

*Hazards Campaign Hazards Campaign*

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# Organising Demands

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# Hazards Campaign

## Organising Demands

***“It is a universal human right to have a safe and healthy workplace and to be able to go to work and return after a day’s work as fit and healthy as when we left home”.***

### Introduction

The Hazards Campaign is a network of campaigners, resource centres for occupational health and safety and the award winning Hazards Magazine. It was established in 1987 to campaign for action to prevent injuries, deaths and risk of occupational ill health faced by workers daily.

The right to life, to live in freedom and safety, and the right to work are universal human rights. The Hazards Campaign believes it is a universal human right that everyone should have a safe and healthy workplace and be not harmed or made ill by work.

Health and safety at work is a class issue: generally as your pay goes down, your risks go up. Lower paid, less secure workers face more risk of being injured, made ill, disabled or being killed at or by work. This includes dying from work-related illness, including all the major killers such as heart disease, lung disease and cancer, as well as work-related suicide. Lower paid and less secure workers are also less able to protect themselves, to complain, to get their rights to safe work enforced or to challenge unsafe and unfair working conditions without fear of victimisation and are less likely to be in a trade union.

We reject the indecent, low paid, insecure, zero hours, sweat shop, modern slavery and the inappropriately named ‘gig economy’ that many employers want to become the ‘new normal’, because it is literally making us sick to death. Workers have become disposable and little regard is made to their health, safety or welfare. Some working conditions are so bad that workers dare not take time off sick, even with life threatening conditions. Sports Direct workers were under a ‘three strikes and you are out’ policy, so ambulances had to be called in to the workplace because workers dare not take a day off work. MP’s called for improvements to their working conditions which they said were no better than the ‘Victorian Workhouse’.

McDonald’s workers went on strike in September 2017, for a living wage of £10 an hour. Workers spoke about not having enough money to house or feed themselves, sleeping on floors, safety issues from working two or three jobs, long hours and insufficient food. Low pay leads to serious physical and mental ill-health and is a major occupational health issue as well as job insecurity.

There are examples of workers in retail being denied toilet breaks, call centres with timed toilet breaks which lead to disciplinaries at the end of the week, and drivers denied access to toilets. This leads to workers wearing nappies, drivers’ defaecating and urinating in boxes or bottles in the back of vans or behind bushes and in public laybys. This treatment puts at risk workers’ health, insults their dignity and is a broader public health concern. Increased scrutiny and surveillance is leading to workers being micro-managed and even micro-chipped. This includes Amazon workers wearing devices which monitor their movements or vehicle drivers with GPS reporting their every move.

At the same time our health and safety laws, our enforcement bodies and our trade unions have all been attacked by successive governments. Deregulation is carried out as ‘Better Regulation’ and

based on the lie of good health and safety being a 'burden on business' and 'unnecessary red tape'. This has led to HSE budget cuts of almost 50%, cuts to enforcement by the HSE and Local Authorities (L.As) and legislative attacks on trade unions such as the 'Trade Union Act 2016'. There has also been an undermining of the trade union role, tripartism on the HSE board and the added commercialisation, and privatisation of the enforcement role of HSE and LA's. These attacks plus so called 'austerity' policies have threatened and damaged the health and safety protection for all workers to the extent that many of the most vulnerable workers in the precarious and so called 'gig' economy now fall outside of any statutory enforcement protection.

In June 2017 there was a tragic fire in Grenfell Tower, London and 72 people were killed. The fire was a direct result of the attacks on our health, safety and welfare. The cuts to fire safety officers, the changes to building and planning inspections and fire safety regulations, the privatisation, disregard and contempt by politicians of worker's safety and health all led to this disaster.

