

THE BUILDING SAFETY GROUP NEWSLETTER



Climate Adaptation: Managing Heat on UK Construction Sites

HSE Prohibits Dry Cutting of Engineered Stone: Immediate Compliance Required

Post Grenfell: A Housing Association's Guide to Life-Saving Health & Safety Standards



Contents

- 04 Climate Adaptation: Managing Heat on UK Construction Sites
- 06 HSE Prohibits Dry Cutting of Engineered Stone: Immediate Compliance Required
- 10 How to Build a Culture of Compliance Post Grenfell: A Housing Association's Guide to Life-Saving Health & Safety Standards
- 14 Staff News
- 15 New BSG Members
- 16 BSG Reports 21% Surge in Traffic Management Breaches on Construction Sites
- 20 Real-Time Health and Safety Data Management in UK Construction
- 24 Court cases
- 29 BSG Training courses

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Climate Adaptation: Managing Heat on UK Construction Sites

As climate change drives increasingly frequent and intense periods of hot weather across the United Kingdom, the construction industry faces mounting challenges in protecting workforce health and safety.

Rising temperatures present significant risks, including heat exhaustion, heat stroke, and heat stress—conditions that can severely compromise worker wellbeing and site productivity.

This article provides essential guidance for site managers and construction professionals on implementing effective heat management strategies, fulfilling legal obligations under the Health and Safety at Work Act whilst maintaining operational efficiency during periods of elevated temperatures.

Understanding Heat-Related Illnesses

Heat stress represents the body's inability to regulate its core temperature effectively, manifesting through early warning signs such as excessive sweating, fatigue, and reduced concentration. Left unaddressed, heat stress significantly **impairs worker performance** and increases **accident risk**. Heat exhaustion develops when the condition progresses, characterised by profuse sweating, weakness, dizziness, nausea, and headaches.

The most severe manifestation, **heat stroke**, constitutes a medical emergency requiring immediate intervention. Symptoms include confusion, loss of consciousness, cessation of sweating, and dangerously elevated body temperature. Recognising these progressive stages enables timely intervention and prevents potentially fatal outcomes.

Preventative Measures: Strategic Scheduling

Proactive work scheduling represents the primary defence against heat-related illness. Site managers should actively monitor weather forecasts and reschedule demanding physical tasks to cooler periods, particularly early morning or evening hours.



During heatwave conditions, adjusting work intensity during peak temperature periods (typically 11:00-15:00) proves essential. Implementing flexible working patterns, including earlier start times or split shifts, allows high-intensity activities to occur when ambient temperatures remain manageable, thereby reducing physiological strain on workers whilst maintaining project timelines.

Practical Control Measures

Rest Break Management: Increase rest break frequency proportionate to temperature elevation. Implement structured schedules ensuring workers receive adequate recovery time, and establish shaded rest areas with sufficient ventilation to facilitate effective cooling.

Hydration Strategies: Position multiple water stations throughout the site, ensuring free access to cool drinking water at all times. Encourage workers to maintain regular fluid intake before thirst develops, as thirst indicates existing dehydration.

Shading Solutions: Install temporary shading using canopies, tarpaulins, or portable shelters in both work and rest areas. Prioritise shading for static work positions where workers remain in fixed locations for extended periods.

PPE Management: Whilst maintaining essential safety standards, encourage workers to remove personal protective equipment during rest breaks to facilitate heat dissipation. Where feasible, select breathable PPE alternatives that balance protection requirements with heat stress prevention.



Worker Education and Awareness:

Comprehensive training enables workers to recognise early heat stress symptoms in themselves and colleagues. Implement buddy systems promoting peer monitoring, and cultivate a workplace culture where reporting heat-related concerns receives immediate, serious attention. Regular toolbox talks reinforcing heat safety protocols ensure consistent awareness throughout hot weather periods.



BSG Comment

Managing heat on construction sites represents a shared responsibility requiring proactive engagement from management and workforce alike. By implementing these evidence-based strategies, the construction industry can effectively adapt to changing climatic conditions whilst safeguarding worker health. Prevention consistently proves more effective than reaction—prioritise heat management before conditions become critical.

Available Resources

BSG provides comprehensive support materials, including a dedicated Tool Box Talk on [Sun Protection](#) and a detailed Heat Stress risk assessment accessible via the [BSG Hub](#).

