FACT SERVICE

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Top hazards mentioned by safety reps

Long hours has replaced slips, trips and falls as one of the five most frequently cited hazards at work by safety reps, according to the TUC's 11th biennial safety representatives' survey.

The top four hazards are the same as in 2014 and are stress, bullying/harassment, overwork, back strains and long hours at work.

Stress was once again the top hazard and was identified as a top-five hazard by 70% of safety representatives in the survey. That's a higher proportion than any of the previous surveys.

Concern over stress remains higher in the public sector than the private sector. And it is especially prevalent – and rising – in central government (93% citing it as a top-five concern), education (89%) and health services (82%).

Nevertheless it has become more widespread in both sectors.

Concern over bullying/harassment has been creeping up for some years and now almost half (48%) of safety representatives put it in their top five, compared with 46% in 2014.

The rise over the last two years has all taken place in the public sector, cited by 53% of safety reps compared with 43% of reps in the private sector.

It appears to be a particular problem in leisure services, where it is the top concern, and in central government and education. And it is more of a problem in larger workplaces – those with 200 or more employees – than smaller ones.

Two out of five (40%) of respondents cited overwork in 2016 compared with 36% in 2014. It is more widespread in the public sector (46% citing it) than the private sector (33%), and is a particular problem in education.

The linked problem of long hours, on the other hand, is more prevalent in the private sector with 35% citing it compared with 29% in the public sector.

Concern over back strains is virtually unchanged – with 32% of reps citing it this year compared with 33% in 2014. More reps from the private sector mentioned it – 39% against 28% in the public sector.

Bubbling up below the top five concerns is the worrying trend of a rise in violence and threats, with 24% of safety reps citing it in 2016 compared with 19% in 2014.

www.tuc.org.uk/sites/default/files/focusonhealthsafetyreport.pdf

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Auto-enrolment pushes up pension figures

Last year, membership of occupational pension schemes reached its highest level recorded in the Office for National Statistics (ONS) annual survey.

The 2015 total of 33.5 million was a 10% increase on the 2014 figure of 30.4 million.

The ONS survey breaks membership down into three groups:
- active members, that is current members who would normally contribute;
- pensioner members who are drawing their pensions; and
- members with preserved pension entitlements, that is, members who are no longer actively contributing into the scheme, but have accrued rights that will come into payment at some point in the future.

Active membership numbers are estimated to have grown to 11.1 million in 2015 from 8.1 million in 2013 and 10.2 million in 2014.

The increase, almost entirely in the private sector, is likely to be due to the establishment of auto-enrolment Estimates for the private sector show a significant increase from 2.8 million to 5.5 million between 2013 and 2015.

The growth in the public sector was lower, as numbers increased from 5.3 million in 2013 to 5.6 million last year.

Active membership of private defined benefit (DB) schemes has remained at around 1.6 million over the past three years.

Meanwhile, active membership of private defined contribution (DC) schemes has increased from 1.2 million in 2013 to 3.9 million last year. This rise in membership is likely to due to the introduction of automatic enrolment, as such schemes were favoured by employers taking on auto-enrolment.

Estimates for contribution rates were broadly comparable over the past two years, but, as in past years, private sector DB schemes had higher contribution rates than DC schemes.

In 2015, the estimated average total contribution rate for DB schemes was 21.2% of pensionable earnings, broken down by 5.0% for members and 16.2% for employers.

For DC schemes, the average total contribution rate was 4.0% of pensionable earnings with 1.5% coming from members and 2.5% from employers.

TUC general secretary Frances O'Grady said that auto-enrolment has made a good start by bringing millions more people into workplace pensions.

However, she warned that it is a job half done. "Too many women and lower-income workers still miss out.

“Next year's review of automatic enrolment must be used by the government to provide a long-term plan for how workplace pensions will provide a decent retirement income for low and middle-earners.”

http://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/personalandhouseholdfinances/pensionssavingsandinvestments/bulletins/occupationalpensionschemessurvey/2015

www.tuc.org.uk/economic-issues/pensions-and-retirement/pension-enrolment-adequacy-still-needs-addressing-urgently?

Prospect grows

The specialists' union Prospect is set to grow as members of APFO, the Association of Principal Fire Officers, have voted overwhelmingly to become a branch of the union. The ballot saw 89% of those who took part vote in favour of the proposal.

