

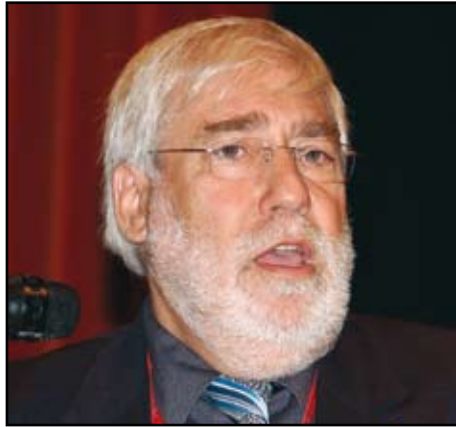


VITACRESS SIGN A VOLUNTARY RECOGNITION AGREEMENT WITH THE BAKERS FOOD & ALLIED WORKERS UNION 17 JANUARY 2011



LEFT TO RIGHT:

FRANK LOVEDAY, ORGANISING DISTRICT SECRETARY BFAWU; MIKE RUSHWOOD, VITACRESS MANAGING DIRECTOR; KAREN BURNLEY, VITACRESS HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER



Now that the Tory/Lib Dem cuts are starting to bite we can begin to see the real threat to our Welfare State. This is not just a case of cutting back. It is a wholesale assault on the protections and benefits built up over 60 years that even Thatcher in her wildest moments did not dare to contemplate.

As I have written before it is a case of the rich getting richer and the poor getting poorer; the bankers and financiers who caused this problem getting off scott free whilst the rest of us pay the bill. It is even getting too much for some LibDems as Lord Oakshott jumps ship over the capitulation of the LibDems to the bankers – the Tories were always going to let their friends off so no surprises there. Just look at the facts using Barclays bank as the example (they are all the same of course, it is just a question of degree).

Barclays made a profit of £11.6 billion in 2009. If they had paid corporation tax on that at the average OECD rate of 25.9% they would have paid £3 billion. In fact they paid tax worldwide of only £1.4 billion. And in the UK, their home market, with a Corporation Tax rate of 28% they paid only £113 million, whilst over the last four years the current president and group chief executive was paid an annual average of £16 million. The Guardian estimates (19/02/11 pp12/13) that putting these tax figures into perspective £0.3 billion could save the 521 libraries under threat of closure around the UK and keep them open for another 50 years; £0.055 billion is enough to prevent St George's hospital in Tooting from cutting 500 jobs and closing three wards – some 20 times over; £2.5 billion would save half the cut which was gained when child benefit was removed from higher-rate taxpaying families; £1.8 billion would cover the government's NHS shakeup costs.

This is just one example of the exploding myth of us all being in this together. Over the coming period there will, unfortunately, be many others as these Con Dems seek to protect their own banker and financier friends by making working people, the old,

EDITOR'S NOTES

disabled, young, children and sick pay for the mess the ConDems' friends got us into. Never tire from reminding people it is their crisis not ours and they should pay not us. If that sounds like the ranting of an old man it is probably because it is. But that does not make it any less correct.

We need to ensure this message gets across at every opportunity and, as I have said before, be ready with an alternative programme that not only points out the truth behind the mess but gives people hope for the future. March 26 is the first opportunity to make our anger clear. But it must not be a one off venting of frustration. That would be a waste. It needs to be the beginning of the fight back that will sweep this reactionary Government away, deal a decisive blow to their cuts agenda and begin a process of political and economic change that will lead to a fairer and more decent society.

The role and need for unions will grow in this period. The attacks on workers' rights by extending the employment length of service from one year to two before Employment Tribunal cases can be taken and the imposition of huge charges for taking such cases, will put justice at work out of the hands and pockets of those who are not in unions. The proposed changes to accident reporting will be a charter for rogue employers to downgrade health and safety at work. The attacks on social benefit will be a signal to employers to attack terms and conditions of employment for those in work – we are seeing that already are we not! And the destruction of our Welfare State – for have no doubts that is what the ConDems are about – will affect every one of us and our children and grandchildren for generations to come.

The trade unions need to be part of the opposition to these attacks, forging links with students, parents, social workers, library workers, local communities, youth and pensioners. We need to rebuild old alliances and create new ones to harness the growing feeling of anger out there against the ConDem attacks.

I note Government Ministers pontificating on events in the Middle East making comments like, if a million people demonstrate on the streets Governments have to go. There, then is our target. A million on the streets of Britain on March 26 should send a message should it not?

We need not despair. This Government may well be doing things that Thatcher in her wildest dreams – and she had some pretty

wild ones – never attempted. We need to harness the differing strands of opposition to this vandalistic and ideological attack on our welfare state and workers' rights. It can be done. We saw off Thatcher, we will see off Cameron and the ConDems.

And Finally

I want to take this opportunity to thank all activists, stewards, officials and members for their encouragement and support during my period as General Secretary. I have met and worked with some marvellous people who I shall never forget. We have been through many a struggle together but still remain an independent and proud trade union. We have seen off attempted amalgamations and anti union governments – in the later case we will do so again.

