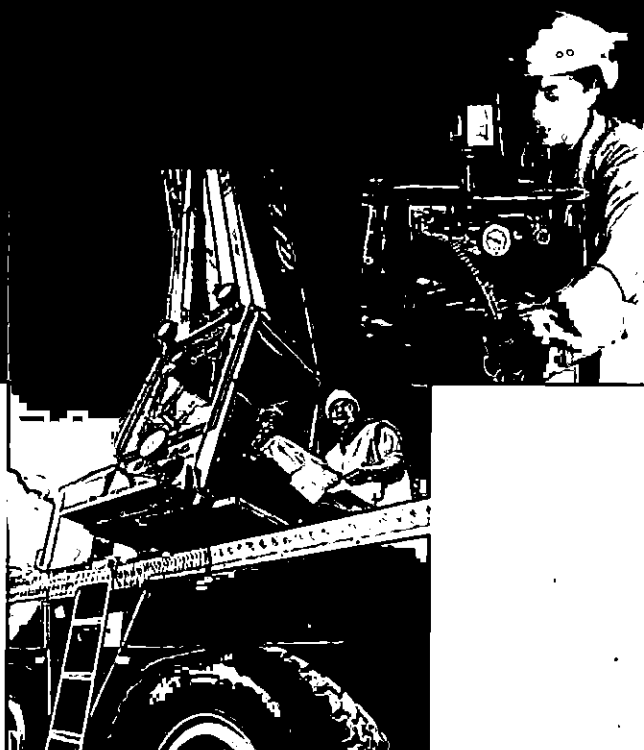




Health and Safety Authority Annual Report 1997

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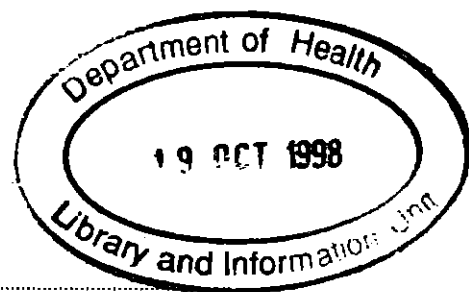
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HEALTH AND SAFETY
AUTHORITY

Health and Safety Authority
Annual Report 1997



Our Mission is to obtain a working environment:

- in which the health of people is ensured,
at the highest level possible, consistent
with technical development, economic
and social progress
- in which a preventive approach
is maintained, underpinned by occupational
health and safety law
- in which there is widespread consultation
between those affecting and those affected
by working conditions, especially between
employers and employees.



Chairperson's

MR TOM KITT TD
Minister for Labour,
Trade & Consumer Affairs

Dear Minister

1997 has been a very eventful year for the Authority and may turn out to be a turning point in improving workplace health and safety for Irish workers. In many ways the year was 'the best of times and the worst of times' for worker's safety. Public awareness of the importance of workplace safety has never been higher, while health and safety professionals, trade associations and others are doing much good work in workplace safety. There is an increasing demand for information and advice from the Authority, which we are striving to meet through new services such as our information line 'Info-tel', and our Website as well as our expanding range of publications. In European terms Ireland would now be regarded as having one of the safer workforces. On the other hand the stark fact remains that the level of workplace accidents, as estimated by the Central Statistics Office's Labour Force Survey, has not fallen and still remains unacceptably high. This accident level remains the target, which must be addressed by society in general and the Authority in particular.



The 1989 Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act placed responsibility for ensuring workplace health and safety on quite a broad group of people. In addition to involving employers and employees, it also covers designers, manufacturers, suppliers, health and safety professionals and, implicitly, a still wider group including trainers, educationalists, the courts and insurance companies. The role of the Authority is explicitly stated as being that of both adviser and enforcer i.e. to help people fulfil their responsibilities and to monitor and take enforcement action where people fail to co-operate. The critical element here is that various groups involved need to be aware of the importance of the issue and also be aware of their own responsibilities. Once this awareness is in place the debate moves onto a discussion of the best ways of ensuring workers' safety and here the expertise of the Authority's staff can be made available in a positive and supportive way to industry.

Public awareness of workplace health and safety was raised to an all-time high in 1997, with the Authority engaged in high profile enforcement actions in the High Court. The message was loud and clear. Where there is a serious risk to health and safety we will take immediate and significant action to eliminate the risk to workers and we are sure of the full support of the courts in this.

Submission

to the Minister

There was some anecdotal evidence by year end that safety standards were improving in the construction sector. Nevertheless construction accident rates are still on the increase so that the sector is now 27% more dangerous than it was in 1994. Clearly we cannot yet say that there has been a fundamental change in attitude.

In another traditionally high-risk area, agriculture, we had the results of the second National Survey on Farm Health and Safety commissioned by the Authority and carried out by Teagasc. This found a reduction in all accidents, a halving of fatal accidents and a general increase in safety awareness. We are convinced this has happened for one main reason, the farming community – farmers, their families, farming organisations, agricultural training courses, the farming media and insurance companies have all actively promoted and encouraged safe farming and have taken ownership or responsibility for their own safety. However there has also been a worrying rise in accidents and fatalities in 1997 over 1996. Clearly if accident rates are not to go back up to previous levels, there will be a need for renewed vigilance in the sector.

This last example also brings home the point that health and safety is not something that firms 'solve' and then forget about. It requires constant attention to detail, ensuring old risks are kept under control and new ones identified and dealt with as they emerge. The good news is that there are many firms who do this as a matter of course, because it makes good business sense. We have been fortunate to have secured the goodwill and co-operation of some of these firms for our Good Neighbour Scheme. This scheme has gone from strength to strength, and has led us to believe that there are many companies with a good track record and a strong commitment to safety with whom we can enter into a working partnership.



A quick look at these Good Neighbours shows quite clearly that safety is good business as many of the leading companies in the country participate in the scheme.

Minister, we would also like to acknowledge here your own efforts to secure additional resources for the Authority to assist us in our higher profile work. We know we can rely on you to continue to make the case to Government that providing resources to the Authority is making an investment in the most important element of our economy – our workforce.

In summary we feel that 1997 has given grounds for cautious optimism, particularly because of heightened public awareness about workplace safety. If all the responsible parties seize the present opportunity to work together we are convinced it will be possible to make Irish workers safer in their workplaces. The responsibility rests on all of us to ensure this opportunity is not squandered. On behalf of the Board and the staff of the Authority, I can assure you that we will use all our available resources to ensure that those who risk the health, safety or lives of workers will be stopped, by the Authority and the Courts.

Yours sincerely,

Mary Buckley

Litir on gCathaoirleach

AN TUAS. TOM KITT TD

An tAire Saothair, Trádála & Gnóthaí Tomhaltóirí

An Roinn Fiontar, Trádála & Fostaíochta



A Aire, a chara,

Bliain lán d'eachtraíthe a bhí sa bhliain 1997 agus bhí an tÚdarás páirteach ina bhformhór. Seans gurb í bliain na cinniúna maidir le sláinte agus sábháilteacht sa láthair oibre a fheabhsú d'oibríthe na hÉireann. Ar go leor slite, ba bhliain í a raibh idir dhea-scéal agus dhrochscéal ag baint léi, fad is a bhaineann le sábháilteacht na n-oibríthe de.

Tá tuiscint ag an bpobal ar thábhacht na sábháilteachta sa láthair oibre nach raibh ann go dtí seo, agus tá go leor leor oibre ar fónamh maidir le sábháilteacht sa láthair oibre á déanamh ag oibríthe gairmiúla sláinte agus sábháilteachta, ag cumainn trádála agus ag dreamanna nach iad. Tá ag méadú ar an éileamh ar eolas agus chomhairle ón Údarás, agus táimid ag iarraidh freastal air sin trí sheirbhísí nua amhail an líne eolais 'Info-tel', agus fós trinár láithreán Gréasáin agus ár soláthar foilseachán, soláthar a bhfuilimid ag cur leis i gcónaí.

