

National Irish Safety Organisation

# Update!



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

WINTER 2021

# *29<sup>th</sup>* ANNUAL Occupational Health and Safety Awards 2020

*Increasing Safety Performance*

National Irish Safety Organisation

# Update!

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**Editorial enquiries to:** The Editor, 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)

**Design & Print:** Print Bureau Tel: 01 4733 567 [www.printbureau.ie](http://www.printbureau.ie)

## President's Message

### A difficult start to 2021

With the COVID-19 pandemic still impacting on all aspects of our daily lives we are hopeful that with the commencement of the vaccine programme there is light after what has been a very difficult year.

### Historic Safety Awards

The All Ireland Occupational Safety Awards 2020 can claim a number of firsts in the 29-year history of the Awards Scheme. For the first time the Award winners were announced in an online Awards Ceremony which took place on 22 January 2021. Also for the first time in Safety Award history we had an organisation win the Supreme Award two years in succession! Congratulations to PM Group for making Safety Award history and for also picking up an Exceptional High Achiever Award, a great achievement.

My congratulations also to the other winners in particular Designer Group, winner of the Gold Award and Exceptional High Achiever Award; Actavo, winner of the Silver Award and Excellence in Safety Award and Weltec Engineering Ltd., winner of the Bronze Award and Consistent High Achiever Award.

Well done also to the Safety Representative of the Year Award Joint Runners Up, John White and Trevor Johnston, both Patrol Technicians with AA Ireland and the winner of the Safety Representative of the Year Award Margaret Murphy, PricewaterhouseCoopers - Cork Office.

The Driving for Work Award went to KD Group for the second year in a row and the Occupational Health Award, sponsored by the Health and Safety Authority and the Health and Safety Executive for Northern Ireland, went to Joint Winners, Kiernan Structural Steel Limited, who won the award last year, and Vision Contracting Ltd. The winner of Healthy Workplace Award, sponsored by Healthy Ireland, was Alexion Ireland.

I wish to congratulate all the organisations who entered the Awards Scheme for their commitment to the highest standards of health and safety and we look forward to the 2021 Awards and hopefully a return to our awards presentation dinner. We will be holding the 2021 Awards Workshops soon so watch out for notices from us regarding these workshops.

### Upcoming Events

We continue to hold our safety education courses and workshops in accordance with Government Guidelines related to COVID-19 with a lot more online training taking place.

At the time of writing this we are hopeful that we will be in a position to hold the Regional and All Ireland Safety quizzes. It is likely that these events will take place a little later than



*Harry Galvin, president, National Irish Safety Organisation*

normal. We will advise on dates and arrangements as soon as we have a clear understanding of Government Guidelines related to COVID-19.

It is also likely that our AGM will be held mid-year rather than in April as has been the norm in recent years.

With so much publicity focusing on the pandemic, we should not forget the other areas of health and safety and our prevention efforts in these areas. Accidents, injuries and fatalities are still happening in our regular working environment. Slips, trips, falls and machinery related incidents etc. are still taking place. COVID-19 is just another issue safety managers need to deal with in addition to the normal everyday safety prevention tasks.

*Harry Galvin, President, NISO*





# New COVID-19 Regulations and Code of Practice



The Tánaiste and Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment, Leo Varadkar TD, has signed into law new regulations and a Code of Practice to protect workers exposed to COVID-19 in the workplace.

The new Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Biological Agents) (Amendment) Regulations 2020 and Code of Practice for the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Biological Agents) Regulations 2013-2020, place a number of additional obligations on employers to ensure workers in COVID-19 risk environments are kept safe.

The Tánaiste Leo Varadkar TD said: “We have all made huge sacrifices to limit the spread of the virus, but none so much as our healthcare workers and those that work in our labs, processing tests and researching the virus. These new regulations are designed to put in place even more protections for workers who are employed in those settings to make sure we are doing everything we can to keep them safe. The new Code of Practice will provide clarity to all in dealing with biological agents in the workplace.”

The regulations introduce a number of requirements on employers in relation to COVID-19. Currently, COVID-19 is a reportable disease to the Government through the Department of Health and all cases have to be notified by law. These new regulations make it mandatory to also report a case of occupational exposure in the workplace to the Health and Safety Authority (HSA).

Occupational exposure can result from deliberate work with the virus such as in a research laboratory setting or can occur incidentally from other specific work activities with the virus e.g. working with a COVID-19 patient, handling infected waste or carrying out diagnostic testing in a laboratory.

An employer is also required to carry out a biological agents risk assessment, where work activities involve working with the virus. Other requirements, such as implementing protective measures, keeping exposure lists and making appropriate health surveillance available, may also be required depending on the outcome of this risk assessment.

The Code of Practice also sets out specific measures for laboratories conducting diagnostic testing or non-

propagative research and development in respect of COVID-19 samples. It allows a dispensation for certain work, subject to risk assessment, to be conducted at a lower containment level (containment level 2), where appropriate and safe to do so.

The Health and Safety Authority is currently in the process of completing a regulatory impact assessment on a proposal to introduce a legislative requirement for all employers to report cases of COVID-19 to the Authority.

The Biological Agents Regulations and Code of Practice give legal effect in Ireland to two European Directives – EU Directive 2019/1833 and EU Directive 2020/739. These Directives amend and update the EU Biological Agents Directive 2000/54/EC aimed at protecting workers from exposure to biological agents in the workplace.