I have always believed that this union can be proud of its democratic structure. Built on the branch membership – without which we can do nothing – and channelled through branch activists we have remained sensitive and responsive to the wishes of the members. Have we got things wrong from time to time? Of course. We are, after all, only human. Yet we have tried to meet those aspirations set and I am confident you will continue to do so. It is this belief in the sound base of our union that has led us to ensure the growth of our education programme. If I am proud of anything over the last thirty years it is that. When I was elected in 1979 all we did were a few Trade Union Congress Courses. Over the years successive Executive Councils have invested heavily in our Shop Stewards and Health and Safety Representatives training and that has borne ripe fruit. One of my last duties in February was to attend a Stage One stewards training course in Belfast. The enthusiasm and commitment of those stewards shows clearly to me there can be no fear of the future. This is an area of our work we can all be proud of and I only hope I played a small part in advancing that cause.

I want to wish you all the best for the future struggle ahead. I am sure in Ronnie and Ian you have a leadership that will be responsive to the membership and give clear and decisive leadership. If you give them the support you afforded me there can be no complaints.

It has been a privilege to serve you and the Union and I wish you all the best for the future. Remember, Unity is strength and together we can make a difference.

Adieu.



GENERAL SECRETARY-ELECT RONNIE DRAPER WRITES

I have always thought it bizarre how celebrities such as footballers, singers and film stars can write their life stories when they have reached the grand old age of 18. Wayne Rooney at 18 and now Justin Bieber has his life story portrayed on the silver screen at just 16 years of age. I used to think what can you write about to fill a book in such a short time and then I reflected on nine months of this Con Dem government. You could produce enough written evidence about their disaster to fill the British library.

Nine months of broken promises, betrayal, deceit, hypocrisy and more lies. We thought Thatcher was bad but this crowd will prove to be even worse. At least Thatcher waited a short time before the onslaught on working people's rights, the welfare state and protective legislation started.

Nine short months, the time it takes to create a life and in that time we have seen the government systematically set in train a number of policies that will destroy thousands of lives.

Already we have seen unemployment rise to nearly 2.5 million, youth unemployment hover just below 1 million and the promise of much more to come. Every council making major cuts to both jobs and services, inflation starting to rise steadily, output falling, police numbers being reduced despite Cameron promising that there would be no cuts to the front line. These are the realities of Tory Britain.

Yes, they backed down on the privatisation of our woodlands and

forests, but was it because of the massive protest by ordinary people or did they realise that most of this land probably backs onto the estates of their supporters?

They complained that Labour didn't do enough to control the banks and I have to say that may be true, but what is also true is that the reigns that Labour eventually put on are slowly being released by the Chancellor. If banks were the cause of many of our problems, how can they justify people like Bob Diamond getting a £9 million bonus? He earns top dollar and enjoys fantastic working conditions, so why should he be treated any different from millions of people who work hard, live on near poverty pay and get treated less than fairly? This is the reality of life under the Tories. Rich getting richer at our expense.

Ironically, one of the things the Tories were silent on in their manifesto was the closing of tax loopholes. The opportunity to bring in billions of pounds to our ailing economy and to reduce the burgeoning deficit. Why not close them? Well maybe it is because it is mostly their supporters who are exploiting them. It is contended that the Chancellor George Osborne owes £1.6 million in avoided taxation and he is probably small fry. Believe me; if it was one of us who owed a couple of hundred pounds to the taxman, then we would now be having it deducted from salary. The only difference is the affordability of good accountants. They can and we can't.

At the time of writing we are seeing Tweedle Cam and Tweedle Clegg going head to head over the alternative voting

system. From manifesto, before Clegg became a Tory, to the present day he has consistently argued for some form of proportional representation. It may be a stance he changes if he is threatened by his Tory puppet masters, but right now he remains steadfast in his belief.

Cameron on the other hand argues for the first past the post system being the ultimate democratic process and that the alternative voting system could give us lots of second choice members of parliament. I'm fine with that up to now. But then you look at how the Tories select their leader.

In 2005 party leader Michael Howard announced that he would be stepping down as leader in the near future. However, he stated that he would not depart until a review of the rules for the leadership election had been conducted, given the high level of dissatisfaction with the current system. Ultimately, no changes were made and the election proceeded with the existing rules, which were introduced in 1998.

The first round of voting amongst Conservative MP's took place on 18 October and Ken Clarke was eliminated (38 votes) leaving David Davis (62 votes), David Cameron (56 votes) and Liam Fox (42 votes) to go through to the second ballot 2 days later. In the second ballot, Liam Fox was eliminated (51 votes), leaving David Cameron (90 votes) and David Davis (57 votes) to go through to a postal ballot. The ballot, whose result was declared on 6 December, saw David Cameron win 68% of votes.

Forgive me but do I smell something rotten? If they had adopted what David Cameron is calling for David Davis would be leader of the Conservative Party and potentially Prime Minister of Britain. Looks like a severe case of do as I say, not do as I do. Or maybe it's just downright hypocrisy.

Finally, it has been revealed that there is a new member of staff at 10 Downing Street who will play an active role in cleaning up the place. Leo the cat has been lauded as being a good ratter and excellent at clearing vermin. Does that mean we will be seeing considerably less of Cameron, Clegg, Osborne and Cable?

