Welcome to this edition of the
Occupational Health and Safety Information Service News Brief

This edition of our News Brief continues the inclusion of content from our partners at the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH) and Sheila Pantry Associates.

The CIEH is a registered charity and the professional voice for environmental health. They provide information, training, evidence and policy advice to public health, health and safety, environmental management regulators and practitioners in the public and private sectors. For more information about the CIEH please visit [uk.ihs.com/about/cieh.html](http://uk.ihs.com/about/cieh.html)

From Sheila Pantry Associates we have the latest prosecutions, and training and conference events.

We are keen to hear your feedback on the content and if you have any suggestions for how we can further enhance the News Brief for you. To provide your feedback please email [marketing@ihsmarkit.com](mailto:marketing@ihsmarkit.com) and title your email ‘OHSIS News Brief’.

Please share this newsletter with your colleagues and keep them up-to-date with the latest news.
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PROSECUTIONS

Industrial Staircase Installer Fined After Worker Trapped
A company specialising in the manufacture and installation of industrial staircases has been fined following an incident where a worker became trapped at a site on Fenchurch Avenue in London.

Westminster Magistrates’ Court heard that on 19 July 2018 Dragos Sultana suffered serious injuries when a section of staircase weighing 1.7 tonnes fell and trapped his leg. The staircase was being lifted into position when one of the fabric slings supporting the load failed, causing one side of the staircase to drop and striking Mr Sultana. His injuries resulted in the amputation of his leg just below the groin.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that Leyton Group Construction Ltd failed to properly plan the lifting operation. The lift plan was not specific to the job and the method statement lacked the level of detail required about the load, how it should be slung and how it should be lifted. This resulted in the slings being stretched across the sharp metal edges of the staircase stringers, which caused a shearing action and ultimate failure of one the slings.

Leyton Group Construction Ltd of Swinborne Road, Basildon pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 8 (1) of the Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 (LOLER) was fined £14,000 and ordered to pay costs of £7,227.14.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE principal inspector Tania van Rixtel said:

‘The method employed for lifting the staircase was unsafe. This case highlights the need for duty holders to properly plan all lifting operations before work is carried out to manage the risk of injury to workers. This incident could so easily have been avoided by simply carrying out correct control measures and safe working practices.

‘Companies should be aware that HSE will not hesitate to take appropriate enforcement action against those that fall below the required standards.’

Company Fined After Employees Exposed To Respirable Crystalline Silica
A playground installation and landscaping contractor has been fined after failing to provide employees with adequate control measures to prevent exposure to respirable crystalline silica (RCS).

Greater Manchester Magistrates’ Court heard how on 23 March 2018, the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) carried out unannounced inspection of a site at Newbank Garden Centre, Bury Road, Radcliffe. The HSE inspector served a Prohibition Notice to stop two employees of Playscape Design Ltd, using a powered tool to cut flags without any respiratory protective equipment. This put the health of the employees at risk due to exposure to RCS, which is released when silica-containing materials are cut with a powered tool.

HSE then served an Improvement Notice, requiring the company to provide adequate control from exposure to RCS. The investigation found the company did not provide evidence of compliance within the deadline and a second, similar job was completed at the same site with no adequate control measures in place.

Playscape Design Limited of Ball Grove Drive, Colne, Lancashire, pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 7(1) of the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 and also
admitted not complying with an Improvement Notice, which is an offence under Section 33(1)(g) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. The company was fined £20,000 and ordered to pay costs of £3,000.

HSE inspector Rebecca Hamer, said after the hearing: 'The working conditions we encountered were putting the health of the employees at risk due to exposure to RCS, which is released when silica-containing materials are cut with a powered tool.

‘Exposure to respirable crystalline silica can cause life-threatening diseases including silicosis and chronic obstructive pulmonary disorder (COPD), which can lead to impaired lung function, lung cancer and death. This incident could so easily have been avoided by simply carrying out correct control measures and safe working practices.

‘Companies should be aware that HSE will not hesitate to take appropriate enforcement action against those that fall below the required standards.’

**Freight Forwarding Company Fined £82,000 After Warehouse Operative Suffers Crush Injuries**

Airworld Airlines Ltd has been fined £82,000 after a freight container weighing nearly 700kg fell on a worker at a warehouse in Hounslow.

Westminster Magistrates’ Court heard how, on 26 January 2018, a warehouse cargo agent was using a forklift truck to offload a freight container from a heavy goods vehicle at the site on the Hatton Cross Centre. The container became unstable and fell on him. As a result, he was pinned between the container and a concrete pedestrian barrier, sustaining serious injuries including multiple fractures and internal injuries.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found the company had no safe system of work in place to identify the risk of freight containers falling from forklift truck blades. The company had also made alterations to the fork lift blades to enable employees to lift aircraft containers from the floor without any stabilisation mechanism.

District Judge Baraitser described Airworld Airlines Ltd’s lifting operation as a ‘dangerous practice [which] presented a significant risk not only to the operator of the forklift but to any member of staff who happened to be in the vicinity of the operation as it was being carried out.’

Airworld Airlines Ltd of Ascot, Berkshire pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. The company was fined £82,000 and ordered to pay £6575.60 costs and £170.00 victim surcharge.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Sarah Pearce said: ‘Employers have a responsibility to devise safe methods of carrying out lifting operations and should ensure that every lifting operation is properly planned, appropriately supervised and carried out in a safe manner.

‘Companies should be aware that HSE will not hesitate to take appropriate enforcement action against those that fall below the required standards.’
Construction Company Fined After Worker Suffered Carbon Monoxide Poisoning

Construction company Construction 360 Ltd was sentenced for safety breaches after a worker collapsed and lost consciousness while working at the site of King Asia Foods Ltd, Middle Bank, Sheffield.

Sheffield Magistrates Court heard how, on 11 January 2018, the worker was cutting a drain into the factory floor as part of the construction of a new processing room within the packaging area of the factory. He was using a petrol driven floor saw within an enclosed space (the open side had been covered by a tarpaulin). After a period of cutting, he felt unwell and subsequently collapsed losing consciousness. He was taken to hospital and was diagnosed with carbon monoxide poisoning. He also sustained bruising to his head, elbow and knees, and a cut to his elbow.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that Construction 360 Ltd had failed to appropriately plan the work in the confined space of the processing room. Additionally, at the request of the director of Construction 360 Ltd, unsafe work at height had also taken place beforehand as the worker had accessed the roof of the processing room without suitable edge protection, or means of access, without checking the stability of the structure. Construction 360 Ltd of Eastoft Road, Cowle, Scunthorpe, North Lincolnshire pleaded guilty to breaching section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974. The company has been fined £15,000 and ordered to pay £1805 in costs.

After the hearing, HSE inspector Sarah Robinson commented: ‘This incident could so easily have been avoided by simply carrying out correct control measures and safe working practices.

‘The company failed to appropriately plan a safe system of work for the task being carried out.’

Construction Firm Fined Due To Multiple Safety Failings

A construction firm has been sentenced after failing to put measures in place to prevent falls from height and to control risks associated with fire.

Greater Manchester Magistrates’ Court heard how Irish Anglo Properties Limited failed to ensure the safety of their workers and nearby residents during the construction of six timber frame houses at Moss Lane East in Manchester.

An inspection by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found three men working on the flat roof of the structure on 23 August 2017. The roof ranged from two to three stories high, with no edge protection in place to prevent falls and access to the roof was via untied ladders resting on unsecured floorboards inside the building. Serious fire safety failings were also identified on site with the company failing to consider both the risks associated with constructing from timber, and the measures needed to reduce the risk of a fire occurring and spreading across and beyond the site. There was also an accumulation of combustible materials on site, a lack of adequate site security and there were no general fire precautions in place.

A material with a suitable level of fire resistance should have been used for the construction, taking into account the close proximity of the occupied apartment block, and the construction of the timber frame should have been phased to allow the building in of suitable compartmentation to reduce the risk of fire spread.

Irish Anglo Properties Limited of Moss Lane East, Manchester, pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 29(a) of the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 and Regulation 6(3) of the
Work at Height Regulations 2005. The company was fined £26,000 and ordered to pay costs of £10,000.

HSE inspector Laura Royales said after the hearing: ‘The failings on this site put not only the site operatives but also those living in the adjacent apartment block at risk of serious injury or even death.

‘Companies should be aware that HSE will not hesitate to take appropriate enforcement action against those that fall below the required standards, even where no incident occurs.’

**Company Fined £32,000 After Teenage Apprentice Overcome By Fumes**

An alloy wheel refurbishment company was sentenced after a 16-year-old apprentice worker was overcome by vapours from a chemical used in the stripping and cleaning of alloy wheels.

South Tyneside Magistrates’ Court heard how, on 12 December 2017, the employee of Wheelnut Ltd, entered an area of the company’s former premises in Swalwell, Newcastle upon Tyne, known as the ‘acid room’.

The employee entered the room to retrieve alloy wheels from one of three barrels of a chemical substance containing Dichloromethane (DCM), Methanol and Hydrofluoric Acid used in the stripping process.

He was subsequently found by a colleague slumped unconscious over a barrel.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found a risk assessment for the chemical wheel stripping process was not suitable or sufficient. Appropriate control measures should have included suitable exhaust ventilation in the room as well as respiratory protective equipment (RPE) for the employees. RPE was provided but it was not maintained in an efficient or effective state. Several parts of it were damaged and the air feed to it from the compressor was not filtered correctly. The investigation found that on this occasion, and previously, the employee was not wearing the RPE when he entered the room. Employees were not provided with suitable and sufficient information, instruction, and training with regards to the risks involved with using the chemicals, particularly the risks involved with using DCM.

Wheelnut Ltd of Whickham Bank, Swalwell, Newcastle upon pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974. The company was fined £32,000 and ordered to pay full costs of £1718.50.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Joy Craighead said: ‘A young worker suffered a potentially serious injury. Breathing in DCM vapour can produce narcotic effects and, at high concentrations, unconsciousness and death. In this instance, the boy made a full recovery, but it could have easily resulted in his death.’

**Wood Product Manufacturer Fined £10,800, Ordered To Pay £43,241 In Costs And £170 Victim Surcharge After Worker Suffers Life Changing Injuries To Face**

A St Helens wood product manufacturer and a company director have been fined after a worker was dragged into a rotating drive shaft at their site at Normans Road, Sutton, St Helens.

Liverpool Magistrates Court heard how, on the 30 June 2016, an agency worker had been working on a production line making parts for staircases when her hair caught on a rotating drive shaft, resulting
in the loss of her full scalp, ears and one of her thumbs. She suffered severe physical and mental trauma and has undergone numerous reconstructive operations and has been unable to return to work since the incident.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found the company had failed to adequately guard the production line, allowing access to dangerous parts of machinery, including conveyors and drive shafts, by employees and agency workers, during both operation and cleaning.

A return visit was made in April 2018 where it was discovered that the company had changed the layout of the production line, leaving accessible dangerous parts, including an identical shaft to the one which the victim was injured on. A Prohibition Notice and an Improvement Notice were served to address the risks.

The subsequent investigation showed that mill operatives were regularly accessing the strapping section while the machinery was still running, and the Production Director was aware of this.

Cheshire Mouldings and Woodturning Limited of Unit 7, Normans Road, Sutton, St Helens pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2 (1) and Section 3(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and was fined £466,666 and ordered to pay costs of £7,475.90 and a victim surcharge of £170.

Paul Carney of Springburn Gardens, Woolston, Warrington pleaded guilty to breaching Section 37 of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and was fined £10,800, ordered to pay £43,241 in costs and £170 victim surcharge.

After the hearing HSE Principal Inspector Helen Jones said: ‘This incident, which was easily preventable, has had a devastating impact on the victim involved and those close to her. The company failed to prevent employees accessing dangerous moving parts of machinery. Had they ensured the machine was adequately guarded employees would not have been able to access moving parts and this tragic accident would have been avoided.’

Construction Company Fined £30,000 And Ordered To Pay £1,302.60 In Costs After Worker Injured In Fall From Height
A Sheffield construction company has been sentenced for safety breaches after a self-employed general builder fell seven metres onto a concrete floor at a site in Sheffield.

Sheffield Magistrates’ Court heard how, on 11 April 2018, the builder was working for and under the control of Clear Property Solutions (SY) Limited. He had just finished installing a flat rubber roof on a dormer extension at the rear of the domestic property in Abbeydale Road, Sheffield, South Yorkshire. He was exiting the flat roof onto a scaffold using an untied unsecured folding ladder when the ladder slipped, and he fell onto the concrete floor below.

The 34-year-old builder sustained shattered heels and a fractured skull resulting in swelling and bleeding on the brain following this incident.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that Clear Property Solutions (SY) Ltd had not completed any risk assessments or method statements or construction phase plan for this works. Operatives on the site were also not trained in work at height.
Clear Property Solutions (SY) Limited of John Street, Sheffield pleaded guilty to contravening Regulation 6 (3) of the Work at Height Regulations 2005. The company has been fined £30,000 and ordered to pay £1302.60 in costs.