The Regulations are available at [enterprise.gov.ie/en/Legislation/SI-No-539-of-2020.html](https://enterprise.gov.ie/en/Legislation/SI-No-539-of-2020.html) and the Code of Practice is available at [hsa.ie/eng/Publications\\_and\\_Forms/Publications/Codes\\_of\\_Practice/biological\\_agents\\_code\\_of\\_practice\\_2020.93153.shortcut.html](https://hsa.ie/eng/Publications_and_Forms/Publications/Codes_of_Practice/biological_agents_code_of_practice_2020.93153.shortcut.html)

*Source: enterprise.gov.ie*

# Farm Safety Message for 2021

The significant number of fatalities on Irish farms in 2020 as a result of workplace incidents has been highlighted in a New Year's message to farmers from Minister of State at the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Martin Heydon.

There were 19 fatal incidents on farms in 2020, with three of these being children under the age of 18, and nine being farmers aged 65 or more.

This follows 25 fatalities in 2017, 15 in 2018 and 19 in 2019.

Commenting on these grim statistics, Minister Heydon – a farmer himself and minister with responsibility for farm safety – said:

“The level of safety incidents, many of them fatal, we are seeing on farms across the country is unacceptably high. Farming accounts for nearly 50% of all workplace fatal incidents, despite accounting for only 6% of the workforce. That's why today I am appealing to everyone, as they wish farmers a Happy New Year, to also take the time to ask them to be safe on their farm in 2021.”

“2021 needs to be the year when farmers put their own safety first; we cannot continue to see the level of fatalities we have seen in recent years. Two-hundred and forty people tragically lost their lives on farms between 2010 and 2019 – and this is simply not acceptable. As the first ever minister to be given specific responsibility for farm safety, I am working to ensure that safety is at the heart of everything we do on our farms



and I am determined to deliver lasting change that will drive down the current level of safety incidents.”

Noting the launch in recent months of a number of initiatives “that will hopefully help to deliver this change”, Minister Heydon said:

“The new Accelerated Capital Allowance (ACA) scheme, which I brought forward together with Minister [for Finance Paschal] Donohoe, will make essential farm safety investments more accessible to farmers. Additionally, my new call for proposals under the Innovation Partnership (EIP) model, will fund a number of community-led farm safety projects that will hopefully deliver some new

and innovative solutions.

“2021 will be an important year for farm safety with around 50,000 farmers set to receive vital safety training, and the revised HSA [Health and Safety Authority] Farm Safety Partnership Advisory Committee and its new Working Groups are now in place. I plan to build on the momentum of recent months by working closely with farmers to deliver the needed initiatives that can make a real difference to safety on our farms.”

Minister Heydon concluded by wishing farmers around the country a happy and safe new year.

*Source: agriland.ie*

## HSA Annual Statistics review for 2018–19 released

The Health and Safety Authority has released its Annual Review of Workplace Injury, Illness and Fatality for 2018–19.

Key points include:

- There were 47 fatal work-related accidents were reported to the Authority in 2019, representing a substantial increase from 2018, which was the lowest year on record with 39 fatal accidents.
- Agriculture, which accounted for 19 of the 47 deaths, remains the most dangerous sector in which to work, with the evidence suggesting that older farmers are most at risk.
- The number of fatalities in the construction sector more than doubled in 2019.
- The number of work-related non-fatal injuries also increased in 2019, with 9,335 reported to the Authority.
- Manual handling leading to internal injuries was the most common cause of workplace accidents in 2019, representing almost a third (29%) of all non-fatal accidents reported to the Authority.
- Slips or falls were the second most common at 24%.

- The workforce is getting older which is presenting new challenges. Of the 47 fatal accidents in 2019, 16 (34%) were aged over 65. This age group was particularly prominent in the Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing sector, where 13 (59%) of the fatal accidents reported occurred to victims aged 65 years or more.
- In 2019, the Authority hosted a summit on the Future of Workers and Work, which looked at the challenges and opportunities that new ways of working present for workers and employers. The ageing workforce was highlighted as a particular group requiring focus in the workplace now and in the future.
- The Authority urges all employers to implement tailored health and safety policies designed with the unique requirements of older workers in mind, and also stresses that people must also recognise their own limitations as they age which may affect their ability to work.
- One area that saw improvements in 2018 was the number of work days lost to work-related non-fatal injuries. This decreased by 13%, from 709,544 in the five-year average for 2014-2018 to 620,800 in 2018, with men more likely to be

absent from work as a result of injury compared to women.

- In 2018, there were 9.4 non-fatal injuries leading to four or more days absence from work for every 1,000 male workers compared with 6.5 per 1,000 female workers.

Source:  
shponline.co.uk and hsa.ie



## HSA release its 2019 Annual Report

The Health and Safety Authority (HSA) has released its Annual Report for 2019.

The report outlines all the HSA's activities during 2019 across its 5 "Strategic Priorities", namely:

1. Regulate;
2. Promote;
3. Accredit;
4. Influence;
5. How We Work.

Here are some of the key regulation and enforcement figures for 2019 from the report:

### 9,270 inspections completed in 2019

- 1,032 investigations were completed following accidents or complaints to the HSA which included 53 in agriculture, 298 in construction and 38 in healthcare.
- 68% of investigations and inspections resulted in some form of enforcement action
- 992 improvement or contravention notices issued
- 21 prosecutions taken (10 on indictment and 11 summarily)
- 11 fines were imposed at a total of €938,000

The first custodial sentence for a breach of occupational health and safety was also handed down although on appeal the custodial element was removed and the accused was ordered to pay €300 to the RNLI.

