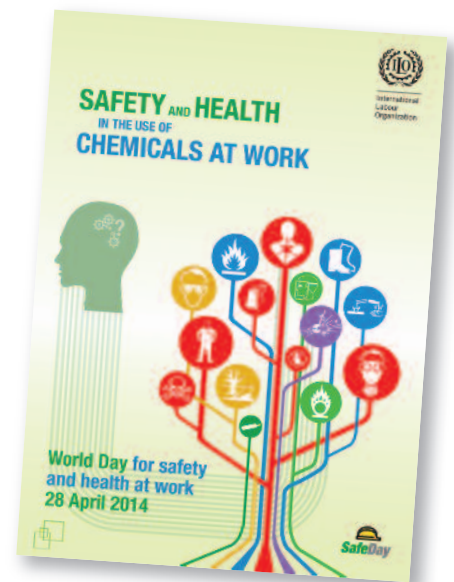
This year, the world day will focus on the safe use of chemicals at work. To promote this theme, the ILO has produced a publication titled *Safety and Health in the use of Chemicals at Work*. The publication includes the role and management of chemicals in the workplace and outlines the components of a workplace program for safety and health in the use of

chemicals. Other international and national developments in the management of chemicals are also stated in the publication, including a summary of the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS).

Activities to celebrate the World Day for Safety and Health at Work are organised in many parts of the world by national authorities, trade unions, employers' organisations and safety and health practitioners. The ILO invites all persons celebrating the world day to share with them the activities they organise.

## Resources

Information resources for the safe use of chemicals at work include the Health and Safety Authority website: [www.hsa.ie](http://www.hsa.ie), which contains guidance documents, posters and information sheets on the safe use of chemicals.



The Health and Safety Executive ([www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk)) and the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work ([www.osha.europa.eu](http://www.osha.europa.eu)) also have useful posters and other publications on the safe use of chemicals. Another source of information is the European Chemicals Agency website: [www.echa.europa.eu](http://www.echa.europa.eu).

For further information on the World Day for Safety and Health at Work, visit the International Labour Organization website: [www.ilo.org](http://www.ilo.org).

## OBITUARY

### Pat Storan – NISO President 1982-1987

The National Irish Safety Organisation (NISO) extends its sincere sympathy to Pat's wife Noreen, son Tony and daughter Jacqy on the sad occasion of his passing on Friday, 28 February 2014 at University Hospital Limerick.

I first met Pat in February 1972 when he was the chairman of the mid west region of NISO. Pat instigated the first safety and health quiz to be held in this country and I was a member of one of the first participating teams. This quiz was instrumental in bringing the topic of safety and health to employees, particularly at shop floor level, who otherwise had little or no exposure to this type of information. The quiz soon spread to other regions throughout Ireland and is still currently a national event including the participation of teams from Northern Ireland.

Later in the 1970's, Pat and some others pioneered the Safety and Health Foundation course in the mid west region. This course is still a core activity for NISO.

As President of NISO between 1982-1987, Pat played his part in helping NISO to adapt to new legislation being formulated at that time and informed NISO membership accordingly.

There's not too many of us that can say that the good we do will live after us, but in Pat's case he surely has left a fine legacy. Pat was laid to rest on Sunday 2 March, next to his beloved daughter Sally who passed away in December 2013, in the cemetery at Doonass on the river Shannon overlooking the famous falls.



*Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam dílis*

*Reflection by Bill Kelly, NISO Vice President*

# NISO AGM

Delivering the presidential address at the National Irish Safety Organisation (NISO) annual general meeting (AGM), NISO president Pauric Corrigan said that signs of improvement in the Irish economy are evident as NISO increase their membership for the first time in five years.

Mr Corrigan said that the organisation is now in a “stable financial position”. Figures were given showing that the organisation recorded a surplus of €87,478 for the year, an increase of over 24% on the 2012 surplus. NISO is represented on Health and Safety Authority (HSA) regional committees and REACH committees, on the Construction Safety Partnership, the Electro-Technical Council of Ireland (ETCI) and the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work’s Irish Focal Point.

Mr Corrigan was delighted to announce that the 2014 health and safety conference will be a joint event by NISO and the HSA. The conference will be a day and a half event and will take place on Thursday 2 and Friday 3 October at the Mullingar Park Hotel, Mullingar, Co Westmeath.