At the 2017 Hazards Conference we launched a postcard campaign 'We love red tape. It's your choice. Red tape or more bloody bandages?' The postcard read '*Dear Prime Minister, When you tear up critical fire, building, product, environmental and workplace safety laws you are not removing red tape-you are removing the protection necessary to keep us safe. The Grenfell Tower fire is one shocking example of the consequences of your government's 'bonfire of health and safety regulations'. Enough is enough. Stop undermining safety laws at work, in our homes and communities – instead keep, improve, enforce and uphold the laws that protect us.*'

*We campaign for the right of every person to return alive from work each day as fit and healthy as when they left home. In order to ensure this, all working people should have the right to:*

- *Work which does not cause physical or mental injury or illness;*
- *Meaningful work that makes it possible to maintain and develop skills and competencies;*
- *A limit to working hours and flexible working to suit the worker;*
- *A balance of work with home life to ensure good quality of life;*
- *Work which differentiates but does not discriminate –this means recognising the differences between people and the impact work has on them, and the measures we need to ensure that they are equally protected;*
- *Work that pays a minimum of a living wage and has decent terms and conditions of employment which includes permanent contracts;*
- *A zero tolerance on violence against any worker;*
- *Laws that protect workers from unfair and unsafe working practices as soon as they start work;*
- *Direct access to legal redress and enforcement bodies, where necessary.*

What makes work safe are strong laws, strictly enforced and strong active trade unions. We demand a bold precautionary, preventative, ambitious system of health and safety laws and enforcement to prevent death, injuries and illnesses caused by work. We demand repeal of laws restricting the ability of trade union to organise and represent workers because all the evidence shows that unionised workplaces are safer and healthier. The Hazards Campaign is committed to supporting workers and trade union safety reps fighting to improve health and safety for their members *This document is a means to discuss, educate, agitate, organise and politicise health and safety. It is a living, working document. Please participate, contribute to improving it and use it to stop work killing, injuring and making us ill.*

## Hazards Campaign - Organising Demands

1. We demand that the existing role and statutory functions of Trade Union Safety Reps are fully enforced, and extended to include the following principles and practices:	1	Enforcement inspectors to contact TU safety reps in advance of their visit and when on site. Reports of workplace visits and contacts with safety reps should be published on the HSE website. contacts
	2	Right to have written responses to correspondence by workers to their employers in connection with health and safety. Employers failure to do this should be reportable to enforcement for bodies for enforcement action.
	3	Right of safety reps to 'stop the job' when there is a danger of or likely to be an incident which is potentially harmful to the health, safety and welfare of workers and/or members of public.
	4	Joint trade union and management health and safety committees in all workplaces including shared workplace safety committees where there are multiple employers, to be held at least quarterly or more frequently. The agenda to include all health, safety and welfare issues arising from inspections, risk assessments, potential changes to working practices, infrastructure and construction. The aim of the committee is to prevent incidents or practices which may potentially affect health, safety and welfare and interrogate information relating to ill health, incidents, near misses and other information which may indicate further concerns and risks which need to be addressed.
	5	Paid release for continuous health and safety training which will support TU Health and Safety Reps carrying out their functions.
	6	Paid release for all TU Health and Safety Reps to carry out their functions and fully participate in all aspects of health and safety at work.
	7	TU Health and Safety Reps to cover all workplaces and where appropriate, accredited TUC approved Roving Reps
	8	TU Health and Safety Reps to be able to serve Provisional Improvement Notices on employers, and if not resolved internally must be followed up by the enforcement bodies
	9	Recognition of all workplaces for TU safety reps regardless of recognition agreements and membership numbers
	10	Lay worker safety representatives (currently employed) to have seats on all HSE and other enforcement bodies

2. We demand the improvement and the strengthening of Health, Safety and Welfare Regulations to focus on prevention of harm. To support this priority we demand that:	1	Regulations must be continuously reviewed to ensure up to date with technological, environmental issues and effective in achieving the aim of preventing harm. Full consultation (with adequate time) is conducted, prior to any changes, with all interested and relevant parties, especially the TUC, trade unions and workers, who can discuss the proposals and make submissions.
	2	There is a review of the Display Screen Equipment regulations to include or additional regulations to cover tablets, phones and other hand held, mobile technology.
	3	Protection against violence, harassment and victimisation by 3 <sup>rd</sup> parties to be re-introduced and included in regulations on employers duties.