### Inspections

The HSA carried out 4,269 inspections in the construction sector, 1,684 inspections in the farming sector, 575 in the transport and storage sector and 182 in the health and social care sectors.

In construction, inspections focused on machinery and vehicle risks, occupational health (manual handling and chemical exposure) and working at height. 242 inspections addressed chemical agents in the workplace, with 40% focusing on respiratory and skin sensitisers. 74% of workplaces inspected had completed an adequate chemical agent risk assessment. In agriculture, inspections focused on tractors and machinery, livestock handling and working at height.

A specific docks campaign was completed in response to the high numbers of fatalities in the period 2018–2019. The 76 inspections focused on the management of health and safety during vehicle movements in docks and port areas.

### Chemicals

The HSA assessed 337 chemical products on the Irish market for compliance and focussed mostly on mixtures, in particular, detergents, paint and construction-related products. Twenty-six assessments for compliance with CLP requirements were undertaken on chemical products



sold online which mainly included DIY and construction stores and auto maintenance stores.

### Education

The HSA reports that 32,210 online courses were completed in 2019, which was a 38.5% increase in the use of [hsalearning.ie](https://hsalearning.ie) from 2018.

There were 66,296 cumulative users of BeSMART, 9,967 of whom were new users in 2019. Users prepared 11,018 safety statements using the tool.

The report gives a detailed breakdown of all the HSA's activities across all its strategic priorities throughout 2019. Access the HSA's Annual Report 2019 here: [https://www.hsa.ie/eng/publications\\_and\\_forms/publications/corporate/hsa-annual-report-2019.pdf](https://www.hsa.ie/eng/publications_and_forms/publications/corporate/hsa-annual-report-2019.pdf)



# HSA releases Programme of Work for 2021



The HSA has released its Programme of Work for 2021. This is the third and final year for implementation of the HSA's Strategy Statement for 2019–21.

COVID-19, Brexit and Priority Sectors (agriculture, construction and health and social care) are listed among the HSA's main areas of focus for 2021.

Some of the key elements of the Programme of Work 2021 include:

## COVID-19

- **Legislation:** Complete legislative development process for the Board proposal to amend the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) (Amendment) (No. 3) Regulations 2016 to introduce a requirement for employers to report cases of COVID-19 that are attributable to work activity to the Authority.
- **Inspections:** Undertake inspections and investigations in key sectors impacted by the Biological Agents Regulations and Code of Practice. Continue checking compliance against the COVID-19 Work Safely Protocol.
- **Promotion:** The HSA will continue to support employers and employees with guidance, advice and supports, with a particular emphasis on supports to address ergonomic and psychosocial hazards, in response to the unprecedented number of people working from home as a result of COVID-19.

- **Recruitment:** Undertake an intensive recruitment campaign to rapidly increase the number of field and policy inspectors available to the Authority

Other key actions and priorities outlined for 2021 include:

- **Health and Social Care:** The completion of a national inspection programme in health and social care settings with a focus on compliance with occupational health and safety requirements for the protection of employees from exposure to COVID-19 in the workplace.
- **Construction:** Continue to monitor compliance with OSH Regulations and complete a programme of occupational health inspections in relation to musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) and carcinogens.
- **Agriculture:** Complete three proactive inspection campaigns covering high risks on farms covering:
  - livestock handling,
  - tractor and farm machinery operations and maintenance, and
  - construction of, and the maintenance of, farm buildings.
- **Legislation:**
  - Complete legislative development process for the update of the Code of Practice for Industrial Lift Trucks.
  - Update the Code of Practice for the Chemical Agent &

Carcinogens Regulations to include occupational exposure limit values from the 5th EU Indicative list (EU) 2019/1831.

- **Remote working:** Support DETE in the development and implementation of a National Remote Working Strategy under the Future of Jobs programme.

The HSA's long-term vision to enable "healthy, safe and productive lives and enterprises" is being met over the course of the three years 2019–2021 through the following five strategic priorities:

- Increase focus on compliance through risk based inspection and enforcement (Regulate)
- Support, educate and raise awareness to prevent accidents, injuries and ill health (Promote)
- Grow the National Accreditation service to enable and support enterprises and public services (Accredit)
- Partner and collaborate in support of healthy, safe and productive lives and enterprises (Influence)
- Improve the way we work through people, processes and technology (How we work)

Read the HSA's Programme of Work 2021 in full here:  
[https://www.hsa.ie/eng/publications\\_and\\_forms/publications/corporate/programme\\_of\\_work\\_2021.pdf](https://www.hsa.ie/eng/publications_and_forms/publications/corporate/programme_of_work_2021.pdf)

# NISO Welcomes New Members

National Irish Safety Organisation would like to welcome all of the organisations that have joined recently. As a not for profit organisation with charitable status, your membership of NISO supports our endeavours to promote health and safety in Irish workplaces.