I gcomhthéacs na hEorpa, tá Éire ar na tíortha is sábháilte ó thaobh na láithreach oibre de. Mar sin féin, níor tháinig aon laghdú ar líon na dtimpistí sa láthair oibre, de réir mar a léirítear sin sa Suirbhéireacht ar an Lucht Saothair a diúltmhaigh An Phríomhoifig Staidrimh. Tá líon na dtimpistí fós ró-ard, agus is leis sin a chaithfidh an sochaí uile, agus an tÚdarás go háirithe, dul i ngleic.

Chuir an tAcht um Shábháilteacht, Shláinte agus Leas sa Láthair Oibre, dualgais ar raon leathan daoine maidir le sláinte agus sábháilteacht sa láthair oibre a chinntiú. Chomh maith le fostóirí agus fostaithe chuirtear dualgais ar dearthóirí, táirgeoirí, soláthróirí, agus oibríthe gairmiúla sláinte agus sábháilteachta. Tá sé le tuiscint chomh maith go bhfuil dream níos fairsinge fós i gceist, soláthróirí traenála, lucht oideachais, na cúirteanna agus comhlachtaí árachais. Deirtear go soiléir gurb é ról an Údaráis ná an dá thrá a fhreastal, is é sin comhairle a chur ar fáil agus an dlí a chur i bhfeidhm. Cabhróimid le daoine a gcuid dualgas a chomhlíonadh agus fós rachaimid i mbun gnímh chun an dlí a chur i bhfeidhm i gcás nch bhfuil aon chomhoibriú le fáil. Is é is tábhachtaí ná go dtuigfeadh na dreamanna éagsúla cé chomh tábhachtach is atá an t-ábhar seo, agus fós na dualgais atá orthu féin. Agus an tuiscint sin ann is féidir ceann a chur ar an díospóireacht faoi na slite ab fhearr chun sábháilteacht oibríthe a chinntiú. Is féidir saíneolas fhoireann an Údaráis a chur ar fáil ansin, ar bhealach deimhnitheach a rachaidh chun sochair don earnáil thionsclaíoch.

Le linn 1997, cothaíodh tuiscint an phobail i leith sláinte agus sábháilteachta sa láthair oibre ar shlí nach bhfacthas riamh roimhe. Bhí an t Údarás bainteach le cásanna Ard-Chúirte chun an dlí a chur i bhfeidhm, cásanna a tharraing cuid mhór poiblíochta.

Bhí an teachtaireacht breá soiléir. Áit ar bith a bhfuil baol suntasach sláinte agus sábháilteachta ann, rachaimidne i mbun gnímh chun nach gcuirfí na hoibrithe i gcontúirt. Tá a fhios againn go bhfuil tacaíocht iomlán na gcúirteanna againn sa mhéid sin. Más fíor na tuairisci a bhí faighte againn faoi dheireadh na bliana, tá feabhas beag tagtha ar chaighdeán sábháilteachta san earnáil tógála. Mar sin féin, is ag méadú i gcónaí atá líon na dtimpistí san earnáil tógála, ar shlí go bhfuil an earnáil 27% níos contúirtí ná mar a bhí in 1994. Is léir nach féidir a mhaíomh go bhfuil aon athrú bunúsach tagtha ar dhearcadh daoine san earnáil seo.

Earnáil eile a bhí contúirteach riamh ná an earnáil talmhaíochta. Foilsíodh torthaí an Dara Suirbhéireacht ar Shláinte agus Shábháilteacht Feirme, taighde a choimisiúnaigh an t-Údarás agus a rinne Teagasc ar ár son. Léirigh seo go bhfuil laghdú tagtha ar líon na dtimpistí trí chéile, gur tháinig laghdú caoga faoin gcéad ar líon na dtimpistí marfacha agus gur fearr an tuiscint atá anois ann i leith chúrsaí sábháilteachta. Táimidne cinnte de nach de thaisme atá sé seo amhlaidh, ach go bhfuil lucht talmhaíochta - feirmeoirí, a gcuid teaghlach, eagraíochtaí talmhaíochta, lucht soláthair chúrsaí traenála talmhaíochta, na meáin chumarsáide talmhaíochta agus na comhlachtaí árachais - go bhfuil siad uile rannpháirteach i gcaighdeán sábháilteachta a chur ar aghaidh sa talmhaíocht, agus go bhfuil siad tar éis cúram na sábháilteachta a ghlacadh chucu féin. Bíodh sin mar atá, is ábhar imní an méadú atá tagtha ar thimpistí agus ar bhásanna in 1997 seachas mar a bhí le linn 1996. Is léir go gcaithfidh lucht talmhaíochta bheith ar a n-airdeall, más mian nach mbeidh líon na dtimpistí chomh hard agus a bhí riamh.

Léiríonn an sampla deireanach sin nach rudai iad sláinte agus sábháilteacht ar féidir le comhlachtaí a 'leigheas' agus neamshuim a dhéanamh díobh ina dhiaidh sin. Teastaíonn síorfhaire a thabhairt do gach mionghné, ag féachaint chuige go gcoinnítear smacht ar fhoinsí contúirte a aithníodh roimhe seo, agus go ndéantar gníomh láithreach a luaithé is a aithnítear aon rud nua a d'fhéadfadh a bheith ina fhoinsé chontúirte amach anseo.

Is maith linn a rá go bhfuil comhlachtaí ann a dhéanann amhlaidh i dtólamh, nó is é is fearr a rachaidh chun sochair don chomhlacht. Bhí sé d'ádh orainn dea-thoil agus rannpháirtíocht cuid de na comhlachtaí seo a chur chun tairbhe i Scéim na nDea-Chomharsan. Is ó neart go neart atá an scéim seo ag dul, rud a chuireann in iúl dúinn go bhfuil go leor comhlachtaí eile ann a bhfuil stair mhaith ag baint leo ó thaobh sábháilteachta de, agus a léiríonn dúthacht i leith na ndualgas atá orthu. Is féidir linne dul i gcomhpháirtíocht oibre leis na comhlachtaí seo. Is leor spléachadh gairid ar Scéim na nDea-Chomharsan chun a chruthú gurb ionann an shábháilteacht agus an dea-ghnó, nó tá cuid mhaith de na comhlachtaí is bisiúla sa tír páirteach sa scéim.

Ba mhaith linn, a Aire, ár mbuíochas a chur in iúl duit as na hiarrachtaí chun breis acmhainní a ghnóthú don Údarás a chabhróidh linn san obair is mó a bhfuil poiblíocht ag baint léi. Tá a fhios againn gur féidir linn brath ort ár gcás a chur in iúl don Rialtas, gurb ionann breis acmhainní a thabhairt don Údarás agus infheistíocht sa chuid is tábhachtaí den gheilleagar - na hoibrithe.

Lena rá i mbeagán focal, dar linn nach miste dúinn a bheith dóchasach agus muid ag breathnú siar ar 1997, ach cuid den fhaichill a bheith tríd an dóchas. Tá sin fíor go háirithe i gcomhthéacs thuiscint an phobail i leith na sábháilteachta sa láthair oibre, tuiscint atá níos forleithne ná riamh. Má thapaíonn na páirtithe ar fad an deis agus an obair a dhéanamh i bpáirt a chéile, táimid cinnte de gur féidir an láthair oibre a dhéanamh níos sábháilte d'oibrithe na hÉireann. Tá dualgas orainn go léir féachaint chuige nach rachaidh an deis seo amú. Ar son an Bhoird, agus ar son an Údarais, féadaim a rá leat le cabhair na Cuirte go gcaithfidh ár n-acmhainní go léir chun a chinníú go gcuirfear stop leo siúd a chuirfeadh sláinte, sábháilteacht agus fiú amháin beatha a gcuid oibrithe i mbaol.

Mary Buckley

Cathoirleach

Chapter 1: Introduction & Summary



Mary Buckley,
Chairperson



Sylvester Cronin



Lenore Mrkwicka



Tom Wall

THE HEALTH AND SAFETY AUTHORITY

The Authority is a State-sponsored body, established under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 1989. It operates under the auspices of the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment. It aims to promote a working environment in which the safety and health of persons at work is ensured at the highest practicable level.



Tony Briscoe
Vice Chairman



Grainne Higgins



Pat Walsh

THE BOARD

Policies and activities are determined by an eleven-member, tripartite Board, representing the social partners and other interests concerned with health and safety in the workplace. The Board met on 8 occasions during 1997 and members also served on the Legislation and Guidance Sub-Committee, Finance and Programming Sub-Committee, on various ad hoc Working Groups and on Sectoral Committees and Task Forces.