Additionally, consult [HSE guidance](#) on sun exposure for regulatory compliance information and best practice recommendations.



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HSE Prohibits Dry Cutting of Engineered Stone: Immediate Compliance Required



The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has imposed an immediate prohibition on uncontrolled dry cutting of engineered stone throughout Great Britain.

This decisive regulatory intervention follows the preventable deaths of two young workers from silicosis, a serious occupational lung disease caused by silica dust exposure.

For UK construction businesses working with engineered stone, compliance is now mandatory, with over 1,000 HSE inspectors actively conducting nationwide enforcement visits.

Understanding the Catalyst for Change

The tragic deaths of two workers from silicosis have prompted urgent regulatory action. **Silicosis**, an entirely preventable occupational disease, develops through prolonged inhalation of respirable crystalline silica dust—a hazard particularly acute in engineered stone fabrication. Following a comprehensive two-year research programme, the HSE concluded that current industry practices posed unacceptable risks to worker health.

Engineered stone, commonly used for kitchen worktops and bathroom surfaces, contains significantly higher concentrations of crystalline silica than natural stone—often exceeding 90% silica content.

This elevated composition dramatically increases dust-related health risks during cutting, grinding, and finishing operations. The HSE's findings confirmed that without proper controls, workers face severe and potentially fatal respiratory consequences.

New Regulatory Requirements

Mandatory Water Suppression: The HSE has explicitly prohibited all uncontrolled dry cutting of engineered stone, effective immediately with no transitional grace period. Water suppression techniques now represent the only approved control method for managing silica dust exposure.

This approach works by binding dust particles at the point of generation, preventing them from becoming airborne and entering workers' respiratory systems.

Active Enforcement: To ensure compliance, the HSE has deployed over 1,000 inspectors conducting targeted site visits across Great Britain. These inspections assess equipment, working practices, and documentation.

Businesses found operating non-compliant cutting processes face formal enforcement action, including improvement notices, prohibition notices, and potential prosecution.

Legal penalties for violations can include substantial fines and, in serious cases, custodial sentences for responsible individuals.

Affected Operations and Businesses

This regulation applies to all businesses involved in engineered stone fabrication, including stone processing workshops, kitchen and bathroom fitters, construction contractors, and manufacturers. Both workshop-based and on-site operations fall within scope.

Businesses must review all cutting, grinding, and finishing processes involving engineered stone.

Supply chain partners should also verify that their contractors and subcontractors maintain compliant practices, as principal contractors may bear legal responsibility for site-wide compliance.



Your Compliance Action Plan

Immediate Operational Assessment:

Conduct a comprehensive audit of all engineered stone cutting operations. Identify equipment requiring water suppression retrofitting or replacement, and document current practices against regulatory requirements.

Equipment Modifications: Invest in compliant water suppression systems for all cutting equipment. Specify appropriate technology, establish installation timelines, and ensure proper commissioning before resuming operations.

Workforce Training: Legal obligations require employers to inform workers of silica dust risks and control measures. BSG's Silica Dust Awareness Online Training provides a focused 40-minute course covering health hazards, legal duties, and practical risk control measures—offering a cost-effective compliance solution with documented completion records.

Inspection Preparedness: Maintain comprehensive documentation including risk assessments, training records, equipment maintenance logs, and standard operating procedures. Designate a compliance officer responsible for coordinating HSE inspection responses and maintaining regulatory adherence.



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BSG Comment

Compliance with the HSE's prohibition on dry cutting is non-negotiable and subject to active enforcement. Worker health protection must take precedence in all engineered stone operations.

For guidance on achieving compliance, or to access our [Silica Dust Awareness Online Training](#) course, please contact us without delay.



With HSE inspectors conducting visits nationwide, ensuring your business meets these essential requirements is now an urgent priority.



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- Construction Design Management (CDM)
- Fire Safety Awareness
- Silica Dust Awareness
- IATP Asbestos Awareness
- Health & Safety in Offices
- Risk Assessment Training
- Working at Height Awareness
- Hand and Power Tool Safety Awareness
- Manual Handling in Construction Awareness



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How to Build a Culture of Compliance Post Grenfell: A Housing Association's Guide to Life-Saving Health & Safety Standards

Health and safety compliance in social housing has never been more critical. The ongoing Grenfell Tower investigation serves as a sobering reminder of the catastrophic consequences when safety standards fail.