Contact NISO on 01 465 9750 or email [info@niso.ie](mailto:info@niso.ie) for further information on NISO membership and to receive a copy of our Membership Brochure.

## New Members

Organisations to recently join NISO include:

- Banner Fire Prevention Services Limited
- Cheshire Ireland
- IFRS Ireland Ltd.
- Ignite Fire & Safety Training Ltd.
- LMC Fire Safety Ltd.
- MCK Fire Services
- Milltown New Homes
- MS Construction



At Cheshire Ireland we provide a vast range of services to people with both physical and neurological conditions, who often have very complex and high support needs. Cheshire's support services are offered in private homes, residential centres, community clusters and stand-alone respite facilities. With over 250 people across Ireland using our services, and 760 staff Cheshire Ireland is the largest supported accommodation provider in the country. Our Vision to support people to live their best possible life.

Tel: 01 297 4100  
[adminstaff@cheshire.ie](mailto:adminstaff@cheshire.ie)  
[www.cheshire.ie](http://www.cheshire.ie)



## Share your thoughts...































If you have any health and safety ideas, experiences, stories or tips that you would like to share with NISO Update readers, we would love to hear from you! Please send an email expressing your interest in contributing to NISO Update to Geraldine at [gbrady@niso.ie](mailto:gbrady@niso.ie).





## SAFETY AWARD WINNERS 2020

Award	Organisation	Achiever
Supreme Award	PM Group	
Gold Award	Designer Group	
Silver Award	Actavo	
Bronze Award	Weltec Engineering Ltd.	
President's Award Large Size Organisation	MSL Engineering Ltd.	
President's Award Medium Size Organisation	Griffin Brothers Contracting Ltd.	
President's Award Small Size Organisation	Ecolab Ltd.	
President's Award Construction	Winthrop Engineering & Contracting	
President's Award Chemical/Pharmaceutical	Colas Bitumen Emulsions (West) Ltd. Chemoran	
President's Award Overall Regional/Northern Ireland	KD Group	
Facilities Management and Services Award	Acacia Facilities Management Ltd.	
Manufacturing Award	Baxter Healthcare Irish Manufacturing Operations	
Local Authority / Council Award	Longford County Council	
Public Service Award	Irish Aviation Authority	
Healthcare Provider Award	Bon Secours Hospital Cork	
Medical Devices Award	Wright Medical Cork	
Service Award	LotusWorks	
Electronic / Electrical Manufacturing / Assembly Award	Intel Ireland Ltd.	
Construction – Industrial / Commercial Award	John Sisk & Son (Holdings) Ltd.	
Construction – Road Surfacing Award	Colas Contracting Ltd.	
Regional Award (East)	Jones Engineering Group	
Higher Distinction	Fingal County Council	
Higher Distinction	TLI Group Ltd.	
Construction Utility Services Award	Mainline Group Ltd.	
Construction Consulting Engineers Award	GEA Process Technologies Ireland Ltd.	
Construction Civil Engineering Award	Coffey	

Award	Organisation	Achiever
Regional Award (South)	Cork City Council	
Regional Award (Mid West)	LMC Group	
Regional Award (South East)	Specialist Technical Services – STS Group	
Regional Award (West)	P&D Lydon Ltd.	
Higher Distinction	Walls Construction Limited	
Higher Distinction	Bon Secours Hospital Dublin	
Higher Distinction	Flynn	
Higher Distinction	MMD Construction Ltd.	
Higher Distinction	Suir Engineering Ltd.	
Higher Distinction	GMC Utilities Group Ltd.	
Higher Distinction	ISS Facility Services	
Higher Distinction	BAM Ireland	
Higher Distinction	Leo Lynch Group	
Higher Distinction	Dornan Engineering Ltd.	
Higher Distinction	W & H Alexander Ltd.	
Higher Distinction	John Paul Construction	
Higher Distinction	Cork County Council	
Construction Specialist Contractor Award	H&MV Engineering Ltd.	
Construction Building Services Award	King & Moffatt Building Services	
Construction House Building Award	Glenveagh Properties PLC	
Pharmaceuticals [Fill Finish] Award	Helsinn Birex Pharmaceuticals	
Biopharmaceuticals Award	Alexion Ireland	
Northern Ireland Award	Adman Civil Projects Ltd.	
Regional Award (Midlands)	Kiernan Structural Steel Limited	
Regional Award (North West)	Kilcawley Construction	
Regional Award (North East)	Elliott Group	
Higher Distinction	Cagney Contract Cleaning	
Higher Distinction	Vision Contracting Ltd.	
Higher Distinction	PJ Hegarty & Sons	
Higher Distinction	Compass Group Ireland	