The Board began its statutory three-year term of office in December 1995.



Mary Darlington



Eric Fleming



Fergus McCafferty



Mary Slattery



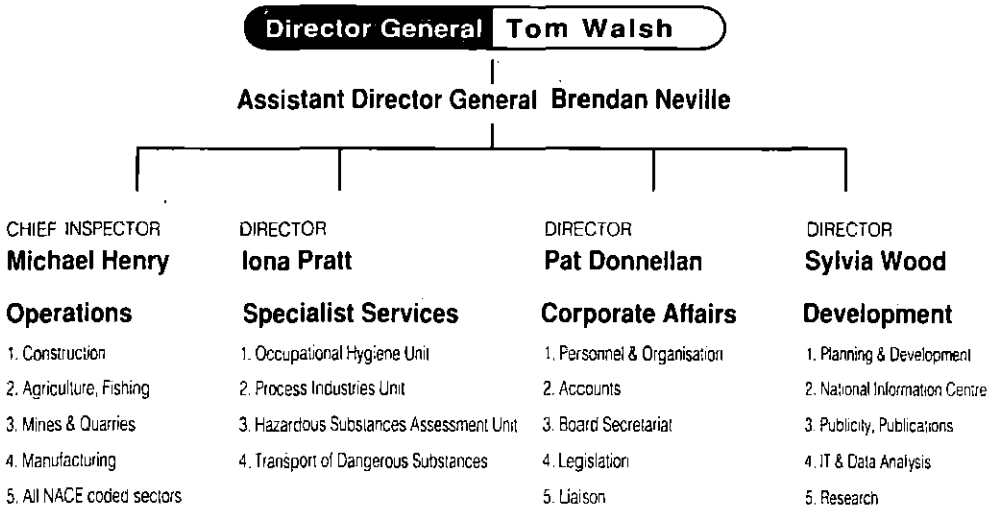
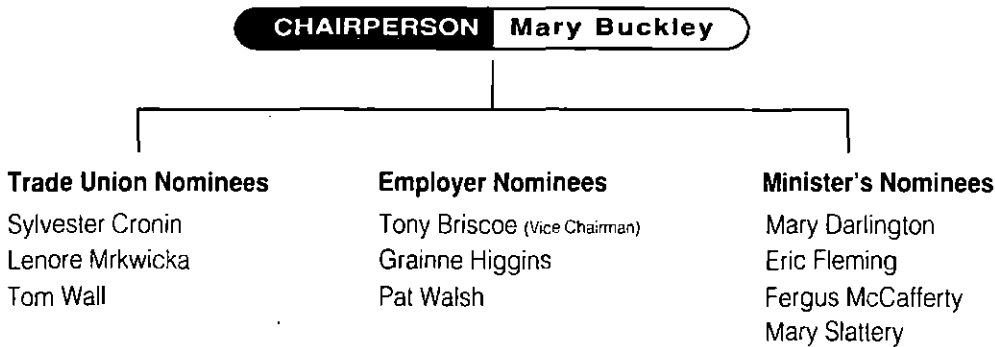
Tom Walsh
Director General

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The Staff

The staff of the Authority are located in eight offices nationwide: the Dublin headquarters and regional offices in Athlone, Cork, Drogheda, Galway, Limerick, Sligo and Waterford. They serve the workforce by:

- Developing and promoting effective safety legislation
- Enabling compliance with legislation and good safety practice
- Developing a national preventive infrastructure
- Providing information on all aspects of workplace health and safety
- Enforcing statutory requirements
- Ensuring effective management of staff and public resources



Director Occupational Medical Services **Dan Murphy**

1997 - A Summary

1997 was the second year of the Authority's three-year work programme (1996-1998). The overall aims and objectives for the year were:

- To ensure an appropriate and adequate level of safety at all workplaces
- To maintain vigilance in the safe handling and use of chemicals
- To ensure that ill health and common accidents are acted on
- To review, maintain and consolidate the legislative system
- To develop primary preventive infrastructures, including our national information service on workplace safety
- To maintain all legal, EU and international obligations
- To manage and monitor the Authority's programme
- To ensure the most efficient and effective use of state funds and resources

This Annual Report is the evaluation of our success in meeting these objectives.

PRIORITIES DURING 1997

SAFETY MANAGEMENT

The emphasis of the 1997 work programme was on enabling good safety management. The management of health and safety is an integral part of good routine business management and it not only improves the health and safety of the workforce, but makes a significant contribution to reducing business costs by reducing production down time, employee sick leave levels, employer insurance costs, etc. There is also a major benefit to the general competitiveness of the economy through reduced legal and medical costs, and lower social insurance costs. Effective employee consultation, participation and co-operation is central to the safety management programme, as is the Safety Statement which was a particular focus of attention in 1997. As the tables in Appendix 3 indicate overall levels of safety consultation and safety representation across all sectors of employment were broadly at the same level as in 1996. Similarly the number of firms visited who had Safety Statements drawn up is at the same level as 1996 indicating that much work still needs to be done by employers in this area.

This year, we placed major emphasis on:

- Working with and encouraging those companies with good safety management in place
- Supporting those who are trying to develop good safety systems and
- Rigorously enforcing compliance by those who ignore or wilfully neglect required safety measures

WORKPLACE INSPECTIONS - TARGETED SECTORS

A total of 11,156 inspections and other advisory visits were carried out in 1997, meeting the annual target of 11,000. Overall inspection and enforcement figures are given in Appendix 1. Enforcement inspections were targeted at those sectors/topics with the highest levels of risk, including:

- Construction
- Agriculture and Forestry
- Fishing
- Mines and Quarries
- Chemical Safety
- Occupational Health

We set a target number of inspections for each of the Priority Sectors we have included in the work programme. However, the overall profile of inspections carried out can vary significantly from these for a number of reasons:

(i) Activity in a particular sector can be higher than anticipated, and this certainly was the case with the Construction industry in 1997. In a climate of limited supply and increasing demand for housing, constantly increasing house prices and time pressure for completion of projects, the number of workers employed in the industry has increased significantly, as has the occupational injury rate.

Public interest has been focussed particularly on this area of our work and we have responded by targeting a large proportion of our resources in that direction. This has unavoidably resulted in a decrease in resources available for other industrial sectors.

(ii) We make every effort to respond as soon as possible to complaints made about health and safety conditions in the workplace, as well as investigating thoroughly all fatal or serious accidents reported to the Authority. As awareness among the general population increases, this makes up an ever expanding component of our workload and obviously determines to some degree the number of inspections carried out in particular sectors.

Full details of our sectoral and other programmes are contained elsewhere in this report but summary details are shown in the tables below. It will be noted that the actual number of workplace inspections declined as did the number of enforcement actions. This in part reflects an increased emphasis on safety management systems within firms. While firms with proper safety management systems become considerably safer in the long run, the initial supporting inspections are inevitably more time-consuming. There was also a deliberate shift to making greater use of Improvement Directions requiring employers to detail a safety management programme in order to encourage them to take greater ownership of the safety of their employees.

INSPECTIONS AND OTHER ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITIES 1992 - 1997

	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Total workplace visits	10,944	12,379	10,182	11,085	11,985	11,156
Formal inspections	8,837	9,868	9,856	10,759	11,525	10,560
Advisory & other visits	2,107	2,511	326	326	460	596
Complaint investigations	355	522	750	756	1,329	1,834
Accident investigations	314	348	322	358	345	388
Fatality investigations	46	82	103	131	134	111

TABLE 1.1

In addition to work programme inspections, the figure for formal inspections given above includes those carried out as a result of complaints, accident and fatality investigations.

ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS FOR 1996 AND 1997

	1995	1996	1997
Improvement Directions	29	99	177
Improvement Notices	1,476	1,799	1,044
Prohibition Notices	148	381	295
Prosecutions Heard	39	35	39*
High Court Order	0	1	2
Total	1,692	2,294	1,557

TABLE 1.2

In addition there were a further 42 prosecutions pending which had not been heard by year end. Many of the prosecutions heard in 1997 arose from inspections/investigations carried out in 1996.