APFO represents brigade managers, area managers and equivalent and at the end of 2015 had 145 members, 92% of whom were male, according to its return to the Certification Officer.

Prospect general secretary Mike Clancy said: “This is very welcome news – APFO will strengthen Prospect's diverse membership in hazardous and security-critical areas, which includes fire managers at airports and in London Fire Brigade.”

www.prospect.org.uk/news/id/2016/September/12/Principal-fire-officers-vote-become-branch-Prospect

www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/529788/81T_2015.pdf

Minimum wage rises

New National Minimum Wage rates are to take effect imminently.

On 1 October, the National Minimum Wage (NMW) for workers aged between 21 and 25 rises by 3.7% or 25p an hour to £6.70 an hour.

The development rate for 18 to 20-year-old workers rises by 4.7% or 25p an hour to £5.55, while the youth rate for 16- and 17-year-olds rises by 3.4% or 13p an hour to £4.00.

The apprentice rate rises by 3.0% or 10p an hour to £3.40 an hour. The rate applies to those apprentices aged 16 to 18 and those aged 19 or over who are in their first year. All other apprentices are entitled to the NMW for their age.

The above rates will be payable for six months until the end of March 2017.

The National Living Wage, in effect a higher NMW for older workers aged 25 and over, was introduced in April 2016 at a rate of £7.20 an hour. This rate will be uprated in April 2017, when the uprating of the other NMW rates will be aligned with it.

The National Minimum Wage and National Living Wage are calculated by including most financial awards or payments, but excluding allowances, such as regional or on-call allowances, unsocial hours payments, tips and gratuities, or any benefits in kind, with the exception of accommodation up to a specified amount.

The accommodation offset is the maximum daily sum employers who provide accommodation can deduct towards those costs and this rises by 12.1% or 65p to £6 a day.

www.gov.uk/government/news/the-government-accepts-minimum-wage-rate-recommendations–2

Apprenticeships — getting it right

The Department for Education (DfE) is expanding the apprenticeships programme, while making it increasingly employer-led and employer-funded.

The policy objective is to bring about three million new apprenticeship starts during the period from 2015 to 2020.

From April 2017, employers with a pay bill of more than £3 million will pay a levy to fund apprenticeships. The levy is expected to raise almost £3 billion a year. At the same time, it will be made easier for employers to choose and pay for the apprenticeship training and assessment they want.

Also, in April 2017, an independent and employer-led Institute for Apprenticeships will be created. The Institute's role will include regulating the quality of apprenticeships.

However, the DfE has not set out how it will use the increase in apprenticeship numbers to deliver improvement in productivity, and how it will influence the mix of apprenticeships in order to deliver the most value, according to a National Audit Office (NAO) report.

The DfE, which assumed overall responsibility for apprenticeship policy in July this year, has also not defined what "success" will look like in the reformed programme. Research shows that different apprenticeships offer significantly different benefits, but the DfE is not clear about how it plans to use this evidence to maximise the value derived from the mix of apprenticeships undertaken.

In England, an apprenticeship is a full-time paid job, available to those aged 16 or over. It incorporates on and off-the-job training and leads to a nationally recognised certificate. Annual public funding of apprenticeships has grown over time. In 2010-11, it amounted to just under £1.2 billion, but by 2015-16 the figure had risen to around £1.5 billion.

Since 2013, there has been a process to develop new, employer-led, apprenticeship "standards", which will eventually replace the previous frameworks.

The NAO's report finds that many of the employers and training providers involved in designing and delivering apprenticeships support the principles behind the new standards, but more work is needed to raise awareness of them.

In practice, the process of introducing the new standards has been resource-intensive and has taken longer than the DfE envisaged. Employers involved in developing the new standards have expressed concern about the time they have to invest at their own expense. As at April 2016, only around 2,600 people had started an apprenticeship under the new standards.

Furthermore, some employers and industry representative groups are concerned that the approach is leading to a large number of narrow and overlapping standards, which may restrict the extent to which apprentices gain transferable skills.

Employers report high levels of satisfaction with the training offered and benefits experienced, but surveys of apprentices provide a less clear view on quality of delivery.

One in five apprentices reported that they had not received any formal training at all, either at an external provider or in the workplace. Ofsted reports suggest that, overall, around a fifth of training providers need to improve the quality of their training and the results they achieve.

