

Unite - Union Inspection Notices Briefing



What is a Union Inspection Notice (UIN)?

A UIN is a formal notice issued to a manager by an accredited trade union safety representative. It registers that the employer is not complying with health and safety legislation in respect of an identified workplace hazard, describes the action which must be taken to comply with the law and specifies a date by which action must be taken.

A UIN is not an enforcement notice. Only statutory Health and Safety Inspectors (e.g. Health and Safety Executive Inspectors and Local Authority Environmental Health Officers) can take enforcement action against an employer in breach of health and safety law.

Unite wants to see this legal right extended to safety representatives (similar to rights enjoyed in parts of Australia in relation to Provisional Improvement Notices).

Why are UINs/PINs needed?

A legal right to serve enforcement notices is needed in the UK because:

- There is often poor compliance with the law, a shortage of inspectors and lack of enforcement
- Employers are often unwilling to listen to reasonable requests to comply with health and safety law
- Employers are often unwilling to provide an adequate response or information in relation to a complaint or representation about health and safety made by a safety rep
- Safety reps often raise issues with employers which are ignored.
- Safety committees waste months debating issues when action could prevent injuries and illness.
- We need a mechanism to force managers more interested in production targets to take health and safety seriously
- UINs are a way of improving workplace safety quickly. We can tap our safety reps' knowledge of workplace hazards and this, coupled their union training, equips them to judge when action is needed.