CONSTRUCTION SECTOR ACTIVITIES

Construction Safety received considerable attention in the media arising initially after the scaffolding collapses in late 1996. Supported by the industry, the Authority conducted an intensive campaign to improve the safety of scaffolding. The poor level of safety in construction was reflected in a number of high profile court cases in the latter part of the year, which dominated the headlines.

AGRICULTURE

While there has been a significant decrease in the number of farm accidents over the past 5 years, over 2,000 accidents resulting in injury still occur on farms each year. Thus despite the progress reported in the Teagasc Survey on Farm Health and Safety commissioned by the Authority, farmers remain an extremely vulnerable group. The major risk activities targeted for action in 1997 included:

- Tractor and Machinery Safety
- Livestock Handling
- Children's Safety
- Slurry Handling
- Agricultural Contractors
- Farm Machinery Suppliers

Awareness Raising Activities

EUROPEAN WEEK OF SAFETY AND HEALTH AT WORK

During October the 2nd European Week of Safety and Health at Work took place. The theme for the week was *Risk Assessment*. In order to ensure good local levels of activity and participation the Authority's highly successful 'Good Neighbour Scheme' was used as one of the main channels for activity during the week. This scheme involves larger 'Good Neighbour' companies with a proven track record in safety management organising safety awareness events to which they invite suppliers, customers, neighbours etc.

JOINT CONFERENCE

The Joint Health and Safety Authority/Health and Safety Agency for Northern Ireland Joint Annual Conference was successfully run in Dublin in February on the theme "Developing a Safety Culture". Over 350 delegates from a wide cross-section of employment sectors attended this highly educational and enjoyable event. A number of distinguished speakers addressed the conference on such topics as the cost of accidents and patterns of human error. The workshop organised specifically for Safety Representatives was particularly successful and was included as a separate element of other seminars during the year.

SAFETY IN TRANSPORT SYSTEMS

In June a series of seminars were organised on Safety in Transport to coincide with the publication of the Authority's booklet 'Safety and Workplace Vehicles'. The seminars covered the main vehicle/transport risks found at work and how to carry out a transport workplace risk assessment. Over 500 people attended these seminars in Dublin, Dundalk, Sligo, Galway, Limerick, Cork, Waterford and Tullamore. These seminars were also used by Authority Inspectors to meet local safety representatives and conduct an open discussion forum.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The Authority continued to support the Diploma and Certificate Courses in Safety, Health and Welfare at Work which are provided at a range of venues throughout the country including University College Dublin, Waterford Institute of Technology, University of Limerick, University College Cork and University College Galway. An increasing number of other bodies including the National Irish Safety Organisation (NISO), the employer bodies and the trade unions are now providing a wide range of information and training on occupational safety and health.

ACCIDENT & INJURY RATES

1997 saw a welcome fall in fatal accidents with a drop for the second successive year despite the continued strong growth in employment (workplace fatalities have dropped from 78 in 1995, to 59 in 1996 to 48 in 1997).

FATAL ACCIDENTS 1992 - 1997

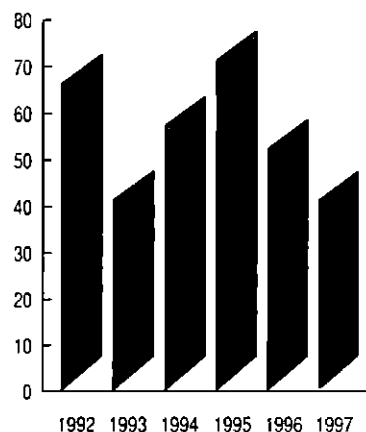


TABLE 1.3

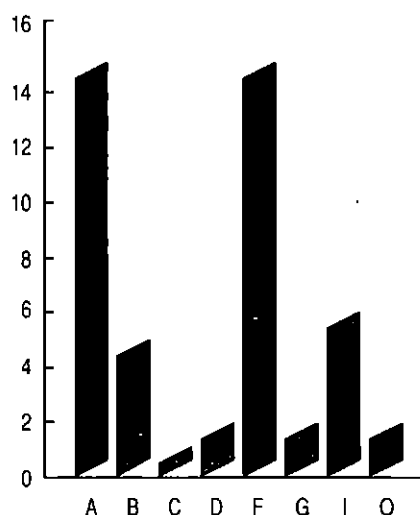
REPORTED FATAL ACCIDENTS 1997

TABLE 1.4

A - Agriculture

B - Fishing

C - Mining & Quarrying

D - Manufacturing

F - Construction

G - Wholesale & Retail Services

I - Transport, Storage & Communications

O - Other Community, Social & Recreational Services

REPORTED ACCIDENTS

All employers are obliged to report to the Authority accidents at work which result in employees being absent for more than three days. Data on occupational accidents is essential to the Authority in setting the priorities of its work programme. However there is still considerable under-reporting of accidents.

The Authority also makes use of a number of other sources of data including the Central Statistics Office's Labour Force Survey, the Department of Social Welfare's Occupational Injury Benefits Claims and the Irish Insurance Federation's Employer Liability Claims. Further details of these various data sources are set out in Appendix 1.

THE LABOUR FORCE SURVEY

The Labour Force Survey continues to be the most comprehensive source of information available to the Authority. This is based upon responses to questions included in the survey, which relate to occupational accidents experienced in the preceding year. A total of 47,993 households participated in the 1997 survey. The Authority is indebted to the Central Statistics Office for this data. Data for the years 1992 to 1997 is given in Appendix 1.

The figures show that the increased accident rates observed in 1996 persisted in 1997. This is put down to the growth in employment in recent years which has brought a higher proportion of young and inexperienced workers into the labour force.



CAUSATION TYPES FOR ALL WORKPLACE ACCIDENTS IN 1997	
ACCIDENT TYPE	NUMBER
Handling, lifting or carrying	1,384
Slips, trips or falls on same level	568
Fall from height	521
Contact with moving machinery parts	404
Falling objects	330
Injured by a person - malicious	255
Working with hand tools	182
Road traffic accidents	171
Exposure/contact with harmful substances	163
Transport (excl. road traffic accidents)	114
Struck by something collapsing/overturning	95
Injured by a person - non malicious	61
Fire or explosion	39
Contact with electricity	30
Injured by an animal	14
Drowning or asphyxiation	8
Miscellaneous	1,228
Not classified	103
Total	5,670

TABLE 1.5

CONSULTATION AND LIAISON

SAFETY CONSULTATION

Extensive consultation was carried out with staff, employers organisations, employees and social partners in an effort to identify key issues and major areas of concern.

The Advisory Committee on Construction Safety established by the Authority during 1997 met on three occasions and have two working groups looking at the urgent development of a Code of Practice on Scaffolding Safety. The on-going Dangerous Substances Advisory Committee met on five occasions to discuss issues related to safe handling and use of dangerous substances. The Agriculture Task Force co-ordinated a range of programmes addressing Safety on Farms while the work of the Fishing Task Force was completed in 1997.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

At an international level, in addition to regular contacts with the European Commission the Authority continues to play an active part in supporting the work of the newly founded European Agency for Health and Safety in Bilbao. Closer to home, the Authority, together with the Health and Safety Agency in Northern Ireland and the HSE in the U.K. meets regularly in a tripartite Forum to discuss national concerns and share solutions and approaches.

NATIONAL IRISH SAFETY ORGANISATION (NISO)

Close co-operation and support was maintained between the Authority and NISO at both national and local levels. The Authority is represented on the National Executive of NISO. The NISO Secretariat is currently based in the Authority's HQ building.

Chapter 2: Priority Sector Programmes



2

Those sectors with the highest risk of injury are targeted for inspection each year.

The employment figures and occupational injury rates given for various sectors in the tables below are taken from the Labour Force Survey. We have given such data where the breakdown of industrial sectors in the Labour Force Survey corresponds with the employment sectors used by the Authority.

As well as the prosecution cases heard during 1997, we have included those that have been prepared and forwarded to the Chief State Solicitors Office during the year. Because of the time delay in processing of cases, this is in fact a more accurate measure of the resources and time spent on preparation of prosecutions in any given year.