After the hearing, HSE inspector Stuart Whitesmith commented: ‘This incident could so easily have been avoided by simply carrying out correct control measures and safe working practices.

‘In this case the builder suffered life-threatening injuries which could have been avoided by installing guardrails around the perimeter of the flat roof, with a gate and secured ladder access.’

Demolition Company Fined After Nearby Worker Injured
G O’Brien and Sons (Nationwide Demolition Contractors) Limited has been fined after a nearby worker was seriously injured on a demolition site in Durham.

Newton Aycliffe Magistrates’ Court heard that on 22 February 2018 the company was demolishing two semi-detached properties as part of a project to renovate a residential street. The injured person, the director of a loss assessor company, had attended his client’s property adjacent to where the work was taking place. Demolition waste had spread into the garden of the neighbouring property, and the injured person stood on a broken window panel, cutting through his ankle and Achilles tendon, whilst attempting to take photographs of the waste.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that the company failed to suitably ensure that demolition work within its grounds was carried out in such a manner as to prevent danger. The work had not been thoroughly planned to ensure that demolition waste was fully enclosed within the site boundary, and there was no secure fence to prevent unauthorised access to the site.

G O’Brien and Sons (Nationwide Demolition Contractors) Limited of Durham Road, Birtley was found guilty of breaching Regulation 20(1) of the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015. The company was fined £3,000 and ordered to pay costs of £1419.40.

After the hearing, HSE inspector Phil Chester said, ‘An important message to the industry is to suitably plan work and ensure that site documentation is followed throughout the duration of the work.

Paperwork and planning are not just a tick box exercise.’

Company Director And Two Construction Companies Sentenced After Worker Falls From Height
A company director has received a Community Service Order and two construction companies have been fined after a worker suffered life changing injuries following a fall from a scaffold tower during the refurbishment of an old pub in Reading.

Reading Magistrates’ Court heard how on 2 December 2016 Samuel Goemans of Cedar Ridge Construction Limited suffered a serious head injury after falling from a tower scaffold onto the street below (London Road). His injuries have led to long term brain and memory problems and have resulted in him suffering from seizures and losing the ability to care for himself.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that the principal contractor failed to control the safety and planning on site and the sub-contractor carried out unsafe working practices.
The principal contractor, Turnkey Contractors Limited of Ethelburt Avenue, Bassett Green, Southampton pleaded guilty to breaching Section 3 (1) of The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. The company has been fined £40,000 and ordered to pay costs of £3184.00.

The director of Turnkey Contractors Limited, Santokh Dhanda, of Ethelburt Avenue, Bassett Green, Southampton pleaded guilty to breaching Section 3 (1) of The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and has received a Community Service Order for 100 hours.

The subcontractor, Cedar Ridge Construction Limited of Waterloo Road, Wokingham pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 4 (1) of The Work at Height Regulations 2005. The company has been fined £40,000 and ordered to pay costs of £3184.00.

Speaking after the hearing HSE inspector Ian Whittles said: ‘Falls from height remain one of the most common causes of work-related injuries in this country and the risks associated with working at height are well known.

‘The case highlights the importance of following industry guidance and in order to design and erect scaffolding in a safe manner, which does not raise risk to members of the public and workers using the scaffold.’

**Waste And Recycling Company Fined After Employee Injured During Machinery Maintenance**
A waste and recycling company has been fined after an employee suffered a broken arm and crush injuries whilst carrying out maintenance work at a site in, Llandow, Vale of Glamorgan.

Cardiff Magistrates’ Court heard how on 28 February 2018, an employee was tracking a running conveyor when his arm became entangled between the conveyor belt and the roller, causing a broken arm and crush injuries.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found the company had failed to undertake a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks posed by maintenance work on the conveyor and failed to draw up a safe system of work for the procedure, including adequate isolation.

The company also failed to report the incident under RIDDOR within 10 working days.

Siteserv Recycling (Waste Paper) Ltd of Llandow Trading Estate, Llandow, Cowbridge pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work Act and Regulation 4(1) of the Reporting of Injuries, Disease and Dangerous Occurrences, Regulations 2013. The company was fined £25,333 and ordered to pay £8,882.15 in costs.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Matthew Hamar commented:

‘This injury was easily preventable. Employers should make sure they properly assess risk and apply effective control measures to minimise the risk from dangerous parts of machinery, especially during maintenance work.’

**Milling Company Fined After Employee Suffers Life Changing Injury To His Hand**
A milling company has been fined after a worker suffered life changing injuries resulting in loss and partial loss of three fingers in his dominant hand.
Peterborough Magistrates’ Court heard how, on 21 September 2015, an employee of Nene Milling Company Limited in Wisbech was cleaning wood dust from a 4-sided planer/moulder using an extraction pipe and his hand came into contact with the cutter block. Access to the working parts is usually prevented by hood enclosures but these were damaged, meaning the interlocks were not working. Also, during the set up process, temporary cutter guards should have been in place but were not.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) into the incident found the company failed to prevent access to dangerous parts of machinery and failed to provide adequate information, instruction, training and supervision of employees.

Nene Milling Company Limited of Brigstock Road, Wisbech, Cambridgeshire pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and have been fined £5,000 and ordered to pay costs of £2,499.03.

Speaking after the hearing HSE inspector Roxanne Barker said: ‘This life changing injury was easily preventable and the risk should have been identified. Employers should make sure they properly assess and apply effective control measures to minimise the risk from dangerous parts of machinery.’

Grain Store Company Fined £180,000 And Ordered To Pay Costs Of £20,000 After Worker Fatally Struck By Lorry

A grain store company has been fined following the death of a worker at its site in Linton, Cambridgeshire.

Peterborough Crown Court heard how on 27 July 2016 an employee of Camgrain Stores Ltd suffered fatal injuries after being struck by a lorry at the site. Mr. Edward Orlopp had left the control room to walk across the site and on leaving the building he walked in front of a moving lorry. The driver had checked his mirrors but he did not see the employee and moved forward fatally injuring the employee.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that Camgrain Stores Ltd had failed to ensure that pedestrians and vehicles could move safely around the site and that they had not provided measures to prevent employees walking into areas where large vehicles are moving.

Camgrain Stores Ltd of London Road, Balsham pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2 (1) of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. The company has been fined £180,000 and ordered to pay costs of £20,000.

After the hearing HSE inspector Stephen Faulkner said: ‘Being struck by vehicles is one of the most common causes of workplace fatal accidents. This was a tragic and wholly avoidable incident caused by failure of the host company to undertake a number of simple measures.’

Roofing Company Fined After Worker Falls From Height

A London based roofing company, McDonald Roofing Contractors Limited, has been fined after a worker fell a distance of nine metres from a flat roof he was working on.

Westminster Magistrates court head how McDonald Roofing Contractors Limited were carrying out re-roofing works at 12 Glebe Road, SW13 0DR. Work began at the end of February 2018. On 12 March 2018 an employee of McDonald Roofing Contractors Limited was carrying out work on a flat roof.
Whilst carrying out this work he stepped backwards from the flat roof. As a result of the fall the worker suffered a broken right shoulder blade, a broken right collar bone, and a fracture to the left side of his face.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that the company had failed to ensure that the work at height was properly planned; appropriately supervised; and carried out in a manner which is so far as is reasonably practicable safe.

McDonald Roofing Contractors Limited of 6 Colville Road, London W3 8BL pleaded guilty to breach Regulation 4(1) of the Work at Height Regulations 2005 and fined £30,000 with full costs of £1483.00.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Adam Thompson said: 'The case highlights the importance of ensuring that work at height is properly planned and appropriately supervised.'

'The incident could so easily have been avoided by having suitable and sufficient edge protection around the flat roof.'

Ferry Company Fined £30,000 And Ordered To Pay Costs Of £ 10,800 After Worker Suffers Multiple Fractures
Red Funnel Ferries has been fined after a worker fell from the unprotected edge of its Red Falcon ship’s mezzanine car deck.

Southampton Crown Court heard how, on 24 September 2015, a worker was uncoiling a reel of electrical cable on a mezzanine deck at Southampton docks, when he inadvertently stepped off a raised edge and fell 2.5m to the lower deck, sustaining multiple fractures to his foot and wrist.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that Red Funnel should have taken steps such as lowering the mezzanine deck or raising the edge protection barriers on the deck in order to eliminate the risk of falling from height.

The Southampton, Isle of Wight and South of England Royal Mail Steam Packet Company Ltd (trading as Red Funnel Ferries), of 12 Bugle Street, Southampton, Hampshire, SO14 2JY pleaded guilty for failing to discharge the duty imposed upon them by Section 3(1) of Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and has been fined £30,000 and ordered to pay costs of £ 10,800.

Speaking after the case, HSE inspector Andrew Johnson said: 'Companies have a duty to ensure the risks from working at height are properly controlled. Simple steps to eliminate the risk of falling or prevent it (through barriers etc.) were not taken and a serious injury occurred.'

Roofing Contractor Sentenced For Unsafe Work At Height
A roofing contractor has been sentenced for failing to take adequate precautions to prevent his workers falling from height and for breaching a prohibition notice.

Llandudno Magistrates’ Court heard how in April 2018 workers were observed working on the roof of a domestic two-storey house in Wrexham with no edge protection. A prohibition notice was issued preventing further work until control measures were put in place, but the contractor chose to ignore it and carried on working.
An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), found that Asa Hamilton allowed his workers to be exposed to a continuing risk of falling from the roof, with potential for fatal or major injury.

Asa Hamilton of Linthorpe Road, Buckley, Flintshire pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 6 (3) of the Work at Height Regulations 2005 for failing to provide precautions to prevent falls from height and Sections 33 (1) (e) and 33 (1) g of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 for failing to comply with a prohibition notice.

Mr Hamilton was sentenced to 12 months imprisonment, suspended for 12 months, plus 200 hours unpaid work. He was also ordered to pay a contribution of £4,000 towards the costs.

Speaking after the case HSE principal inspector Paul Harvey said 'This was a serious incident and it is fortunate nobody was injured as a result of it. There are well known standards in the construction industry for controlling risks from falls from height. Even when the dutyholder was served a prohibition notice to stop the activity they failed to take the appropriate action.

'HSE will not hesitate to take enforcement action against those that disregard enforcement notices when served or fail to take appropriate measures to control well known risks.'
EVENTS

1 August 2019, Dangerous Substances And Explosive Atmospheres Regulations (DSEAR): Controlling Dust Explosion Risks
Buxton, UK

The Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmospheres Regulations 2002 (DSEAR) regulate the presence and use of flammable substances in the workplace. The list of potential dangerous substances includes gases, liquids and flammable solids in the form of a finely divided dust which, if dispersed in the air, could lead to a serious fire or an explosion.

However, flammable dusts pose their own unique risks that differ from those posed by flammable gases and liquids. This course provides advice on how to understand the hazards from flammable dusts and how the risks from storing and using the dusts can be managed so as to comply with DSEAR.

Further details are available here:

1 August 2019, HSE Inspectors' Guide To Risk Assessment
London, UK

This workshop will be delivered by a senior HSE inspector with more than 25 years of experience, and is a rare opportunity to understand your regulator by seeing the world through an inspector’s eyes.

You will learn: how HSE examines and uses employers’ risk assessments; the common errors that HSE finds in the risk assessment process; and how to use this information to manage risks more effectively and avoid enforcement action.

Further details are available here:

1 August 2019, Practical Controls For Heating, Ventilation And Air Conditioning (HVAC) Systems
London, UK

This course will provide an insight into different systems and how these are required to work to meet performance requirements. The monitoring of these systems, through Buildings Energy Management systems, will also be covered in order for you to understand how your energy is used and allow fine-tuning and improvements within your own company.

Occupant wellbeing is increasingly being seen as an important component in the delivery of any high performing business with people at its heart. This course will demonstrate the controls that can deliver good internal environments that are fundamental in creating the modern workplace.

Further details are available here:
https://cibse.force.com/s/lt-event?id=a1E0O00001Yr11CUAR
The Occupational Health & Safety Information Service
Health & Safety News Brief – Issue No. 316

5 August 2019, Machinery Series: Provision And Use Of Work Equipment Regulations (PUWER)
Buxton, UK

Machinery is used in many sectors to fabricate, handle and package industrial and consumer products. Everyone who works with machinery, whether directly or indirectly, need to understand the basics of machinery safety but not everyone needs to know all the details relating to the design.

This course covers those activities regulated by the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations (PUWER) and provides delegates with a thorough knowledge of this legislation. The course will also give practical advice on how to evaluate the safety of existing machines and how to measure and evaluate noise and vibration risks. This course can be taken in combination with the machinery risk assessment essentials course that takes place on the following day.

Further details are available here:

6 August 2019, HSE Inspectors’ Guide To Risk Assessment
Buxton, UK

This workshop will be delivered by a senior HSE inspector with more than 25 years of experience, and is a rare opportunity to understand your regulator by seeing the world through an inspector’s eyes.