	4	Regulations to be introduced on nano technologies and other new and emerging developments, such as automation.
	5	Extend the requirements of COSHH regulation to include the introduction of a duty on employers to risk assess environmental issues caused by or related to work, including air pollution caused by external sources and an obligation to present strategies for minimising and eradicating pollutants within the workplace and in the wider community.
	6	Obligation on employers to consider 'Just Transition' in changes to production and processes that affect workers including those brought in to meet climate change, reduction in air pollution, energy consumptions and other environmental and automation measures.
	7	TUC and workers proposals for changes, additions and improvements to health and safety regulations to be considered by enforcement bodies.

3. We demand strict enforcement of Health, Safety and Welfare Regulations. To support these priorities we demand:	1	A strengthened HSE prevention agenda for injuries and illnesses with remit to provide advice, instruction and direction, but reinforced by a stronger enforcement function. Guidance to be reinstated as Approved Codes of Practice (ACOP) and all ACOP's to be given the same legal status as regulations.
	2	We support the concept of a Labour Inspectorate but only with separate specialist health, safety and inspectors to proactively enforce our safety and health alongside other inspectors to enforce employment rights at work.
	3	RIDDOR to be reviewed, reinstatement of incidents causing absence from work of over 3 days with an extended list of injuries, illnesses and incidents that must be reported. Lack of reporting to attract prosecution and high penalties on employers.
	4	All 'work related' deaths including suicides, road traffic incidents, and work related diseases to be investigated for work related causes.
	5	Enforcement of HSE's Management Standards for work related stress.
	6	Enforcement of the Safety Reps and Safety Committees Regulations (SRSC) regs.
	7	Enforcement bodies to be accountable to and run by the state and not outsourced to commercial sector.
	8	Greater resources and investment in the enforcement bodies to at least minimum ILO standards.
	9	Health and safety performance of companies to be reported in Annual Reports and prominently displayed on their website.
	10	Prosecutions with high penalties for health and safety victimisation and blacklisting for raising health and safety issues.
	11	Increased prosecutions and penalties especially in Scotland, for employer negligence and reduced reduction for guilty plea. Specialised national prosecution unit in HSE. Introduction of percentage penalties for cost to the local economy of any incident i.e. cost to health service, clean- up costs, and costs of sickness benefits etc. of all workers of any health and safety incident.

	12	Reinstating proactive inspections in all sectors to ensure compliance. Removal of ban on proactive inspections in so called 'low risk' sectors.
	13	Strictest possible enforcement of asbestos regulations in workplaces and also in the community.
	14	Workplaces to ensure all incidents and near misses are recorded and accessible to health and safety reps
	15	Ensure that the HSE collect and publish full details of all ill- health, deaths and injuries related to work.

4. We demand just treatment for victims of health and safety crime. To support this priority, we demand:	1	Victim Impact Statements to be accepted for all court proceedings in health and safety cases.
	2	In the case of deaths in work-related incidents, extending civil compensation awards to next of kin in addition to dependants.
	3	Just and effective system of civil compensation Just and effective civil compensation for all cases of work-related injury, illness and deaths from work illnesses. Repeal of removal of civil and strict liability, restoration of full legal aid for personal injury case, removal of the 2x burden in the prescription of diseases for the Industrial Injury Disablement Benefits scheme.
	4	Legal aid for families of those killed at and by work to be represented at inquests.

5. We demand that employers provide decent work (good pay and conditions) which is essential for a healthy and safe working environment. To support this priority, we demand:	1	Workers access to regulatory enforcement from day one of 'employment contract' and protection from victimisation by any employer.
	2	All employment including self- employment, to have minimum health and safety remit/standards and removal of self- employment exclusion from health and safety law.
	3	Sex and gender sensitive approach to health and safety, risk assessments and management of health and safety.
	4	Specific risk assessments for all pregnant women to include risks from Endocrine Disrupting Chemicals (EDCs), plus nanoparticles, carcinogens, mutagens and reproductive toxins.
	5	Proactive inspections of workplaces to ensure they are free from discrimination, harassment and violence.
	6	Minimum of a living wage for all workers.
	7	Abolition of zero hours contracts.
	8	An ergonomic approach to all work to ensure that work is fitted to the worker (and not the other way around) and work to be fit for all workers. Full enforcement of Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations hierarchy of control.