## Burden on business

Speaking at the AGM, NISO honorary secretary Harry Galvin said that NISO are finding the Government’s approach to safety related matters confusing with different arms of government following contradictory policies. On the one hand they are committed to reducing the costs on business but they are now proposing increases in the Circuit Courts and District Courts awards, which will lead not only to increased awards but also increased legal and related professional costs.

Mr Galvin went on to say that while this is happening we are seeing a reduction in the resources of the HSA and this in turn restricts their role in preventing accidents. NISO would like to see a co-ordinated approach from Government to the whole area of safety with the focus on prevention, which would lead to a major saving to the economy as well as a healthier society.

Mr Corrigan also spoke of the burden imposed on businesses due to the restructuring of courses by Quality and

Qualifications Ireland (QQI) (the QQI replaced both FETAC and HETAC in November 2012). As an example, Mr Corrigan spoke of the *FETAC Level 4, Workplace Safety* component, which initially had a credit value of one credit representing a notional 10 hours of learner effort. However, the revised component has a credit value of 10 credits which represents a notional 100 hours of learner effort.

According to Corrigan, “the workplace safety component provided an introduction to health and safety in the workplace and was aimed at reducing the burden on business. The component has been extended to 100 notional hours of learner effort thus greatly increasing the burden on businesses and the risk of new employees not receiving basic health and safety training due to increased costs for tutors and downtime for staff away on training”.

Both Mr Corrigan and Mr Galvin expressed their thanks to Martin O’Halloran and the HSA for their support during the year. They also thanked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, Richard Bruton, T.D., and his officials for their support. However, both Corrigan and Galvin expressed their disappointment that Minister Bruton, T.D., has failed to meet NISO or attend the All Ireland Safety Awards since he was appointed Minister of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation in March 2011.

## Election

At a NISO executive committee meeting following the AGM, Pauric Corrigan was re-elected president of NISO, while Bill Kelly was re-elected vice-president. Corrigan is now the second longest serving president in the history of NISO, having held the position since 2008.

## Executive Committee 2014

The NISO executive committee 2014 include:

- John O’Reilly, east region;
- John Flanagan, midland region;
- Philip Thornton, mid west region;
- Fergal McKevitt, north east region;
- John Quinn, north west region;
- Michael O’Neill, south region;
- Philip O’Keeffe, south east region;
- Pauric Corrigan (NISO president), west region;
- Harry Galvin (NISO honorary secretary);
- Bill Kelly (NISO vice-president), members nominee;
- Des Brandon (NISO honorary treasurer), members nominee;
- Catherine Hession, members nominee;
- Edel Niland, members nominee;
- Sheena Notley, Health and Safety Authority;
- Ann Murphy, Ibex Limited;
- Michael Horan, Insurance Ireland;
- Michael Dowling, Irish Congress of Trade Unions.



L to R – Harry Galvin, NISO honorary secretary; Pauric Corrigan, NISO president; Bill Kelly, NISO vice-president; Des Brandon, NISO honorary treasurer



# All Ireland Safety Quiz Finals 2014 - Results

Tipperary and Longford teams scoop the honours in the 41st All Ireland Safety Quiz Final.



*Bord na Mona Littleton, All Ireland Previous Entrants Category Winner*



*Quiz teams deliberate over a question at the All Ireland Safety Quiz Final 2014*

At the All Ireland Safety Quiz Final, held in Westport, Co Mayo on 5 April 2014, Bord na Mona Littleton and Abbott Ireland Diagnostic Division, Longford, were the overall winners in the Previous Entrants and Novice Categories respectively.

The All-Ireland Occupational Safety Quiz Finals are run jointly by the National Irish Safety Organisation (NISO) and the Northern Ireland Safety Group (NISG) and a total of 15 teams competed from all parts of the island of Ireland.

The event was a great success with a number of teams in the running for top spot right to the last round of questions.

Cllr. Myles Staunton, Leas Cathaoirleach, Westport Town Council, presented the prizes at a special prize-giving dinner that evening and praised the effort and knowledge of the participating teams and the role jointly by NISO and NISG in promoting safety on the island of Ireland.

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.