You will learn: how HSE examines and uses employers' risk assessments; the common errors that HSE finds in the risk assessment process; and how to use this information to manage risks more effectively and avoid enforcement action.

Further details are available here:

6 August 2019, Machinery Series: Machinery Risk Assessment Essentials
Buxton, UK

This training course gives delegates practical hands-on experience of conducting a machinery risk assessment using structured techniques which demystify the process given in BS EN ISO 12100: 2010.

This course assumes a basic level of understanding of machinery safety such as that given in the machinery safety basics course that takes place on the previous day. Anyone who also needs a thorough understanding of the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regs should take this course in combination with the Machinery Safety Basics course held on the previous day. Anyone who needs a thorough understanding of the Supply of Machinery (Safety) Regs, should take this course in combination with the designing and selecting safe machinery course held on the following day.

Further details are available here:

6 August 2019, Sanitary And Rainwater Design
London, UK

Many of the drainage systems installed in the UK today are often based on designs from other European countries, meaning that engineers need to view the standard EN 12056 as a document that provides many options for designing and understanding modern drainage systems.
Although BS EN 12056 has not been revised since its publication, the way it is used has greatly.

This one day training course will take place in the style of an interactive workshop including a Drainage Walk and will look in detail at BS EN 12056, and its applications.

Further details are available here: https://cibse.force.com/eventapi__router?event=a1E0O00001atGcx

7-8 August 2019, Control Of Substances Hazardous To Health (COSHH) Training: Practical Assessment And Control
Buxton, UK

Many people tasked with COSHH assessments are unsure what is required or where to get information. Once the initial assessment is complete, they are often uncertain on how to approach control, and how to judge when control is adequate. This course aims to give that knowledge and those skills.

Day one covers assessing exposure and risk and includes case studies and the chance to work through examples. Day two moves on to implementing exposure controls that are effective and reliable, and includes practical demonstrations. The focus for both days is on practicality and effectiveness.

Further details are available here: www.hsl.gov.uk/health-and-safety-training-courses/coshh-training---practical-assessment-and-control

7 August 2019, Fire Sprinkler Systems: Design To BS EN 12845
London, UK

Properly installed and maintained automatic fire sprinkler systems help save lives. Because fire sprinkler systems react so quickly, they can dramatically reduce the heat, flames and smoke produced in a fire.

This course covers sprinkler system components; hazard classification; design requirements; water supplies; types of sprinkler; spacing and location of sprinkler heads; piping layout and sizing.

Further details are available here: https://cibse.force.com/s/lt-event?id=a1E0O00001YqwymUAB

7 August 2019, Machinery Series: Machinery Directive
Buxton, UK

This course gives delegates a thorough understanding of this legislation, as revised, as well as the key current European and International safety standards that support the Regulations. Delegates are shown how to build a technical file and have the opportunity to practice assessing conformity to the essential health and safety requirements. The purpose and content of a declaration of conformity and incorporation are explained along with when to use which.

The role and process of risk assessment are explained, however delegates who need a more detailed understanding of machinery risk assessment should attend the course on the previous day. An introduction to control system safety and some of the related standards is given. However those delegates who are directly involved in control system design, and need a more thorough understanding of the design of safety related control systems should also attend the course held on the following day.
Further details are available here: 

**7 August 2019, NEBOSH HSE Introduction To Incident Investigation**
Buxton, UK

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and the National Examination Board in Occupational Safety and Health (NEBOSH) have jointly developed a new one day qualification that shows how non-complex incidents can be investigated effectively. By learning lessons and making improvements, organisations can avoid similar incidents occurring in the future.

A practical assessment is completed at the end of the course. You will be provided with a pack of evidence and shown a video of three witness interviews. You will be asked to review the evidence, evaluate each interview and produce an action plan that will help prevent a recurrence of an incident.

Further details are available here: 

**8 August 2019, HSE Inspectors’ Guide To Improvement And Prohibition Notices**
Buxton, UK

This workshop will be delivered by a senior HSE inspector with more than 25 years of experience and is a rare opportunity to understand your regulator by seeing the world through an inspector's eyes.

You will learn why, when and how HSE takes formal enforcement action, how to influence formal HSE decisions and how to respond to receipt of a notice.

Further details are available here: 

**8 August 2019, Machinery Series: Designing And Specifying Safety Related Control Systems**
Buxton, UK

Control systems for machinery, whether electrical, pneumatic, hydraulic or combinations thereof, are often required to perform safety-related functions. There are regulatory requirements for these control systems and established approaches for dealing with their design, which are laid out in European Standards.

This course will help delegates understand how to specify and design safety related control circuits which comply with the requirements of both the Supply of Machinery (Safety) Regulations 2008 (Machinery Directive 2006/42/EC) and the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations. It explains how these, and other regulations and standards are applied to real-life situations, through the use of examples of how to and how not to do it.

Further details are available here: 

**16 August 2019, Construction (Design And Management) Regulations 2015 (CDM 2015): An Introduction To The Role Of The Principal Designer**
Buxton, UK
CDM 2015 creates a new role of the Principal Designer (PD) - a designer or design organisation appointed from the existing project team with duties to plan, manage and monitor the pre-construction phase and coordinate matters relating to health and safety during the pre-construction phase. A significant part of the course is intended to increase awareness and understanding of how construction risks can be mitigated through design and exchange of information.

This event provides an introduction to this new role and is aimed at designers, clients, contractors and/or individuals who may take on the pre-construction phase coordination role for the first time, or simply want to understand the PD function for small to medium size projects. It is not aimed at former CDM-Cs. The course will be delivered by an HSE Principal Inspector with over 30 years' experience.

Further details are available here:

16 August 2019, HSE Inspectors’ Guide To Electrical Safety
Buxton, UK

This workshop will be delivered by current and former Specialist Electrical Inspectors with extensive industry experience including giving guidance to duty holders, experience with serious incident investigations and enforcement action. The workshop is based on HSE's practical enforcement experience which arises out of the businesses it inspects, generally those in the higher risk industries but also those where although the hazards can be high, the risks are thought to be well-controlled.

The workshop will give you a practical understanding of what HSE inspectors are looking for in the control of general electrical safety risks, including the risk and appropriate controls. You will review known high risk electrical safety issues together with the appropriate controls based on HSE's investigation experiences and understand the practical application of HSE's Enforcement Management Model.

Further details are available here:
www.hsl.gov.uk/health-and-safety-training-courses/hse-inspectors%E2%80%99-guide-to-electrical-safety-

20 August 2019, NEBOSH HSE Certificate In Health And Safety Leadership Excellence
Manchester, UK

This qualification is specifically aimed at individuals currently in a position of senior leadership, e.g. Board Director, H&S Director, Operations Director, HR Director, Finance Director, as well as others in senior leadership positions, or those who are aspiring to become a senior leader.

The course covers financial and legal reasons for good health and safety leadership and also focuses on how leaders can become better advocates and influencers in relation to health and safety.

Further details are available here:

20 August 2019, Site And Transport Safety
Buxton, UK

Vehicle movements and loading and unloading vehicles can be some of the most dangerous work activities organisations carry out.
This course will help you understand the legal requirements of both road traffic law and workplace safety law, how and why things go wrong, and how you can take practicable steps to reduce risk in your business.

Further details are available here:  

27-29 August 2019, From Age Management To Life Course Management  
Skodsborg, Denmark

This course will focus on life course management concept and practices in work organizations comprising not only organizational level activities, such as top management, HR-policy and line-management practices, but also individual level activities, such as peer-support groups, self-help tools and work ability coaching.

The purpose of the course is to provide participants clear insights of current empirical evidence of effectiveness of organizational and individual level activities in supporting longer and better working careers among employees with all ages. Participants will gain understanding of theoretical background concepts and their practical application in form of concrete tools for work organizations as part of life course management practices.

Further details are available here:  
https://niva.org/course/from-age-management-to-life-course-management

28 August 2019, Embracing Disability In The Workplace  
London, UK

Despite 22% of the working age population being classed as disabled, employers are still not making the necessary workplace adjustments to be disability confident. The employment rate for the able to work disabled population is 30% lower than that of the rest of the population. With the government investing funds into reducing the disability pay gap, there are plenty of steps that can be taken to bring our disabled population into work.

Our ‘Embracing Disability in the Workplace’ conference will equip you with insight into the assistance that is available to disability employers and provide you with the skills necessary to benefit from this largely untapped pool of talent.

Further details are available here:  
www.westminster-briefing.com/event/embracing-disability-workplace

29 August 2019, Permitted Development Rights In Planning: Policy Updates, Mitigating Problems And Making Use Of Opportunities  
London, UK

Utilising permitted development rights fundamentally changes the route many take in the planning process. PDRs allow certain building and development works to be carried out without the need to make a planning application. With the government recently announcing reforms in this area, including new permanent rights to support the regeneration of the high street and to create new homes, how can your organisation mitigate problems and make use of opportunities where these rights apply?

Join Westminster Briefing on the 29th August to hear of the latest policy changes in utilising permitted development rights in the planning process. This is your opportunity to understand how your organisation can make use of the opportunities when these rights are utilised and mitigate problems when deployed without sufficient foresight.
Further details are available here: www.westminster-briefing.com/Permitted_Development_Rights

3-5 September 2019, Electromagnetic Fields (EMF) Regulations Training: Competent Persons Course
Scarborough, UK

With the implementation of The Control of Electromagnetic Fields at Work Regulations in 2016 it is important for any organisation to understand if EMF may impact on its employees or visitors. This may include the effect of work equipment on medical implants as well as direct effect on the human body.

The course is designed to meet the requirements of the Electromagnetic Fields Regulations, giving you the knowledge and skills to be classed as ‘competent’ to carry out risk assessments and control measures. The subjects covered vary from the principles of fields and waves, to the identification and management of EMF problems. Practical elements are included to help you with the task of reducing exposure in the workplace and to assist in getting to grips with measuring instrumentation.

Further details are available here: www.castletrainingacademy.com/emf-regulations-training.php

4 September 2019, The Importance Of Energy Efficient Buildings
London, UK

This one-day course looks at why it is important for buildings to use energy efficiently. The course looks at heating and cooling systems, and how they fit into a building.

Renewable systems are also covered allowing the delegate to understand how they can have a considerable impact on the buildings energy use.

Further details are available here: https://cibse.force.com/eventapi_router?event=a1E0O00001YqxCA9

9-13 September 2019, 24th International Symposium On Shiftwork And Working Time
Coeur d’Alene, USA

The International Symposium on Shiftwork and Working Time provides a welcoming setting for scientists, researchers, practitioners, trainees, and other stakeholders concerned with shiftwork and working time organization to come together, network, and collaborate. Symposium participants from across the globe present the latest research on shiftworker alertness, safety, health, and well-being, debate recent developments in working time arrangements and policies, and discuss fatigue risk management and health intervention solutions.

Rich in both science and networking opportunities, the meeting will feature over 70 presentations and scores of posters. See the ‘Keynote Speakers,’ ‘Symposia,’ and ‘Program’ tabs for more information. Abstracts of presentations and posters from the meeting will be published in the journal Sleep Science prior to the conference. Following the meeting, attendees will be invited to submit papers for the conference proceedings, which will be published in a special supplement of the peer-reviewed journal Chronobiology International.

Further details are available here: www.eiseverywhere.com/ehome/363296
10 September 2019, Building Services One Day Overview
London, UK

This one day course covers building services found in commercial buildings.

The course looks at heating and cooling systems, how to use them efficiently and how they fit within a building. Electrical and renewable systems are also covered allowing you to understand how they can have a considerable impact on the building's energy use.

Further details are available here: https://cibse.force.com/eventapi__router?event=a1E0O00001YqwyN

10 September 2019, Improving UK Occupational Health And Safety: Protecting Human Rights And Ensuring Healthy Work Environments
London, UK

Health and Safety Executive statistics show that each year, over a million workers are injured or made ill by their work in the UK (2018). In 2017, the total costs of workplace injuries and ill health to the UK economy was £15 billion, and 15.4 million working days were lost due to work related stress, depression or anxiety (MHFA 2018). Not only are employees experiencing work-related ill health, but also many UK workers are subject to inadequate working conditions. A recent Unite the Union study discovered that tens of thousands of workers across the UK are either not provided with proper toilets or have restrictions placed upon them in using facilities.

In view of these challenges, this symposium will offer health and safety practitioners, HR professionals, local authorities and other key stakeholders with a timely and invaluable opportunity to scrutinise current health and safety regulations and develop priorities for delivering enhanced protections in British workplaces.

Further details are available here: www.publicpolicyexchange.co.uk/events/JI10-PPE

10-12 September 2019, Physical Exercise At The Workplace
Hanaholmen, Finland

Musculoskeletal disorders such as back and neck-shoulder pain is a major problem in the working environment and is associated with reduced work ability and sickness absence. Physical exercise at the workplace – and especially simple strength training exercises, e.g. with elastic bands – have shown promising results in preventing and reducing musculoskeletal pain and improving work ability in different occupational groups. Several factors are required for a successful implementation of physical exercise at the workplace.