Unfortunately, as thousands of public sector workers find themselves thrown onto the scrapheap by the policies of this heinous government, no doubt they will create a job looking after Leo as he has not perfected the art of removing the top from the cat food tin.

THE EQUALITY ACT 2010

JUSTIN MADDERS, THOMPSON'S SOLICITORS

The Equality Act 2010, the brainchild of the Labour government, came about because of a much-needed overhaul of discrimination legislation that had become more and more complex.

Sadly much of the complexity remains, but at least now the rules (some of which have been extended and improved) are all under one "roof".

Effective from 1 October last year, the Act outlaws discrimination for nine "protected characteristics" - age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

Crucially, the new Act extends the old definition of discrimination to include situations when people associate with someone who has a protected characteristic, or when someone is perceived to have a protected characteristic.

It also specifies three different types of harassment, including sexual harassment. And employers are now liable for harassment by third parties (such as customers), provided that they knew the worker had been subject to harassment on two previous occasions, but had done little or nothing to prevent it.

And there is a new concept of discrimination arising from disability, so that it is now discriminatory to treat a

disabled person unfavourably because of something arising "in consequence of" their disability (for instance, a tendency to make spelling mistakes because of dyslexia).

And it is also now unlawful, except in certain circumstances, for employers to ask about a candidate's health before offering them work.

The big changes, though, are around pay (although they don't go nearly far enough). It is now possible for a person bringing an equal pay claim to rely on a hypothetical comparator, if they can show they have been directly discriminated against.

Employers can no longer stop their employees from having a discussion about whether there are differences in their pay related to protected characteristics, nor can they enforce "gagging clauses" in people's contracts.

The missed opportunity, though, was around pay audits. Although the Act allows for compulsory pay audits for organisations with more than 250 employees from 2013, it is not clear (given this government's preferred voluntary approach) when or if this section will ever be enacted.

The government has, however, agreed to extend the public sector equality duty to all nine protected characteristics (from three previously). This puts public bodies under a duty to consider equality when



making day to day decisions about service delivery and employment.

Although this may sound a bit vague, it allows trade union reps to hold public sector employers to account in terms of their duty to eliminate unlawful discrimination and foster good relations between people from different groups.

Finally, the Act allows employers to treat someone with a protected characteristic more favourably during the process of recruitment and promotion.

Despite headlines inferring that "positive action" would lead to men being sacked or passed over for women candidates, this just means that employers can now choose one candidate with a protected characteristic over another if they think they have been disadvantaged in some way, as long as they are as qualified as the other person.

BFAWU BREAD WINNER

Players from the under-10, under-12 and under-13 girls' team at Gateshead Leam Rangers FC show off their new strips provided by sponsors the Bakers, Food and Allied Workers Union.

For the first time the girls' team have their own brand new strips – and the strips have certainly scored a goal with the girls.

So here's a big thank you to the Union from all three girls' teams. Let's hope this is a winning combination.

New players welcome: contact Kevin Hawdon 07951102031 or John Herron 07590105101



A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO BRO VINNY MUNOZ-CANOZ



Frank Loveday presenting Vinny Munoz-Canoz with his Certificate of Appreciation

Vinny has been presented with a Certificate of Appreciation to thank him for his many years of hard work. Vinny, who works at the British Bread Bakeries Factory in Eastleigh Southampton has held many Union positions from shop steward, Branch Secretary, ULR and health and safety rep. Over many years Vinny has helped many members. His friendly kind-natured approach made him easy to talk to and he always found the time for people with a smile. Vinny will be missed, he has many friends throughout the Union and legal services at MWR. Vinny is very much respected and highly thought of by all who know him. Vinny has reluctantly decided to stand down from his Union posts. I, along with Steve Finn and Dave Hunt and all his friends, thank him and wish him and his family well for the future.

Frank Loveday
Organising Regional Secretary

SPECIAL VISIT TO PARK CAKES, OLDHAM, FOR 40-YEAR PRESENTATIONS

Joe Marino, General Secretary of the Bakers Food and Allied Workers Union paid a visit to Park Cake on Monday 1st November. He was here to present two union members with a very special award. Hazel Sitcheran (Beehive) and Yasmin Ali (Low Risk) have both clocked up 40 years of continuous union membership. They are now both entitled to free cards, no more union subscriptions to be paid ever! Hazel and Yasmin were also presented with certificates of their achievement, 40 year service badges and a cheque each for £150. What makes Hazel's achievement even more remarkable is that she tells us she has NEVER had a day's absence. Wonder what they are going to do with their extra £2.55 a week?

This award jolted a few walks down memory lane. Hazel & Yasmin can remember:

- their take home pay being £7.50 a week!
- the bus journey to work costing just 5p
- the opportunity to buy a new house for £2000
- most of the factory being ALL FEMALE

Congratulations to Hazel & Yasmin!

Julie Summersgill,
Branch Secretary, BFAWU Branch 452/Park Cakes Oldham



General Secretary Joe Marino presents 40-year certificates to Yasmin (top) and Hazel (below)



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Health and Safety BULLETIN

By Ronnie Draper Spring 2011

WORKERS MEMORIAL DAY 2011 – HOW WILL YOU RECOGNISE IT?

