

No. 239/2018

20 April 2018

Our Ref: EX10/18

TUC - Celebrating 40 Years of Union Safety Reps:

To: All Branches

Dear Colleagues,

It's 40 years since trade union health and safety reps had a legal right under the 1977 SRSC Regulations to improve health and safety in the workplace. Let us celebrate the difference this has made to workplaces up and down the country.

What are we celebrating?

The Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977 is the primary piece of regulation covering union health and safety representatives and is, along with the parent act, the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, one of the most important pieces of regulation for unions working in health and safety. It has also had a huge effect in saving lives and preventing injury and illness.

It's often forgotten that union health and safety representatives are volunteers doing the job because we want to actually make a difference in the workplace so let's use the occasion to celebrate the massive difference we have made.

The 40th anniversary of the Safety Reps Regulations has been used to celebrate union health and safety reps and as previously notified to safety reps, the campaign was launched last October on National Inspection Day and runs through to finish on Workers Memorial Day on 28th April 2018.

Although much of the campaign has been grounded in celebrating the past successes of union safety reps, it will also focus on the future, making the case for union involvement in health and safety over the coming 40 years.

Union safety reps are the key to a safe and healthy workplace

Safety reps are the most effective tool that we have in ensuring good health and safety at work, because organised workplaces are safer workplaces. We now have around 100,000 trade union safety representatives and the work that they do:

- helps reduce injuries at work
- leads to reductions in the levels of ill health caused by work
- encourages greater reporting of injuries and near-misses

- makes workers more confident
- helps develop a more positive safety culture in the organisation
- saves the economy many millions of pounds.

We need Union Safety Reps and Strong Union Safety Organisation today as much as ever

At a time when health and safety is under attack by politicians who see good regulation as 'red tape', by employers who ride roughshod over the laws, and by a big fall in inspections and enforcement, we need trade unions and their safety reps more than ever before.

The only employers who fear safety reps are those who want to cut corners and take risks with workers' lives. Good employers are already working with unions: they need the rest to start recognising the benefits that unions can bring. Government needs to stop attacking unions and instead do more to ensure that employers are consulting with unions so that everyone can have the benefits that unions bring.

Meet The Unions@40 Safety Rep Case studies as:- <https://www.tuc.org.uk/meet-safety-reps-making-difference>

Safety Reps @40 leaflet attached.

Yours sincerely



Dave Joyce
National Health, Safety & Environment Officer