With the Metropolitan Police expected to present investigation files to the Crown Prosecution Service by the end of September, up to 20 corporate entities—including housing bodies and tenant management organisations—face potential criminal charges ranging from corporate manslaughter to fraud and health and safety breaches.

Alongside these organisations, 57 individuals may also face prosecution. For UK housing associations, this watershed moment underscores an inescapable truth: robust health and safety adherence is both a legal obligation and a moral imperative that cannot be compromised.

The Grenfell Tower Context: A Watershed Moment

The scale of potential accountability emerging from the Grenfell investigation represents an unprecedented moment for the social housing sector. The prospect of corporate manslaughter charges against housing bodies and tenant management organisations signals a fundamental shift in how regulatory authorities approach safety failures.



The investigation has exposed systemic weaknesses that extend far beyond a single building, revealing inadequate oversight, poor governance, and insufficient attention to resident safety across multiple organisational levels. The reputational impact on the sector has been profound, eroding public trust and intensifying scrutiny from regulators, politicians, and the communities housing associations serve. For every housing association in the UK, Grenfell has made one thing abundantly clear: compliance is non-negotiable, and the consequences of failure are severe.

CDM Regulations: The Foundation of Construction Safety

The Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 establish the fundamental framework for construction safety, placing specific duties on housing associations when they act as clients in development projects. These responsibilities include appointing competent contractors and designers, ensuring adequate time and resources are allocated to projects, maintaining and providing comprehensive pre-construction information, and ensuring

appropriate welfare facilities are available throughout construction phases.

Housing associations must also ensure that health and safety files are created and maintained throughout a building's lifecycle, providing essential information for future maintenance and refurbishment work. Non-compliance with CDM regulations can result in prosecution, substantial fines, and enforcement action from the Health and Safety Executive.

More fundamentally, these regulations protect both construction workers during the building phase and future residents who will occupy these homes.

Proper CDM compliance ensures that safety considerations are embedded from initial design through to completion and beyond.

Code of Governance and Organisational Accountability

The National Housing Federation's Code of Governance explicitly links effective governance with health and safety outcomes. The Regulator of Social Housing's governance standard requires boards to maintain a clear framework for accountability and propriety, which necessarily encompasses health and safety oversight. Board members bear ultimate responsibility for ensuring their organisations have robust health and safety management systems, adequate resources, and appropriate expertise.

This responsibility cannot be delegated away; it must be integrated into risk management frameworks and regularly reviewed at the highest organisational level. Transparency and accountability to stakeholders—particularly residents—are essential components of good governance.

The Grenfell tragedy demonstrated how **governance failures** at board level can cascade into safety failures with devastating consequences, making it imperative that housing association boards actively engage with health and safety matters rather than treating them as operational details.



Site Inspections for New Build Properties

Regular, comprehensive **site inspections** during development represent a critical control mechanism for housing associations. Effective inspection regimes must verify compliance with building regulations, conduct quality assurance checks, monitor health and safety practices, and identify defects requiring remedial action before they become embedded problems.

The frequency of inspections should be proportionate to project complexity and risk, with comprehensive documentation maintained throughout.

Many housing associations employ clerks of works or **independent inspectors** to provide professional oversight separate from contractor self-certification. The cost of robust inspection regimes is invariably lower than the cost of post-completion remediation, quite apart from the potential safety implications of undetected defects.

Proper handover procedures, thorough snagging processes, and post-completion inspections during defects liability periods provide additional layers of assurance that properties meet required standards before residents move in.

Health and Safety Training: Building Competence

Competence at all organisational levels is fundamental to effective health and safety management. Board members and senior leadership require training to understand their legal duties and governance responsibilities. Development and asset management teams need detailed knowledge of CDM regulations, building safety legislation, and risk assessment methodologies.

Fire safety training has become particularly critical following Grenfell. Housing associations must also ensure their contractors and supply chain partners demonstrate appropriate competence through verified training records and competency matrices.

Creating a culture where **safety awareness is embedded** requires ongoing investment in training, regular refresher courses, and updates on regulatory changes. This investment in human capital is as important as investment in physical assets.

Practical Steps for Compliance

Housing associations should conduct comprehensive **health and safety audits** to identify gaps in current practices. Policies and procedures require regular review and updating to reflect evolving regulations and lessons learned from incidents. Contractor vetting and monitoring processes must be strengthened, with clear expectations and consequences for non-compliance.