Once again, Workers Memorial Day will be commemorated on April 28th, an international day of remembrance for workers killed, maimed, injured or whose health has been damaged carrying out their work.

This year is the second time that we will be commemorating it as a day that is now formally recognised by our government as a national day of remembrance.

Whilst the official day is Thursday 28th April, many commemorative rally's and meetings will actually take place on Saturday 30th.

Given that our union ran a massive campaign which helped the Labour government officially recognise the day, it would be fitting if we played a full and active role in remembering those who have lost their lives at work.

The Workers Memorial Day campaign slogan "Remember the dead – Fight for the living" does not only highlight the fact that workers have had their health impaired, or even worse been killed by their work. It should also serve as a reminder that in many cases these tragedies were totally preventable.

The day also gives us the opportunity to promote the fantastic health, safety and welfare campaigns, run by the trade union representatives that ensure real improvements in workplace safety.

Last year we criticised the Labour government for waiting until the end of 13 years of in power before they did something about recognition, but in hindsight it was a positive move that would not have been achieved under this ConDem government.

We need to ensure that we also get a realistic report of just how many people lose their lives through their work as there is currently massive undercounting. Deaths attributable to work including work-related road traffic accidents, some workplace cancers and suicides brought about by workplace stress are all missed.

It is important that members of the BFAWU continue to recognise and publicise the relevance of Workers Memorial Day as a focal point on which to improve workplace safety.



However you commemorate the day, either as an individual or as a branch, you will be highlighting its importance in a fitting way. One of our branches in Blackpool campaigned to get a bench put in the local park by the council, with a small plaque of remembrance, some people have planted trees in memory, others lower the flag at their places of work, some wear purple ribbons and some hold a minute's silence.

It may be that your local place of worship, irrespective of religion, could include WMD in their prayers. The reality is that whatever form your remembrance takes, you are contributing towards the universal recognition of WMD.

A more pro-active way of remembering those who have been killed or seriously injured, may well be by taking steps to ensure that people in the future are protected from the horrors of the past. Why not use this first anniversary of Workers Memorial Day to hold a safety inspection of your workplace or a day's hazard spotting?

Hold a safety committee meeting in commemoration or conduct a safety audit. You could publicise a new safety strategy within the workplace or generally raise health and safety awareness amongst your members.

If you want to know more about our campaign to have Workers Memorial Day recognised or if you are commemorating it in a special way, contact head office?

THE REPORTING OF INJURIES, DISEASES AND DANGEROUS OCCURRENCES REGULATIONS 1995 (RIDDOR)

BY IAN HODSON, NATIONAL PRESIDENT-ELECT

Employers have legal duties under RIDDOR that require them to report and record work-related accidents in certain circumstances which, in particular, involve an employee or self-employed person being away from work or unable to perform their normal work duties for more than 3 consecutive days. In the last 12 months many of our safety representatives have raised concerns over the conduct of some employers and their belief that they could avoid reporting serious accidents in the workplace by bringing workers in to do other tasks. If a worker returns to work in any capacity without first consulting their doctor they are putting themselves at risk. The BFAWU believes that anyone returning to work should be fit to do so quite clearly there is an impact on any individual returning to work before they should do, so anyone who feels pressurised to return should contact their health and safety representative or shop steward.

Because of the discussions that have been going on at regional councils and through our national health and safety committee, as well as being raised directly with companies, a decision has been made to raise this issue at the highest level. The BFAWU firmly believes that workers should not be put at risk and campaigns to ensure we make our workplaces the safest they can be are of paramount importance.

At the Parliamentary Group meeting on 24th November 2010 Ronnie Draper (General Secretary Elect BFAWU) and Joe Marino (General Secretary BFAWU) raised concerns at what they felt to be a widespread practice of employers breaching the requirements of RIDDOR. This entailed employers pressuring workers who were unable to work due to a workplace incident to come in to work (albeit not necessarily to perform their usual task but instead to sit in a rest room) before three days were up which would mean that the incident would not need to be reported. This clearly has serious implications for workers rights and dangerously distorts statistics.

The following is the guidance taken from the HSE website for Employers.

The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR), place a legal duty on:

- employers;
- self-employed people;
- people in control of premises;

to report work-related deaths, major injuries or over-three-day injuries, work related diseases, and dangerous occurrences (near miss accidents).

Reporting accidents and ill health at work is a legal requirement. The information enables the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and local authorities, to identify where and how risks arise, and to investigate serious accidents. We can then help you and provide advice on how to reduce injury, and ill health in your workplace.

For most businesses, a reportable accident, dangerous occurrence, or case of disease is a comparatively rare event. However, if it does happen, please let us know.

As an employer, a person who is self-employed, or someone in control of work premises, you have legal duties under RIDDOR that require you to report and record some work-related accidents by the quickest means possible.