Award	Organisation	Achiever
Higher Distinction	Gilead Sciences Ireland UC	
Higher Distinction	Secto Services Ltd.	
Distinction	John Cradock Ltd.	🏆
Distinction	Collen Construction Ltd.	🏆
Distinction	Merit Medical Ireland Ltd.	🏆
Distinction	Wills Bros Ltd.	🏆
Distinction	Transport Infrastructure Ireland	🏆
Distinction	Aura Sport and Leisure Management Ltd.	🏆
Best New Entry Large Size Organisation Award	Danone Macroom	
Best New Entry Small Sized Organisation Award	MDE Installations Ltd.	
Distinction	Balfour Beatty CLG Ltd.	
Distinction	KDK Scaffolding Ltd.	
Distinction	J Coffey Construction Ltd.	
Distinction	Inland and Coastal Marina Systems Ltd.	
Distinction	Barretstown	
Distinction	DB Schenker @ Intel	
Distinction	Tritech Engineering	
Distinction	GRAHAM	
Distinction	SK Biotek Ireland Limited	
Distinction	Duggan Brothers (Contractors) Ltd.	
Distinction	Stewart Construction	
Distinction	Kercon Construction	
Distinction	BioMarin International Limited, Shanbally	
Distinction	Richard Nolan Civil Engineering Ltd.	
Distinction	Cumnor Construction Ltd.	
Distinction	Jones Lang LaSalle (Intel Leixlip Site)	
Distinction	Ryobi Aluminum Casting (UK) Ltd.	
Distinction	Gem Construction	

Award	Organisation	Achiever
Distinction	Conack Construction Ltd.	
Distinction	Lynskey Engineering Ltd.	
Distinction	Portakabin (Ireland) Ltd.	
Distinction	Dominic O'Connor Ltd.	
Distinction	Mac Interiors Ltd.	
Highly Commended	Controlled Environments Company (CEC) at Intel	
Highly Commended	Maveric Contractors	
Highly Commended	Adston Ltd.	
Highly Commended	Linde TMM	
Highly Commended	ESS Modular	
Highly Commended	AbbVie Ballytynan	
Highly Commended	DB Schenker Cork	
Highly Commended	Southlink N25	
Commended	Nordex Energy Ireland Ltd.	
Commended	Cheshire Ireland	
Merit	Crowley Carbon Limited	
Merit	Shareridge Ltd.	
Recognition	Dachser Ireland Ltd.	
Driving for Work Award	KD Group	
Occupational Health Award – Joint Winners <i>Sponsored by Health and Safety Authority and Health and Safety Executive for Northern Ireland</i>	Kiernan Structural Steel Limited  Vision Contracting Ltd.	
Healthy Workplace Award – Winner <i>Sponsored by Healthy Ireland</i>	Alexion Ireland	
Safety Representative of the Year Award – Winner <i>Sponsored by The CPL Institute</i>	Margaret Murphy, PwC Cork Safety Representative, PricewaterhouseCoopers – Cork	
Safety Representative of the Year Award – Runners Up	John White, AA Patrol Technician, AA Ireland  Trevor Johnston, AA Patrol Technician, AA Ireland	

🏆 Excellence in Safety Award (>15 years)

🏆 Exceptional High Achiever (10 years)

🏆 Consistent High Achiever (5 years)



# PM Group wins All Ireland Supreme Safety Award 2020

The 29th National Irish Safety Organisation / Northern Ireland Safety Group (NISO/NISG) Annual Occupational Safety Awards took place on 22 January 2021 in a special online ceremony at which the Supreme Safety Award winner for 2020, sponsored by Irving Oil Whitegate Refinery, was announced as PM Group.

As the Supreme Safety Award winner in 2019 also, PM Group has made Safety Award history by becoming the first organisation to win the top prize two years in a row!

The Supreme Safety Award is presented to the organisation that has shown consistently good or continuously improving health and safety performance over a number of years and an outstanding contribution to occupational safety, health and welfare during the previous year. The Awards are highly valued and regarded among health and safety professionals throughout the island of Ireland.

Under normal circumstances the safety awards would have been presented to the award winners in a prizegiving ceremony and gala dinner event in October of 2020. However, due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic the event was moved online.

Other awards presented in the online ceremony include the Safety Representative of the Year Award 2020 in association with The CPL Institute. The winner of the Safety Representative of the Year Award for 2020 was Margaret Murphy from PricewaterhouseCoopers, Cork, and the Runner Up prize was jointly awarded to John White and Trevor Johnston from AA Ireland.

The Driving for Work Award was won for the second year in a row by KD Group. The Driving for Work Award is an award requiring entrants to demonstrate evidence of the following in relation to driving for work: policy, planning, practice,

measuring performance and reviewing performance.

The Healthy Workplace Award, supported by Healthy Ireland, was won by Alexion Ireland. The Healthy Workplace Award recognises the commitment of workplaces who promote health and wellbeing as a core element of the Health and Safety agenda.

The Occupational Health Award, supported by the Health and Safety Authority (HSA) and the Health and Safety Executive for Northern Ireland (HSENI), was won jointly by the 2019 award winner Kiernan Structural Steel, and Vision Contracting Ltd.

Minister of State for Business, Employment and Retail, Damien English, T.D., acknowledged the tremendous work carried out by both NISO and NISG in promoting the cause of better workplace health and safety. He noted that the awards acknowledge the “dedicated efforts of the winners to ensure that their places of work provide safety to all present.”

Mr. English also said that the Awards “acknowledge the innovative ways that safety measures can be introduced without disrupting the operation of a business but also enhancing the work experience of employees”.

Dr. Sharon McGuinness, CEO, Health and Safety Authority, said that “Given the challenges everyone has had in work, and indeed out of work, as a result of COVID this past year, today’s event is a really great testament to those who are showing a continued importance of health and safety in the workplace, for businesses and workers alike.”

Harry Galvin, NISO President, announced the award winners from over 100 organisations from all around the island of Ireland. NISG Chair, Ashleigh Birkett, also addressed the award entrants and winners during the event.