Robust reporting and escalation mechanisms ensure that concerns reach appropriate decision-makers promptly. Meaningful engagement with residents on safety matters builds trust and provides valuable intelligence.



Learning from incidents and near-misses prevents recurrence. Adequate resources must be allocated for compliance activities, and external expertise should be sought where internal capacity is insufficient.



BSG Comment

The Grenfell investigation serves as a stark reminder that health and safety compliance is non-negotiable. Housing associations must review and strengthen their practices across all areas—from board-level governance to site-level inspections.

Criminal Charges

The potential criminal charges facing housing bodies underscore the serious consequences of failure. Ultimately, protecting residents must remain the paramount priority.

By learning from this tragedy and implementing robust health and safety systems, the social housing sector can build a safer future and restore the trust that has been so profoundly damaged.



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BSG Staff News

Hard Hat for a Day



Kevin Edwards, Jackie Abraham
& Joshua Brown - Browns Construction

When Jackie Abraham, BSG's Membership Account Manager, swapped her desk for a hard hat, she discovered what BSG membership really means in practice.

Shadowing Safety Adviser Kevin Edwards through two site inspections gave Jackie an eye-opening view of the hands-on support our members receive daily.

Why It Matters

It's one thing to explain BSG's 'Site Inspection Service over' the phone – it's quite another to see it in action. For Jackie, understanding what actually happens during site visits means better conversations with both prospective and current members. This kind of cross-training builds stronger teams and more authentic relationships. When office staff truly understand field operations, everyone wins.

Morning at Browns Construction Group

The day started at a Browns Construction Group site, where Jackie watched Kevin's methodical approach unfold. He checked welfare facilities, reviewed method statements, and assessed general safety – but what struck Jackie most was how he did it.



Kevin's collaborative style stood out immediately. Rather than playing "gotcha," he offered practical advice focused on genuine improvement. It's about helping members get better, not catching them out. Real-world solutions matter far more than box-ticking exercises, and Jackie saw that philosophy in action.

Afternoon with Ashton Scaffolding Services

The second visit brought a complete change of pace. At Ashton Scaffolding Services' site, Jackie learned that every inspection is different. Scaffolding work demands specific safety considerations – procedures, testing protocols, and trade-specific hazards that require specialist knowledge.

Watching Kevin adapt his approach to suit different trades highlighted BSG's tailored support.



There's no one-size-fits-all template here. The depth of expertise our advisers bring to each visit became crystal clear.

Jackie's Takeaway

"I very much enjoyed the day and learned a lot about what happens when a BSG Safety Adviser goes to site," Jackie reflected.



Beyond the enjoyment, she gained practical insights that directly strengthen her membership work. Understanding the time, care, and expertise invested in each visit gives her a solid foundation for future conversations.

The Bigger Picture

Jackie's experience demonstrates BSG's commitment to quality across every role. When our entire team understands what members experience, we serve you better. Want to discuss how BSG's site inspection service could support your business? Get in touch – we're always happy to explain the practical, hands-on support that makes membership worthwhile.



New BSG Members



We would like to thank the following new members who have joined BSG, since our last newsletter:

- Evergreen Contractors (SW) Ltd
- Harrow Council
- Ice Electrical Service Ltd
- JLL Workplace Management UK & Ireland
- Kingstone Construction
- MAH Drywall
- Newmans Conservation Ltd
- Prior & Company (SW) Ltd
- Sorel Living Ltd
- Total Contract Carpenters Ltd

Welcome to BSG!

BSG Reports 21% Surge in Traffic Management Breaches on Construction Sites



The Building Safety Group (BSG) has reported a significant 21% rise in Traffic Management breaches across construction sites nationwide.

The alarming figure is drawn from approximately 6,000 independent safety inspections conducted on behalf of the construction industry over a six-month period, comparing Q4 2025 with Q1 2026.

The findings serve as a stark reminder of the very real and preventable dangers posed by inadequate traffic management and pedestrian segregation on construction sites, and reinforce BSG's unwavering commitment to driving meaningful, measurable improvements in construction safety culture across the United Kingdom.