The objective of the course is to provide the participants with theoretical knowledge and hands-on experience on how to design, perform and evaluate workplace interventions for increased physical exercise and reduced sitting time for improved musculoskeletal and cardiovascular health.

Further details are available here: https://niva.org/course/physical-exercise-at-the-workplace-from-research-to-practice-2

11 September 2019, Gas Safety Regulations (Designing For Compliance)
London, UK

This training course will cover the background and stated requirements of the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations (1998).
As well as a thorough overview the trainer will cover the interpretation and application of the Regulations, as detailed in the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) Approved Code of Practice Document L56, as well as the function of HSE and the Gas Safe Register.

Further details are available here:
https://cibse.force.com/eventapi__router?event=a1E0O00001Yqwyw

**11-12 September 2019, Thirteenth Carbon Dioxide Utilization Summit**
Calgary, Canada

Active Communications International Inc.’s 13th Carbon Dioxide Utilization Summit will follow on from the successful series of conferences focusing on the re-use of greenhouse gas CO2 and converting this into profitable sustainable and commercial materials. It will be taking place in Calgary, Canada on the 11th and 12th of September 2019, and it's a one-time special edition of this event.

The two day event will bring together senior experts from various CO2 emitting industries discussing sustainable, technological and commercial aspects of CO2 Utilization in Canada and across the globe. With technology comparisons focusing on economic, environmental, and social indicators, our panel of speakers will highlight knowledgeable insights into commercial application and development of technology and products.

Further details are available here:
www.wplgroup.com/aci/event/co2-canada

**16-18 September 2019, 8th Occupational And Environmental Exposure Of Skin To Chemicals Conference**
Dublin, Ireland

The Occupational and Environmental Exposure of Skin to Chemicals (OEESC) conference is the leading international conference on skin exposure bringing together experts from wide ranging fields including occupational hygiene, health and safety, dermatology, skin research and consumer fields. The focus of the 8th OEESC conference is to bring together expertise and latest knowledge to share and discuss a range of issues with the aim of reducing skin exposure and improving health.

The conference will bring together researchers, practitioners, regulators, dermatologists, health and safety professionals, occupational health advisers, occupational hygienists, toxicologists, product formulators and other experts from around the world to discuss the very latest issues that affect skin exposure management.

Further details are available here:
www.oescaping.com

**17 September 2019, Energy Monitoring And Targeting**
London, UK

This one-day course has been designed to provide practical guidance and techniques on Energy Monitoring and Metering, and so provide a solid foundation by which a building or organisation’s energy use can be captured and reported.

The course also aims to explore ways in which energy monitoring and metering can be implemented and how the data captured can be utilised to identify trends, benchmark, and determine and formulate energy reduction targets.

Further details are available here:
https://cibse.force.com/eventapi__router?event=a1E0O00001YqxXB
17-19 September 2019, Hand Arm Vibration Syndrome (HAVS) Training: Competent Persons Course
Scarborough, UK

This Hand Arm Vibration (HAVS) Vibration Training course covers Hand-Arm Vibration and Whole Body Vibration with a 3 day residential course. Covering the most up to date legislation and standards; practical use of vibration meters and vibration measurement theory, you will leave this training course (subject to successful completion of all three modules) as a Competent Person.

If your workforce operate hand held power tools or vibrating plant and machinery, then it's likely that vibration exposure is a potential issue within your organisation. This course is ideal for Health and Safety professionals, works managers, engineers or simply the individual(s) responsible for safety within your organisation.

Further details are available here:
www.castletrainingacademy.com/havs-vibration-training.php

17-19 September 2019, Noise At Work Training: Competent Persons Course
Peterborough, UK

Any organisation where noise is an issue should have a competent person for Noise at Work Risk Assessments. This person may be a professional safety officer, a works manager or simply someone who has been given the responsibility for it. The course forms an ideal follow up to a NEBOSH diploma or can be simply stand-alone.

The course is designed to meet the requirements of the Noise at Work Regulations, giving you the knowledge and skills to be classed as ‘competent’ to carry out Noise at Work Risk Assessments. The subjects covered vary from the principles of acoustics to the identification and management of noise problems. Practical elements are included to help you with the task of reducing noise exposure in the workplace.

Further details are available here:
www.castletrainingacademy.com/noise-at-work-training.php

17 September 2019, The Next Steps For Developing Brownfield Sites
London, UK

Developing brownfield sites delivers a number of key benefits. Not only does brownfield development recover desirable locations whilst reducing potential environmental damage and greenbelt spawl, but in the process can help regenerate urban areas and renovate derelict sites. With the Campaign to Protect Rural England's 2019 report stating that there is enough brownfield sites in England to build over one million new homes, two thirds of which could be delivered in five years; what are the next steps for developing brownfield sites in the U.K.?

Join this Westminster Briefing on 17th September 2019 to understand the latest policy initiatives and how to overcome barriers when developing brownfield sites. You will learn from good practice examples how to effectively decontaminate and develop brownfield sites, which you can implement within your own setting.

Further details are available here:
www.westminster-briefing.com/event/Brownfield_Sites
Human Trafficking and Migrant Smuggling have become a major problem in the EU; consequently, the exploitation of vulnerable persons has been increasing over the last years. According to the data collection published by the European Commission in 2018, in the period 2015-2016 the number of registered victims of human trafficking in the EU28 was 20,532, with a dramatic rise of almost 5,000 persons comparing to the period 2013-2014. Sexual exploitation prevails as the most common form of exploitation, accounting for more than half of the registered victims of trafficking in human beings. Over half (56%) of the victims were non-EU citizens, showing that human trafficking is strongly related to the migrant flows that border Member States have been facing for the last six years.

Whilst the European Union is implementing new actions to address the phenomenon, this international symposium provides an invaluable opportunity to discuss the causes of human trafficking and migrant smuggling and to study multi-agency approaches to prevent it. Participants will have the chance to share new ideas to offer support and protections to victims of human trafficking. Public Policy Exchange welcomes EU officials, stakeholders, legal practitioners and other responsible authorities to attend the symposium, which promises a thought-provoking and topical discussion.

Further details are available here: www.publicpolicyexchange.co.uk/events/JI18-PPE2

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**18-20 September 2019, Building Services Explained**
Birmingham, UK

This three-day course covers building services found in commercial buildings. The course looks at heating and cooling systems, how to use them efficiently and how they fit within a building.

Electrical and renewable systems are also covered allowing the delegate to understand how they can have a considerable impact on the buildings energy use.

Further details are available here: https://cibse.force.com/eventapi__router?event=a1E0O00001YqwEt

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**18-20 September 2019, Mechanical Services Explained**
London, UK

Engineering services in buildings are complex and often account for more than 40% of the capital cost of a building. Increasing demands to conserve energy and improve environmental performance mean that good design, efficient operation and reliable maintenance of services have never been more important.

This course looks at heating and cooling systems, how to use them efficiently, and how they fit within a building.

Further details are available here: https://cibse.force.com/eventapi__router?event=a1E0O00001YqwLJ

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**19 September 2019, Biodiversity 2020 And Beyond: Developing UK Strategy And Embedding Conservation At The National And Local Levels**
London, UK

The most recent biodiversity indicators published by the Department for Environment, Rural and Agricultural Affairs (Defra) found that just over half of the long-term measures included within the
government's Biodiversity 2020 Strategy demonstrated an 'improvement' in 2018 (Defra, 2019). The landmark Agriculture Bill 2017-19 is expected to deliver transformative change to the existing farming subsidy system. Farmers will begin to receive payment in exchange for producing 'public goods' under a revised Environmental Land Management System (Defra, 2018). The intended effect is to create a fairer balance between farming for food production and maintaining critical biodiversity. Additionally, an ongoing consultation by the Government seeks to determine whether the concept of 'biodiversity net gain' should be formally embedded within local planning permission authorisation processes.

This symposium therefore represents a unique and timely opportunity for national government, local authorities, environmental organisations, developers, third sector organisations and other key stakeholders to examine progress towards biodiversity targets. Delegates will also contribute to the development of innovative future strategies to promote and safeguard national biodiversity.

Further details are available here: www.publicpolicyexchange.co.uk/events/JI19-PPEX

20 September 2019, Fire Risk Assessment To PAS 79
London, UK

PAS 79 is now virtually the industry standard for carrying out fire risk assessments, the latest revision was published in 2012, and gives more detailed guidance on assessing buildings that do not meet current benchmark standards.

This course reviews the PAS and considers the issue of competence of risk assessors.

Further details are available here: https://cibse.force.com/eventapi_router?event=a1E0O00001Yqx2Z

23-26 September 2019, 10th International Conference On The Prevention Of Accidents At Work
Vienna, Austria

Main theme: The Future of Safety in a Digitalised World

From 23rd – 26th September 2019, the 10th International Conference on the Prevention of Accidents at Work – WOS 2019 will take place in Vienna. The congress, focusing on the prevention of workplace accidents – WOS: Working on Safety – aims at bringing together experts from all over the world in order to facilitate a high-level exchange of experience, new findings and good practice solutions. The congress will be an excellent occasion for representatives of H&S organizations, labour inspectors, safety professionals, researchers, policy makers, labour administrators and other experts to broaden the personal prevention horizon and to get in touch with experts from other countries and other safety-cultures.

Further details are available here: www.wos2019.net

24 September 2019, Gender Equality In The Workplace
London, UK

In recent years, companies have consistently reported that they are highly committed to gender diversity. Unfortunately, this commitment has not translated into meaningful progress.

This conference offers practical advice on removing the barriers that are preventing equality in the workplace. We will discuss together how best to take responsibility for diversity in our organisations, and how to encourage a positive culture change to the benefit of all in your place of work.
Further details are available here:  
www.westminster-briefing.com/event/gender-equality-workplace

25 September 2019, Protecting UK Water Quality: Improving Water Management And Tackling Pollution  
London, UK

Latest biodiversity indicators show that between 2012 and 2017, there has been a 33% reduction of surface water bodies in England with high or good status (DEFRA, 2018). Moreover, roughly half of all groundwater bodies are not expected to reach good chemical status in time for 2021 targets. Whilst the total number of events has declined, serious pollution incidents continue to occur at an alarming rate. Over the last ten years, the amount of serious water pollution events caused by water companies has been consistent at around 60 incidents per year (Environment Agency, 2018). In 2017, Thames Water were dealt a record-breaking fine of £20.3 million after the company reportedly released 1.9 billion litres on untreated sewage into the Thames.

Despite commitments by successive governments, key stakeholders including the water industry, agriculture and rural land managers, urban and transport bodies have substantial roles to play in safeguarding national water bodies. With major components of the Government’s strategic framework in place, delegates will scrutinise existing measures to maximise water quality at the national and local level. They will also determine cost-effective methods of tackling pollution and improving our water environment.

Further details are available here:  
www.publicpolicyexchange.co.uk/events/JI25-PPE

26 September 2019, The Importance Of Staff Networks  
London, UK

Staff Networks hold enormous potential to influence the levels of staff engagement and productivity in the workplace. When operating efficiently they enable employees from minority groups to feel accepted, tackling the under-utilisation of skills and encouraging diverse talent. To remain competitive, employers must make effective use of staff networks to benefit from their employees’ full potential.

This Diverse Workforce event will supply you with the tools and strategies needed to reap the benefits of a motivated workforce.

Further details are available here:  
www.westminster-briefing.com/event/importance-staff-networks
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Welcome to the second part of the Occupational Health and Safety Information Service News Brief

This part of the News Brief contains news articles and prosecution summaries in the field of environmental health and health and safety from the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH).

Areas that they will be focusing on include; noise pollution, food safety, air quality, occupational health issues and relevant industry prosecutions.

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Biocidal Products Committee Concludes On Authorisations For Disinfectants And Pest Control

The European Biocidal Products Committee (BPC) adopted one opinion concluding that the active substance DBNPA should not be approved for product type 4 (food and feed area). DBNPA or 2,2-dibromo-3-nitrilopropionamide is a quick-kill biocide that easily hydrolyses under both acidic and alkaline conditions.

New EU Study On Repprotoxic Chemicals


Research Priorities To Stimulate Innovation And Effective Communication

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) has identified research priorities for food safety for the next 5 to 10 years. In order to inform research agendas, a paper presents three research streams bringing together the main research needs and priorities in support of food safety risk assessments in the coming years.

BSI Publishes New Standard For Public Sector Procurement

The UK public sector spends over £250 billion, about one-third of public expenditure, on the procurement of goods and services from the private sector. Past procurement practices favoured the bigger, more established organizations and lesser known alternative and smaller firms have often felt unable to compete.

EU Wide Comparison Of Quality Related Food Product Characteristics

The European Commission has published the results of a Pan-European testing campaign of food products showing that some products are identically or similarly branded while having a different composition.

Video Highlights Dangers Of Construction Sites To Children

With the school holidays just around the corner it’s worth highlighting the South Yorkshire and Humberside WWT produced Stay Safe, Stay Away film.
Government To Overhaul Housing Health And Safety Rating System

In October 2018 the Government launched a scoping review to consider whether the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) should be updated and, if so, to what extent. The review has now concluded, and the Minister for Housing and Homelessness announced that a comprehensive overhaul of the HHSRS will be undertaken later in the year.