Other special guest speakers who contributed to the online event



included Robert Kidd, Chief Executive, Health and Safety Executive for Northern Ireland and Dave Murphy, Chief Executive Officer and David Tomlinson, Group Head of Health and Safety, PM Group [Supreme Award Winner 2019]

The Gold Award was won by Designer Group., the Silver Award by Actavo and the Bronze Award by Weltec Engineering Ltd.

The awards, which demonstrate the positive and proactive culture of safety management in organisations, were supported by the Health and Safety Authority, Health and Safety Executive for Northern Ireland, Healthy Ireland and Irving Oil Whitegate Refinery.

Excellence in Safety, a new award which acknowledges organisations that achieve a high standard safety award for more than 15 continuous years, was achieved by Actavo.

A number of Exceptional High Achiever awards were presented to organisations that consistently achieved a high standard safety award for more than ten years, representing their continuous commitment to health and safety in their organisation. Recipients of this award include Colas Bitumen Emulsions (West) Ltd. / Chemoran, Colas Contracting Ltd., Designer Group, Fingal County Council, John Sisk & Son (Holdings) Ltd., Jones Engineering Group, PM Group, TLI Group Ltd.

Register with NISO / NISG to receive details of the 2021 Awards when available.

The full list of awards winners for 2020 and the online presentation can be viewed at [safetyawards.ie](http://safetyawards.ie).



# NISO CERTIFICATE IN SAFETY, HEALTH AND WELFARE AT WORK COURSE

13 weeks; 1 evening per week



**Commencing**

**Athlone IT**

25 January 2021

**Limerick IT**

26 January 2021

**Castlebar**

16 February 2021

**Cork**

16 February 2021

**Dublin**

16 February 2021

**Wexford**

16 February 2021

## DETAILS AND CONTACTS:

**National Irish Safety Organisation**  
**A11 Calmount Park, Ballymount, Dublin 12**

**T** 1850 SAFETY **F** 01 4659765

**E** [info@niso.ie](mailto:info@niso.ie) **W** [niso.ie](http://niso.ie)

Course Price: €425 (NISO members); €525 (Non members)

**Contact Details**

**T** 01 465 9760 **E** [info@niso.ie](mailto:info@niso.ie)

# Updated Bullying Code of Practice Published

**Patricia Murray, Senior Work Psychologist with the Health and Safety Authority, writes about the recently updated Code of Practice for Employers and Employees on the Prevention and Resolution of Bullying at Work.**

Workplaces have changed so much over the past 12 months that any system developed with the “old order” in mind may find it hard to fit into the way things are now. With so many workplaces closed, buildings empty and employees working from home, it may seem that there is little need for the recently published Code of Practice (COP), developed by the Health and Safety Authority and the Workplace Relations Commission and published in January 2021.

However, no matter where people work, how they work or when they work, there is, unfortunately, a need for proper direction on the best systems to put in place to deal with workplace bullying. Therefore, the new COP for Employers and Employees on the Prevention and Management of Bullying at Work will no doubt be a useful tool across industry and around the country.

The new COP is an update and upgrade on two previous Codes – both agencies had separate Codes related to their distinct legislation prior to this. As Codes are not of themselves legislation, but a strong standard set in line with legislation, any Code must show a thread between its contents and standards set and relevant legislative powers. In this case, both agencies have underpinning legislation in the guise of various Industrial Relations Acts (WRC) and the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act (2005) (HSA).

Led by the internal professional expertise within each agency, the COP was developed with inputs from employer body Ibec and employee representative body ICTU, as well as

employment expertise from the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER) over the past two years. Further public consultation and inputs from private and commercial parties was undertaken. The new COP is now welcomed as a replacement of the previous Codes promoted by each agency, the HSA's from 2007 and the WRC's from 2002.

This new COP is more comprehensive on the informal approaches to dealing with bullying complaints at enterprise level. It includes a second “filter” stage, when employers can bring a problem-solving approach to issues where bullying is a feature or an alleged feature of a troubled relationship at work. This was added due to the nuanced nature of human behaviour at work and the fact that a person's perception is heavily influenced by their attitude and pre-existing suspicion. Thus, a situation where bullying is cited may well, at times, be better managed to the satisfaction of all, by slowly unravelling the behaviours and trying to reduce the tension and hurt around the deteriorating relationship.

Giving more time, space and energy to such a resolution, early in the process, can often yield more positive results than formal legalistic approaches further into the issue.

The joint COP also highlights to complainants the seriousness of making any complaint citing bullying, and the ramification of any maliciousness motivating such a complaint. Serious damage and mental health fallout can result from a



*Patricia Murray, Senior Work Psychologist, Health and Safety Authority.*

complaint against a person, and the COP reiterates that anyone found to have made such a complaint will face sanction.

The COP also highlights the serious mental health fallout from being bullied and outlines the behaviours that should not be tolerated between people at work and the employer's duty to prevent improper conduct and ensure fair and reasonable supervision and management. It gives employers guidance on the need for competence across the systems of work and a proper working complaints procedure within an Anti-Bullying Policy, which all employees are aware of, and signed up to, as part of induction programmes.