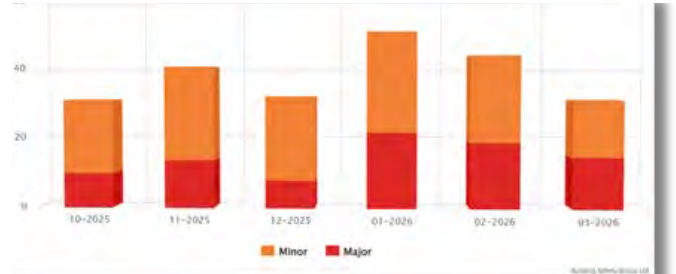
A Growing and Preventable Crisis

According to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), inadequate pedestrian and traffic management on construction sites is responsible for approximately seven worker deaths and 93 serious injuries every year in the UK.

In the 2024/25 period alone, **35 construction workers** lost their lives on site, with vehicle-related incidents accounting for a significant proportion of that devastating total.

Furthermore, four members of the public were killed in incidents connected to construction activities during the same period – a sobering reminder that the consequences of poor site management extend far beyond the workforce itself.

Traffic Management breaches 1/10/25 - 31.03.2026



The most common causes of traffic-related injuries and fatalities include being struck by a moving vehicle, being struck by a forklift truck, falls from vehicles and being trapped between a vehicle and a fixed structure such as a wall.

New build projects also represent a particularly elevated area of risk for Traffic Management failings.

Common on-site deficiencies identified during BSG’s inspections include poor or absent segregation of pedestrians and vehicles, broken or non-functioning reversing alarms and cameras, and a lack of trained banksmen – all of which are entirely preventable with proper planning, resourcing, and management oversight.

The gravity of these failings was brought into sharp focus in October 2025, when Marlborough Highways Ltd was fined £546,000 following the death of one of its employees – a tragic and costly consequence of the very failures BSG’s inspections continue to identify across the industry.

Planning, Segregation, and Operational Control: The Path to Safer Sites

BSG’s position is unequivocal: the overwhelming majority of construction transport accidents are preventable. The organisation stresses that effective **traffic management** must be **embedded** from the earliest stages of a project – beginning at the design stage – and must be rigorously maintained and monitored throughout the entire construction process.

Careful site layout planning, clearly defined and appropriately sized pedestrian and vehicle routes, and robust operational controls are not optional enhancements; they are legal requirements and moral imperatives. Andrew Harper, Head of Technical and CDM Support at BSG, commented:

“The law is clear – you must organise a construction site so that vehicles and pedestrians using site routes can move around safely. “Routes need to be suitable for the people or vehicles using them, positioned correctly, and sufficient in both number and size.



This is not a complex or costly requirement; it is a fundamental duty of care that every site manager, principal contractor, and CDM duty holder must take seriously.”

“A 21% increase in Traffic Management breaches is not a statistic we can accept passively – it demands an immediate and collective response from across the industry.” Andy further emphasised the operational dimension of the issue, adding:

“Our message to the industry is unambiguous: vehicle accidents on site can and should be prevented through the effective management of transport operations throughout the construction process.

Whether it’s ensuring **banksmen** are properly trained and deployed, that reversing aids are fully functional, or that pedestrian and vehicle routes are clearly segregated and consistently enforced – these are achievable standards.”

“BSG will continue to support our members and the wider industry in meeting them, because every worker deserves to go home safely at the end of every working day.”

Source: Mark Johnson | BA (Hons) MA | Communications and External Affairs Manager and Mark Stevens CMIOSH, Regional Manager

BSG Reports 21% Surge in Traffic Management Breaches ctd ...



BSG Comment

BSG remains steadfast in its mission to lead the construction industry towards the highest possible standards of health and safety performance.

Through its extensive programme of independent site inspections, technical guidance, CDM support, and member engagement, BSG continues to provide the construction sector with the tools, knowledge, and expertise required to identify risk, implement effective controls, and foster a genuine culture of safety at every level of an organisation.

The 21% rise in Traffic Management breaches identified in this latest reporting period will serve as a catalyst for intensified focus, targeted guidance, and renewed industry dialogue – because for BSG, the goal is not simply compliance, but the complete elimination of preventable harm on construction sites across the UK.

Vehicle Banksman - Traffic Marshall Training Course



BSG's Vehicle Banksman/Traffic Marshall Training equips your personnel with the skills and confidence to safely guide vehicles and plant equipment, reducing accidents and keeping your projects on track.

