

HSE SAFETY

CORNERSTONES

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Recent HSE News and Prosecutions

Read about how lax health and safety harmed Han Solo, a construction worker that nearly lost his foot due to inadequate foresight, a rocket motor company that received a substantial fine for severe safety failings and a motor manufacturer that exposed its workers to asbestos.

Health and Safety in Post-Brexit Britain

On 23rd June, Britain chose to leave the EU in a historic vote, which has sent shockwaves across the world. Yet, although Britain will remain a part of the EU for at least another two years, during the transition, there will undoubtedly be a period of uncertainty—particularly due to the fact that UK health and safety regulations have been shaped by EU directives. Richard Jones, Head of Policy and Public Affairs for the Institution of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH), was optimistic about the future of the nation's health and safety.

Jones stated that IOSH will continue to promote UK health and safety standards, which are both respected and imitated across the world, and it will defend against any erosion to established practices. In addition, this position is expected to also help UK companies ensure that they are able to continue trading with the EU.

While the full repercussions of Brexit cannot be totally foreseen, health and safety experts have offered their best estimates for how the decision will affect UK health and safety practices. The following are the four key areas that are expected to be impacted by Brexit:

- 1. Health and safety law:** Most likely, UK health and safety regulations will not experience a wholesale change. Although a considerable amount of existing UK regulations stem from EU directives, the UK government has had significant input on how those regulations were implemented and on how they affect British workers. However, Brexit does provide the government with an opportunity to review the current regulations, and assess whether each one affords beneficial protections or introduces unnecessary red tape. Whatever the government may decide for each regulation, change is expected to be slow.
- 2. The role of the HSE:** As Britain will no longer be receiving health and safety directives from Brussels, the nation will turn to and depend upon the HSE to initiate those changes. This new responsibility would require the HSE to guide the UK government on standards and accreditation. However, the agency is more than capable of taking on this responsibility, as it is already regarded as being deeply knowledgeable and is seen as a world-class health and safety regulator. Nevertheless, the HSE may require additional funding to ensure that it can successfully act as a consultative and enforcement organisation.
- 3. Personal protective equipment (PPE) directive:** In April of this year, the new Regulation (EU) 2016/425, which updates and bolsters current PPE regulations, came into force and will apply starting April 2018. Despite Brexit, it is expected that UK industries will continue to recognise the regulation as necessary and adopt the mandatory changes that it outlines. However, to ensure that the regulation's requirements provide the most benefits to UK businesses, the British Safety Industry Federation (BSIF) is expected to work alongside legislators to help determine the regulation's shape.
- 4. Britain's role in international health and safety:** Britain has been a positive influence on strengthening health and safety legislation for both the EU and the globe. Even though UK regulations will no longer be shaped through EU directives, it is the aim of the BSIF to ensure that Britain continues to draft and implement the most comprehensive health and safety regulations—not only to be recognised as a global leader, but to ensure the continued safety of Britons.

To ensure that your company remains up to date on the repercussions that Brexit has upon UK health and safety, turn to the insurance professionals at Crendon Insurance Brokers Ltd today.



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HSE Releases 2015/2016 Fatal Injury Statistics

The HSE recently published the provisional statistics for work-related fatal accidents that occurred between 1st April 2015 and 31st March 2016, which continued to reflect the 20-year trend of declining fatality rates. Yet, while Britain has one of the best health and safety systems in the world, 144 people were killed at work and 103 members of the public were fatally injured in work-related accidents between 2015 and 2016. However, it should be noted that the statistics exclude figures related to deaths caused by fatal diseases and accidents on non-rail transport systems.

By examining the figures from the previous year, your company may be inspired to bolster your health and safety policies in order to more adequately protect your employees. Here are four key provisional figures from 2015 to 2016:

1. **Construction:** 43 workers died, which was the same average as the previous five years
2. **Agriculture:** 27 workers died, which was lower than five-year average of 32 deaths
3. **Manufacturing:** 27 workers died, which was higher than the five-year average of 22 deaths
4. **Waste and recycling:** Six workers died, which was comparable to the five-year average of seven deaths

To help ensure that your health and safety scheme is thorough and comprehensive, periodically inspect your company's risk management efforts to identify any hazards, and discuss with your employees what risks they regularly face to better address any potential issues.



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NEWS AND PROSECUTIONS

Film Production Company Fined After Injuring Harrison Ford

Foodles Production (UK) Ltd plead guilty to failing to protect actors and workers after Harrison Ford was seriously injured during the filming of Star Wars: The Force Awakens in June 2014. Ford suffered a broken leg and other injuries when he was struck by a metal door that weighed as much as a small car while on set. In its investigation, the HSE found that the firm was guilty of breaching Section 2 and Section 3(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. No fine amount has yet been announced.

Construction Worker Nearly Loses Foot Due to Inadequate Foresight

Complete Demolition Ltd was fined £40,000 and ordered to pay £7,246.95 in costs after a worker was hit and then run over by an excavator. At the construction site, the worker was in the same area as an excavator and a skip wagon that was attempting to reverse. As the excavator attempted to move out of the skip wagon's way, it knocked the worker down and ran over his foot. In its investigation, the HSE found that the company had breached the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2007 and failed to ensure pedestrians and vehicles were separated on the worksite.

Rocket Motor Company Fined for Severe Safety Failings

Roxel (Rocket Motor) Limited, an engineering company, was fined £386,000 and ordered to pay costs of £60,000 for safety failings. During an inspection of a rocket motor that had received damages during the manufacturing process, the propellant within the engine ignited due to the heat from a fibre optic light used to inspect the motor. The charge caused the room to catch fire, which also housed four explosive charges and a Vulcan rocket motor. When the company contacted emergency services, they were unable to adequately communicate the potential risk—delaying help for at least an hour. In its investigation, the HSE found that the company had failed to conduct risk assessments, and had not implemented any safe systems of work or an emergency plan.

Motor Manufacturer Fined £120,000 for Asbestos Contamination

General Motors UK Ltd was fined £120,000 and ordered to pay £11,779 in prosecution costs after exposing contractors to asbestos in boarding panels. In its investigation, the HSE found that the company had not performed the proper risk assessments, and had not determined whether the work was notifiable or licensed asbestos work. This incident highlights the legal duty a company has to document and implement an asbestos management plan whenever asbestos-containing materials are found.