James Fenton, chairperson of the NISG thanked both the NISO and NISG for their cooperation in making the event a success.





Abbott Ireland Diagnostics Division, Longford, All Ireland Novice Category Winner



Alkermes Pharma Ireland Limited, All Ireland Previous Entrants Category Runner-Up



Zimmer Orthopedics Manufacturing Limited, All Ireland Novice Category Runner-Up

Martin O'Halloran, chief executive officer of the Health and Safety Authority, also congratulated teams on their success but reminded attendees of the 47 lives lost due to workplace accidents in 2013 and that we all have a responsibility to maintain safety and health in the workplace.

For further information on the safety quiz final, view the NISO website: [www.niso.ie](http://www.niso.ie).

### Previous Entrants Category Winners

**1st Place:** Bord na Mona Littleton (representing the mid west region)

**2nd Place:** Alkermes Pharma Ireland Limited (representing the midland region)

**3rd Place:** SSE Generation Ireland Limited (representing the south east region)

### Novice Category Winners

**1st Place:** Abbott Ireland Diagnostics Division, Longford (representing the midland region)

**2nd Place:** Zimmer Orthopedics Manufacturing Limited (representing the mid west region)

**3rd Place:** AbbVie Ireland NL BV (representing the north west region)

### Other participating teams were:

#### Previous Entrants Category Teams

Abbott Ireland Diagnostics Division, Sligo (representing the north west region)

Abbott Ireland Nutritional Division (representing the north east region)

Cagney Contract Cleaning (representing the east region)

Cold Chon (Galway) Ltd. (representing the west region)

Ulster Carpets Ltd. (representing Northern Ireland)

### Novice Category Teams

Abbott Ireland Nutritional Division (representing the north east region)

Helsinn Birex Pharmaceuticals Ltd. (representing the east region)

Lagan Construction Ltd. (representing Northern Ireland)

Thermo King Ireland Limited, Ingersoll Rand Climate Solutions (representing the west region)

# HSA Publish New Biological Agents Code of Practice

Nicholas de Paor, inspector with the occupational hygiene unit of the Health and Safety Authority (HSA), writes about the Authority's new code of practice for biological agents.



Biological agents (bacteria, viruses, etc.) are found virtually everywhere in the natural environment and are a major part of life and the ecology of the planet. However, certain biological agents can cause harm (i.e. are pathogenic) – either by causing disease, by causing allergy or by producing toxins which are harmful.

There are two aspects of exposure at work to biological agents: (1) they are intentionally worked with, as in a microbiological laboratory or medical research; or (2) incidental exposure may occur as a result of the kind of work done, such as farming, refuse disposal or work with products of animal origin, e.g. food production.

The health effects vary for different agents so the biological agents have been classified into four groups by the World Health Organisation and these classifications have been adopted worldwide by various bodies, including the EU through the Biological Agents Directive. The classification system is based on the relative risk of the biological agent causing disease in humans:

- The severity of the disease caused,
- The ease with which that disease may spread,
- The availability of effective treatments or preventative measures.

The four groups defined in Regulation 2 of the Regulations are:

1. Group 1 biological agent presents no or low individual or community risk. Effectively outside of the scope of the regulations although there is a requirement to have good hygienic procedures.

2. Group 2 biological agent presents moderate individual risk, low community risk e.g. *Legionella pneumophila* which can cause Legionnaires' Disease.
3. Group 3 biological agent presents high individual risk, low community risk (can be treated) e.g. Tuberculosis.
4. Group 4 biological agent (e.g. the Ebola Virus) presents a high individual and high community risk (highly infectious and no known treatment).

## Purpose of the Biological Agents Regulations

The purpose of the regulations is to protect workers from the risks related to exposure to biological agents at work. Biological agents are grouped under bacteria, fungi, helminths, prions, protozoa and viruses.

The 2013 regulations set down obligations on employers regarding the determination and assessment of risk of hazardous biological agents; the prevention and control of exposure to hazardous biological agents; specific protection and prevention measures; arrangements to deal with accidents, incidents and emergencies; information, training and consultation; health surveillance; record keeping, and notification requirements to the HSA; together with duties for employees.

