HAZARDS CAMPAIGN BRIEFING FOR SAFETY REPS

HAZARDS CAMPAIGN

THE WHOLE STORY

What Work Really Does to People

The real toll of death, illness and injury caused by work — and why official figures don't show it.

3 MILLION+

Annual Global Work Deaths

Over 3 million people die worldwide every year from work. 9 in 10 deaths are from slow-building occupational illnesses.

400 MILLION+

Annual Global Workplace Injuries

Over 400 million workers suffer non-fatal injuries on the job globally each year.

WAR VS WORK

Work Kills More Than War

Work kills more people every year than war. Most deaths build up slowly over decades from stress, dust, and toxic hazards.

THE WHOLE STORY: WHAT WORK REALLY DOES TO PEOPLE

The Official Reporting Gap: Fatalities & Illness (GB)

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FATAL INCIDENTS (ANNUAL)

11× HIGHER

Official Count: 126

Hazards Estimate: 1,403

RIDDOR only counts narrow reported deaths. Misses sea/air, road deaths while working, and work-related suicides.

WORK ILLNESS DEATHS

5× HIGHER

Official Count: 13,000

Hazards Estimate: 65,460

Most deaths aren't sudden accidents — they're cancer, heart, and lung disease built up over years of exposure.

LIVING WITH WORK ILLNESS

6× HIGHER

Official Count: 1.9 Million

Hazards Estimate: 12.6 Million

Millions live with illnesses caused or worsened by work, completely left out of official statistics.

Why Official Figures Miss Harm & Cause Breakdown

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5 MAJOR REPORTING GAPS IN RIDDOR

- 1. Killed at Sea or Air: Not reported under RIDDOR systems.
- 2. Killed on Road for Work: Commuting and work driving excluded.
- 3. Work-Linked Suicides: Stress-related suicides not officially recorded.
- 4. Latent Illnesses: Decades-long delay for cancers & lung disease.
- 5. Work Long Covid: Recording scaled back significantly from 2023.

ANNUAL WORK-RELATED ILLNESS DEATHS: 65,460

Heart Disease — 32,855 deaths/yr (50% of total)

Occupational Cancer — 19,619 deaths/yr (30% of total)

Lung & Breathing Disease — 12,986 deaths/yr (20% of total)

None of these are the kind of sudden accidents most people picture when they think of workplace safety — yet they cause 99% of work deaths.

THE WHOLE STORY: WHAT WORK REALLY DOES TO PEOPLE

12.6 Million People Living with Work-Related Illness

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8.36 MILLION

Stress, Anxiety or Depression

Over 8.3 million workers affected by mental ill-health driven by excessive work demands, overwork, and toxic management.

1.71 MILLION

Respiratory Illness

Over 1.7 million suffering chronic lung conditions, asthma, and breathing damage from workplace dusts and fumes.

1.64 MILLION

Heart Disease

Over 1.6 million living with cardiovascular illness linked to long working hours, shift work, and chronic stress.

511,000

Musculoskeletal Disorders

Over half a million workers dealing with painful MSDs, back injuries, and repetitive strain.

411,121

Occupational Cancer

Over 400,000 individuals living with cancer caused by historical exposure to toxic chemicals, asbestos, and carcinogens.

The Real Cost: Who Pays the Price?

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£28 BILLION ANNUAL COST

Estimated annual financial cost of fatal injuries and work-related cancer in Great Britain

FAMILIES PAY 58%

Families pay 58% - 59% of the financial cost — and 100% of the heartbreak of losing a loved one or living with severe illness.

TAXPAYERS PAY 23%

Taxpayers bear 23% of the economic burden through NHS healthcare costs, state benefits, and lost tax revenue.

EMPLOYERS PAY 19%

The employers whose dangerous workplaces cause the harm carry only 19% of the financial cost.

Turn This Into Action: Safety Rep Demands

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1. ACCESS ALL INCIDENT REPORTS

"Can we see all incident and near-miss reports — not just the ones legally required to be reported under RIDDOR?"

2. MONITOR LONG-TERM HEALTH

"How are we monitoring long-term worker health, not just counting injuries after they happen?"

3. PREVENT STRESS & OVERWORK

"What specific actions are being taken to prevent stress, overwork, and exposure to toxic substances?"

4. DEMAND REAL PREVENTION

"Are we investing in genuine primary prevention, or just doing the bare legal minimum?"

THE WHOLE STORY: WHAT WORK REALLY DOES TO PEOPLE

Every Work-Related Death Should Count

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> **“Every work-related death should be recognised, counted, and made to count.”**
>
> **— Families Against Corporate Killers (FACK)**

HAZARDS CAMPAIGN BRIEFING SOURCES

Health and Safety Executive (HSE) · Office of Rail and Road · Marine Accident Investigation Branch · Air Accident Investigation Branch · Department for Transport · Samaritans · National Records of Scotland · Macmillan Cancer Support · British Heart Foundation · Asthma + Lung UK · Mental Health First Aid England

The Whole Story Sources 2026 (PDF Document)