

HSE SAFETY CORNERSTONES

FEB. 2017

Top Free HSE Initiatives to Join in 2017

As 2017 is already well under way, your organisation should by now be considering strategies to help bolster its health and safety practices. Whether you already have a list of planned objectives or if you are still constructing your list, here are four of the most beneficial free HSE initiatives that you should consider joining:

- 1. Clean Air? – Take Care!** – This campaign is a collaboration between the British Safety Industry Federation and the HSE in order to reduce occupational respiratory disease, which contributes to an estimated 12,000 deaths each year. Free resources for the campaign include posters, leaflets and presentations. For more information, click [here](#).
- 2. Health Risks at Work** – This initiative is intended to help SMEs adequately manage the five key health risks at work, which include breathing; skin; muscles, bones and joints; hearing and touch; and well-being. Free resources include a DVD, rapid reference cards and brochures to help educate SMEs. For more information, click [here](#).
- 3. The Health and Work strategy** – The intent behind this programme is to increase awareness about occupational ill health—including stress and related mental health issues, musculoskeletal disorders and lung disease—which affected nearly 1.3 million workers last year. To participate in the programme's strategies click [here](#), and join the conversation on social media by using #HelpGBWorkWell.
- 4. Stress Summit 2017** – The HSE Stress Summit will take place 16th March in London and will provide a forum to discuss workplace stress along with strategies on how to address it. This event is not free—registration costs £425. To sign up, click [here](#).

Tackling Workplace Alcohol and Drug Use

Each year, an estimated 26 per cent of all workplace accidents are caused due to employees being under the influence of drugs and alcohol, according to Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development research. One reason for the prevalence of these types of workplace accidents is that nearly 1 out of 3 employers have stated that they do not have the proper training to adequately identify whether an employee is under the influence of drugs and alcohol.

To ensure that your organisation is free of alcohol and drug-related accidents, follow these best practices:

- **Develop a drug and alcohol policy.** Your policy should at least include what disciplinary action may be taken if an employee is found to be under the influence and what support you will provide to help the employee seek treatment.
- **Provide training to managers and supervisors.** Have managers and supervisors participate in an annual drug and alcohol training, so that they can identify the symptoms and know how best to handle the situation.
- **Examine your workplace culture.** Take an in-depth look at your workplace culture to see whether there is some factor that is causing your employees to self-medicate.

HSE News and Prosecutions

New Research Suggests Link Between Eye Health and Workplace Productivity

A recent independent study conducted by Specsavers Corporate Eyecare revealed that 79 per cent of the surveyed employers believed that eyecare can contribute to an improvement in the overall well-being of their employees. Proper eyecare can help reduce issues, including eyestrain, tiredness and headaches. And with those conditions addressed, 84 per cent of employers stated that eyecare could increase productivity as well. Eyecare can increase productivity since nearly 70 per cent of adults suffer from a malady caused by staring at a computer screen for long hours.

Crisp Company Fined for Safety Failings

Tayto Group Limited, a crisps and snacks manufacturer, was fined £330,000 and ordered to pay £11,752.23 after a worker lost the tips of three of his fingers. The worker was cleaning a blockage from a machine on the production line when his fingers came into contact with shears. In its investigation, the HSE found that the company had not implemented a formal monitoring system and the machine was not properly secured.

British Airways Prosecuted for Not Protecting Workers

British Airways PLC was prosecuted for not adequately protecting its workers from hand-arm vibration syndrome (HAVS). Employees that conducted maintenance on aircraft components used handheld power tools that exposed them to the risk of developing HAVS. In its investigation, the HSE discovered that the company had not conducted a thorough risk assessment in order to control the workers' exposure to activities that could potentially contribute to HAVS.

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01738 441 555

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