Among the NAO's recommendations is that the DfE should set out the planned overall impact on productivity and growth, along with short-term key performance indicators to measure the programme's success, and should develop more robust ways of managing behavioural risks.

Sir Amyas Morse, head of the NAO, said: "The Department for Education needs to chart and follow a course from having a lot of apprenticeships to having the right apprenticeships in order to help improve the UK's productivity, and achieve value for money, in return for the costs of the programme."

www.nao.org.uk/report/delivery-value-through-the-apprenticeships-programme/

How much of £86.9m is executive excess?

Twenty-six executives were given remuneration packages worth £86.93 million in total in our latest list of FTSE 350 directors with packages worth in excess of £1 million.

Three directors of upmarket builder Berkeley top the list, which is headed by the firm's co-founder and chair Tony Pidgley on £21.49 million. That package equates to £413,250 a week.

His chief executive, Rob Perrins, picked up a package of £10.99 million or £211,404 a week. Meanwhile, Greg Fry takes third spot with £7.14 million or £137,269 a week.

Year-on-year comparisons could be made for 21 of the executives, but just six saw the package grow.

The top rise went to someone who is no longer at the firm. Ann-Francoise Nesmes only joined drugs group Dechra as chief financial officer in 2013, but she left in July this year to take up a similar past at Merlin Entertainments, the owners of Alton Towers. In her final year at Dechra, Nesmes saw her package increase by a third to £1.34 million or £25,673 a week. Her former boardroom colleague and chief executive at Dechra, Ian Page, received a 17.8% rise to take his package to £2.28 million or £43,808 a week.

Ivan Menezes, chief executive of drinks multinational Diageo, got a 17.1% rise, taking him to £4.44 million or £85,385 a week.

Benzion Freshwater, managing director of property group Daejan, and executive director and family member Solomon both received 10% rises and last year both picked up £1.1 million or £21,154 a week.

The two executive directors of media group Sky – chief financial officer Andrew Griffith and chief executive Jeremy Darroch – saw the biggest cuts in packages. Nevertheless, Darroch still received a package worth £4.75 million or £91,250 a week and Griffith £2.41million or £46,423 a week.

The total remuneration figure given in the table includes: basic salary, cash bonus, long-term share bonuses, golden hello, golden handshake, cash pension payments and a cash figure for other benefits, such as use of company car, private healthcare and housing allowance. It does not include dividends received from their shareholdings in their company.

Executive	Company (financial year end)	Total remuneration (£000)	% change
Tony Pidgley	Berkeley (4.16)	21,489	-7.8
Rob Perrins	Berkeley (4.16)	10,993	-11.0
Greg Fry	Berkeley (4.16)	7,138	-2.3
Jeremy Darroch	Sky (6.16)	4,745	-73.5
Ivan Menezes	Diageo (6.16)	4,440	17.1
Karl Whiteman	Berkeley (4.16)	3,943	-10.3
Geoff Drabble	Ashtead (4.16)	3,115	-25.2
Sean Ellis	Berkeley (4.16)	3,010	-19.8
Kathryn Mikells	Diageo (6.16)	2,811	n.a
Andrew Griffith	Sky (6.16)	2,414	-74.3
Ian Page	Dechra Pharma (6.16)	2,278	17.8
Ian Gorham	Hargreaves Lansdown (6.16)	2,071	0.6
John Tutte	Redrow (6.16)	1,888	-19.8
Graham Stapleton	Dixons Carphone (4.16)	1,786	n.a
Sebastian James	Dixons Carphone (4.16)	1,616	n.a
Mark Coombs	Ashmore Group (6.16)	1,411	-52.9
Anne-Francoise Nesmes	Dechra Pharma (6.16)	1,335	33.8
David Brown	Go-Ahead (6.16)	1,311	-38.6
Suzanne Wood	Ashtead (4.16)	1,290	-23.5
Brendan Horgan	Ashtead (4.16)	1,258	-22.8
Barbara Richmond	Redrow (6.16)	1,143	-21.4
Alex Kanellis	PZ Cussons (5.16)	1,105	-24.5
Benzion Freshwater	Daejan (3.16)	1,100	10.0
Solomon Freshwater	Daejan (3.16)	1,100	10.0
Deidre Mahlan	Diageo (6.16)	1,076	n.a
Andrew Harrison	Dixons Carphone (4.16)	1,059	n.a