The COP also addresses recent Irish court judgements on bullying. These judgements emphasise the requirements needed for a case to be considered one of bullying. These judgements held that occasional disputes, irregular disagreements and even personality fallouts, do not, of themselves, meet the criteria for bullying. Bullying cases are founded upon regular, repeated, serious, traumatic targeted ill-treatment of a person or persons, and therefore, employees making such a claim should know of this standard, and



apply it. Employers processing various complaints should have some direction on what to process as bullying and which disputes can, and should be, processed otherwise.

Finally, the new COP, being a joint code, aligns the systems in place at State level. It gives some examples of what is and what is not considered under the bullying heading, and differentiates harassment as a distinct set of behaviours, under nine specified grounds. Harassment cases are processed separately to bullying and come within the remit of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC).

The new COP is now available at [www.hsa.ie](http://www.hsa.ie) and [www.workplacelrelations.ie](http://www.workplacelrelations.ie).

The following outlines the main additions to the joint HSA/WRC Code of Practice for Employers and Employees on the Prevention and

#### Resolution of Bullying at Work 2021:

- Increased focus on the initial employer classification of a complaint: whether it is a general conflict, as a case of alleged bullying, a case of alleged harassment, or some other workplace issue wrongly labelled.
- Increased direction and advice on informal resolution of complaints of bullying within the work area.
- Reiteration of sanction for maliciously or carelessly making a bullying complaint.
- Clarity on the roles of both agencies and where they overlap and diverge.
- Clarity on the legal finding of Irish courts to ensure proper assessment of bullying complaints.
- Clarity from recent Irish court rulings on bullying investigations and the rights of various parties, including employer role.

- Clarification on follow-on processes for formal investigation of bullying cases.

For further information visit [www.hsa.ie](http://www.hsa.ie) or [www.workplacelrelations.ie](http://www.workplacelrelations.ie), or contact the Health and Safety Authority on 1890 289 389 or by email at [wcu@hsa.ie](mailto:wcu@hsa.ie) or the Workplace Relations Commission on 1890 80 80 90.



# New Publications

## HSA Programme of Work 2021

This is the third year for implementation of the HSA's strategy for the period 2019-2021. This published document connects some of the key programme activities to the relevant strategy goals.



Available at [hsa.ie](https://hsa.ie).

## Annual Review of Workplace Injury, Illness and Fatality Statistics 2018-2019

The HSA's Annual Review of Workplace Injury, Illness and Fatality presents the most recently available data on occupational deaths, injuries and illnesses in Ireland.



Available at [hsa.ie](https://hsa.ie).

## Biological Agents Code of Practice 2020

This code of practice, in accordance with Regulation 3 (1) of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Biological Agents) Regulations 2013 and 2020, applies to activities in a place of work where existing or potential – whether deliberate or incidental – exposure to a biological agent has occurred or may occur.



Available at [hsa.ie](https://hsa.ie).

## HSA Annual Report 2019

This is the first annual report under the HSA's strategy for 2019 to 2021. The 2019 programme of work focused on delivering a wide range of objectives and actions under the HSA's strategic priorities and legal mandate.



Available at [hsa.ie](https://hsa.ie).

## Guidance on Working from Home for Employers and Employees

This guide from the HSA will enable employers and employees to understand the requirements when working from home. Appendix 1: Homeworking Risk Assessment/Checklist is included to help employers and their employees to carry out an assessment of the home working environment as an online fillable form contained within the guidance document or available as a separate file.



Available at [hsa.ie](https://hsa.ie).

## The future of agriculture and forestry: implications for managing worker safety and health

This report from EU-OSHA explores the challenges facing the agriculture and forestry sector in Europe. It looks at new and emerging opportunities and risks and the implications for OSH.



Available at [osha.europa.eu](https://osha.europa.eu)

## Preventing musculoskeletal disorders in the construction sector: examples from INAIL incentive schemes

This discussion paper looks at the prevalence of musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) in the construction sector and at the tasks that put workers at risk, such as manual lifting and awkward postures. The paper focuses on vibrations as a significant risk factor, with workers who operate tools and machinery exposed to hand-arm vibrations and whole-body vibrations. Available at [osha.europa.eu](https://osha.europa.eu)



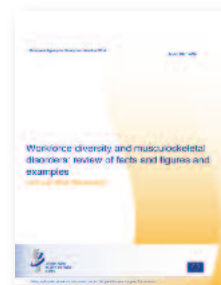
## Supporting musculoskeletal health in the workplace

This info sheet from EU-OSHA includes guidance on supporting musculoskeletal health in the workplace including workplace risk assessments, the hierarchy of prevention and worker participation. Available at [osha.europa.eu](https://osha.europa.eu)



## Preventing musculoskeletal disorders in a diverse workforce: risk factors for women, migrant and LGBTI workers

This report examines the prevalence of musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) and the associated physical, psychosocial, individual and organisational risk factors in three specific groups of workers: women, migrants and LGBTI workers. It discusses why workers in these groups are more often exposed to MSD-related risk factors, and report a higher prevalence of health issues, including MSDs, than other workers. Available at [osha.europa.eu](https://osha.europa.eu)





# Legislation

## SI No. 444 of 2020 European Communities (Merchant Shipping) (Investigation of Accidents) (Amendment) Regulations 2020

These Regulations amend the European Communities (Merchant Shipping) (Investigation of Accidents) Regulations 2011 (S.I. No. 276 of 2011) to give further effect to Directive 2009/18/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2009 establishing the fundamental principles governing the investigation of accidents in the maritime transport sector and amending Council Directive 1999/35/EC and Directive 2002/59/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council.

