

## Workers Memorial Day Quiz (with answers)

How much do you know about Workplace Health and Safety in Great Britain?

### 1. How many workers were killed in work-related incidents at work 2010/11?

(like a census the figures are only released periodically, these are the most current)

- a) 171                      b) 12,000                      c) over 1,000                      d) 250

**Answer: c) over 1,000**

171 workers killed at work and reported to the HSE and Local Authorities under RIDDOR, are NOT the total. The UK Statistics Authority in its assessment of the HSE's compliance with the code of practice for official statistics, May 2010, states that the 'HSE does not produce an overall figure for work-related fatalities in Great Britain' and makes recommendations that they 'investigate the feasibility of producing statistics on the total number of work-related injuries and fatalities'.

Hazards Magazine/Campaign estimates based on authoritative sources are:

171 workers reported to HSE & L.A. under RIDDOR + 51 workers killed at sea (31) and in the air + minimum 778 in work-related road traffic incidents + about 100-250 suicides due to the pressures of work - 1,100 to 1,350.

### 2. What percentage of deaths and major injuries are due to poor management of health and safety?

- a) 2%                      b) 10%                      c) 100%                      d) over 70%

**Answer: d) over 70%** (This is the HSE estimate).

### 3. How many workers die each year from work-related illnesses caused by, for example, exposure to chemicals, dusts, carcinogens such as asbestos, stress from long hours of work, overwork bullying and harassment?

- a) 10,000                      b) 20,000                      c) 50,000                      e) 171

**Answers: b) 20,000 and c) 50,000**

The TUC estimates a minimum of 20,000, the Hazards Magazine/Campaign estimate based on authoritative sources is 50,000 made up of **18,000** work-related cancer deaths (12% of all cancer deaths) including at least 5,000 due to asbestos cancers, plus **20,000** work-related deaths from heart disease (20% of deaths) due to stress, long hours, shift work and dust exposure, plus **12,000** from work-related respiratory illnesses. Safety & Health Practitioner, December 2008: '**The Whole Story**': <http://www.gmhazards.org.uk/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/the-whole-story-shp-december-20081.doc>

### 4. Where does Great Britain come in a league table on occupational health and safety performance amongst OECD countries?

- a) 30/34                      b) 1/34                      c) 10/34                      d) 20/34

**Answer: 20/34**

Maplecroft Risk Index Report published in 2010 put Britain 20th out of 34 countries in the OECD for occupational health and safety performance. <http://www.hazards.org/votetodie>

**5. DWP Minister Chris Grayling published 'Good Health and Safety: Good for Everyone' in March 2011, banning 33% of proactive inspections in 'low risk' workplaces. What sort of workplaces are now classified as 'low risk'?**

- a) Agriculture                      b) Quarries                      c) Docks                      d) Manufacturing

**Answer: ALL OF THEM:**

Despite their high rates of major and fatal injury a) Agriculture b) Quarries c) Docks d) Manufacturing are all now in the low risk category and proactive inspection are banned.

Sectors also in the low risk category are: the whole of the public sector hospitals, schools, colleges, emergency services; road and air transport, electrical engineering, office and shops. Despite the fact that occupational ill-health such as stress and musculo-skeletal disorders are at epidemic levels in these sectors, and workers still face physical injury from exposure to asbestos and other chemicals, violence, slips trips and falls and manual handling, preventative, advisory inspections are now banned.

**6. The HSE average death rate for all workplaces is 0.5 per 100,000, what is the death rate in the Docks (now classified as low hazard)?**

- a) over 5 x the average    b) the average    c) 2 x the average    d) well below average

**Answer: a) over 5 x the average**

This is a minimum as it depends on the total number of workers included which is a hard figure to pin down. The range is from 5 times the national average to 20x the national average deaths. Proactive inspections are banned but HSE inspectors on their way to investigate a fatal injury to a worker in Immingham docks, noticed something so dangerous that they put an immediate prohibition notice on it, which may have prevented injury or death, but the inspectors were only there because someone had already been killed as proactive inspection are banned in the 'low risk' Docks.

See Hazards Magazine 'Safety in the Dock': <http://www.hazards.org/sfaetyinthedock>

**7. What is the real risk of a worker dying because of work (illness and incident)?**

- a) Less than winning the lottery    b) 1 in 100    c) 1 in a million    d) 1 in 200,000

**Answer: b) 1 in 100**

Far more than the public is made aware, as the government and HSE do not publicise the real figures; the press and media prefer to publicise apocryphal stories rather than the real risks workers face daily; and the business lobby promotes the falsehoods of health and safety being a 'burden on business'.

**8. How many workers were suffering work-related ill-health in 2010/11**

- a) 1.9 million                      b) 15 million                      c) 50,000                      d) 500,000

**Answer: a) 1.9 million**

According to the HSE Statistics for 2010/11 from the Labour Force Survey.

**9. How much does poor workplace health and safety cost society?**

- a) £20- £40 million                      b) £20-40 billion                      c) £20,000-40,000                      d) £1 million

**Answer: b) £20-40 billion**

The HSE's most recent estimate is £14 billion (£20 billion in Parliamentary answer to Ian Lavery MP) with the proviso that this excludes long latency diseases like cancer. As each occupational cancer is estimated by HSE to cost society £1.5 million, this gives a total estimate of at least £40 billion per year- **a bank bailout every year!** See HSE Annual Statistics Report 2010/11

**10. What percentage of that cost is borne by employers?**

- a) less than 25%                      b) over 75%                      c) 100%                      d) about 5%

**Answer: a) less than 25%**

HSE latest estimates for 2009/10 are that over half of the cost burden (55%) falls on individuals, workers and their families, and the state bears 24% leaving employers picking up only 22% of the total cost of harm caused by work. See HSE Annual Statistics Report 2010/11

**11 Who bears the biggest cost burden of poor health and safety?**

- a) workers & their families                      b) the state                      c) taxpayers                      d) employers?

**Answer: a) workers & their families**

Workers bear the burden twice! They do this once as individuals who are harmed (and their families), and again as tax payers. Employers, despite lobbying for cuts in regulation and enforcement as a 'burden on business', pay less than a quarter of the cost of breaking health and safety law and mistreating workers. See HSE Annual Statistics Report 2010/11.

Greater Manchester Hazards Centre April 2012

