

# fack families against corporate killers

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## FACK Statement International Workers' Memorial Day 28 April 2021

It is **fundamentally wrong** that a wife should need to write heartbreakingly about her 6<sup>th</sup> year on the grief rollercoaster, missing her beautiful angel husband so much with every passing hour of her life.

It is **fundamentally wrong** that a mum should be marking the 18<sup>th</sup> year since her 17-year-old son was taken from her, the pain she feels, never healing, instead festering like an open wound.

It is **fundamentally wrong** that a daughter should wish her dad a happy 56<sup>th</sup> birthday, while lamenting that he will be forever 37.

And it is **fundamentally wrong** that a fiancée should go from choosing wedding cars to instead sitting in a funeral cortège.

We FACKers are therefore at a loss to understand why we are even having to seek to convince the International Labour Organisation that health and safety should be recognised as a **fundamental right** at work...!? Because of course it should!

So, seek to do so, we will. And that will involve us taking you on a FACKing journey, a FACK-ers experience of a work-related life-ending journey.

Just when does such a journey begin? Is it when a loved one leaves home to go to work, with the intention of making a better and a fuller life for themselves, for their families, for us...?

That's how it feels for Catriona: "a year ago today my life ended at 7.25am the last time I saw my everything, my Mr Hendry alive, as he walked out our kitchen door in Dornie on his last journey to work at Mowi Fish Farm at Ardintoul."

Or does it begin when we get the harrowing call to say our loved one has been in "an accident"; when the police appear at our door in scenes we thought we'd only ever see on TV; when we ourselves set off for the hospital, not knowing what condition we're going to find our loved one in when we get there; or when the organ donor nurse calls to tell us they are now at peace; when we are escorted from the cold place where they lay; or when our stricken loved one is finally retrieved from the place where their life ebbed away?

The ending of our loved one's life begins our own lifelong journey and it is all so **fundamentally wrong**.

Because by the time we all go to bed tonight, this will have been the day at least another 140 families here in the UK set off on this fateful journey, caused by death due to a work-related incident or a work-related illness. Same again tomorrow. And the next day. And the day after that. And so on....unless, significant enough change is brought about.

So, have we been looking at this all wrong?

Does our journey in fact begin when our loved one's employer decides that the health and safety of its workforce just isn't an important enough priority? Does it begin when decisions are taken, or indeed, are not taken, and as a result our partner or parent, sibling or child, friend or family member is then exposed to the hazardous substance, process, or work environment which results in their death.

Are we on this journey because government decided that hard-won legislative protections should be stripped back, and that calls for legislative improvement should be knocked back?

Do we travel this road because our enforcement authorities have had their abilities to carry out proactive preventative inspections stifled, their governance and resources having been rifled?

And do we have our progress heartbreakingly hampered by the inability of our justice system to deliver answers quickly or thoroughly enough, indeed, often, to deliver anything even approaching what might be considered justice at all.

Because justice would mean organisations and individuals being held properly to account, charged with offences which fit the crime. It would mean punishment which serves as a deterrent to others. And it would mean ensuring lessons are learned swiftly so that future deaths are prevented. So that when a young man calls his mum to tell her, "I'm drowning in dreams, mother dear", that he actually gets to live out those dreams with this partner, rather than them both lose their lives the very next day when an entirely preventable fire ravages the hotel in which they are staying. His dear mother is still fighting for answers and justice for "her boys" more than 3 years on.

**All of this is so very fundamentally wrong.**

The mum of Tom, who lost his life when he was only 21-years-old wrote recently: "Every day I cry for you and what you lost. I have a painful yearning and ache in my chest constantly to see you, to hug you, to hear you, to talk to you, and there is nothing I can do about it."

The ILO has it within their power to do something about this, by recognising that our loved ones should have had a **fundamental right** to be kept safe and to return to us at least as healthy as they were when they left home.

We FACKers will continue in whatever ways we can, to seek to make right current fundamental wrongs. We commit to continue working tirelessly to ensure that in future families do not have to embark on this FACKing journey, one which proved life-ending for our loved ones and will be lifelong for us.

We FACKers remember all of the dead. And will continue to fight like hell for the living.

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FACK was established in July 2006, by and for families of people killed by the gross negligence of business employers, see [www.fack.org.uk](http://www.fack.org.uk).

**Founder Members of FACK:**

**Dawn and Paul Adams – son Samuel Adams** aged 6 killed at Trafford Centre, 10th October 1998

**Linzi Herbertson -husband Andrew Herbertson** 29, killed at work on 30th January 1998

**Mike and Lynne Hutin – son Andrew Hutin** 20, killed at work on 8th Nov 2001

**Mick & Bet Murphy – son Lewis Murphy** 18, killed at work on 21st February 2004

**Louise Adamson – brother Michael Adamson** 26, killed at work on 4th August 2005

**Linda Whelan – son Craig Whelan** 23, (and **Paul Wakefield**) killed at work on 23rd May 2004

**Dorothy & Douglas Wright – son Mark Wright** 37, killed at work on 13th April 2005

For more information and to support FACK, contact Hilda Palmer, Facilitator for FACK: Tel 0161 636 7557