

FACTSHEET FOR UNIONS HEALTH AND SAFETY REGULATION

Regardless of the result of the election there is likely to be pressure for both cuts in regulation and enforcement activity.

This factsheet contains a number of simple statistics that may help unions argue the case for greater protection for workers.

Do we have too much regulation?

In 1974 an appendix to the Robins report listed 10 main statutes and 452 statutory instruments relating to safety. This means that the number of regulations in 1974 was 462.

HSE's Review of Health and Safety Regulation published in May 1994 the HSE said it was responsible for 28 pieces of primary legislation and 367 sets of health and safety regulations. It also stated that the Commission's programme had led to the removal of 350 sets of regulations, replacing them with around 100 sets of modern regulation.

The HSE website at <http://www.hse.gov.uk/legislation/enforced.htm> as at April 2009 lists 17 pieces of primary legislation and 231 statutory instruments owned and enforced by HSE/Local Authorities as at April 2009

This means we have 46% less regulation than 35 years ago and 37% less than just 15 years ago

It is not just the number of regulations that have declined. *Over the last three years the HSE has reduced the number of forms used for collecting information from business from 127 to 54 – a 57.5% reduction.*

Are businesses inspected too much?

In 1999/2000 the number of inspections made by HSE Field Operations Division inspectors was 75,272. In 2008/09 the number of recorded inspections was 23,004. *This is a fall of 69.5% in 10 years.*

The number of premises that are covered by the Field Operations Division is 884,000 covering 15 million workers. *This means the average premises could expect a visit by an HSE inspector once every 38 years.*

Does business spend too much time on health and safety?

According to research conducted by the Government in 2005 called the "Administrative Burdens measurement Exercise" *the average firm spends approximately 20 hours and just over £350 a year on the administrative costs of complying with the management Regulations (mainly risk assessment).* Given this figure includes a considerable number of very large firms, it is clear that the normal cost for smaller companies will be considerably less.