FACT SERVICE

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Shift workers more prone to disease

Workers are more susceptible to infection at certain times of the day as the body clock affects the ability of viruses to replicate and spread between cells, new research from the University of Cambridge suggests.

The findings, published in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, may help explain why shift workers, whose body clocks are routinely disrupted, are more prone to health problems, including infections and chronic disease

When a virus enters the body, it hijacks the machinery and resources in the cells to help it replicate and spread throughout the body. However, the resources on offer fluctuate throughout the day, partly in response to circadian rhythms — that is, the body clock.

Circadian rhythms control many aspects of human physiology and bodily functions — from sleep patterns to body temperature, and from the immune systems to the release of hormones. These cycles are controlled by a number of genes.

"The time of day of infection can have a major influence on how susceptible we are to the disease, or at least on the viral replication, meaning that infection at the wrong time of day could cause a much more severe acute infection," explains Professor Akhilesh Reddy, the study's senior author.

"This is consistent with recent studies which have shown that the time of day that the influenza vaccine is administered can influence how effectively it works."

http://medicalxpress.com/news/2016-08-day-susceptibility-infection.html

Lucky 13 in boardroom

The company reporting season has all but come to an end, so the latest list of £1 million earners at FTSE 350 companies numbers only 13.

The lucky 13 executives received a total of £28.94 million in remuneration; that works out as an average package of £2.23 million or £42,824 a week.

Preben Prebensen, chief executive of merchant bank Close Brothers, tops the table with a total package of £3.77 million or £72,519 a week.

Ken Gillespie, chief operating officer at housebuilder Galliford Try, tails the table in his final full year at the firm. He stood down in July, but his final year package came to £1.13 million or £21,654 a week. His overall package might have been cut by a third, but his basic salary ended 11.1% higher at £390,000.

Year-on-year comparisons can be made for 10 of the 13 executives and not one saw the overall package grow, mainly as a result of smaller long-term bonuses. However, nine received increases in their basic salary ranging from 2.0% for three executives up to 48.9% for David Thomas who was promoted to from chief finance officer to chief executive of housebuilder Barratt in July 2015.

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
Preben Prebensen	Close Brothers (7.16)	3,771	-36.7
Stephen Hodges	Close Brothers (7.16)	3,328	-21.8
David Thomas	Barratt Developments (6.16)	3,320	-29.9
Steven Boyes	Barratt Developments (6.16)	2,945	-38.4
Jonathan Howell	Close Brothers (7.16)	2,827	-17.9
Alistair Cox	Hays (6.16)	2,743	-30.8
Paul Venables	Hays (6.16)	1,981	-30.6
Mark Clare	Barratt Developments (6.16)	1,837	n.a
Peter Truscott	Galliford Try (6.16)	1,461	n.a
Greg Fitzgerald	Galliford Try (6.16)	1,262	n.a
Elizabeth Lee	Close Brothers (7.16)	1,221	-21.8
Graham Prothero	Galliford Try (6.16)	1,127	-26.1
Ken Gillespie	Galliford Try (6.16)	1,126	-33.9

Manufacturing output still weak

The latest data shows factory output contracted in the three months to August.

Manufacturing output was down by 0.4% on the previous three months.

Factory output was 0.6% higher than the same period a year ago. Meanwhile, the volatile monthly figure showed a 0.2% increase in August compared with July.

In the three-month period ending August, output of the production industries — manufacturing, utilities and mining — was just 0.2% higher than the three months ending May, but 1.4% higher than the same period a year earlier.

The volatile monthly figure for production output showed a 0.4% contraction in August compared with the previous month.

In the three months to August 2016, production and manufacturing were 7.7% and 5.7% respectively below their level reached in the pre-downturn gross domestic product (GDP) peak in the first quarter of 2008, the Office for National Statistics said.

GDP The production industries account for around 14% to 15% of the UK economy as measured by GDP. The latest estimate for GDP in the second quarter of 2016 is a 0.7% increase on the first quarter, a revision upwards of 0.1 percentage points from the second estimate.

Production output increased by 2.1% in the second quarter compared with the first, unrevised from the previously published estimate, while manufacturing rose by 1.6%.

www.ons.gov.uk/economy/economicoutputandproductivity/output/bulletins/indexofproduction/aug2016

www.ons.gov.uk/economy/grossdomesticproductgdp/bulletins/quarterlynationalaccounts/quarter2aprtojune2016

Firms sign Dying to Work charter

Santander bank is the latest high-profile employer to sign up to the Dying to Work Voluntary Charter, following in the footsteps of companies such as E.On, Legal and General, and Carillion Rail.

The charter is part of the TUC's wider Dying to Work campaign which is seeking greater security for terminally ill workers through a "protected period" where they cannot be dismissed as a result of their condition.

Other signatories include: Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council; Harrow Council; Nottinghamshire County Council; Nottingham City Homes; The Isle of Man Steam Packet Company; Southport and Ormskirk NHS Trust; and AB Produce.

Dying to Work was taken up by the TUC following the case of Jacci Woodcock, a 58-year-old sales manager from Derbyshire, who was forced out of her job after being diagnosed with terminal breast cancer.

The TUC is asking employers to sign up to its voluntary charter to stop cases like Jacci's happening in the future.

TUC deputy general secretary Paul Nowak said: "Worrying about your job should be the least of your concerns when you receive a terminal diagnosis. We are delighted that Santander have committed to sign up to the TUC's Dying to Work Charter.

"More than 60,000 employees across the country are now covered by the charter. There is real momentum behind the campaign as we work to secure the dignity and protection that all terminally ill workers deserve.