Due to a change in our recording system, this information is not available for earlier years.



CONSTRUCTION

This sector includes construction work, demolition, and the repair/maintenance of buildings and the installation, commissioning and decommissioning of certain fixed plant and equipment.

CONSTRUCTION			
	1996	1997	
Employment	86,700	96,700	
Occupational Injury Rate (per 100,000 at work)	1,730	1,965	
Fatalities	14	15	
New Projects notified to the Authority	1,150	2,094	
Inspections	4,532	PLANNED 3,600	ACTUAL 4,332
Improvement Directions	14	49	
Improvement Notices	352	185	
Prohibition Notices	311	240	
Prosecutions Heard	16	16	
Prosecutions Initiated		33	
High Court Orders	1	2	

TABLE 2.1

In 1997, 4,332 inspections were carried out against a target of 3,600, representing almost 40% of the total inspections for the year. The increased emphasis on site inspection followed a number of high profile scaffolding collapses at the end of 1996 and the beginning of 1997. High Court Orders were obtained to close down 2 sites where the Authority felt the risk to the safety of persons was serious enough to prohibit their use as a place of work.

Inspection concentrated on the enforcement of safe site management as is required by the 1995 Construction Regulations.

Inspectors' reports noted problems with:

- Poor scaffolding (instability, inadequate user safety, lack of control procedures)
- Inadequate protection on roof work
- Unfenced openings and edges at heights
- Unshored trenches
- Poor control of site machinery and traffic
- Lack of overhead power line protection
- Absence of Safety and Health Plans or the non-identification of particular risks in Plans
- Asbestos and other fibre control
- Dust and fume management
- Occupational dermatitis

Where safety conditions on sites were particularly poor or where there was evidence of poor safety management, instead of issuing a number of improvement notices, Inspectors in many cases issued an Improvement Direction requiring the employer to detail his safety management programme. This has the effect of focussing the attention of the employer on safety management and making him take ownership of the safety of his employees.

SCAFFOLDING

Following the high profile scaffolding collapses in late 1996, the Authority called together all the key organisations involved in scaffolding to review safety in the industry. A programme to improve scaffolding standards emerged which was based on the requirements for site management control under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Construction) Regulations, 1995. In addition the Board decided to replace the Construction Task Force with a new Construction Advisory Committee representative of all sides in the construction industry with a specific brief (a) to develop a Code of Practice for Scaffolding, and (b) to prepare a video on scaffold safety. It is hoped that both of these will become available in 1998. Scaffolding specialists from the United Kingdom's Health and Safety Executive were invited to speak to the industry.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

- The Construction Industry Strategic Review Committee set up by the Minister for the Environment in 1996 reported in 1997 and placed great emphasis on construction site safety and training.
- 78 tool hire premises were visited (against a target of 100) to ensure that construction equipment hired out was up to standard.
- An in-depth safety audit was performed on a large construction project. The audit found that a strong commitment to safety by the client led to a low rate of accidents on the project.
- All Government Departments and public bodies were asked to ensure that contracts were not assigned to companies without a Safety Statement in place.

- Authority staff gave approximately 30 lectures on aspects of safety in construction including a number of lectures given by the Occupational Medical Service.
- The Construction Mobile Training Unit, which is jointly sponsored by the Authority, FAS and ICTU and supported by the CIF, continued its programme of visits to construction sites to promote awareness of health and safety.

Although the Construction campaign and high profile media events have brought about some improvement in the level of safety on sites, until there is effective safety management of all building sites, safety of workers will continue to be at high risk. There was some evidence towards the end of 1997 of safety standards improving, however it remains to be seen if this trend is continued. As safety management is now a legal requirement on site, it is likely that the Authority will continue to close down sites where lives are at risk.

AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY

This sector involves various agricultural activities including animal husbandry, dairying, crop production, hunting and forestry operations.

On farm inspections, inspectors reported particular problems with:

- Electrical installations
- Slurry handling
- Farm machinery

STATISTICS	1996	1997	
Employment	138,000*	134,200*	
Occupational Injury Rate (per 100,000 at work)	1,377	1,416	
Fatalities	12	15	
		PLANNED	ACTUAL
Total farm inspections	832	880	876
Agricultural contractors	38	100	29
Farm machinery suppliers	91	20	53
Forests	20	100	6
Overall total	981	1,100	964
Improvement Directions	6	2	
Improvement Notices	151	61	
Prohibition Notices	15	3	
Prosecutions Heard	2	0	
Prosecutions Initiated		1	

Table 2.2 *Employment figures given above are those from the Labour Force Survey covering the industrial sectors of Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing.

Prosecution of farmers, 95% of whom are self-employed, is difficult because in most farm accidents the victim tends to be the farmer himself or a member of his immediate family. Forestry inspections were significantly down on our 1997 target, mainly as a result of a reallocation of the inspection resources available. More time was spent on farm inspections because of the number of accidents occurring in farming.

AGRICULTURAL CONTRACTORS

Detailed inspections were carried out on the operations of agricultural contractors working on farms - particularly silage making, slurry handling and sheep dipping operations. The major hazards identified included machinery safety and working under overhead power lines. It had been hoped to do more of this type of inspection, but Inspectors had difficulty in identifying beforehand the location of such contractors as they often cover several locations in one day.

AGRICULTURAL MACHINERY SUPPLIERS

With the difficulties encountered with inspection of agricultural contractors, our emphasis shifted so that there was a significantly enhanced programme of visits to farm machinery suppliers which focused on:

- Pump controls on slurry tankers
- PTO guards and power input shafts
- Condition of second hand machinery, particularly tractors, when offered for sale to farmers.

Concern was expressed about the lack of safety instructions provided with second hand machinery and the poor overhaul of second hand machinery before sale in many cases.

FARM SAFETY TASK FORCE

This Task Force represented a wide range of farming interests and was established to draw up and implement a National Programme to improve farm safety. It met five times during 1997 and considered:

- Safe use of machinery
- Safety of All Terrain Vehicles (ATVs)
- Safety Statement compliance
- Child Safety on farms
- Poorly lit vehicles on roads
- PTO guarding
- Seasonal risks
- Projects
- Schools safety competition
- Continued progress on Code of Practice for children on farms

THE NATIONAL PLOUGHING CHAMPIONSHIPS

The championships provide a unique opportunity to meet with the farming community. Our Farming Newsletter, as well as a range of farm safety and general publications, was distributed to 25,000 visitors to our stand.

A farm safety competition for children was organised and attracted over 4,000 entries. A comic for children, which dealt with farm safety, proved to be a big hit and much positive feedback was received.

TRAINING AND AWARENESS RAISING ACTIVITIES

Awareness raising activities included on-going co-operation with all of the relevant agencies (Teagasc, Coillte, ESB) and the various farming organisations (e.g. the IFA, ICMSA, ICOS, the Farm Relief Services, Macra-na-Feirme, ICA). The Authority also attended and exhibited at various shows and exhibitions including a Teagasc open day at Ballyhaise, Co. Cavan, a Seminar at Gurteen Agricultural College, Co. Tipperary and selected Agricultural Shows. Talks were also given to farming organisation meetings, Teagasc Colleges, and training courses.



The Farm Relief Services spearheaded the National launch of a training course in Safe Tractor Driving Skills for 14 to 16 year olds in April 1997 at the Irish Farm Centre. Macra-na-Feirme, in association with the Health and Safety Authority and the Farmers Journal, launched a very successful Farm Safety Booklet, which was widely circulated to all farmers and within the industry generally. It included valuable guidance on the preparation of a Farm Safety Statement.

SURVEY OF HEALTH AND SAFETY ON IRISH FARMS

The Authority commissioned a recent study on health and safety on Irish farms. It was carried out by Teagasc and published in June 1997.

The findings included:

- Approximately 50% reduction in the level of accidents (now 2000/year). This was attributed to improved awareness and better work practices
- Tractors, machinery, livestock, trips and falls account for over three quarters of farm accidents
- The severity of individual accidents has increased with 42% of accidents now requiring hospitalisation
- Peak time for accidents is June-October
- The economic loss resulting from accidents is increasing
- The vast majority of farmers (87%) do not see safety as costing them money
- There is concern about the level of ill health among farmers

FISHING

This sector includes traditional fishing, fish farms, the operation of fish hatcheries and service activities incidental to fishing e.g. diving.