This will make it simpler and quicker for local authorities to assess health and safety standards in rented homes, helping them to improve conditions for tenants and better tackle rogue landlords. The system will be simplified, minimum standards for common health and safety hazards will be developed and that digital solutions for inspecting rented houses and flats will be explored.

The HHSRS is used by local authorities to assess a range of potential hazards in rented properties, such as damp, excess cold and electrical faults as well as fire and falls. However, it has not been updated in over 12 years and tenants, and landlords, tenants and local authorities are of the opinion that it is complicated and inefficient to use.

This work is an important part of ongoing Government action to drive up standards in the rental sector – ensuring tenants are living in safe and secure properties; cracking down on the small minority of landlords that are renting out unsafe and substandard accommodation; and ensuring the housing market works for everyone.

The recommendations of the scoping review set out 3 options for the second stage of the NHSRS review:

• Option 1 is the minimum required to improve, clarify and modernise the HHSRS assessment.

• Option 2 includes Option 1 and will also address whether some hazard profiles can be removed or combined and to improve the guidance given to landlords and tenants.

• Option 3 would result in a comprehensive review of the HHSRS assessment process by building on options 1 and 2.

The Government intends to proceed with Option 2 as this will make the system easier to understand for landlords and tenants, correct the disconnect between the HHSRS and other legislative standards, and facilitate the effective enforcement of housing standards by local authorities. It is also the most cost-effective option.


Rabies Risks For Travellers

PHE has published a new leaflet on the risk of rabies for travellers visiting countries where the virus is known - or thought to - occur (particularly Asia, Africa and parts of Central and South America).

The leaflet explains the activities that could require a pre-travel course of vaccination, as well as the general precautions to take when visiting rabies-endemic destinations. It explains:

• what to do before travelling

• what to do if bitten, scratched or licked by an animal

• rabies post-exposure treatment
For health professionals, the leaflet advises on dealing with patients who are presenting as having had a bite, scratch or lick from an animal while visiting those areas.


Precautions When Using Disinfectants For Pools And Spas
The French safety agency: Agence nationale de sécurité sanitaire de l'alimentation, de l'environnement et du travail (ANSES) is calling for owners of spas and swimming pools to remain vigilant when using disinfectant products in order to avoid accidents.

To enjoy swimming pools and spas safely, it is important to maintain good water quality with disinfectants. However, these products often contain chlorine and their use without precautions is not without risks.

During prolonged storage or in the presence of moisture, the products may degrade and release at the time of opening toxic vapours which, inhaled, can cause severe irritation of the respiratory tract.

It is therefore important to keep these products in a cool place, out of direct sunlight and moisture, in their original container, closed and upright. As with all hazardous chemicals, care should be taken not to store them in the vicinity of flammable materials such as solvents or gasoline due to the risk of fire or explosion.

When using, it is recommended to open the product carefully, preferably outside, avoiding breathing any emerging vapours.

If prior dissolving is necessary, it is important to always pour the product into the water and not the other way around to avoid the risk of splashes and burns. Indeed, adding water directly to the product can cause an explosive exothermic reaction.

Finally, be careful not to mix in the same container chlorination products with other products for the pool, as it could cause a release of chlorine vapours or an explosive reaction. To avoid this type of accident, use different dosing cups, which are clean and dry, for each product.

Whatever the maintenance products used, it is essential to respect the recommended doses and it is important to monitor in particular the concentration of chlorine by making regular analysis of the water. Chlorine doses that are too high can cause eye, nose and throat irritation in swimmers and too low doses may give rise to the contamination of water by microorganisms, especially when the pool is frequented by many swimmers and when the temperature is high.

Disinfectants for pools and spas: observe the precautions for use (currently only available in French): www.anses.fr/fr/content/d%C3%A9sinfectants-pour-piscines-et-spas-respecter-les-pr%C3%A9cautions-d%E2%80%99emploi

All-Party Parliamentary Group On Whistleblowing Demands Radical Reforms
The All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Whistleblowing has demanded radical reforms to legislation in order to stamp out the ‘cycle of abuse’ that many staff face after raising concerns, which can sometimes involve disciplinary action, demotion, pay reduction and even dismissal.

In 1998 the UK became the first EU nation to introduce legal rights and protections for whistleblowers when The Public Interest Disclosure Act was introduced. While ground-breaking it has failed in its most important role - to protect the whistleblower - perhaps because ‘Whistleblowing’ still has no definition in law. It is however generally understood to be an act by an individual or individuals that exposes wrongdoing or perceived wrongdoing on the part of an organisation of any kind. In the last twenty years, however, the UK regulation on whistleblowing has become very fragmented and incomplete and it is no longer deemed fit for purpose.
The APPG for Whistleblowing was thus launched in July 2018 to look at the case for an Independent Office for the Whistleblower and an online survey was launched in October 2018. The purpose of the survey was to raise awareness about the APPG and gather evidence on whistleblowing practices from as wide an audience as possible across all sectors.

Evidence from research and the survey exposes that often organisation adopt a Deny, Delay, Defend approach to whistleblowing. Whistleblowers can be subjected to retaliation often within hours of raising issues.

The survey also shows that, after the whistle is blown the first time, only in a very small number of cases (7.6%) the wrongdoing or malpractice is acted upon, while in the majority of cases (55.3%) no action is taken. In the remaining cases, ‘other’ responses followed the reporting.

The vast majority (77.8%) of respondents declared that the organisation retaliated against them. In most other cases, the respondents have indicated that organisation was not supportive (14.2%). Only in a limited number of cases the organisation was deemed to be generally supportive (5.2%) or very supportive (2.8%). These responses, together with open comments by the respondents help shed light on the nature of the ‘other’ responses. In the best cases, these comments report adherence to formal and published procedures but disappointingly result in no substantial outcome and 'whitewash' investigations. In the worst cases, they report criticism, personal attacks, false allegations and attempts to discredit the whistleblower, cover up, ‘perversion of the course of justice’, attempts to destroy evidence, bullying, disciplinary action, suspension, threat of dismissal, dismissal.

Moreover, most respondents (91.2%) indicated that the organisation did not follow the appropriate procedures to manage whistleblowing as directed by the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service.

Whistleblowers put forward a range of ideas and suggestions and called for a thorough review and overhaul of existing legislation to include:

- An Independent office, regulator or ombudsman with regional centres
- Legal protection
- Equality of arms
- Specialist independent tribunals

The APPG recommendations include:

- A legal definition of the term ‘whistleblower’
- A revision of the legal definition of whistleblowing to include any harmful violation of integrity and ethics, even when not criminal or illegal. The focus should be on the harm (or risk of harm) to public.
- Protection for whistleblowers, including protection against retaliation.
- Mandatory Internal and external reporting mechanisms and protections to be adopted and include meaningful penalties for those who fail to meet the requirements across all sectors to include those currently outside of the regulations, e.g. journalists and clergy.
- A further review of compensation awarded by employment tribunals.
- An urgent review of the barriers to justice including access to legal aid and an introduction of measures to tackle inequality of arms including protection against costs.
- A ban on non-disclosure agreements in whistleblowing cases.
• Better regulatory framework and coordination to include the introduction of international best practice and a public awareness campaign.

• There should be an urgent review of the prescribed persons list, a more comprehensive guide to their role and measures put in place to ensure that they fulfil their responsibilities.

• The introduction and establishment of an Independent Office for the Whistleblower with real powers allowing it to; set standards, enforce the protections, and administer meaningful penalties to not only organisations but individuals within organisations.

The report: Whistleblowing - The Personal Cost of Doing the Right Thing and the Cost to Society of Ignoring it is available at: www.appgwhistleblowing.co.uk

Declining Vulnerability To Climate-Related Hazards
Societies worldwide have become more resilient to climate disasters but climate change is likely to result in an unprecedented rise in climate extremes, which will challenge the climate resilience and adaptive capacity of our societies.

A recent EU Joint Research Centre (JRC) study shows that over the last four decades, societies around the world have increased their capacity to cope with climate disasters.

The findings indicate that adaptation represents an opportunity to make our societies more resilient and minimise future impacts of climate change in Europe.

From 1980 to 2016, the occurrence of climate extremes, their death tolls and economic losses continued to rise in many parts of the world. Global warming, fuelled by demographic change and urbanisation, is likely to result in more people and economic value being exposed to climate extremes in the decades to come.

This means that societies will need to adapt and better protect themselves against these hazards which is also one of the main messages of the Paris Agreement on climate.

In order to better understand the capacity to cope with climate extremes of societies around the world, researchers studied global trends in resilience since 1980. The scientists looked at impacts of 7 climate extremes: floods, flash floods, coastal floods, cold related hazard, heatwaves, droughts, and wind related hazards. More than 16,000 loss records of human deaths and economic losses were analysed.

Between 1980 and 2016, the total number of reported fatalities amounted to 815,293 EUR and the overall damage to 2,436 billion EUR.

Scientists analysed all the disasters worldwide for which these impacts have been reported.

These range from major disasters such as Hurricane Katrina and the 2003 European heatwave, which amounted to hundreds of billions of Euros of economic losses and/or thousands of fatalities, to smaller scale events such as the January 2013 floods in South-Africa, for which the reported impacts in the regions of Limpopo and Mpumalanga totalled 12 fatalities and 38 million EUR of damages.

Scientists then mapped exposure to these disasters using detailed snapshots in time of human presence and wealth.

The study shows that the number of people killed by extreme climate events – as a proportion of the population exposed to such events – dropped by more than 6 times over the past four decades.
The economic loss rate, which refers to the damage caused by climate extremes as a proportion of the economic value exposed to these hazards, is now about one-fifth compared to the 1980s.

The evidence also shows that when societies become wealthier they become more resilient.

In countries with the lowest income levels the effect of increasing wealth on reducing disaster impacts has been much stronger than in richer countries.

As a result, the disparity in resilience between lower and higher income countries has become smaller, although the gap still remains considerable.

The strong link that was found between resilience and wealth suggests that poverty eradication, improved living conditions, better social protection and economic inclusiveness will further increase the capacity of countries to adapt to the impacts of a changing climate.

As a country develops economically, the investments in protection measures to natural hazards, early warning systems, and disaster risk management strategies improve.

These actions also facilitate the response and recovery that follow on a natural disaster.

Climate change is likely to result in an unprecedented rise in climate extremes, which will challenge the climate resilience and adaptive capacity of our societies.

This requires a strong EU Strategy and preparedness actions by Member States to further reduce the vulnerability of their citizens and economies to climate hazards in order to minimise future climate impacts in Europe.

Poorer countries remain particularly vulnerable to climate hazards and huge investments or changes in these societies may be needed to close the vulnerability gap with richer countries.

Guiseppe Formetta et al:

Empirical evidence of declining global vulnerability to climate-related hazards


Further Understanding Of Tinnitus

Tinnitus is sound perceived in the absence of an external sound source. This abnormal auditory sensation, which can be in the form of buzzing, ringing or whistling, affects one or both ears.

For a significant number of people with hearing loss, it can cause considerable deterioration in the quality of life and ability to work. In the two studies described in this report, a recent model, referred to as central auditory gain, has been used to integrate normal and pathological data into the same conceptual framework.

It has been speculated that central auditory gain is a normal mechanism by which the auditory system modulates its response when acoustic conditions change. For example, auditory sensitivity increases with auditory deprivation, while it decreases with auditory stimulation. This phenomenon has been documented in adults with normal hearing. However, mainly subjective assessments of intensity have been measured, leaving questions about the existence and the localisation of this central auditory gain mechanism unaddressed.

The objective of the first study was to demonstrate the existence of central auditory gain and to localise it functionally. Two groups of adults with normal hearing wore earplugs or noise generators for one week. They underwent tests before and after deprivation (earplugs) or stimulation (noise generators) with a hearing assessment battery that included measurements from the cochlea to the auditory cortex. The results demonstrate that the auditory system effectively modulates its response.
According to acoustic conditions (deprivation or stimulation, although less so for the latter), and that this modulation does not occur at the peripheral level (i.e., in the cochlea), but within the auditory cortex, i.e., in the highest level of the auditory system. In fact, in the study, no change was observed below this level. Thus, the presence of auditory gain modulation of purely central origin is supported by data.

The objective of the second study was to examine whether the central auditory gain could be modulated among adults with tinnitus. In this population, it has been suggested that the central auditory gain mechanism is maladaptive (in that it overreacts to stimuli), and that it could be responsible for tinnitus and hyperacusis, which are defined as auditory hypersensitivity. The model suggests that tinnitus reflects spontaneous neural hyperactivity, while hyperacusis reflects hyperactivity caused by external sounds. Essentially, the central auditory gain appears to be chronically altered among people with tinnitus and hyperacusis and constitutes the principal pathophysiological mechanism in hearing disorders. If such is the case, a return to normal of the gain adaptation mechanisms should be reflected by a decrease in the sensitivity observed in appraisals of loudness and even a decrease in the intensity of the tinnitus. In the second study, participants with or without hearing loss, and who had tinnitus, used noise generators for three weeks. Auditory and psychometric measurements were taken before the test, after one week of wearing the generators, after three weeks, and then one month after the end of the tests.