You must report:

- deaths;
- major injuries;
- over-3-day injuries – where an employee or self-employed person is away from work or unable to perform their normal work duties for more than 3 consecutive days;
- injuries to members of the public or people not at work where they are taken from the scene of an accident to hospital;
- some work-related diseases;
- dangerous occurrences – where something happens that does not result in an injury, but could have done;

RIDDOR applies to all work activities but not all incidents are reportable. If someone has had an accident in a work situation where you are in charge, and you are unsure whether to report it call the Incident Contact Centre on 0845 300 99 23.

Information supplied to HSE in a RIDDOR report is not passed on to your insurance company. If you think your insurer needs to know about a work related accident, injury, or case of ill health please remember to contact them separately - insurers have told us that reporting injuries and illnesses at work to them quickly could save you time and money.

When do I need to make a report?

Although the Regulations specify varying timescales for reporting different types of incidents, it is advisable to ring and report the incident as soon as possible by calling the Incident Contact Centre on **0845 300 99 23**.

In cases of death, major injury, or dangerous occurrences, you must notify the enforcing authority without delay, most easily by calling the Incident Contact Centre on **0845 300 99 23**.

Cases of over-three day injuries must be notified within ten days of the incident occurring.

Cases of disease should be reported as soon as a doctor notifies you that your employee suffers from a reportable work-related disease.

What records do I need to keep?

You must keep a record of any reportable injury, disease or dangerous occurrence. This must include the date and method of reporting; the date, time and place of the event; personal details of those involved; and a brief description of the nature of the event or disease.

Lord Young

Clearly the recent announcement by the ConDems that a review was to take place has highlighted changes to what Lord Young described as a common sense approach but yet surely the common sense approach would be is it working? Lord Young's approach was to trivialise the importance of health and safety promoting the idea that it is an unnecessary burden clearly workplace have become safer because of the

laws that have been implemented and that means lives have been saved surely filling in a report of someone injured at work is far better than sending the HR team to tell the loved ones that their mother or father or sibling has been killed at work, most accidents can be avoided and most are caused because of bad practice and that's normally due to workers being encouraged to take short cuts or as many examples have shown ignoring safety rules.

Therefore, in response to Young's recommendation a consultation was formally agreed by the HSE board at its December meeting and the deadline for responses is 9th May 2011. If the government decides to make the recommended amendment it would take effect either in October this year or April 2012. The Bakers Union Parliamentary Group and the TUCG will be submitting a paper to the consultation. The General Secretary elect, Ronnie Draper has already submitted a detailed response on behalf of our membership

It is so important that our members voices are heard so I would encourage our members to fill in the questionnaire available at the HSE website. This Government wasn't elected to kill people at work but these changes if they happen could seriously risk a return to the days of people having more serious accidents and worse than that fatal ones.

HSE STATISTICS SHOW WORKPLACE FATALITIES DOWN AGAIN

The recently published statistics from the Health and Safety Executive show that the number of people killed at work has fallen over the last year to a record low.

The figures covering the period between April 2009 and March 2010 show that 152 workers lost their lives due to their work representing a rate of 0.5 deaths per 100,000 workers. This figure is 27 fewer than the previous year but still represents 152 too many tragedies, 152 families left grieving and many workplaces left with the trauma of dealing with the consequences. The sad reality is that the vast majority will have been wholly avoidable if correct procedures, risk assessments and safe systems of work had been followed.

Major workplace injuries also fell by almost 1800 for the same period to a new total of 26,061 or an incidence rate of 101.5 per 100,000 workers, with the major contributing factor still being slips and trips which contributed 41% of all accidents.

RIDDOR reportable injuries which required 3 or more days off work fell by almost 10,000 although it is worrying that only around 57% of this type of injury is actually reported. In part this will be because of

the practice that some unscrupulous employers have of bringing injured workers into work to do little or no work, just to massage the reporting figures.

Whilst many of these figures represent progress being made there is no room for complacency. We must remain vigilant and ensure we target those problem areas that see multiple occurrences of similar type accidents.

We have demonstrated throughout the food industry that since the launch of the Recipe for Safety initiative and the Revitalising Health and Safety programme, that we can embrace safer ways of working that have significantly improved our workplaces and reduced the harm caused to workers.

There is little doubt that health and safety will come under a sustained attack from the government as they try to impose the fantasies of Lord Young and if we are not vigilant, we will see a return to the days of putting cure before prevention.

Once again these figures demonstrate the fantastic work being done by health and safety representatives and practitioners up and down the country. This work has to carry on unhindered.

TUC SURVEY CONDEMNS LACK OF HSE INSPECTIONS

The 2010 survey of health and safety representatives conducted by the TUC has highlighted the extent of workplace inspections being carried out by HSE inspectors as being way below what should be expected.

The figures returned show that 49% of safety representatives who responded to the survey, claimed that to the best of their knowledge there had not been an inspection of their workplace. A further 9% stated that there had not been a visit in the last 3 years and 15% said their last visit had been between 1 and 3 years.

Given that we have understood that HSE inspectors have a dual role of accident investigation and accident prevention it seems bizarre that only 27% of representatives' workplaces had received a visit within the past 12 months and this figure dropped to only 16% if you work for an employer who has less than 50 people working on site.

Of workplaces that had more than 1000 employees 33% claimed to have received a visit in the last year which seems to demonstrate that whilst big is not necessarily beautiful it most certainly has the ability to be safer.