PRIORITY INSPECTIONS: FISHING - TOTAL VISITS 141

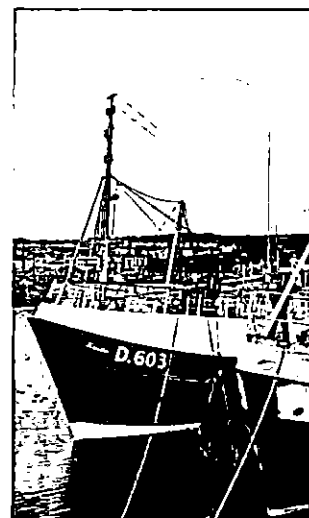
	1996	1997	
Fatalities	8	5	
Inspections	228	PLANNED 200	ACTUAL 162
Improvement Directions	0	1	
Improvement Notices	5	14	
Prohibition Notices	0	0	
Prosecutions Heard	1	0	
Prosecutions Initiated	0	0	

TABLE 2.3

The major concerns addressed during inspection were:

- Emergency plans
- Safety during rescue operations
- Provision and use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- Machinery on board
trawlers
- First aid
- Safety on piers

Inspectors who were involved in the inspection of fishing boats felt that positive outcomes resulted. However, they expressed dissatisfaction with the arrangements for berthing at some piers and ports. As some fishing harbours are owned by Local Authorities safety on these piers were addressed with them, where a willingness to carry out improvements was apparent.



Contacts were also made with the harbour authorities and with groups of fishermen at various ports (including Greencastle, Clogherhead, Carlingford and Burtonport) to raise awareness of safety and health. In one particular case, an Inspector met with a group of Skippers on board one trawler that the owner had willingly made available for a sample inspection. This proved to be very useful, both in the interest generated and in the effective use of Inspectors time. Among the topics discussed was the construction of shelter decks on existing vessels. Such structures, unless properly designed, can have serious implications for the safety of crew because of impaired visibility from the wheelhouse.

BIM mobile training units have been in operation and copies of the HSA/BIM Safety Statement leaflets were distributed. Fishermen have received an opportunity to get some basic training locally in this way.

With support from the Authority, an explanatory leaflet was produced by the Department of Social Welfare in April 1997 explaining the status of fishermen as employees. The Authority is also involved with the R.N.L.I., Irish Marine Emergency Services, BIM, the Department of the Marine and Natural Resources and other interested groups in publishing a booklet about Safety on the Water for Fishing Boats. The Authority's Occupational Medical Service advised interested parties on the implications of the new Regulations on First Aid in fishing boats.

MINING AND QUARRYING

This sector includes the mining and processing of ores, coal, peat and lignite, the extraction of natural gas and oil. There were 244 priority inspections of quarries.

PRIORITY INSPECTIONS OF QUARRIES - TOTAL VISITS 244

	1996	1997	
Employment	4,900	6,200	
Injury Rate (per 100,000 at work)	NOT AVAILABLE	3,226	
Fatalities	1	1	
Inspections	343	PLANNED 230	ACTUAL 321
Improvement Directions	3	9	
Improvement Notices	78	41	
Prohibition Notices	8	2	
Prosecutions Heard 1997	0	0	
Prosecutions Initiated 1997	0	0	

TABLE 2.4

SUBJECT	Number examined	Improvement Directions served	Improvement Notices served	Prohibition Notices served
Explosives Handling & Use	96	2	0	0
Safety Management Systems	192	4	15	1
Internal Traffic Control	166	2	1	0
Welfare Arrangements	170	0	12	0
Dust Control	125	3	1	0
Machinery Safety	170	2	16	1
Noise Control	110	2	1	0
Site Fencing	97	0	2	0

TABLE 2.5

The areas addressed during inspection are summarised above. It was found that machinery safety, management systems and welfare arrangement were inadequate in many of the quarries visited.

OFFSHORE INSTALLATIONS

There was considerable activity in offshore exploration and exploitation during 1997 with four drilling rigs working in Irish waters. An extended well test in relation to oil exploration was carried out for the first time off the Connemara coast. The Authority advised the Department of Energy on the safety implications of a number of these projects.

The inspectorate carried out 32 inspections on both semisubmersible and Jack up rigs, on one oil floating storage ship and 2 standby vessels. They also investigated the accident in which a seaman was drowned while employed on a floating tanker off the West of Ireland.

Inadequacies/problems identified during inspection included:

- Simultaneous exploration and exploitation operations
- Absence of gas detectors
- Maintenance activities
- Lifting equipment on drilling rigs

OTHER ACTIVITIES

During 1997 regulations were prepared to give effect to EU Directives 92/91/EEC (the Borehole Directive) and 92/104/EEC (the Extracting Industries Directive) titled the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Extractive Industries) Regulations, 1997 (S.I. No. 467). The Authority was also represented on the EU Safety and Health Commission for the Mining and other Extractive Industries (SHCMOEI) and its sub-committees on Underground and Surface Workings. These Committees exchange information on accidents and ill health in the mining and quarrying industries.

Chapter 3: Chemical Safety & Occupational Medical Programmes



3

CHEMICAL SAFETY

The Authority's chemical safety programme encompasses the prevention and limitation of major accidents in the chemical processing sector, the transport by road and storage of dangerous goods, hazard identification and risk assessment of chemical agents in the workplace and the notification of new chemicals scheme.

There is a considerable body of European Legislation in this area. The Chemical Agents Directive was adopted by the Council of Ministers in June, 1997.

Staff represented Ireland at:

- The Major Accident Hazards ("Seveso") Directive Committee of Competent Authorities meetings and on working groups dealing with inspection systems and safety report information limitation.
- The European Council Working Group dealing with the proposed Directive which will replace the current Directive on the Classification, Packaging and Labelling of Dangerous Preparations and on the Senior Officials Working Group dealing with issues of global harmonisation of classification and labelling of chemical substances and preparations.
- ADR and Joint ADR/RID Meetings in Geneva.
- The Working Group of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods by Road and meetings related to draft Directives on the Harmonisation of Examination Requirements for Dangerous Goods Advisors and on Transportable Pressure Equipment.

CHEMICAL PROCESSING SECTOR

Although the majority of companies in the sector appeared to have appropriate arrangements in place to minimise the risk of a major accident related to chemical processing, areas of concern arising in some companies during 1997 included:

- Inadequate identification of potential major accident scenarios and their consequences.
- Use of non-classified forklift trucks in areas where flammable gas or vapours were potentially present.
- Deficiencies in the chemical hazard classification information available, particularly in relation to potential environmental effects, to determine the application of EU Council Directive 96/82/EC ("Seveso 2" Directive).
- The failure of routine maintenance programmes to identify key risk areas such as corrosion on pipelines and plant.

309 inspections were carried out against a planned target of 300. Evaluation of notification updates submitted by 'top-tier' sites in compliance with the Major Accident Hazards legislation was ongoing and discussions in respect of two new notification sites were initiated. Of 4 oil jetties inspected, 1 was considered to need an upgrading of fire fighting facilities and contact was made with the appropriate Fire Authority to initiate remedial action.



INSPECTIONS & ENFORCEMENT				
	1995	1996	1997	
Inspections	395	378	PLANNED 300	ACTUAL 309
Fatalities	0	0	0	
Reported Accidents in the Sector	222	173	191	
Improvement Directions	1	1	9	
Improvement Notices	30	37	43	
Prohibition Notices	8	11	11	
Prosecutions Heard	1	1	2	
Prosecutions Initiated	2	3	2	

TABLE 3.1

During the year a number of investigated accidents gave rise to particular concern in respect of hazard identification, risk assessment and control.

These involved:

- Amputation and crushing injuries due to isolation procedures not being adhered to and interlocks being defeated.
- Undetected corrosion resulting in a number of significant chemical releases and the collapse of a dryer.
- Fires initiated in tanks with heater elements' due to lack of appropriate controls such as an interlock between the liquid level and heater.
- A number of chemical exposure incidents due to incorrect respiratory protective equipment being specified, including an instance where protection from vapour was only provided in a mist generating situation.