The laboratory results suggest that wearing noise generators decreases sensitivity to external sounds and reduces the loudness of tinnitus. This decrease was more significant in the group without hearing loss. The subjective intensity of the tinnitus and the disturbance that it causes in daily life, as measured by visual analogue scales, also declines with treatment. The preliminary findings are the first resulting from a joint examination of two different tasks (the loudness of tinnitus and loudness functions) that involve a modulation of intensity (external sounds and tinnitus) possibly originating from a common mechanism, normal in one case and pathological in the other. Overall, the data suggest that the central auditory gain mechanism, present among the participants with normal hearing, could be used successfully to objectively measure improvement after the use of noise generators in people suffering from tinnitus and hyperacusis.

Central Auditory Gain Modulation in the Rehabilitation of Workers with Tinnitus: [www.irsst.qc.ca/media/documents/PubIRSST/R-1041.pdf](www.irsst.qc.ca/media/documents/PubIRSST/R-1041.pdf)

**Industrial Pollution Worsens Health Inequality**

The 5th SENTIERI report was published in Italy in June 2019. SENTIERI is an Italian project collecting data on sites with identified industrial pollution.

In a study of residents living near to Italian polluted sites, SENTIERI used a standardised methodology to analyse the health profile of such areas, looking at mortality and hospitalisation rates and the incidence of cancers and birth defects. The study also looked at cancers contracted by children and adolescents as well as the hospitalisation rate of this age bracket. The study provides in-depth evidence of the multiple consequences for populations exposed to industrial pollution, enabling preventive measures by public health organisations to be better targeted. It also highlights the trans-generational consequences of industrial pollution.

The study covered a total of 45 sites in 319 municipalities with a total population of around 5.9 million. The data collected relates to deaths and hospitalisations in the period 2006-2013.

The study revealed high excess mortality involving 5,267 men and 6,725 women. These figures are calculated on the basis of the average mortality in the regions in which the polluted sites are located. With specific regard to cancers, excess mortality involves 3,375 men and 1,910 women. The most striking excesses of cancer involved mesothelioma, lung cancer, colon cancer and stomach cancer.

The situation among children and adolescents (between 0 and 19) and young adults (between 20 and 29) is also greatly affected by industrial pollution. Looking solely at the first year of life, there was an excess of 7,000 hospitalisations (2,000 of which were linked to perinatal health problems). Among the
hospitalisation excesses in the 0 - 14 age range, acute respiratory problems and asthma play a significant role.

A further finding is a significant excess of cancers in the 0 - 24 age range, due mainly to sarcomas among children, acute myeloid leukaemia among children and young adults, and non-Hodgkin's lymphoma and testicular cancers among young adults.

Fifteen of the sites studied are covered by birth defect registers. In seven of them, significant excesses were found for genital organs, the heart, the limbs, the nervous system, the digestive system and the urinary tract. For example, around the site of the Mantua chemical cluster, a significantly higher incidence of birth defects involving the nervous system and the heart was found.

Estimates point to some 342,000 contaminated sites in Europe, of which just 15% have been subjected to remediation. Generally speaking, multiple forms of pollution exist, with both soil and water contaminated. Such pollution is the result of (past and present) industrial activities or the storage and recycling of waste. If researchers were to include the quality of air, the number of sites to be considered would be much higher.

This situation is contributing greatly to health inequality, especially as the populations living near the contaminated sites generally belong to the least privileged social classes.


New Antibiotics Appear Not To Trigger Resistance In Mice
Researchers have developed two new antibiotics that are effective against Gram-positive and negative multi-resistant bacteria, and they also appear not to trigger resistance when used to treat infection in mice.

Whilst antibiotics have saved countless lives over the previous century of their use in humans their growing resistance is gradually rendering them ineffective, with the threat of catastrophic public health consequences should this trend continue much longer. Moreover, the few new antibiotics being brought to market are derived from existing classes of antibiotics.

Researchers from Inserm and Université de Rennes recently identified a new bacterial toxin which they transformed into potent antibiotics active against various bacteria responsible for human infections, whether Gram-positive or negative. The researchers realised that a toxin produced by Staphylococcus aureus whose role is to facilitate infection is also capable of killing other bacteria present in our body. They had identified a molecule with dual toxic and antibiotic properties and were of the opinion that if they could separate these activities, they would be able to create a new antibiotic non-toxic to the body.

A new family of so-called peptidomimetics was thus synthesised. As their name suggests, these peptides are inspired by the existing natural bacterial peptides but have been shortened and modified. Out of the twenty molecules created, two proved effective against resistant Staphylococcus aureus and Pseudomonas aeruginosa in mouse models of severe sepsis or skin infection. In addition, no toxicity to the other cells and organs, whether in animals or human cells was observed. These new compounds are well tolerated at their active doses and are devoid of the renal toxicity issues often encountered with this type of compound.

It is important to note that the bacteria that researchers had left in contact for several days in the animals with these antibiotics showed no signs of resistance. In order to progress the study, the researchers created conditions favourable to the development of resistance in vitro and in vivo, with nothing happening. However, caution is still required here given the short experimental time periods (up to 15 days).
The antibacterial activity of these peptidomimetics is partially due to the capacity of its non-natural amino acids to reinforce the association of these compounds with the membranes of the infectious bacteria. This strong binding leads to membrane permeability and the death of the bacteria. The next step involves launching phase I clinical trials in humans.

Irène Nicolas, Valérie Bordeau, Arnaud Bondon, Michèle Baudy-Floc’h, Brice Felden.

Novel antibiotics effective against gram-positive and -negative multi-resistant bacteria with limited resistance.

PLOS Biology, 2019; 17 (7): e3000337 DOI: 10.1371/journal.pbio.3000337

**LGA Publishes New Councillors’ Guidance To Handling Intimidation**

The Local Government Association and the Welsh Local Government Association have published a guide for local councillors on how to manage and protect themselves against increasing incidents of intimidation.

The Councillors’ Guidance to Handling Intimidation includes detailed advice on:

- Personal safety at ward surgeries, lone working, attendance at meetings and home visits;
- Managing, reporting and blocking abuse on social media;
- How local authorities can support councillors; and
- What the law says around balancing freedom of speech and its limitations, and on physical intimidation.

The guide covers topics such as how to handle abuse, both face-to-face, letters or online, and the legal and practical remedies, including the nature of the criminal offences involved and will be continuously updated with the latest advice and information available.

In addition to producing the guide, the Local Government Association is planning further guidance for councils on supporting councillors. It also plans to continue to work with national Government and other agencies to address the issue of public intimidation and its impact on local democracy.

The Councillors’ Guidance to Handling Intimidation is available at: [www.local.gov.uk/councillors-guide-handling-intimidation](http://www.local.gov.uk/councillors-guide-handling-intimidation)

**Bacteria Found In Hospitals Found In Raw Meat**

Bacteria of the Acinetobacter ACB complex, which are frequently acquired in hospital settings, can also be found in beef, according to a study led by ISGlobal, evidenced by meat samples taken from markets in Lima, Peru. Although the isolates were susceptible to most antibiotics, these results suggest that raw meat can act as a reservoir for these pathogenic bacteria.

Among bacteria of the Acinetobacter family, those belonging to the ACB complex (Acinetobacter calcoaceticus-Acinetobacter baumannii) have become a major threat in hospitals, due to their capacity to acquire resistance to multiple antimicrobial drugs and disinfectants and to survive in hospital environments. However, pathogenic Acinetobacter species have also been found in food and food-producing animals, which could represent a reservoir and source of infection for humans.

This study analysed bacteria recovered from 138 meat samples from poultry, swine and beef, randomly picked from six traditional markets in Lima, Peru. The authors obtained 12 Acinetobacter isolates from five different beef samples, sold in two independent markets. All but one belonged to the ACB complex: 9 were Acinetobacter pittii, 1 A. baumannii and 1 was A. dijkshoorniae, a species
recently described by the same ISGlobal research group. In fact, this is the first time that the latter is identified in meat samples, or in Peru.

Although all of the isolates were susceptible to clinically relevant antibiotics, and their overall prevalence was low, these results suggest that raw meat may represent a reservoir for Acinetobacter transmission to humans.

The results underscore the fact that many microbes that infect humans can also be transmitted through contaminated food; hence the need to establish interdisciplinary collaborations between health care for humans, animal health and the environment, an approach known as ‘One Health.’

Marta Mari-Almirall et al,
Pathogenic Acinetobacter species including the novel Acinetobacter dijkshoorniae recovered from market meat in Peru,
https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijfoodmicro.2019.108248

New Research Shows Hundreds Of Sharks And Rays Entangled In Plastic
Hundreds of sharks and rays have become tangled in plastic waste in the world’s oceans, according to new research carried out by scientists at the University of Exeter.

In the study, scientists scoured existing published studies and Twitter for shark and ray entanglements, and found reports of more than 1,000 entangled individuals. However, they say the true number is likely to be far higher, as few studies have focussed on plastic entanglement among shark and rays.

According to the study, such entanglement - mostly involving lost or discarded fishing gear - is a ‘far lesser threat’ to sharks and rays than commercial fishing, but the suffering it causes is a major animal welfare concern.

One example cited in the study is a shortfin mako shark with fishing rope wrapped tightly around it. The shark had clearly continued growing after becoming entangled, so the rope – which was covered in barnacles – had dug into its skin and damaged its spine.

Although the researchers do not believe entanglement to present a major threat to the future of sharks and rays, it is important to understand the range of threats facing these species, which are among the most threatened in the oceans. There are also animal welfare issues to consider because entanglements can cause pain, suffering and even death.

The study was the first to use Twitter to gather such data, and results from the social media site revealed entanglements of species – and in places – not recorded in the academic papers.

The review of academic papers found reports of 557 sharks and rays entangled in plastic, spanning 34 species in oceans including the Atlantic, Pacific and Indian. Almost 60% of these animals were either lesser spotted dogfish, spotted ratfish or spiny dogfish.

On Twitter, the researchers found 74 entanglement reports involving 559 individual sharks and rays from 26 species including whale sharks, great whites, tiger sharks and basking sharks.

Both data sources suggested ‘ghost’ fishing gear (nets, lines and other equipment lost or abandoned) were by far the most common entangling objects. Other items included strapping bands used in packaging, polythene bags and rubber tyres.
The study identified factors that appear to put certain species more at risk:

- **Habitat** – sharks and rays in the open ocean appear more likely to get entangled, as do those living on the sea floor, where materials such as nets loaded with dead fish sink and attract predators, which in turn get stuck.

- **Migration** – species that cover long distances appear at more at risk of encountering plastic waste.

- **Body shape** – sharks seem to be at greater risk than rays. Species with unusual features – such as manta rays, basking sharks and sawfish – are also at more risk.


https://doi.org/10.3354/esr00964

**Environment Must Come First, Says Newly-Elected European Commission President**

Former German defence minister Ursula von der Leyen has been elected as European Commission President after winning a ballot of MEPs in Strasbourg.

Von der Leyen won the support of MEPs after presenting a bold vision for a greener Europe and calling for significant climate and environmental action over the next five years.


The von der Leyen agenda includes a number of commitments to climate action including achieving a climate neutral EU by 2050, improving the EU’s Emission Trading System and a carbon border tax.

Alongside raised climate ambition von der Leyen promised a number of other important environmental measures, including:

- €1trn of sustainable finance investment and turning part of the European Investment Bank into Europe’s climate bank
- A 2030 biodiversity strategy to stop biodiversity loss within five years
- A new circular economy action plan that addresses textiles and construction sectors
- A ‘zero-pollution’ target delivered through a cross-cutting strategy to protect citizens’ health from environmental degradation and pollution
- A ‘farm to fork’ strategy on sustainable food

Von der Leyen has also promise to use the EU’s budget to make sure that countries follow EU rules, which could provide crucial in ensuring the proper implementation and enforcement of EU environmental laws.

A Union that strives for more: My agenda for Europe: www.europarl.europa.eu/resources/library/media/20190716RES57231/20190716RES57231.pdf
Failure To Provide Adequate Welfare Facilities Leads To Prosecution For Construction Company

A Stockport construction company has been prosecuted and fined after failing to ensure suitable welfare facilities were provided for workers on site.

Manchester Magistrates' Court heard that R and S Builders (Mcr) Ltd had been issued with multiple Improvement Notices, following an inspection by a Health and Safety Executive (HSE) inspector at the company's site at Great Underbank, Stockport on 7 July 2018. The company subsequently complied with the Improvement Notices that had been served for fire safety and respiratory risks, but failed to comply with the minimum standards of health, safety and welfare on site.

