

Health and Safety matters in **The Rail Sector**

Employers are required to consult safety reps, especially about:

- Measures introduced at a workplace that may substantially affect health and safety.
- Arrangements for appointing health & safety competent persons and emergencies.
- Health & safety information required to be provided to employees.
- Health & safety training arrangements for the workforce, such as induction training.
- New technology introduced and planned, regarding consequences to health & safety.

Employers are legally required to provide safety reps with resources to carry out their role. ACAS suggest:

- Room with desk and chairs at work, for carrying out interviews and meetings.
- Secure facilities for storing documents.
- Access to internal and external telephones.
- Access to word processor now IT facilities.
- Access to duplicating facilities.
- Notice board.

Other facilities should include copies of relevant statutes, regulations, approved codes of practice and HSE guidance, copies of safety journals, and legal and international standards that are relevant to the workplace.

Everyone has the right to work in a healthy, safe environment. Unite offers the latest training, information and advice to representatives, members and employers to ensure that best practice is followed, creating healthier, safer working environments for everyone.

Unite is committed to improving health & safety in all workplaces. Union organised workplaces are safer than non-union organised workplaces.



www.unitetheunion.org

Your Unite Safety rep is:

www.unitetheunion.org



Employers have a general duty of care for the health, safety and welfare of their employees.

This includes providing:

- a safe and healthy workplace where risks are suitable and adequately controlled
- safe work equipment, properly maintained and used, suitable for purpose and safe systems of work
- adequate welfare facilities
- information, training and supervision necessary for health and safety.

Key health and safety issues include

- Machinery and hand tools
- Lighting and ventilation
- Fire risk
- Pit work and confined spaces
- Safety critical work
- Work outside depots
- Noise
- Vibration
- Dusts and substances
- Fatigue, long hours, shift work and night work
- Manual handling and ergonomics
- Slips trips and falls
- Working at height
- Housekeeping
- Welfare facilities
- Lone working
- Asbestos
- Dignity at work
- Infectious diseases
- Occupational health



Unite has thousands of safety reps that are supported by branches regions and national staff and resources. Safety reps deal with issues locally supported by their senior workplace reps. If further assistance is needed the first point of call is your Regional Officer, to access your regional office call: Membership Department: 020 8462 7755

Or visit the Unite web site: www.unitetheunion.org

Legal Help

Members of Unite are entitled to free legal advice. Representation services cover a range of issues both inside and outside the workplace. We can help with personal injury claims, employment matters, wills conveyancing and many other legal issues.

Telephone our 24-hour helpline on **0870 240 4545**.

Unite has a dedicated Health and Safety Unit consisting of several Health and Safety Advisers and Researchers dealing with national issues around specific sectors and specialist topics.

For enquires contact:
Unite Health and Safety Unit
healthandsafety@unitetheunion.org

Information links

Health and Safety Executive: www.hse.gov.uk
HSE info line Tel: 0845034500055

Office of Rail Regulation: www.rail-reg.gov.uk
Tel: 020 7282 2000

Rail Safety & Standards Board www.rssb.co.uk
Tel: 020 7904 7518

CIRAS www.ciras.org.uk

Tel: Free phone 0800 0850 449

CIRAS is an alternative way for rail industry staff to report safety concerns that they feel unable to report through company safety channels. It is a completely independent and confidential way to report safety concerns without fear of recrimination.

TUC: www.tuc.org.uk

Tel: 020 7 636 4030

Greater Manchester Hazards Centre: www.gmhazards.org.uk

Tel: 0161 636 7557

Hazards magazine: www.hazards.org

Inquiries and orders – Jawad Qasrawi email: sub@hazards.org

Tel: 0114 201 4265

Safety Reps Rights

Unite safety reps are a key part of providing better health and safety for Unite members at work.

Safety reps have specific rights enshrined in law, which enables them to:

- Inspect the workplace regularly
- Investigate employee complaints concerning health and safety issues at work.
- Investigate accidents, dangerous occurrences and potential hazards.
- Represent workers on health, safety and welfare matters to their employer.
- Inspect health and safety documents.
- Receive information from HSE Inspectors.
- Establish joint union-management Safety committee.