What you will learn

- Conducting safe manoeuvres – Practical skills they'll use every day
- Legal duties and responsibilities – Understanding what the law requires
- Risk assessment – Identifying and mitigating hazards before incidents occur
- Recognised hand signals – Clear communication that prevents confusion
- PPE requirements – Proper protection protocols
- Site limitations – Adapting to different environments and constraints
- Planning manoeuvres – Thinking ahead to prevent problems
- Regulations – Staying compliant with current legislation

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Real-Time Health and Safety Data Management in UK Construction



Health and safety management remains a paramount concern for UK construction companies, where the consequences of inadequate oversight extend far beyond regulatory penalties to encompass human tragedy and reputational damage.

With the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) enforcing stringent requirements under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR), construction firms face increasing pressure to demonstrate robust safety protocols.

Real-time data management and monitoring represents a fundamental shift from reactive incident response to **proactive risk prevention**, transforming how organisations protect their workforce whilst ensuring regulatory compliance.

Through sophisticated data analytics, construction companies can now prevent accidents before they occur, ultimately saving lives and safeguarding business continuity.

The Foundation: Site Inspection and Accident Data

Comprehensive data collection forms the cornerstone of effective safety management. **Site inspection data** provides frontline intelligence on hazardous conditions, equipment deficiencies, and procedural non-compliance, whilst accident data offers invaluable learning opportunities to prevent recurrence. The cost of inadequate data capture manifests in multiple dimensions: financial losses through increased insurance premiums and HSE fines, legal liabilities from preventable incidents, and the immeasurable human cost of workplace injuries.

Traditional paper-based reporting systems introduce critical delays between incident occurrence and management awareness, often taking days or weeks for information to reach decision-makers. **Real-time** digital data capture eliminates these bottlenecks, enabling immediate visibility of safety concerns and dramatically reducing response times. This immediacy fundamentally transforms decision-making capabilities, allowing site managers to address hazards before they escalate into serious incidents.

Data Analytics for Risk Prevention

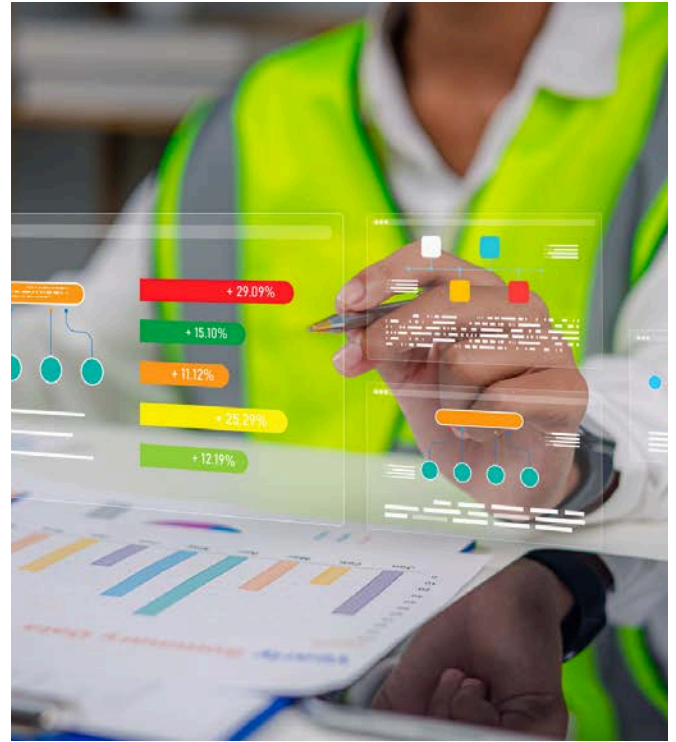
Advanced data analytics unlocks the true potential of collected safety information. By identifying non-compliance patterns and accident trends across multiple sites, construction companies gain unprecedented insight into systemic vulnerabilities.

Pattern recognition algorithms can detect seasonal variations in incident rates, temporal correlations with specific work activities, and common violation hotspots that require targeted intervention.

Performance monitoring through data analytics enables objective site comparison against company standards and industry benchmarks. This capability allows organisations to identify poorly performing sites requiring immediate improvement measures whilst simultaneously recognising high-performing locations whose best practices can be replicated across the portfolio. Such comparative analysis drives continuous improvement through evidence-based decision-making.

RIDDOR compliance becomes significantly more manageable through automated incident classification systems. These tools ensure that reportable incidents are correctly categorised and that both immediate notification requirements and 10-day reporting deadlines are consistently met. Maintaining comprehensive audit trails becomes effortless, providing robust documentation for HSE inspections and demonstrating organisational commitment to regulatory compliance.