Of course these visits could have been in reaction to an accident and so the above statement is not necessarily so.

This has been one of the central planks of our campaign to make workers safer at work and it is nothing short of a scandal when you see visits at their lowest frequency at the same time as the Tory government is proposing a further 35% cut to the HSE budget combined with 28% reductions to local authorities, which will have a devastating impact of the safety of workplaces and working people.

We have prided ourselves in developing a proactive, preventative safety culture amongst our health and safety representatives that has seen serious reductions in instances of industrial accidents and occupational ill health. These cuts will seriously damage the support that can be given by the enforcement authorities and potentially see a reversal in safety trends in the coming years.

Knowing that there is the potential to be caught and prosecuted for breaches of health and safety legislation becomes an effective way of getting the more unscrupulous employers to comply with the law. If the chance of being

caught is significantly reduced then surely there is a greater chance that legislation is ignored and corners are cut and we all know what the consequences of this could be.

We will be pushing through Early Day motions through our parliamentary group and through the TUCG (Trade Union Co-ordinating Group) during the Health and Safety week commencing 28th February until 5th March 2011. Speak to your member of parliament about supporting these EDM's and about joining our Parliamentary group.

The way to improving workplace health and safety is to invest in a HSE fit for purpose, by promoting good H&S practices and having robust H&S legislation and not by spreading urban myths about over burdening business, reducing financial investment and the repeal of protective laws. The latter is the policy of the fool and will end in misery for thousands of working people.

If you require more information regarding the work of our Parliamentary group or of the Trades Union Co-ordinating Group contact head office On 01707260150 or ronnie.draper@bfawu.org

EARLY DAY MOTION ON BEHALF OF THE TUCG

Below is a copy of an Early Day Motion put forward in Parliament on behalf of the TUCG (Trade Union Co-ordinating Group) of which we are members

That this House is alarmed to note that, according to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), between April 2009 and March 2010, 152 people were fatally injured at work, 26,061 suffered major injuries at work and 1.3 million people who worked during the last year were suffering from an illness believed to be caused or made worse by their current or past work; notes that the actual figures are likely to be much higher, given that these statistics are an underestimate due to reporting inadequacies and that prosecutions and convictions for health and safety breaches were at a record low; is concerned that the current legislative and enforcement framework is failing to protect workers and that the Government's proposals contained in the Young Report, along with the budget cuts

of 35 per cent. facing the HSE, not only fail to address the problem but will make things worse; and therefore welcomes the lobby of Parliament organised by the Trade Union Co-ordinating Group, comprising the Bakers, Food and Allied Workers Union, the Fire Brigades Union, the National Association of Probation Officers, the National Union of Journalists, the National Union of Teachers, the Public and Commercial Services Union, the Prison Officers Association, the Rail and Maritime Transport Union, the University and College Union and the United Road Transport Union on 2 March 2011 and that group's Health and Safety Week of Action between 28 February and 5 March 2011, calling on the Government to tighten legislation and improve enforcement to prevent any more workplace tragedies.

For more information on the work of the TUCG contact ronnie.draper@bfawu.org

This is my first article as National President elect and it is important that I thank all those who supported me and pay tribute to all the other candidates.

I recognise that many of our members did not feel that the election of their National President was something they wanted to take part in. I think that this is an issue we have to deal with in the coming years in order for our membership to feel part of the movement and that we who are elected to serve them connect with them. I look forward to building a strong relationship with our shop stewards and activists across our country and working with all our representatives to ensure we deliver the aims and aspirations of our members who are critical to our survival.

I would like to pay tribute to our new General Secretary, Ronnie Draper. As our National President, he not only built on the foundations of his predecessors, but took our union to the forefront of campaigning to improve among other things, health and safety. Ronnie has helped turn the BFAWU into one of the significant voices in this field and commanded the respect from not just the union movement, but all those bodies involved in health and safety.

As National President, my responsibilities will include organising and, as such, I intend to engage with our officials to build a strong, independent and growing trade union that is the union of choice for all those that work in the food industry. Having spent several years as an Organising Regional Secretary, I have gained first hand experience of the complexities involved in gaining new members and achieving recognition agreements. We will look to use the full resources of our movement to ensure the BFAWU remains independent and delivers the quality service our members deserve.

During the election campaign I spoke with many of our members in relation to current employment practices. Most of the members I spoke to pointed to the use of agency workers by employers, seeking to reduce costs by ditching negotiated agreements and paying minimum terms as a major issue. They believe that these companies should be ashamed of themselves, and so do I. Most pay high salaries to their managers who continuously look at ways of protecting themselves and looking for ways to blame others for their own failures to manage properly and what is quite noticeable is companies that are over reliant on agency workers are unsuccessful and in many cases failing. Either they don't realise or are simply ignorant of the fact that it is the skill of the workforce that plays a



NATIONAL PRESIDENT ELECT IAN HODSON WRITES

massive role in any successful company, which in turn allows them to take up their roles after all most of these managers making this daft decisions are usually new or have been in post for a short time. It is the commitment of loyal employees, some of whom often work 30-40 years for the same company. It is this loyalty that helps build companies into what they are. The failure to recognise this is disgusting, as is the exploitation of fellow human beings who have no rights in the workplace. It is a dereliction of the office of management. It is lazy, contemptuous and shows that their ability to manage is seriously flawed. They are (with honourable exceptions of course) not fit to hold the title of manager.