## SI No 539 of 2020 Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Biological Agents) (Amendment) Regulations 2020

These Regulations amend the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Biological Agents) Regulations 2013 and give effect to Commission Directive (EU) 2019/1833 of 24 October 2019 (relating to general worker safety from exposure to biological agents) and Commission Directive (EU)

2020/739 of 3 June 2020 (relating specifically to SARS-CoV-2, the causative agent of COVID-19), both of which amend Directive 2000/54/EC the protection of workers from risks related to exposure to biological agents at work.

## SI No. 571 of 2020 Health Act 1947 (Section 31A – Temporary Restrictions) (Covid-19) (Face Coverings in Certain Premises and Businesses) (No. 2) Regulations 2020

From the 5th of December 2020, these Regulations provide for the requirement that people working in customer facing roles in premises where the principal activity is the sale of food or beverages for consumption on the premises wear face coverings unless they have a reasonable excuse.

## SI No. 674 of 2020 Industrial Relations Act 1990 (Code of Practice for Employers and Employees on the Prevention and Resolution of Bullying at Work) Order 2020

This Code of Practice comes into effect on 23 December 2020 and from that

date it replaces the Code of Practice entitled "Code of Practice for Employers and Employees on the Prevention and Resolution of Bullying at Work" which was issued by the HSA in March 2007 in accordance with the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 and the "Code of Practice Detailing Procedures for Addressing Bullying in the Workplace" issued by the then Labour Relations Commission LRC (now WRC) in 2002 in accordance with section 42 of the Industrial Relations Act 1990.

Notice of issue of this Code of Practice, and the withdrawal of both Codes of Practice, is published in the Iris Oifigiúil.



## Fatal Workplace Injuries by Economic Sector 2009-2020 (NACE Revision 2)

	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010
<b>A</b> - Agriculture + forestry and fishing	1+0+0	19+0+3	19+0+3	15+1+4	25+0+2	21+5	18+6	32+1	16+5	20+8	22+5	21+7
<b>B</b> - Mining and quarrying	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	2	1	1	1	2
<b>C</b> - Manufacturing	0	4	4	2	0	2	3	3	1	0	2	2
<b>D</b> - Electricity; gas, steam and air conditioning supply	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0
<b>E</b> - Water supply, sewerage, waste management and remediation activities	0	1	2	2	1	1	3	0	1	4	3	2
<b>F</b> - Construction	0	14	11	5	6	10	11	6	11	8	6	6
<b>G</b> - Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and personal goods	0	5	1	2	3	2	3	5	3	3	2	4
<b>H</b> - Transportation and storage	0	2	6	8	5	1	3	3	4	1	7	3
<b>I</b> - Accommodation and food service activities	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
<b>J</b> - Information and communication	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>K</b> - Financial and insurance activities	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>L</b> - Real estate activities	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>M</b> - Professional, scientific and technical activities	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	2	0
<b>N</b> - Administrative and support service activities	0	0	1	0	0	2	0	2	0	1	0	0
<b>O</b> - Public administration and defence; compulsory social security	0	1	0	0	5	0	4	1	0	0	1	0
<b>P</b> - Education	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
<b>Q</b> - Human health and social work activities	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	1	1	1
<b>R</b> - Arts, entertainment and recreation	0	2	0	2	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	1
<b>S</b> - Other service activities	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>48</b>

(Source: HSA, correct at 28 January 2021. Note that some accidents may be under investigation and may not have been recorded yet.)

# Upcoming Training and Events

Classroom-based training subject to current Government guidelines.

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

### Manual Handling Basic

NISO Certificate  
(half day)  
29 March

### Mobile and Home Working Assessor Course [Online]

NISO Certificate  
(1 day)  
2 February; 9 March

### DSE/VDU Risk Assessor Course [Online]

NISO Certificate  
(1 day)  
16 February; 16 March

### Safety Representation [Online]

NISO Certificate  
(2 day)  
23-24 February; 24-25 March

## 2. NISO Certificate in Safety, Health and Welfare at Work

Course length: 13 wks /  
2 evenings p/wk

**Please note:** The NISO Certificate in Safety, Health and Welfare at Work course scheduled to commence in Cork, Dublin, Mayo and Wexford venues on 16 February 2021 will commence online.

### EAST REGION

Venue: NISO Training Centre, Dublin 12  
Commencing: 16 February 2021  
Contact: info@niso.ie

### SOUTHERN REGION

Venue: CSN College of Further Education, Cork  
Commencing: 16 February 2021  
Contact: info@niso.ie

### SOUTH EAST REGION

Venue: Renewables Academy, Wexford  
Commencing: 16 February 2021  
Contact: info@niso.ie

### WESTERN REGION

Venue: Campus  
Commencing: 16 February 2021  
Contact: info@niso.ie

## 3. National/All Ireland Events

**NISO National Annual General Meeting**  
Date & Venue TBC

**NISO/NISG All Ireland Safety Quiz Finals**  
Date & Venue TBC

**NISO Annual Conference and Trade Exhibition**  
October/November 2021

**NISO/NISG All Ireland Safety Awards Gala Dinner**  
October/November 2021