- Injury of an operator when the top section of a plate filter unit lifted off under nitrogen pressure. The pressure vessel had been modified, such that the two sections were secured by quick release toggle clamps instead of bolt clamps.

In 1997 the Authority assumed the role of National Authority under the Chemical Weapons Act, 1997. A five day inspection of a Chemical Weapons Act Schedule 2 plant site by six inspectors from the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) was facilitated and a satisfactory outcome was achieved.

HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES

The Authority is responsible for the enforcement of legislation on the Classification, Packaging, Labelling (CPL) and Notification of Dangerous Substances and Preparations and for assessing dossiers of technical information on new substances, which are to be notified for the first time in the European Union. The purpose of this work is to provide adequate information to ensure the general public and the environment will not be adversely affected by hazards associated with their use.

CHEMICAL DOSSIERS PROCESSED				
	1995	1996	1997	
			PLANNED	ACTUAL
Full notifications	12	17	16	8
Reduced notifications	4	12	11	8
Research & development exemptions	19	23	22	15
SENSE inspections		5	9	8
Inspections related to general classification & labelling issues	12	10	-	27

TABLE 3.2

As part of the European Enforcement (SENSE) Project which concentrated on chemical intermediates used by paint and pharmaceutical manufacturers, 9 in-depth inspections were carried out to assess compliance with legal requirements for notification, classification, labelling, handling and material safety data sheets (MSDS). The purpose of this project is to improve compliance and produce a more consistent enforcement approach between EU Member States. This was a useful exercise for dissemination of information/enforcement and will be an on-going project within the EU. While it was found that some companies had excellent procedures for dealing with these issues, many were found to have limited knowledge of the legislation, poor labelling, inadequate MSDS and poor general housekeeping and storage conditions.

Draft Regulations on the Classification, Packaging and Labelling of Dangerous Substances, implementing the 21st and 22nd Adaptations to Technical Progress of Directive 67/548/EEC, and on the Marketing and Use of Dangerous Substances and Preparations, implementing the 14th and 15th Adaptations to Technical Progress of Directive 76/769/EEC were prepared during 1997.

TRANSPORT AND STORAGE OF DANGEROUS GOODS

The Authority enforces legislation on the Transport of Dangerous Goods by Road and on the storage of petroleum. It is the competent authority for the approval of training courses for drivers of vehicles transporting dangerous goods and provides support for the Department of Public Enterprise in the examination of such drivers. A total of 255 inspections of dangerous goods vehicles were carried out in 1997 against a target of 169. In addition, 809 drivers of dangerous goods vehicles were examined with 728 candidates reaching the required level of expertise.

INSPECTIONS & ENFORCEMENT	1996		1997	
		PLANNED	ACTUAL	
Dangerous Goods Vehicles Inspections	147	169	255	
Petroleum Stores Visits	37	50	56	
Prosecutions Heard	1	*	1	
Prosecutions Initiated		*	1	
Driver Training Examinations	57	*	46	
Drivers examined	1,050	*	809	
Driver Training courses approved		*	2	

TABLE 3.3

**It is not possible to plan the numbers of prosecutions, driver training examinations or drivers tested as these are determined by external factors.*

Amending Regulations to the Dangerous Substances (Conveyance of Scheduled Substances by Road) (Trade or Business) Regulations, 1996 were drafted and came into force on 17th November, 1997, and support was provided to the Department of Public Enterprise in the drafting of the Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road Bill.

New Regulations, the European Communities (Training of Drivers of Vehicles Carrying Dangerous Goods by Road) Regulations, 1997, which give effect to the current ADR requirements for Driver Training were introduced by the Department of Public Enterprise.

In support of these Regulations, a new syllabus and revised requirements for Training Courses for Drivers and for providers of such courses were prepared. Under the Regulations, the Health and Safety Authority is an approval body for training providers, and approval was given to two training providers under the revised scheme.

A review was completed of the Dangerous Substances (Retail and Private Petroleum Stores) Regulations 1979 & 1988. These Regulations lay down minimum standards, which must be met in the construction and operation of petroleum stores so as to qualify for the granting of a licence to store petroleum. Proposals were prepared for consideration by the Board of the Authority with a view to addressing the situation regarding the licensing of certain petroleum stores, so called 'kerbside service stations', which do not meet in full the requirements under the Regulations.

Proposals were also prepared for restoring and extending the powers of Local Authority inspectors under the Dangerous Substances Act, 1972, and the extension of the powers of prosecution by Licensing Authorities under the Dangerous Substances Act, 1972 to include breaches of the provisions relating to the storage of petroleum.

OCCUPATIONAL HYGIENE

This work involves the protection of workers from environmental pollutants such as dusts, fumes, vapours and noise within the workplace. Inspections are carried out as part of a planned work programme, on request from Operations Inspectors and in response to external complaints. In total, 434 inspections were carried out during 1997, against a target of 400. Special surveys focused on the Woodworking Industry and exposure of workers to asbestos.

INSPECTIONS & ENFORCEMENT	1996	1997	
		PLANNED	ACTUAL
Premises Visited	372	400	434
Premises where Samples were Taken	139	142	
Number of Samples Taken	1,483	797	
Number in Excess of OEL	221 (15%)	244 (31%)	
Improvement Directions	1	2	
Improvement Notices	34	51*	
Prohibition Notices	0	7	

TABLE 3.4

**Note, multiple samples are taken in most workplaces and consequently, only one enforcement notice may issue in many instances when numerous individual samples are above the Occupational Exposure Limit (OEL). This is the maximum concentration in air of a substance to which workers can be exposed over an 8 hour day in a 5-day working week.*



The variation in the number of samples above the OEL in 1996 and 1997 is not considered to be an indication of a deterioration of conditions in the workplace. It arose because the monitoring carried out is not on a random sample of industry. Much of this work was carried out in response to complaints from the workforce or referrals from Operations Inspectors, and therefore one is more likely to come across a problem than on a routine visit. Our survey during 1997 was on wood dust where in many instances levels measured were above the OEL. In 1996 we surveyed hairdressers and vehicle spray shops which did not necessitate atmospheric monitoring.

WOODWORKING SURVEY

A total of 51 inspections were carried out and dust was considered to present a problem in 34 premises. 83 dust samples were taken and the OEL was exceeded in 36 cases. 5 improvement notices were served, and the following problems were identified:

- Dust from sanding machines, especially hand sanders, was extremely fine and difficult to control
- Hardwood dust (from veneers) released during sanding presents a greater carcinogenic risk to workers
- Extraction systems were frequently not effective in reducing levels of wood dust to below the OEL
- Use of compressed air lines to clean down machinery generated clouds of dust in work areas
- Poor levels of housekeeping contributed to the overall level of dust in many factories

The Authority emphasises that extraction systems must be properly designed to ensure their effectiveness and that ongoing maintenance is essential for their continued performance. The correct type of dust mask must be provided, particularly in respect of fine dust.

ASBESTOS SURVEY

A total of 108 inspections involving asbestos were carried out, among them existing asbestos installations in hospitals, colleges, hotels, factories and offices. These installations included lagging on pipes, calorifiers and boilers, insulation board and ceiling tiles. 44% (48 out of 108 surveyed) of the asbestos installations in place were considered to be in poor condition, thus giving rise to the possibility of asbestos fibres becoming airborne and possibly inhaled by workers. The majority of poor installations were located in unpopulated areas such as boiler houses and service ducts.

The survey identified maintenance workers as being particularly vulnerable during disturbance of existing asbestos to carry out repairs e.g., removing asbestos lagging from a pipe in order to be able to repair a leak. The survey also revealed that in a significant number of instances maintenance personnel did not always recognise the possibility that likely materials could contain asbestos.

Employers having poor installations were required to make them safe and healthy in all instances, and were advised that suitable and adequate systems of work would have to be implemented for any work activity, including maintenance, which could disturb asbestos material and generate airborne fibres.

