

HSE SAFETY CORNERSTONES

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The Sectors Hit the Worst by Higher Fines

In 2016-17, the HSE collected £61,579,494.21 in fines, which was nearly twice the amount collected in 2015-16, according to research from law firm Clyde & Co. A reason for the significant increase is that, in February 2016, the new guidelines from the Sentencing Council came into force. These amendments dramatically increased fines for corporate manslaughter, food safety and hygiene offences, and health and safety offences. Within the first year, the amount that the HSE collected in fines increased by 74 per cent, and local authority fines rose by a massive 1,870 per cent.

The industry sectors most affected by the new Sentencing Council guidelines have been manufacturing and construction. In fact, the value of fines collected from the manufacturing sector in 2016-17 was £22.8 million, a 99 per cent increase over the £11.4 million in 2015-16. Construction fared slightly better—jumping 83 per cent from £7 million in 2015-16 to £13 million in 2016-17, and representing 21 per cent of the overall total fines imposed by the HSE in 2016-17. What's more, there have been more fines that exceed £1 million in 2016-17 than in the previous 15 years combined. This statistic, more than any other, illustrates the trend of higher health and safety fines.

Even though these statistics are startling, there are proactive measures that your organisation can take to ensure that you are protected and compliant. The most straightforward of these is to conduct a thorough annual risk assessment for each process and department within your organisation. To bolster your organisation's health and safety practices as well as risk management processes, contact the professionals at **Crendon Insurance Brokers Ltd** today.

Simple Fire Risk Assessment Checklist

Fire risk assessments are a legal requirement for anyone that owns property or is otherwise in control of commercial premises and other non-domestic premises, such as the common areas of multi-occupied residential buildings. All UK employers with five or more employees are required to keep a written record of their fire risk assessments. While not required, it is still considered best practice for you to have a professional risk assessor conduct the assessment.

If you would like to conduct the assessment, here is a simple checklist:

- **Identify fire hazards.**
- **Identify who is at risk.**
- **Evaluate and then remove or reduce the risks.**
- **Record your findings, prepare an emergency plan and provide training.**
- **Review and update the fire risk assessment annually.**

For more information on fire safety, you can review the HSE's official guidance by clicking [here](#) and the government's sector-specific guidance by clicking [here](#).

HSE News and Prosecutions

£1m Fine for Crossrail Contractors Following 3 Incidents

Three separate incidents occurred during construction on the Crossrail tunnel, the last of which resulted in a worker's death. As a result, Bam Ferrovial Kier (BFK), an unincorporated joint venture made up of three companies, was fined £1,065,000 and ordered to pay costs of £42,337.28. In its investigation, the HSE found that BFK had neither organised nor enforced a safe system of work. In addition, investigators discovered that equipment and vehicles were not being properly maintained, which also contributed to the incidents.

Companies Fined More than £1m After Workers Exposed to Asbestos

While refurbishing a school, workers were exposed to asbestos. The three companies working on the project were fined more than £1 million. In its investigation, the HSE found that while an asbestos survey had been completed, there were multiple warnings and disclaimers that were not appropriately checked.

Ilfracombe Landlord Sentenced for Unsafe Gas Work

An Ilfracombe landlord was fined £3,000 and ordered to pay costs of £12,184.14 after he risked the lives of his tenants by undertaking dangerous gas work. The landlord replaced a boiler despite having no training in gas work nor being registered with Gas Safe Register. Shortly after, the boiler developed faults and the landlord had to call a gas engineer. In its investigation, the HSE had previously warned the landlord that only a member of Gas Safe Register should work on gas appliances.