"Over the coming months we expect more companies to follow Santander's lead and commit to the charter as we take the Dying to Work campaign into more workplaces."

www.tuc.org.uk/equality-issues/workplace-issues/santander-signs-tuc%E2%80%99s-charter-helping-terminally-ill-workers

Perils of hard Brexit for UK car industry

Investment decisions by major carmakers on the production of up to 15 new models in the UK are "hanging by a thread" unless the government secures tariff free access to the European single market, according to a report by the Unite general union, which represents over 500,000 manufacturing workers.

Brexit on our terms says that talk by government ministers of a "hard Brexit" and the uncertainty surrounding the UK's trading relationship with Europe could deter carmakers from investing in their UK plants and see production move to Europe on models due to come in to production after 2020.

The report highlights the key investment decisions which are due over the next two years on new car models ranging from the Honda Civic to the Range Rover Sport.

It also warns that suggestions by some ministers to revert to World Trade Organisation (WTO) tariffs of 10% on exports and 4% on imports would damage a resurgent car industry and decent manufacturing jobs.

According to the report, hundreds of thousands of jobs in the UK's manufacturing and automotive industry would be at risk because of European exports and a reliance on a European wide supply chain which benefits from tariff-free access to the single market.

David Bailey, professor of industry at Aston University explains in the report: "Automotive and engine assemblers like General Motors, BMW and Ford all import sizable inflows of components to the UK from other European Union operations.

"Anything which puts these trading relationships at risk, whether currency risk or higher transaction costs from having to deal with EU and UK regulations separately, reduce the likelihood of further investment."

Investment decisions are already likely to have been made for the production of new car models in 2017 and 2018, including the Nissan Leak and Juke and the Toyota Auris. However, the investment decisions for cars which will be manufactured after 2019 are yet to be made. These include future generations of the Honda Civic, which will begin production in 2023, and future generations of the Toyota Auris, Nissan Qashqai and Range Rover Sport.

Unite general secretary Len McCluskey said: "The UK car industry is the most productive in the EU. Yet the uncertainty of Brexit could seriously compromise the continued resurgence of this world class industry.

"Dozens of decisions, including new models to UK plants, must be made in the coming months. These crucial investment decisions will determine the future of the UK's car industry. Ministers' mixed signals on tariff-free access to the single market, which consumes 80% of the cars we produce, could leave our world class industry hanging by a thread."

www.unitetheunion.org/news/hard-brexit-could-leave-resurgent-uk-car-industry-hanging-by-a-thread-warns-new-unite-report/?

Commission and holiday pay ruling

The Court of Appeal has confirmed that holiday pay calculations should include a representative amount of commission-based pay.

In the case of *British Gas v Lock*, Lock, a sales consultant for British Gas, brought an employment tribunal claim for outstanding holiday pay when this was calculated according to his basic salary without taking into account the commission he would usually earn.

The Court of Appeal upheld a decision issued by the Employment Appeal Tribunal in February 2016, finding that normal remuneration earned over a suitable reference period should be taken into account when determining holiday pay.

This maintains the decision reached by the European Court of Justice (ECJ), which found that the *Working Time Regulations* allow Lock to have his holiday pay calculated based on his normal remuneration, which includes taking into account commission payments.

Andrew Granger, partner in the employment, pensions and mobility group at Taylor Wessing, said: "The court has, as expected, confirmed that workers are entitled to have part of their holiday pay calculated by reference to their normal contractual remuneration measured over a suitable reference period, and that in Mr Lock's case this means that his average commission earnings over a 12-week period are to be taken into account. But the court did not throw much light on how normal remuneration and the requisite reference period are to be calculated in other cases."

www.employeebenefits.co.uk/issues/october-online-2016/british-gas-court-of-appeal-decision-confirms-inclusion-of-commission-in-holiday-pay/

UK's record deficit in trade in goods

The UK's trading position with the rest of the world in goods reached a record deficit of £34.7 billion in the second quarter of the year.

The deficit widened from £32.9 billion in the first quarter as imports rose much faster than exports: imports rose by £4.4 billion, but exports by only £2.6 billion.

Trade in services is usually positive, but the surplus shrank to £22.0 billion in the second quarter from £22.9 billion in the first quarter.

These two sets of figures gave a worsening position for total trade, with the deficit widening to £12.7 billion for £10.0 billion.

The widening deficit in total trade contributed to an increase in the UK's current account deficit, the Office for National Statistics said.

The current account deficit was £28.7 billion in the second quarter of 2016, against a revised deficit of £27.0 billion in the first quarter of the year.

The current account deficit equated to 5.9% of gross domestic product (GDP) at current market prices in second quarter of the year, compared with 5.7% in the first quarter.

EU A current account deficit of £24.6 billion was recorded with the EU in the second quarter of 2016, slightly smaller than the £26.8 billion deficit in the first quarter.

The deficit in trade in goods with the EU narrowed to £23.4 billion from £24.0 billion. Exports increased by around £2 billion to £35.3 billion, but imports only increased by around £1.4 billion to £58.7 billion.

The trade in services surplus with the EU rose slightly to £7.0 billion from £6.5 billion. Exports rose by £0.9 billion to £24.9 billion, while imports only rose by £0.3 billion to £17.9 billion.

Non-EU The current account deficit with non-EU countries widened to £4.1 billion from £0.2 billion.

The trade in goods deficit widened to £11.3 billion from £8.9 billion, as exports rose by £0.6 billion, but imports rose by £2.9 billion.

The trade in services surplus was £15.0 billion in second quarter of the year, a decrease of £1.5 billion from first quarter. Exports fell by £1.4 billion to £33.1 billion, while imports were almost unchanged at £18.2 billion.

www.ons.gov.uk/economy/nationalaccounts/balanceofpayments/bulletins/balanceofpayments/aprtojun2016

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