## Code of Practice

The lists of biological agents, with their classification, related minimum containment measures and possible dispensations are now placed in a code of practice. The code of practice specifies three containment levels which

correspond to hazard groups 2, 3 and 4.

The code of practice will be regularly updated, having regard to the latest and most up to date scientific information. For example, since publication of the 2000 Directive and its Annex of agents, the UK HSE Advisory Committee on Dangerous Pathogens has updated its list in 2004 and added a number of new agents – e.g. the causative agent of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) has been added in Hazard Group 3. This will ensure employers have access to up-to-date information and classification.

## Guidelines

The Authority is also publishing guidelines in the coming weeks providing detailed advice on all aspects of the regulations and its related code of practice. The guidelines will include advice on common occupational infections, risk assessment checklists, fumigation, emergency plans, PPE and notification to the Authority.

## Who is Affected by the Regulations?

Employers/employees who are or are not deliberately working with micro-organisms (biological agents) could, through their work, become infected by a pathogen.

A key question to consider is if employees are in direct contact with humans. Besides healthcare staff, this could include:

- carers,
- minders,
- hospitality staff,
- beauticians,
- leisure employees.

Contact with animals should also be





considered. Employees working with animals may contract a disease or develop an allergy, for example, the fungal infection ringworm from farm animals or allergic alveolitis such as farmers' lung. Employee types could include:

- farmers and their employees,
- vets,
- zookeepers,
- employers/employees involved with bloodstock,
- animal wardens,
- gamekeepers or those involved in hunting etc. as an occupation,
- animal trainers,
- pet-shop employers/employees,
- sports-grounds keepers.

Also, contact with soil or plant materials is an important factor. Soil can be a reservoir of many pathogens (e.g. tetanus – caused by *Clostridium tetani*) and it can also be contaminated by the excrement and urine of various animals, both wild and domestic (rat urine – leptospirosis). This could include:

- farmers (their employees and many on the animal contact list above),

- gardeners,
- mushroom growers,
- foresters,
- construction employees.

Activities to which the Biological Agents Regulations can also apply to work in:

- food production plants,
- biotechnology (including the production of biopharmaceutical products),
- health professionals (hospital staff, etc.),
- health care (including isolation and post mortem units, funeral and cremation undertakings),
- research, clinical, veterinary and diagnostic laboratories,
- refuse disposal plants,
- sewage purification installations,
- academia.

For further information on the Biological Agents Regulations and the related code of practice, contact the Workplace Contact Unit of the HSA at 1890 289 389, email: [wcu@hsa.ie](mailto:wcu@hsa.ie) or visit the HSA website: [www.hsa.ie](http://www.hsa.ie).



## NISO & HSA Conference 2014

Ireland's premier health and safety conference for safety professionals and business leaders.

**Thursday 2 & Friday 3 October,  
Mullingar Park Hotel,  
Mullingar, Co Westmeath**

The conference will offer delegates an insight into current topical issues, which will be addressed by a panel of renowned national and international speakers.

**To register your interest in conference 2014, email [conference@niso.ie](mailto:conference@niso.ie) specifying "Conference 2014 Interest" in the subject line.**

# IOSH Launches Lif€ Savings Ireland Campaign

The Institution of Occupational Safety and Health, IOSH, launched its Lif€ Savings Ireland campaign at Dublin Castle on 12 February, in a bid to help Irish employers beef up their safety programs.

I was very proud to be a part of the initiative and to speak at the prestigious occasion. As I said at the time, in my view, businesses are missing the obvious with health and safety. Let me explain: when you operate in a global market-place and you are trying to stay competitive, a happy, healthy workforce is a driver for growth.

Quite frankly, it's wrong for ministers and business leaders to talk about health and safety as 'red tape' and a burden on business. When done properly and proportionately, health and safety is essential to a business's long-term prospects for survival in our economy. I also think that as well as the primary aim of saving people's lives and livelihoods, good occupational health and safety can also deliver vital cost savings and help a business to grow.

The Lif€ Savings Ireland campaign aims to help businesses get the most out of their health and safety management. It will help IOSH members working in Irish organisations to get the most out of their budgets and cut corporate spending, and to have Ireland's government take action.

According to research, the Irish economy is losing €3.2 billion per year and the cost of health and safety failures per worker in Ireland is €1,711 because of workplace injuries and illnesses, which are

resulting in a million lost working days per year.