As I write this, I am engaging with our members to get involved with the planned demonstrations against the cuts. There is an alternative and we have a duty to ensure a debate takes place. The media in this country, as well as the government would have us believe that the only way out of the deficit is to cut. When you look at the history books and take into account the deficit we inherited at the end of the Second World War, you have to ask yourself how we managed to pay off our debts, rebuild our country, set up the welfare system and create the NHS. In addition to this, the government of the day ensured that everyone had access to education and a home through council house building projects. Fast forward to 2011, the Con Dem government are trying to convince us that we must pay the current deficit back in 4 years. This is a deficit they say is bigger than that at the end of the war, but don't worry, according to former public schoolboy and multi million pound fortune heir, George Osborne, "We're all in this together".

We have two simple choices. We either want to live and work in a fair country where companies, MP's, chancellors and other government ministers pay their taxes, or we want to live in a country that is based on hypocrisy, double standards and different rules, depending on where you land in our highly flawed 'class system'. In choosing the latter, we accept that those that have it keep it and those that don't live 'cap in hand'.

The government complain about the amount of red tape whilst attacking people's basic rights at work such as paid holidays, tea breaks, health and safety and other employment law designed to ensure fair play in the workplace. I want to know why it's seen as sensible to spend vast sums of tax payer's money to sack workers rather than invest for growth, and what about the employer who pays poverty wages who can afford to pay big wages to the company directors and their managers and big dividends to shareholders, meanwhile, their existing workers are on the bread line having to survive on benefits to support their wage. Surely, this burden on the tax payer is wrong. People who work should be entitled to a living wage and those employers that force workers to rely on benefits to support their paltry wages should face a big tax take on their profits. We need to campaign to end the scandalous way in which the richest in our country pay less tax than the poorest.

We need to ensure that we close the loopholes that allow big companies and some politicians avoid their tax obligations. It is estimated that £25 billion was avoided by big business and although immoral it is quite legal furthermore it is estimated that £20 billion has gone uncollected in taxes since 2004, and add to that a further £70 billion through tax evasion lost through illegal tax dodging it's a national scandal and consider if the government closed the loopholes made those that owe pay and prosecuted the tax evaders the argument over cutting jobs in our public service could be avoided and these facts confirm that there is an alternative to mass unemployment and the destruction of both our NHS and welfare state..

Clearly, we have a lot of work to do as a union, and as individuals to fight for a fairer country and a fairer society. This is something that the current political elite fail to address. We should not just accept the argument that the cuts are unavoidable or that 'our cuts are better than yours'. We should ensure the alternative message is put forward and given suitable column space. Only then can we expose the lie that the cuts are necessary and unavoidable.

AGENCY WORKER REGULATIONS 2010: HOW IT MIGHT AFFECT YOU

by Sadiq Vohra, partner and head of employment law, MWR Solicitors

As a busy employment solicitor working regularly with agency workers in various industries, the introduction of the Agency Worker Regulations on October 1, 2011 is an important step in creating a right to equal basic terms for workers who find temporary work through an employment agency. This is in addition to the protection afforded to agency workers under existing discrimination law.

If you are an agency worker, the new regulations will not change your employment status and you will remain to be seen as either an employee or a 'worker' for an agency.

However, agency workers will be entitled to some basic 'equal terms' once they have been working in the same role, for the same hirer for a period of 12 weeks. These terms include terms relating to:

- Pay
- The duration of working
- Night work

- Rest periods
- Rest breaks
- Annual leave/holiday pay
- Bonuses

It is important to note that the following payments will **not** fall within the definition of pay for the purpose of the regulations:

- Maternity pay/paternity pay/adoption leave pay
- Bonuses/incentives not directly attributable to the amount or quality of work
- Payments for time in carrying out trade union duties
- Payments of expenses incurred

If an agency deliberately sets out to limit liability, for example by terminating the services of an agency worker just before the 12 weeks then reinstating them, it could be punished by employment tribunal.



If you have any queries on Agency Worker Regulations please contact Sadiq on 01772 254201 or email sadiq.vohra@mwrlaw.com.

Visit our website for regular updates on employment law www.mwrlaw.com.

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EUROPEAN FEDERATION OF TRADE UNIONS IN THE FOOD, AGRICULTURE AND TOURISM SECTOR REPORT

EFFAT is a European Federation representing 120 national trade unions from 35 European countries; EFFAT defends the interests of more than 2,600,000 members towards the European Institutions, European industrial federations and enterprise management.

In recent years EFFAT has set up European Works Councils in more than 90 transnational groups and it has a successful social dialogue under way in the agricultural, hotel & restaurant, contract catering, sugar and tobacco sectors.

And EFFAT has put a lot of work into supporting its members' organisations in Central and Eastern Europe in building up free and strong trade unions.