	9	Worker controlled and prioritised occupational health services which have preventative and protective services at their centre, including health surveillance available in all workplaces which extends after the employment contract ends.
6. We demand the Government strengthen and promote good health, safety and welfare in our workplaces and communities. To support this priority we demand that:	1	All international trade includes the same high core health and safety standards to protect the health and safety of workers outside the UK and for this to be enforceable.
	2	Government invests in and supports strong health and safety laws, strict enforcement and supports strong active trade unions.
	3	Government does not sign trade deals that will undermine and reduce the duties on employers, or existing laws and standards to keep people safe and healthy in their workplace and communities and involves trade unions in negotiating post- Brexit trade deals.
	4	It Government reverses the budget cuts, political interference and commercialisation of the HSE and LA's health and safety enforcement. This will include repealing the 'growth duty' on , the Primary Authority scheme, the 'one in three out' policy etc.
	5	Government ends the harmful 'Better Regulation agenda' which puts profit maximisation, cuts to regulation and enforcement and commercialisation of enforcement and control to the detriment before of workers' health and lives.
	6	Government guarantees that post- Brexit, no health and safety regulations or laws on worker's rights will be cut and trade deals will include highest health and safety standards which will be enforceable.
	7	Government implements the removal of all carcinogens, mutagens and reproductive toxins, etc. from all workplaces including asbestos, EDCs etc. and commits to urgent eradication of asbestos from schools, other public buildings, all workplaces and homes under Toxic Reduction schemes.
	8	Government puts good health and safety at the heart of decent jobs and decent lives for all.
	9	Government scraps the TU Act and all anti-trade union legislation
	10	Government works with employers to ensure that the financial benefits of automation and technological developments are used to support reduced hours and better conditions of work with no loss of pay-ensuring 'Just Transition.

7. We demand the strongest level of international regulations and standards on occupational health, safety and welfare. To support this priority we will	1	With international organisations such as the ILO, create Create systems of international law and enforcement with independent inspectors to ensure nations conform to the highest health and safety standards are conformed to worldwide. – ILO conventions and independent trade unions must be included in any procedure.
	2	In the Hazards Campaign to maintain and strengthen our international networks with Scottish Hazards, European Work Hazards Network, Asia Monitor Resource Centre, AMRC, Asian Network for Occupational and Environmental Victims, ANROEV, and with USA Council for Safety and Health, COSH. We will work with our colleagues to set up the Global Grassroots Occupational and Environmental Health network. And we

campaign:		will continue to share best practice amongst health, safety, and environment activists and trade unions across the world.
	3	To ensure that UK based employers and UK foreign based employers proactively apply the highest standards of health and safety in the supply chain, and ensure which means there is no slavery, child labour, trafficking or exploitation similar conditions. Ensure that trade unions right to organise and negotiate is enshrined in agreements and contracts.
8. We will continue to strengthen and increase participation in International Workers Memorial Day, IWMD, 28 April every year. To support this priority we will campaign to:	1	Ensure that workers have the right to paid time off to remember those who have been killed by work and to campaign for better health, safety and welfare in the workplace.
	2	Extend the Hazards Campaign IWMD activity locally, nationally and internationally to remember the Dead and Fight for the Living by promoting our demands for safer healthier work and the role of unions, regulation and enforcement to achieve those aims.
	3	Support groups across the UK in organising IWMD events and action.
	4	Ensure the voices of families who have lost loved ones in work-related incidents are heard around IWMD and support the work of Families Against Corporate Killers (FACK), the Asbestos Victims Support Groups and other representing victims of health and safety crimes.

9. We will continue to increase the reach of our Message and Demands by:	1	Promoting the Hazards Campaign demands and worker oriented perspective on all aspects of health, safety and welfare through our website and social media sites.
	2	Organising and running the annual Hazards Conference for 350-400 safety reps.
	3	Supporting safety reps with information, analysis and training events.
	4	Producing briefings for MPs, MEPs, Councillors, Mayors and other relevant individuals and organisations.
	5	Promoting and utilising Hazards Magazine.
	6	Promoting and utilising RISKS.
	7	Supporting and publicising health and safety related disputes, publications and events.