Real-time risk identification represents perhaps the most valuable application of data analytics. Sophisticated systems can assign risk scores to identified hazards, prioritise corrective actions based on severity, and generate automated alerts when critical risks are detected. Predictive analytics can even forecast potential hazards based on historical patterns, enabling truly preventative intervention.



Implementing Effective Health and Safety KPIs

Strategic development of **Key Performance Indicators** (KPIs) provides measurable objectives for safety management. Leading indicators such as near-miss frequency, inspection completion rates, and corrective action closure times offer predictive value, whilst lagging indicators like lost-time injury frequency rates provide outcome measures. Balancing site-specific metrics with company-wide standards ensures both local accountability and organisational consistency.

Dashboard visibility of KPIs creates transparency for all stakeholders, from site supervisors to executive leadership. This visibility fosters a performance-driven culture where safety metrics receive equivalent attention to productivity and financial targets, embedding safety consciousness throughout the organisation.

Incident Notification and Escalation Protocols

Risk-based escalation frameworks ensure that incidents receive appropriate management attention proportionate to their severity. Automated notification systems route high-risk incidents immediately to senior management whilst directing lower-severity matters through standard channels.



This structured approach guarantees rapid response to critical situations whilst preventing alert fatigue from excessive notifications.

Clear communication protocols reduce reporting delays and establish unambiguous chains of responsibility. Comprehensive documentation of notification timelines and management responses provides essential evidence of regulatory compliance and organisational due diligence.



BSG Comment

Real-time health and safety data management transforms construction safety from a compliance burden into a strategic advantage.

By embracing digital transformation and data-driven decision-making, UK construction companies can create safer working environments, reduce incident rates, and demonstrate industry leadership.

The future of construction safety lies in intelligent systems that predict and prevent rather than merely record and react.

BSG Member Data

By consolidating the information collected through site inspections, BSG can help members to identify non-compliance and accident trends within their organisation. Reports can be run across any selected time period and can be used to analyse over 50 different types of non-compliance and RIDDOR classified accident occurrences. Contact us if you like learn more about how to manage your site inspection data.



Source: Mark Johnson | BA (Hons) MA | Communications and External Affairs Manager and Mark Stevens CMIOSH, Regional Manager



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20% discount for BSG Members

BSG is an accredited and leading training provider of the 5 day CITB Site Management Safety Training Scheme (SMSTS). Taught by construction sector specialists, our course is suited to a range of roles including Site Managers, Supervisors, Project Managers as well as proprietors of small to medium-sized businesses.



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COURT CASES

Company fined £350,000 after chemical tank collapse left worker with life-changing injuries

A company has been fined £350,000 after the catastrophic collapse of a storage tank at its Peterhead premises which left a self-employed worker with life-changing injuries.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) investigated the incident, which occurred on 21 June 2023 at Tetra Technologies UK Limited's offshore supply base. The base handles around two thousand ship movements per year, supplying North Sea oil and gas installations with deck cargoes and quantities of fluids.

Philip Moir, a 62-year-old self-employed rope access technician, was on site conducting surveys of storage tanks when Tank 7 — a bolted steel tank holding approximately



Image: HSE - The 700-tonne tank was more than 30 years old

480,776 litres of calcium chloride solution weighing around 700 tonnes — catastrophically ruptured without warning.

Mr Moir was almost immediately immersed to chest height in the released fluid. He was subsequently found slumped over the wheel of a nearby cherry picker, which itself, along with a Ford Transit pickup, a small skip and the cherry picker — weighing twelve and a half tonnes — had all been displaced by the force of the escaping fluid.

COURT CASES ctd ...

Mr Moir sustained a double fracture of his spine and pelvis, lacerated liver, punctured lung, multiple rib fractures, fractured sternum, a fractured wrist, and extensive chemical burns requiring skin grafts. He has not worked since the incident and is unable to climb ladders or work at height, injuries described as life-changing.

HSE Investigation

HSE's investigation, conducted by both regulatory and specialist inspectors, identified that the structural failure occurred around halfway up the tank shell, where the third row of plates split vertically along a bolted seam.