EU employment and social policies bring particular benefits to citizens, for example, in finding a job, moving to another Member state for work or other reasons, upgrading skills, etc. In partnership with national authorities, social partners, civil society organisations and other stakeholders, the Director-General addresses challenges linked to globalisation, the ageing of Europe's population and changing social realities. Some of the examples of the areas which they are actively involved and support are:

- More and better jobs through the European Employment Strategy (which bring national policies closer in this field) and the European Social Fund (9 billion per year managed in partnership with member states)

- Free movement of workers and coordination of social security schemes, which mean that every EU national has the right to work and live in any EU country and that people who move between countries, are not disadvantaged in relation to social security including healthcare.
- Better working conditions through common minimum standards in the workplace, by supporting and developing social dialogue at European level, by modernising labour relations, and by assisting EU who want to be mobile.
- Social inclusion by supporting efforts to combat poverty and social exclusion, reform social protection systems, assess new demographic and social developments.

Gender Equality

The Strategy for equality between women and men represents the Commission's work programme on gender equality for the period 2010-2015. It follows the dual approach of specific initiatives and the integration of equality between men and women into all EU policies and activities ("gender mainstreaming") which has become the hallmark of the EU's work to promote gender equality.

EFAT is a single umbrella organisation which continues to work internationally serving trade union members throughout the food-processing chain 'from farm to fork'.

Marylin French, EFAT Executive Committee

LEARNING CENTRE OPENS AT TANGERINE

On Friday 11 February the BFAWU learning project opened its latest learning centre at the Tangerine site in Blackpool. The official opening was performed by local Blackpool MP Mr Gordon Marsden who also spent time talking to both staff and management on how the Bakers Union had moved learning forward in the area and hoped that it would continue to do so.

The opening was also attended by John Vickers, the Project team manager, who also spoke on how the learning services would like to continue to provide learning in the area and would look at what the needs of the new site were. This was also the commitment of the management team who were present at the opening.

I would like to thank Peter Brown and Gordon Marsden for their input on the day and hope to continue to work with Tangerine in moving learning forward at both sites in Blackpool.

Geoff Atkinson
Learning Services Team Member,
North West



(L to R) Tracey Welsh (BFAWU ULR, Tangerine), Ronnie Draper (General Secretary-elect BFAWU), Ian Hodson (National President-elect BFAWU), Peter Brown (Factory Manager, Tangerine), Hayley Tiltson (H/R Tangerine), John Fox (ULR Hovis Wigan), Sandra Carr (BFAWU Branch Secretary, Tangerine), Gordon Marsden (Labour MP Blackpool), Dariusz Klozniak (Production Operative), Geoff Atkinson (BFAWU Project Team Member)

LETTERS

CONGRATULATIONS TO KENDRA WALKER



Congrats to Kendra Walker, ULF Success Seed Project Coordinator, on achieving the Matrix standard in her Stockton Learning Centre. Kendra is seen here with colleagues (l to r) Steven Dalziel, Paul Moralee and Garry Phillips.

Lisa Greenfield, BFAWU Learning Service

SISTER JEAN KEVILL



Jean Kevill (pictured here with Joe Marino), will be remembered for all the things that she did. Many workers benefited and are still benefitting from her work as a steward and branch secretary. Jean was a stalwart of our union for more than 40 years and those that met her will never forget her. Her wealth of knowledge and experience will be missed. A lovely lady who always had time to talk, to help – a battler, a fighter, a strong lady committed to her family, committed to fairness.

Jean was an active trade unionist who campaigned for fairness and issues that affected all our working lives and even in retirement Jean continued to work tirelessly on issues that impacted on pensioners.

Jean will always be fondly remembered as a passionate and committed trade unionist, a lady prepared to help and to encourage, committed to our union, committed to our movement. Not many people can say they impacted on people's lives but Jean most certainly did.

Ian Hodson, BFAWU Region 4

THANKS AND CONGRATS FROM TOM GEORGE

Dear Members

I would like to thank all members past and present, including Joe Marino, Bill Bellamy and my old friend the late Stan Blackham and many more who have sadly passed away. I have just received my 40-year badge and cheque from the BFAWU. I first joined the union in 1955 and, after one or two breaks, from Birkett and Roberts, as it was then, after that Manor Bakeries I became branch secretary, a position I held for eleven years. It was hard work at times but I thoroughly enjoyed it as I met many wonderful people and became friends with many through the conference and many meetings. I retired from work in 1989 but I still kept up with my annual subscriptions to the union.

I am now 83 years of age and still like to read the Foodworker magazine.

I would also like to wish Joe Marino a very happy retirement and wish all those involved in the union all the very best for the future. I would like to congratulate Ronnie Draper on his recent election as General Secretary. Once again many thanks to you all

Tom George
Bucknall, Stoke-on-Trent

LEAM RANGERS

FOOTBALL TEAMS

We as a team are very proud to wear the union's logo on our football strips. Our girls teams have never had their own sponsors before, we have always had second-hand boys strips and it is so nice to have our own brand new ones.

So once again a very big thank you from all of the players in the three girls teams at Leam Rangers.

Under thirteens: Hana, Brooke, Hannah, Michaela, Yasmin, Nicole, Beth, Emmerlene, Alice, and coach John Herron

(See story and picture on page 4)

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