Certainly, our government has been seeking to make the case that good health and safety represents good business and we know that Richard Bruton, T.D., Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, supports that notion. Indeed, when we filmed him for a promotional video prior to the launch, he said that IOSH's initiative "falls in line with what we are seeking Irish business to do".

However, do not think that this campaign is all academic. Far from it; at IOSH, we have cited a good few case studies of how health and safety can save cash. One of the most remarkable examples is that of Cork based Janssen Pharmaceutical, part of Johnson & Johnson. It reported to us that €2 million was saved in addition to reducing safety risk to employees during the upgrade of the company's powder handling facility. Design improvements resulted in a significantly reduced risk of ergonomic issues, superior manual handling facilities, the elimination of cleaning at heights, and changes in the assembly and disassembly of heavy equipment.

Other cases in point highlighted by us include Killarney Telecommunications in Naas, which saved €31,000 in one year and Integrated Communications, based in

Carlow, which recorded savings of €150,000 in two years as a result of investing in health and safety.

We want to add to the number of case studies and continue to prove the point that good health and safety management saves our economy money, boosts productivity and increases efficiencies. Therefore, if you have implemented a health and safety initiative which has resulted in cash savings, then please email: [campaigns@iosh.co.uk](mailto:campaigns@iosh.co.uk).

Finally, I urge Irish businesses to look at IOSH's Lif€ Savings campaign and integrate it into their business plans for 2014 and well beyond. And for safety professionals to use the free resources to help make the business case for health and safety in your own



Michelle Peate-Morgan, chair, IOSH Ireland

organisation, and to spread the campaign message by, for example, promoting it at your company's 'Safety Week' or through introducing a competition to find the best 'safety savings' idea at your IOSH Ireland branch district.

Through the Lif€ Savings campaign we can help protect both people as well as profits.

For further information on the campaign please visit: [www.iosh.co.uk/lifesavingsireland](http://www.iosh.co.uk/lifesavingsireland) and.





# Help on PPE, safe pass and permit to work

Brian O'Connor answers members' queries.

## QUESTION 1

**Is an employee ever liable for the payment of personal protective equipment?**

## ANSWER 1

Under section 8(5) of the *Safety Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005*, no charge may be made to a worker for the provision of personal protective equipment (PPE) that is used at work.

However, as the *Guide to the Safety Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations 2007, Chapter 3 of Part 2: Personal Protective Equipment* explains, where an employee no longer works for the company but has retained the PPE, the employer may seek a contribution from the employee to the extent of any loss to the employer resulting

from the retention of the PPE.

Where PPE is used outside the place of work, an employer may request the employee involved to make a contribution towards the cost of the PPE to the extent of any loss to the employer resulting from the use of the PPE outside the place of work. Also, if a worker is self-employed then employers may charge the worker for PPE.

If an employee wishes to upgrade to a more expensive item of PPE, a more fashionable brand, for example, then the employer and employee may enter into an agreement whereby the employee makes up the difference between the cost of the original item of PPE and that of the more expensive

item, assuming they both give the same level of protection within the workplace.

For further information on this topic please refer to the *Guide to the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations 2007 Chapter 3 of Part 2: Personal Protective Equipment*. This can be downloaded from the HSA website: [www.hsa.ie](http://www.hsa.ie).

## QUESTION 2

**Is it a requirement that every person on a construction site must possess a safe pass awareness card?**

## ANSWER 2

As per regulation 4 of the *Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Construction)*



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

*Regulations 2013*, the safety awareness scheme applies to craft and general construction workers, persons undertaking on-site security work and persons or classes of persons as may be prescribed by the Minister.

The Health and Safety Authority in conjunction with the Construction Advisory Committee have developed a summary of the categories of



persons to whom safe pass does and does not apply. The summary checklist states that the following require safe pass or equivalent: craft workers; apprentices; general construction workers; working chargehands; on-site security workers; contractors' drivers on site; delivery drivers on-site such as concrete trucks; students on placement on site.