Approximately 4.5mm of the original 5.5mm steel plate had been lost through corrosion over time, leaving just 1mm of steel unable to withstand the outward forces of the fluid within. Investigators found that the loss of any protective coating had left the steel surfaces exposed to aggressive coastal air, accelerating external degradation. The density of calcium chloride – more than one third denser than water – further increased the forces applied to the already weakened structure.

Extensive outer surface corrosion

The tank was more than 30 years old and the manufacturer's maintenance manual required six-monthly checks of seams and bolts, and annual external inspections for corrosion. An inspection in 2013 had already identified extensive outer surface corrosion over the lower section of the tank and corrosion at bolted connections, yet no remedial work was carried out on Tank 7.

The company was unable to provide evidence of any regular inspection regime being followed in the years that followed.



Image: HSE - A still of drone footage captures the aftermath

The company was unable to provide evidence of any regular inspection regime being followed in the years that followed.

Failure of the tank was wholly foreseeable and preventable

On the morning of the incident, Tank 7 had been filled to capacity – a step taken to create space at the company's Aberdeen premises – and failed less than thirty minutes after the final load was pumped in. HSE concluded that the failure of the tank was wholly foreseeable and preventable.

Following the incident, the company removed all bolted tanks from its sites and closed its Peterhead operation, relocating to its Aberdeen premises.

Tetra Technologies UK Limited of One Fleet Place, London, pleaded guilty to breaches under sections 3(1) and 33(1)(a) of the Health and Safety at Work Act etc. 1974. The company was fined £350,000 at Peterhead Sheriff Court on 13 May 2026.

COURT CASES ctd ...



Image: HSE - HSE inspectors arrived on site and took this photo of the scene

HSE Inspector Mark Carroll said:

“This was a completely preventable incident. “The corrosion that caused this tank to fail had been identified a decade before it collapsed, yet no remedial action was taken and there is no evidence that the required inspection regime was ever consistently followed.

“A worker has been left with life-changing injuries as a direct consequence of those failures.

“Companies have a legal duty to maintain equipment in an efficient state and good repair, and HSE will not hesitate to take action where that duty is not met.”

Source: HSE

Company fined £20,000 after worker falls from height

A Hampshire-based company has been fined after a roofer fell through a loft hatch while working on a property in Wimbledon. Mark Smith was working for Willow Services (Southern) Limited when he fell through an unprotected loft hatch and sustained life-changing injuries.

Mr Smith was stripping internal insulation before stepping onto an unguarded loft hatch.

Landing on his back, Mark fractured his L1 vertebra and his hip, and has been unable to return to work, resulting in his termination by the company.

Failure to plan or provide adequate training to work at height

AThe HSE investigation found that the company failed to suitably plan the work at height and did not put adequate measures in place to prevent falls.

Those overseeing the work also lacked adequate training or experience to manage construction-related activities.

As a result, the construction company was fined £20,000 after pleading guilty and ordered to pay £5,607 in costs.

HSE inspector, Laurence Goodacre, said:

“Falls from height remain the leading cause of fatal incidents in the workplace, particularly within the construction industry.

Incident was entirely avoidable

“This incident was entirely avoidable and resulted from a failure to properly plan the work and provide competent supervision.

“Had the loft hatch been identified and protected at the planning stage, Mr Smith would not have suffered these life changing injuries.”

According to HSE, falls from height are still the top cause of death in construction.

One in seven construction workers suffers workplace injuries

Research from Slater and Gordon has shown that in the last 12 months, one-in-seven workers have suffered an injury, and of those, 89% have required further assistance or needed a period of recovery.

This research, surveying 1,000 UK workers from 22-24 April 2026, shows that there is an issue with employers that may be neglecting their responsibilities to keep their employees safe.

28% of these workers have been injured due to slips, trips, and falls.

Employers must do better

Bob Miller, senior associate solicitor, adds, “The data shows that employers must do better in protecting their employees.



Bob Miller, Senior Associate Solicitor at Slater and Gordon Lawyers (UK)



Image: HSE - The unguarded loft hatch

This starts from effective training plans in place, risk management, regular safety reviews, as well as empowering their employees to report any incidents or dangers, without fear.”

“The figures are an unfortunate reflection that some employers are still failing in their legal duties, with real consequences for employees including physical injury, mental health impacts and even long-term harm.”

“For World Day for Health and Safety at Work, I strongly encourage employers to reflect if they are doing everything they can to protect their employees. Employers have a duty of care to put practical measures in place to prevent avoidable injuries.”

Source: PBC Today & HSE



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