The inspector found that welfare facilities on site were in a poor condition, there was no hot or warm running water, and that the company did not provide evidence of compliance with the Improvement Notice by the imposed deadline. R and S Builders (Mcr) Ltd was previously subject to enforcement action by HSE in 2017 that included an Improvement Notice in relation to the absence of adequate welfare provisions at a different site.

R and S Builders (Mcr) Ltd of Sovereign House, Stockport Road, Cheadle, pleaded guilty to breaching Section 21 of the Health and safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and Regulation 13(4) of the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015. The company was fined £8,000 and ordered to pay costs of £1,814.90.

www.hse.gov.uk

Ensuring Food Safety And Standards

Food-borne illness is estimated to cost the UK economy and individuals around £1 billion each year. The FSA has made progress in measuring whether regulation is working to protect consumers, while the majority of food businesses are meeting hygiene standards and levels of major food-borne illnesses are broadly stable. However, the food regulation system is complex, has come under increasing financial pressure, and has elements that are outdated.

This National Audit Office report focuses on the effectiveness of the current UK regulatory arrangements to ensure that food is safe to eat and is what it says it is. Specifically, it examines:

- the extent to which the FSA and local authorities identify the areas of highest risk to food consumers and make effective use of resources (Part One)
- whether the FSA has evidence that the regulatory system is effective in achieving outcomes and driving performance improvements (Part Two)
- whether the regulatory arrangements are coherent and sustainable in the context of emerging challenges (Part Three).

Recommendations for the FSA:

- establish the role that food sampling plays in reducing risks to consumers. As part of its work on developing a sampling strategy, it should assess what level of and approach to sampling is needed to provide assurance that food risks, including food fraud, are being managed effectively by food businesses
- address gaps in outcome-based measures and targets for assessing compliance with food safety and composition standards. It should press ahead with developing indicators for assessing the performance of local authorities in providing assurance that food businesses are compliant with food standards and measures of whether the National Food Crime Unit is having an impact in tackling food fraud. It should set a target for when it will establish a suite of indicators to measure whether the FSA is effective in providing assurance to consumers that food is what it says it is.
• press ahead with its ambition to introduce mandatory display of hygiene ratings in food businesses in England. Recognising the requirement for legislation and current demands on Parliamentary time, the FSA should aim to do this within an achievable time period to improve information available to consumers

• address gaps in the enforcement powers, including those available to the National Food Crime Unit (NFCU). The FSA should make firm plans to provide the powers the NFCU needs to work independently.

Recommendations for a regulatory system that can adapt to future challenges

• organisations in the food regulation system should work together to assess government's appetite for risk and to take decisions on the level of funding required to ensure that food is safe to eat and what it says it is. They should consider the advantages and risks of a range of funding distribution options to ensure a sustainable regulatory system. These could include recovering costs from businesses, centralised national systems of controls or a range of commissioning models

• within six months of the UK leaving the EU, the FSA should start to work closely with the other departments in the regulatory system to evaluate the medium- and longer-term impacts of EU Exit on the capacity of the food regulation system and potential shortfalls in resources and set a timescale for reporting. It should identify what needs to be done to mitigate risks and make plans now to avoid food incidents, which could impact on future confidence and may affect trading relationships. This will require scenario-based analysis of potential future controls on imports, additional food safety and standards checks that may be required to support UK exports, and an assessment of the impact of increasing volumes of imports from new trading partners.


Expert Appraisal On Health Effects Of Low Frequency Electromagnetic Fields

The French Agence Nationale De Sécurité Sanitaire De L'alimentation, De L'environnement Et Du Travail (ANSES) has published a new expert appraisal on the health effects associated with exposure to low-frequency electromagnetic fields.

The Agency has reviewed its 2010 conclusions on association between exposure to low-frequency electromagnetic fields and the long-term risk of childhood leukaemia. It is also restating its recommendation not to build new schools close to very-high voltage power lines. At the same time, the Agency stresses the need to better manage occupational exposure for employees who could be exposed to high levels of electromagnetic fields, particularly pregnant women.

Populations are exposed to many sources of electromagnetic fields, including power lines, transport and transformers outside the home, or household appliances inside the home. Various studies conducted since 2010 have given us a clearer picture of population exposure to low-frequency electromagnetic fields. In particular, they show that the highest values outside the home are measured primarily under very-high-voltage power lines or next to transformers and electricity substations. Inside the home, household appliances may produce high levels of magnetic field, but in this instance, exposure is brief and localised.

In 2010, ANSES noted an association between the occurrence of childhood leukaemia and exposure to low-frequency magnetic fields exceeding 0.2 µT or 0.4 µT. In the light of new data, the Agency is confirming the 'limited' level of evidence associated with this long-term effect, even though this association is found less frequently in studies published after 2010.
As part of this expert appraisal, ANSES financed a study to quantify the proportion of the French population – and more specifically, children – who are exposed to this level of field, emitted by high-voltage power lines. The study indicates that around 40,000 children under 15 years of age (0.35% of the population) are exposed to a magnetic field of over 0.4 µT in their homes, and that around 8,000 children (0.18%) are exposed to a magnetic field of over 0.4 µT in their schools.

Levels of worker exposure to low-frequency magnetic fields vary considerably, depending on the occupation held. A study conducted by the French National Research and Safety Institute (INRS) and the Occupational Health and Pension Insurance Funds (CARSAT) showed that some workers could be exposed to very high field levels. These could potentially exceed exposure limits (1,000 µT at 50 Hz) in specific circumstances, for example when using some types of industrial machinery.

As a consequence, ANSES reiterates the importance of enforcing regulatory provisions in occupational health and limiting situations of overexposure, particularly by adapting workstations. Furthermore, ANSES recommends that manufacturers of industrial machines emitting low-frequency electromagnetic fields measure the exposure associated with machine use, and include these data in the technical specifications provided to customers and users.

The Agency indicates that the results of epidemiological studies are too heterogeneous to establish a link between occupational exposure and the development of chronic diseases, particularly neurodegenerative diseases and tumours of the nervous system. Further research into the possible risk of diseases associated with exposure to low-frequency magnetic fields is thus recommended. At the same time, the Agency also recommends that the next assessment of exposure limits should take into account the most recent scientific data available.

In conclusion, the Agency draws attention to the specific case of pregnant women exposed in the workplace. In some scenarios of occupational exposure, it has been shown that the induced current density in the foetus may exceed the limits recommended for the general public. ANSES therefore recommends providing better information to women and raising awareness of the regulatory provisions allowing them to adapt their working conditions when they are pregnant, in order to limit foetal exposure to low-frequency electromagnetic fields.

www.anses.fr

Gut Bacteria Species Protect Against Food Allergies?
A new study has identified the species of bacteria in the human infant gut that protect against food allergies, finding changes associated with the development of food allergies and an altered immune response.

Led by investigators from Brigham and Women's Hospital and Boston Children's Hospital, the research team conducted studies in both humans and preclinical models to understand the key bacterial species involved in food allergies.

The team collected faecal samples every four to six months from 56 infants who developed food allergies, finding many differences when comparing their microbiota to 98 infants who did not develop food allergies. Faecal microbiota samples from infants with or without food allergies were transplanted into mice who were sensitised to eggs. Mice who received microbiota from healthy controls were more protected against egg allergy than those who received microbiota from the infants with food allergies.

The team tested to see if orally administering protective microbes to mice could prevent the development of food allergies. They developed two consortia of bacteria that were protective. Two separate consortia of five or six species of bacteria derived from the human gut that belong to species within the Clostridiales or the Bacteroidetes could suppress food allergies in the mouse model, fully protecting the mice and keeping them resistant to egg allergy. However, giving other species of bacteria did not afford protection.
To understand how the bacteria species might be influencing food allergy susceptibility, the team also looked at immunological changes, both in the human infants and in mice. They found that the Clostridiales and Bacteroidetes consortia targeted two important immunological pathways and stimulated specific regulatory T cells, a class of cells that modulate the immune system, changing their profile to promote tolerant responses instead of allergic responses. These effects were found both in the pre-clinical models and also found to occur in human infants.

The new approach represents a marked contrast to oral immunotherapy, a strategy that aims to increase the threshold for triggering an allergic reaction by giving an individual small but increasing amounts of a food allergen. Unlike this approach, the bacteriotherapy changes the immune system’s wiring in an allergen-independent fashion, with potential to broadly treat food allergies rather than desensitising an individual to a specific allergen.


Microbiota therapy acts via a regulatory T cell MyD88/RORγt pathway to suppress food allergy. Nature Medicine, 2019; DOI: 10.1038/s41591-019-0461-z

http://dx.doi.org/10.1038/s41591-019-0461-z

Facilities Management Company Fined £1.3 Million Following Death Of Passer-By

On 23 February 2017 the Midlands region was experiencing a winter storm with significant winds – part of ‘Storm Doris’. At 11.38am that day, Tahnie Martin was walking with a work colleague, Ms Raman Sarpal, in Dudley Street next to the Mander Centre, Wolverhampton.

Ms Martin was struck and killed by a large and heavy wooden panel which had been blown off the top of a plant room of the nearby Blackrock building, which formed part of the centre. Ms Sarpal was also knocked to the ground and injured.

Cushman and Wakefield had been the managing agent for the building since September 2012. Its responsibilities included identification of the structures and facilities making up the building as necessary for planning and risk assessment purposes.

In her sentencing remarks, Mrs Justice Carr said that the Company failed to identify two particular brick-built structures on top of the plant room roof, which was itself on top of the roof known as Level 6: namely a former ventilation shaft with a substantial wooden louvered hood and a disused water tank topped with a large wooden panel structure.

The structures had not been inspected nor maintained in any way while under the Company’s charge and were omitted from maintenance plans. By 23 February 2017, the parts intended to secure the structures to the brick were entirely rotten and/or corroded.

When subjected to winds of up to 58 to 59 mph they were simply blown away, with one part ending up on the roof of the O2 building in the Mander Centre and the other larger part striking Ms Martin.

An inquest jury concluded that the panel that killed Ms Martin was blown away because of the lack of maintenance which had resulted from wet rot and corroded defective fixings.

Following the incident, the Company established a working group to consider improvements to its practices, policies and procedures to ensure that risks arising from structures such as those on the plant room roof could not be missed in future. The outcome of that work included the implementation of building public risk assessments involving additional training for building surveyors and operations managers and those in similar roles; revision of the routine building inspection form; a greater level of audit of external consultancy work; enhanced role profiles for front line operational staff; changes to leadership performance evaluation; amendment of building survey instructions; development of new
working procedures to ensure co-ordinated responses to surveys and inspections; improvements to the quality management system; repairs to the building itself.

Cushman and Wakefield pleaded guilty to an offence contrary to section 3(1) of the Health and Safety at Work Act etc 1974 of failing, on and before 23 February 2017, to conduct its undertaking in such a way as to ensure, so far as was reasonably practicable, that members of the public were not exposed to material risk to their health and safety. The Company was fined £1.3 million.


Role Of Public Services In Integrating Refugees And Asylum Seekers
Following the influx of over three million asylum seekers into the European Union between 2015 - 2017, Member States faced a number of challenges related to integrating the newly arrived into their country. This report explores the role of public services – specifically housing, social services, health and education services – in the social and economic integration of refugees and asylum seekers. It aims to identify the factors that hinder this process and the elements that contribute to successful integration.

The overall focus is on destination countries, particularly the three countries most affected by the inflow of refugees and asylum seekers: Austria, Germany and Sweden.

Key findings
The role of public services differs across the selected measures. In the area of housing and social integration (including measures such as civic education), municipalities and local authorities play a key role, in collaboration with NGOs.

An important challenge is ensuring adequate support for refugees and asylum seekers with mental health issues. Many experience psychological trauma, whether in their country of origin, during their journey or in the host communities. Having arrived in the host country, cultural barriers, communication difficulties and the high cost of treatment can make it difficult for refugees to access appropriate support.

In terms of policy responses to housing challenges, a common thread across countries has been the development of a more coordinated approach between central government agencies responsible for dealing with refugees and asylum seekers and local municipalities. This includes the development of dispersal policies and the establishment of quotas to distribute newcomers across municipalities.

Conclusions
The study shows that public services in these countries have been largely proactive in implementing a range of diverse integration measures, including adoption of some innovative approaches. The role of public services differed across the selected measures: in some cases, public services primarily regulated and oversaw the measures (regulator); in other cases, public services were responsible for implementing the measures (service provider); and in yet other cases, public services were primarily involved in financing the measures (funder) or provided a combination of the three primary roles.

The study shows that the type of public services involved and their degree of participation depend on the area of integration.

This research revealed a number of challenges in implementing and designing the different measures and highlighted the lessons learnt in dealing with these challenges. These challenges and lessons learnt are discussed below under the following headings:

- Reaching out to target groups
- Ensuring gender balance
- Cooperation among different actors
- Impact of recent changes in legislation, policy and bureaucratic procedures
- Mental health issues
- Education issues
- Countering negative public opinion
- Practical and logistical challenges in implementing measures

EU Progress On Reduction Of National Emissions Of Certain Atmospheric Pollutants

While emissions of most air pollutants remain on a downward trend across the European Union, emissions of ammonia from the agricultural sector continue to rise, posing a challenge for EU Member States in meeting EU air pollution limits, according to updated data which has been released by the European Environment Agency (EEA).