Safe pass or equivalent is not mandatory for the following: delivery drivers not on-site such as deliveries to canteens or offices; canteen staff; site office staff; architects, surveyors and engineers; project managers/site agents not involved in construction activities; site managers not involved in construction activities; safety advisors or safety officers not involved in construction work; PSDS and PSCS; inspectors and consultants; clients and client representatives; supervised visitors; sales representatives and visitors to show houses. Archaeologists, strictly speaking, are not construction workers and, as such, are not required by the construction regulations to have a safe pass. However, given that much of the work they do is in a construction type environment, it is appropriate that the employer

assess the work to be undertaken on a site-specific basis and consider whether safe pass is necessary.

As per the *Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Construction) Regulations 2013*, the safety awareness scheme does not apply to a person involved in the installation, commissioning, maintenance, repair or removal of mechanical, electrical, gas, compressed air, hydraulic, telecommunication and computer systems, or similar services, where:

- (a) the person is normally domiciled outside the State,
- (b) the person's normal place of employment is outside the State, and
- (c) the person has not been working on the project for a period in excess of 20 working days in any 12 month period.

If the above applies and the person does not possess a safety awareness scheme registration card, then this person must be in possession of a letter in the English or Irish language from the relevant employer, which:

- (a) describes the work to be undertaken,
- (b) states the competence of the person to undertake

- that work, and
- (c) specifies the commencement date and the anticipated completion date of that work.

For further information on safe pass training, view the SOLAS website: [www.solas.ie](http://www.solas.ie) or phone 01 607 0500.

### QUESTION 3

**What information should be contained in a permit to work? Also, how long should a permit to work be kept on file?**

### ANSWER 3

The essential components of a permit to work system include:

- a written procedure that sets out how the system is to operate and clearly defines who may authorise particular jobs and who is responsible for specifying and implementing the necessary precautions,
- a permit to work form, which becomes a written and signed statement ensuring both the establishment of safe conditions for the work to commence and the maintenance of safe conditions for the

duration of the work, including the provision of emergency arrangements,

- a method of informing the persons carrying out the work of the exact identity, location, nature and extent of the job, the hazards involved and the precautions to be taken,
- a system for ensuring the safe hand-back of the workplace after the job is completed and, in the case of confined space entry, after the space is vacated.

The term work permit is not specifically used in Irish legislation and therefore no specific requirement is given for the keeping of records. These terms are normally used internally within industry. However, it is advisable to retain records for a period of time after the works are complete, as this will provide evidence of good work practices.

For further information on the contents of a permit to work system and to view a sample permit to work form, please visit the Health and Safety Authority (HSA) website: [www.hsa.ie](http://www.hsa.ie).

*Brian O'Connor  
BSc OSH, MSc EHS*



## Sponsorship and advertising opportunities are available

For further information,  
please contact  
**Ted O'Keeffe** [tokeeffe@niso.ie](mailto:tokeeffe@niso.ie)  
or phone 01 465 9760



# New Irish legislation and Code of Practice January 2014 - April 2014

## Statutory Instruments

### Petroleum Safety (Petroleum Incident) Regulations 2014

A petroleum undertaking(s) shall notify the Commission for Energy Regulation of a petroleum incident in writing. In addition, in the case of a petroleum incident resulting in the loss of a human life, or as a result of which persons are missing, the petroleum undertaking(s) shall supply the Commission by the quickest practicable means with the name of the deceased or missing person(s), brief particulars and the location of the petroleum incident. These regulations came into operation on 13 January 2014.

### Building Control (Amendment) Regulations 2014

These regulations revoke and replace S.I. No. 80 of 2013. The key changes include:

- changes to the wording of the statutory certificates in the interests of the insurability of persons giving the certificates, and
- changes to recognise the online building control management system as the preferred means of building control administration.

The regulations strengthen the current arrangements in place for the control of building activity by requiring greater accountability in relation to compliance with building regulations in the form of:

- statutory certification of design and construction,
- lodgement of compliance documentation,
- mandatory inspections during construction, and
- validation and registration of certificates.

These regulations came into operation on 1 March 2014.

### Liquefied Petroleum Gas Safety (Liquefied Petroleum Gas Incident) Regulations 2014

This regulation prescribes the classes of event or occurrence that

are a liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) incident. The following is prescribed as a class of event or occurrence that is a LPG incident:

- (a) the death of any person,
- (b) injury to any person which requires medical attention to be given to such person in hospital other than as an outpatient, or
- (c) loss or damage to any building, land or other property, where in the opinion of the LPG undertaking concerned the aggregate value of such loss or damage is in excess of €6,500, resulting from the use, misuse, abuse, leakage, combustion or explosion of LPG.

