

Latest HSE Updates April 2022

1. HSE Metal Fabrication Inspections

The current programme of inspection visits that started in May 2021 has finished.

HSE inspectors carried out inspections in 1875 premises, looking at control of welding fume and exposure to metal working fluids.

Visits generated significant levels of enforcement, particularly in relation to the poor management of, and control of exposure to, water-mix metal working fluids.

62% of visits resulted in notices or other enforcement.

Information on controlling exposure to these substances is available at:

[About metalworking fluids - Metalworking fluids - HSE](#)

[Welding - HSE](#)

It is planned that an analysis of the results will appear in September 2022

2. Workplan for 2022/2023

The welding and MWF visits will continue for Q1 and there will be evaluation visits (to see if previous inspection visits worked) in Q2 on these subjects

Woodworking dust visits will run all year

The silica campaign will run from Q3 and have two parts

- foundry visits to those casting using sand. As well as RCS and the sand cycle the visits will look at FFP, dust, fume etc produced by the casting process
- visits to ceramics, brick, tile, concrete, stone working premises where RCS is a risk

3. COVID

From the latest HSE website update [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) – Advice for workplaces \(hse.gov.uk\)](#)

COVID-19 will remain a public health issue, and guidance for workplaces is being replaced with [public health advice](#).

You can check the latest position and timescales for the nation you are working in:

- [England](#)
- [Scotland](#)
- [Wales](#)

HSE no longer requires every business to consider COVID-19 in their risk assessment or to have specific measures in place. There is a requirement to protect those who will [come into contact with the virus](#) due to their work activity.

You can find advice for [people who may be at higher risk](#) such as those who are immunosuppressed.

Complying with general health and safety law

Employers must, as always, comply with the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 for [welfare facilities](#). We have guidance on [providing sufficient general ventilation](#) in workplaces.

On a related topic, given the injunction to work from home, there is guidance on managing home workers' health and safety

[Managing home workers' health and safety - Overview - HSE](#)

4. REACH

If REACH is important to your business, then I recommend that you sign up to e-bulletins to keep you up to date with the changes in this area.

[UK REACH: eBulletin signup \(hse.gov.uk\)](#)

5. Supply and Manufacture of Work Equipment

New information about UK CA marking

[Manufacture and supply of new work equipment - Work equipment and machinery \(hse.gov.uk\)](#)

6. Safety Alert – Maintenance of UPS Systems

Information prescribed in some original equipment manufacturer's (OEM's) standard operating and maintenance instructions relating to industrial UPS systems may not be adequate to ensure the continued safe and reliable operation for the intended design life, leading to dangerous situations.

[Maintenance of industrial uninterruptible power supply \(UPS\) systems - HSE](#)

7. Personal Protective Equipment Regulations 2022

The revised PPE regulations came into force on 6th April 2022.

For employees the old regulations remain unchanged, but the regulations extend the definition of worker to include employees and limb (b) workers:

“worker” means ‘an individual who has entered into or works under –

- *(a) a contract of employment; or*
- *(b) any other contract, whether express or implied and (if it is express) whether oral or in writing, whereby the individual undertakes to do or perform personally any work or services for another party to the contract whose status is not by virtue of the contract that of a client or customer of any profession or business undertaking carried on by the individual;*

and any references to a worker’s contract shall be construed accordingly.’

This means that people in the gig economy that are not strictly employees, but do work for a company must be provided with the PPE required to do the job.

This does not apply to truly self-employed people, who must provide their own PPE.

[Personal protective equipment \(PPE\) at work regulations from 6 April 2022 \(hse.gov.uk\)](https://www.hse.gov.uk/ppe/)

8. Prosecutions

A recycling company has been fined £2m for the corporate manslaughter of a worker at the plant in 2017.

As reported on the BBC website:-

Stuart Towns, 34, suffered fatal head injuries while working at Alutrade Limited, on Tat Bank Road in Oldbury.

Three of the firm's management were also fined, at Wolverhampton Crown Court on Friday, after admitting health and safety failures.

Mr Towns, a father of one, was remembered by his family as "loving, caring, generous and full of life".

Alutrade Limited had previously pleaded guilty to the charge of corporate manslaughter.

Before the death the company had been warned about the absence of gates on a piece of machinery, said the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS).

The company had installed gates to prevent employees from going under the machine. However, by June 2017 the gates were again damaged and CCTV showed employees, including Mr Towns, going underneath and climbing in or on the equipment.

The worker was struck on 24 July causing him fatal head injuries, the CPS said.

Two directors and the site manager were also prosecuted and fined for not ensuring the health and safety of employees

[Stuart Towns: Oldbury recycling firm fined £2m for corporate manslaughter - BBC News](https://www.bbc.com/news/health-41414141)

9. Stress and Mental Health at Work

Stress affects people differently – what stresses one person may not affect another. Factors like skills and experience, age or disability may all affect whether an employee can cope.

There are [six main areas of work design](#) which can affect stress levels. You should manage these properly. They are:

- demands
- control
- support
- relationships
- role
- change

Employers should assess the risks in these areas to manage stress in the workplace.

Signs of stress

Stress is not an illness, but it can make you ill. Recognising the [signs of stress](#) will help employers to take steps to stop, lower and manage stress in their workplace.

How to help

The earlier a problem is tackled the less impact it will have. If you think that an employee is having problems, encourage them to talk to someone, whether it's their line manager, trade union representative, GP or their occupational health team.

Help for line managers to have simple, practical conversations with employees which can help prevent stress is available in our [Talking Toolkits \(PDF\)](#) .

To protect employees from stress at work, employers should assess risks to their health. These [example stress risk assessments](#) may help.

You may need to develop individual action plans for employees suffering from stress. HSE's [Management Standards](#) may also help you to identify and manage the six causes of stress at work.

[Stress at work - HSE](#)

On a similar vein the HSE has launched the Working Minds Campaign

workright.campaign.gov.uk/campaigns/workingminds.