Emissions of Ammonia (NH3) rose for the fourth year running, increasing by 0.4% across the EU, from 2016 to 2017, according to the annual EEA briefing National Emission Ceilings (NEC) Directive reporting status 2019. Over the 2014-2017 period, the overall increase was about 2.5%. These increases arise as a result of the lack of emission reductions in the agricultural sector. Ammonia emissions can lead to increased acid depositions and excessive levels of nutrients in soil, rivers or lakes, which can have negative impacts on aquatic ecosystems and cause damage to forests, crops and other vegetation. Eutrophication can lead to severe reductions in water quality with subsequent impacts including decreased biodiversity, and toxicity effects.

In 2017, the most recent year for which data were reported, total emissions of the four main air pollutants nitrogen oxides (NOx), non-methane volatile organic compounds (NMVOCs), sulphur dioxide (SO2) and ammonia – were below the respective ceilings set for the EU as a whole. While 21 EU Member States were in compliance with the ammonia emissions ceiling in 2017, Austria, Croatia, Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands, and Spain were not and an increasing number of Member States are projected to miss their 2020 and 2030 emission reduction commitments. The EEA briefing notes that a more substantial reduction will be required for all pollutants if the EU is to achieve its emission reduction commitments for 2030.

The briefing also includes an update of projected emissions reported by EU Member States for 2020 and 2030 under the NEC Directive in relation to their individual reduction commitments set in the NEC Directive for these years. Reductions of around 15% are required for NMVOC and ammonia, more than 30% for particulate matter (PM2.5) and sulphur dioxide, and almost 40% for nitrogen oxides.

A separate EEA report on updated data from the annual European Union emission inventory report 1990-2016 under the UNECE Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution (LRTAP) will be published in the coming months.

NEC Directive reporting status 2019:

Biocidal Products Committee Concludes On Authorisations For Disinfectants And Pest Control

The European Biocidal Products Committee (BPC) adopted one opinion concluding that the active substance DBNPA should not be approved for product type 4 (food and feed area). DBNPA or 2,2-
dibromo-3-nitrilopropionamide is a quick-kill biocide that easily hydrolyses under both acidic and alkaline conditions.

The committee’s opinion is that this active substance has endocrine disrupting properties and, therefore, meets the exclusion criteria. As such, the substance cannot be approved for product type 4 unless one of the following derogations foreseen in the Biocidal Products Regulation can be applied:

- the risk of exposure to the environment, human and animal health is proven to be negligible; or
- there is evidence that the active substance is essential to prevent or control a serious danger to the environment, human or animal health; or
- the non-approval is shown to have a negative impact on society compared to the risks arising from the use of the substance.

Whether or not a derogation to the exclusion criteria can be applied, is not within the remit of the BPC.

The BPC also adopted positive opinions supporting Union authorisation for:

- two applications concerning a biocidal product family based on octanoic acid and octanoic acid and decanoic acid in product type 4 (food and feed area); and
- one application concerning a biocidal product family based on permethrin and S-Methoprene in product type 18 (insecticides, acaricides and products to control other arthropods).

Together with the EU Member States, the Commission will take the final decision on the approval of the active substances and on the Union authorisation of biocidal products.

The committee met from 25 to 26 June 2019. The opinions will be available on the European Chemicals Agency’s (ECHA’s) website in the near future. The next meeting will be held in October 2019.

www.echa.europa.eu

New EU Study On Reprotoxic Chemicals


All reprotoxic substances are currently dealt within the CAD and those that are also Carcinogenic or Mutagenic (C/M) 1A/1B are also within the scope of the CMD. In accordance with a request from the European Parliament and the Council, this study was launched by the European Commission to assess a number of options for amending the CMD, including the possibility of extending its scope to cover all Reprotoxic (R) 1A/1B substances.

Eight EU Member States, including the UK, have transposed the CMD to cover reprotoxic substances. The study adopted two different approaches to estimating the current burden of reproductive ill health from occupational exposure to Reprotoxic 1A/1B substances that are not also C/M 1A/1B4:

- under the bottom-up approach, 27 to 206 cases are expected to occur each year;
- under the top-down approach, 46 to 1,274 cases are estimated to occur each year; and
- when theoretical (unrealistic) worst-case assumptions are adopted for the bottom-up calculations, the figure rises to 1,429 cases per annum.
The economic cost of reproductive ill health is estimated to be between €0.5 and €2.8 million per year under the bottom-up approach and between €39 and €104 million per annum under the top-down analysis. For the theoretical worst case under the bottom-up approach, the figure rises to €381 million per year.

A number of Policy options are assessed within this report and their associated cost implications outlined. The report notes that due to the large number of uncertainties involved in the estimation of the costs and benefits, the quantified ranges presented in this report should be seen as illustrative of the magnitude of the potential impacts rather than definite estimates. In addition, some relevant (and potentially significant) costs and benefits could not be monetised, including benefits from reducing other types of health effects. Furthermore, the impacts of the extension of the CMD to cover Reprotoxic 1A/1B substances to a large extent depend on transposition and enforcement decisions taken at the Member State level, and these cannot be predicted with any degree of certainty.

Study on reprotoxic chemicals: [https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=738&langId=en&pubId=8220&furtherPubs=yes](https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=738&langId=en&pubId=8220&furtherPubs=yes)

**Research Priorities To Stimulate Innovation And Effective Communication**

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) has identified research priorities for food safety for the next 5 to 10 years. In order to inform research agendas, a paper presents three research streams bringing together the main research needs and priorities in support of food safety risk assessments in the coming years.

These Food Safety Regulatory Research Needs for 2030 should be useful when developing Safe Food Systems of the future as well as EFSA's Strategy for 2027.

- **Safe Food Systems**: this research stream shall consider impacts on food safety of innovation in food production and food systems. Risk assessment operates at the science-policy interface, informing decision-and policy-making and food safety is integral part of food and nutrition security. For food systems to be safe, it does not suffice to assess risks, but also benefits, impacts and alternatives need to be assessed and put into the equation. This should be done at processing level as well as primary production level, hence animal and plant health issues need to be considered. Dietary prevention strategies focusing on energy or single nutrients have generally failed and should be broadened.

- **Innovation in Risk Assessment**: this research stream shall consider what impact new knowledge and tools may bring to risk assessment of food safety, so to be prepared for the future. The current risk assessment paradigm is challenged by recent scientific and technical advances, and public demands. The current approach is considered too resource-intensive, is mostly animal-based and can raise issues in terms of reproducibility and ethics. A paradigm shift is required to deliver testing strategies that enable reliable, animal-free hazard and risk assessments, which are based on a mechanistic understanding of chemical toxicity. Increasingly, we see that different compartments are interlinked, and understand the importance of a OneHealth approach.

- **Holistic Risk Assessment**: Holistic risk assessment uses insights from society, explores the use of latest technologies and relies on outstanding scientific expertise. Coupled with evidence-based risk communication, these elements allow delivery of impactful scientific advice meeting expectations of citizens. This research stream will focus on understanding the societal context in which science is delivered, as well as how that science can be strengthened through the use of big data and innovative tools in the risk assessment process and by building a generation of experts who are able to use evidence from different disciplines. To understand the context, research will focus on understanding citizens’ awareness, perceptions and behaviour, integrate risks and benefits, while at the same time promoting education and mobility of experts to acquire transdisciplinary expertise.
This is an important milestone of the EFSA strategy 2020: Trusted science for safe food. The recommendations will inform research agendas, such as the upcoming Horizon Europe research programme as well as the next EFSA’s strategy (2021-2027).

Food Safety Regulatory Research Needs 2030:

BSI Publishes New Standard For Public Sector Procurement

The UK public sector spends over £250 billion, about one-third of public expenditure, on the procurement of goods and services from the private sector. Past procurement practices favoured the bigger, more established organizations and lesser known alternative and smaller firms have often felt unable to compete.

Published by the British Standards Institution (BSI), this new Standard will help by specifying criteria which enable organisations of any size to demonstrate their generic suitability and capacity to meet the requirements of the contracting authority.

The aim is to simplify the tender process, reduce duplication of effort and make public sector tendering more accessible to smaller organizations. At the same time, procuring bodies can use the Standard as a template for the generic parts of all tender processes. It will enable them to quickly assess potential suppliers and to build contracts that are simpler and more focussed.

The Standard will be of specific interest to SMEs which have felt in the past that public sector procurement processes were too onerous, rigid or complex. It will also interest organisations which outsource or procure.

The Standard specifies criteria to demonstrate an organisation’s:

- Suitability as an external provider of products and services to the public sector
- Ability to reliably deliver products and services that meet the requirements of the contracting authority

The requirements are generic and apply to any organisation, regardless of the type, size or the nature of its activities. The criteria can be used by both organisations contracting out provision of products and services to external providers and organizations acting as external providers.

The Standard supplies three levels of conformity. Level one provides smaller or less mature organisations with a simple route into the public sector supply chain wherein they can demonstrate their commitment to trustworthiness, transparency and ethical practice. Level two requires a greater depth of evidence while Level three demands the highest degree of evidence but is only necessary for the most high risk, high value or complex contracts.

Use of the Standard will:

- Simplify public sector procurement
- Reduce bureaucracy
- Ensure due diligence on fundamental issues
- Provide assurance to the public that contracts are awarded fairly to trustworthy organisations which will deliver as required and offer value for money without compromising quality

BS 95009:2019 Public sector procurement. Generic requirements for organizations providing products and services
EU Wide Comparison Of Quality Related Food Product Characteristics

The European Commission has published the results of a Pan-European testing campaign of food products showing that some products are identically or similarly branded while having a different composition.

All food placed on the EU market has to comply with stringent legal requirements to safe-guard the well-being of citizens and inform them truthfully about the characteristics of the products they intend to buy. Moreover, the EU Directive on Unfair Commercial Practices (UCPD) shall prevent consumers from being misled into believing that a product is identical to the same product marketed in several other Member States while those products have a significantly different composition or characteristics.

Studies in some EU Member States carried out between 2016 and 2018 pointed towards differences in quality related characteristics (such as composition and sensory properties) of branded and private label food products. However, because of the different approaches used for collecting samples, testing and data interpretation, the data are not fully comparable.

Most of the studies compared branded and private label products taken from the domestic market to their equivalents purchased mostly in one neighbouring EU Member State. Among the initiatives taken by the European Commission to address this problem, the Joint Research Centre (JRC) developed in 2018 a harmonised testing methodology for assessing quality related characteristics of food, aiming at improving food product comparative tests so that Member States can discuss this issue on a sound and shared scientific basis that is the same for all.

This new study, which analysed nearly 1,400 food products in 19 EU countries, was carried out by the Joint Research Centre and shows that 9% of the compared products differed in composition, although the front-of-pack was identical.

A further 22% of products with a different composition had a similar front-of-pack. The study did not show a consistent geographical pattern.

Based on the new methodology developed, national competent authorities will now be able to perform the case by case analysis required to determine misleading practices prohibited under EU consumer law. The study thus supports the work initiated by the Juncker Commission to address the issue of dual quality of products through different initiatives.

Main findings

The study assessed 1,380 samples of 128 different food products from 19 Member States. The sample is, however, not representative of the vast diversity of food products on the EU market. The study found that:

In the majority of cases, the composition matched the way products were presented: 23% of products had an identical front-of-pack and an identical composition, and 27% of products signalled their different composition in different EU countries with a different front-of-pack.

Approximately 9% of products presented as being the same across the EU had a different composition: they had an identical front-of-pack, but a different composition.

A further 22% of products presented in a similar way had a different composition: they had a similar front-of-pack, yet a different composition.

There is no consistent geographical pattern in the use of the same or similar packaging for products with different compositions. Moreover, the difference in the composition found in the products tested do not necessarily constitute a difference in product quality.

Next steps

The European Commission has launched a new call for proposals with a total budget of €1.26 million to strengthen consumer organisations’ capacities to test products and identify potentially misleading practices. The deadline for applications is 6 November 2019.
Whilst the report will provide a better basis for the discussion of dual quality in the EU, further steps and research are needed to make the assessment more representative, and to better understand the link between composition and quality.


Video Highlights Dangers Of Construction Sites To Children
With the school holidays just around the corner it’s worth highlighting the South Yorkshire and Humberside WWT produced Stay Safe, Stay Away film.

Produced as a resource to help educate primary school children about the hazards present on construction sites, it discourages them from trying to go on to sites. Children are often attracted to the noise, trucks and materials on a building site but are unaware of the dangers that await them.

Available in both English and Welsh, the film takes a walk around a typical house building site while explaining some of the activities going on and highlighting some of the dangers associated with sites such as falls, falling materials, plant and machinery.

Stay Safe, Stay Away is available at: www.youtube.com/channel/UCbXjPivnDulnT21U6fXDfUA