These regulations came into operation on 31 March 2014.

### Liquefied Petroleum Gas Safety (Liquefied Petroleum Gas Incident Reporting and Investigation) Regulations 2014

This regulation provides for the reporting of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) incidents by LPG undertakings that made, or may have made, available to a domestic or commercial final

customer the LPG involved in the LPG incident concerned. It also provides for the investigation of LPG incidents by a gas safety officer appointed by the Commission for Energy Regulation. These regulations came into operation on 31 March 2014.

### Building Control (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations 2014

These regulations provide for alternative but equivalent means of complying with the requirements under the Building Control Regulations 1997 to 2014 to assign a person to inspect and certify the works (the Assigned Certifier) in line with a plan lodged at commencement and implemented during construction.

The alternative means of compliance applies to a limited range of public and privately owned buildings classified as first, second or third level places of education; hospitals or primary care centres. The alternative means of compliance applies only to projects subject to each of the following circumstances:

- (i) planning permission, where applicable, has been obtained before 1 March 2014,
- (ii) contract documents have been signed before 1 November 2014, and
- (iii) a valid commencement notice has been lodged with the building control authority no later than 1 March 2015.

These regulations came into operation on 1 March 2014.

## Code of Practice

### 2013 Code of Practice for the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Biological Agents) Regulations 2013

This Code of Practice contains the approved list of biological agents and their classifications, the containment levels, minimum containment measures and the dispensations from minimum containment measures. Further information on the Biological Agents Regulations and related code of practice can be found on page 10 of this edition of the NISO Update.

This code of practice came into effect on 20 December 2013.

## Latest Statistics

The latest workplace fatality statistics as of 11 April 2014 show there were 13 workplace fatalities so far this year.

EMPLOYMENT SECTOR	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010
A - Agriculture, forestry and fishing	6	20	28	27	29
B - Mining and quarrying	0	2	1	1	0
C - Manufacturing	2	1	0	2	2
D - Electricity; gas, steam and air conditioning supply	0	1	0	0	0
E - Water supply, sewerage, waste management and remediation activities	0	1	4	3	2
F - Construction	2	11	8	6	6
G - Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and personal goods	2	3	3	2	4
H - Transportation and storage	0	4	1	7	3
I - Accommodation and food service activities	0	0	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	1	1	2	0
N - Administrative and support service activities	1	0	1	0	0
O - Public administration and defence; compulsory social security	0	0	0	1	0
P - Education	0	1	0	0	0
Q - Human health and social work activities	0	0	1	1	1
R - Arts, entertainment and recreation	0	0	0	1	1
S - Other service activities	0	1	0	0	0
<b>Total fatalities</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>48</b>

Source: 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 2014.



Celebrating  
**50**  
years

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

### Safe Pass Course

(Course Length: 1 day)  
25 April / 9 May / 23 May

### Basic Manual Handling Course

(Course Length: Half day)  
30 April

### Health and Safety Representation Course, L22487, FETAC Level 5

(Course Length: 3 days)  
12, 13, 14 May

### Manual Handling Instructor and Assessor Course, 6N0233, FETAC Level 6

(Course Length: 3 days)  
19, 20, 21 & 26, 27 May

### VDU/DSE Assessors Course

(Course Length: 1 day)  
9 June

## 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: September

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, Mondays for 2 hours)

Commencing: September

Contact:

[www.lit.ie/LifelongLearning/Courses](http://www.lit.ie/LifelongLearning/Courses)

## 3. National Events

### NISO and HSA Safety Conference and Trade Exhibition

Venue: Mullingar Park Hotel, Mullingar, Co Westmeath  
2 and 3 October 2014

### NISO and NISG Health and Safety Awards Ceremony

Venue: Mullingar Park Hotel, Mullingar, Co Westmeath  
3 October 2014

## 4. All Ireland Safety Awards

### All Ireland Safety Awards Entries Deadline

30 April

For further information, please visit:  
[www.safetyawards.ie](http://www.safetyawards.ie)



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