ASBESTOS SURVEY - BUILDINGS

Premises Visited	108
Premises having asbestos materials	97
Premises having asbestos material in poor condition	48
No. of samples analysed for asbestos content	110
No. of samples having an asbestos content	100
Improvement Notices	22
Prohibition Notices	4

TABLE 3.5

SPRAY PAINTING

Spray painting is carried out in businesses such as garages, furniture manufacture and engineering industries. Monitoring for solvents such as toluene and xylene revealed 20% of samples taken were above the OEL and in these cases, improvement notices were issued. The Authority continues to emphasise the need for adequate extraction during spray painting activities. Where isocyanates such as toluene diisocyanate (TDI) are contained in the hardeners of two-pack paints, air-fed breathing apparatus must be worn and the spraying area totally sealed off from other work areas. These precautions are necessary to protect workers from contracting occupational asthma.

Inspectors continue to find workers wearing unsuitable respiratory protective equipment. Simple nuisance dust masks are often used which afford no protection against isocyanates. The Authority's publication on occupational asthma has been re-issued.

OCCUPATIONAL MEDICAL SERVICES

This work involves the surveillance of the health of workers. This is done by gathering data on the occurrence of occupational diseases, producing guidelines for use in implementing health surveillance procedures at workplaces, inspecting workplaces where occupational diseases have occurred or are a known risk and inspecting and providing appropriate health surveillance systems at workplaces. The service also gives advice to employees, employers and others on fitness standards appropriate to certain forms of work.

Key concerns that arose during inspections were:

- Violence to Healthcare and Social Service workers
- Bullying in the workplace
- Conditions in hospital post mortem rooms
- Disposal of clinical waste
- Exposure to biological hazards
- Exposure to lead dust
- Work related upper limb disorders

OCCUPATIONAL MEDICAL SERVICES

	PLANNED	ACTUAL
Inspections	100	127
Asthma, dermatitis, lead, hearing checks for noise	62	
Responses to complaints/referrals from Inspectors	65	

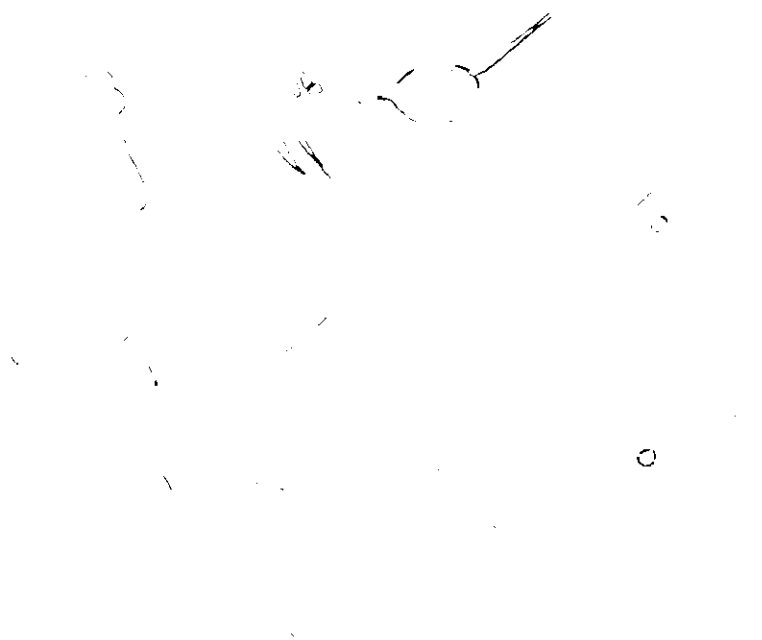
TABLE 3.6

Non enforcement activities consisted of publication of "Care with Minimal Lifting", a Guide for Health Care Workers' and re-publication of two of the "Asthma Guidelines". A total of 28 lectures and seminars were given to various groups.

Much of the time of the medical advisors is spent responding to questions from the general public. The main questions continue to be in the areas of:

- The Pregnancy Regulations
- First Aid training
- Stress, Violence and Bullying

Assistance was given to the Department of the Marine in implementing the Regulations on Medical Treatment on board vessels.



Chapter 4: General Industry Programmes



4



Business Support Services

There is a need to develop a national preventive infrastructure to support workplace activities.

The Authority is committed to working with those companies who are either fully committed to good safety or are trying to develop good safety systems.

Our role is essentially to provide them with the support they need to be able to monitor safety at their own place of work. This is done through many of the information and advisory services of the Authority.

SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES

Companies that employ less than 50 people very rarely have the formal management structures or the higher risks of many larger companies. For this reason the Authority has adopted specific strategies to ensure they are also enabled to work in safety.

• COUNTY ENTERPRISE BOARDS

All of the City and County Enterprise Boards under the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment were provided with information for their clients and a number of joint activities were run to assist small businesses at start-up stage.

• SEMINARS

During 1997 a series of seminars were held around the country to highlight the main risks associated with the movement of goods within workplaces and to better enable participants to assess the risks in their own workplaces. A series of meetings and workshops were also arranged specifically for Safety Representatives with the co-operation of SIPTU and the ICTU with a view to strengthening the process of safety consultation.

• SMALL SHOPS

A short booklet "Box Clever" was produced outlining the main hazards likely to arise in smaller retail outlets. The booklet was produced in co-operation with RGDATA.

PRESS AND MEDIA

Wide-ranging and useful press/media coverage was received both at national and regional level on several topics and issues during the year. There were a total of 1,500 media contacts during the year. Thirty substantive press releases were issued.

During the latter part of 1997 a number of high profile court cases in relation to the construction sector resulted in very significant media coverage for the Authority and its work. The Authority produced a supplement for the Irish Independent which was published during the European Week of Health and Safety at Work.

EUROPEAN WEEK

During October the 2nd European Week of Safety and Health at Work took place. The theme for the week was **Risk Assessment**. The role of the Authority's "Good Neighbour Scheme" has already been mentioned and this scheme was extended from fifty [50] to seventy-five [75] companies as planned. This scheme is seen as encouraging good practice in the larger Good Neighbour Companies and also offering support to the smaller companies such as suppliers, customers, neighbours etc., which are involved in such events as safety audits, competitions, quizzes, hazard spotting, specialist talks, etc. Each of the "Good Neighbours" was presented by the Minister for Labour, Trade and Consumer Affairs with a Certificate to mark their participation.

Also during European Week the Authority arranged the first interdepartmental safety quiz for the public sector with the grand final being held in the Rotunda Hospital on 22 October. Other events organised included eight Safety Management Seminars that were held for small companies - with over 500 participants. Many of these seminars were held in conjunction with local Chambers of Commerce.

NATIONAL INFORMATION CENTRE FOR OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH

The Information Centre in the Authority is the National Information Centre for Occupational Safety and Health in Ireland. It also serves as the Irish National Focal Point for the EU Health and Safety Agency's information network in order to improve information flows on workplace health and safety among the major representative bodies and interest groups. As the National Centre of the International Labour Office's Occupational Safety and Health Information Network the Centre handles information requests from international bodies and communicates with other National Centres to respond to national queries for international data. The Centre has continued to develop the library and information services available to Authority staff. A limited public service was put in place in the latter part of the year and this will be expanded during 1998.

The Authority's new help-line service, Info-Tel, has been in operation since July 1997 to provide information on all aspects of workplace health and safety. The service is manned by information staff and inspectors and its role is to augment the advice already available through publications or our Internet pages. In the six months since its inception, staff dealt with 4,742 requests for information on topics such as general health and safety legislation, construction, the use of hazardous substances, safety statements and notification of accidents.

The Internet plays an important part in the Authority's information service delivery.

The Authority's website, which was launched in 1995, underwent further development in 1997. More than half the Authority's publications are available in full text, the newsletter appears bi-monthly and users are kept up to date on health and safety events both nationally and internationally. Over 36,000 users visited our website in 1997, one-third of them being from Ireland. A multimedia CDROM training package on chemical safety, which can be accessed through the website, was developed in association with the Advisory Committee on Dangerous Substances. The e-mail facility on the website provides a channel for ordering publications, which is very widely used.

SAFETY MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS (SMS) AUDITS

During 1997 a detailed safety management systems audit was carried out on one large construction project and one construction materials firm covering over 3,000 workers and 23 workplaces. The original target for 1997 was to conduct 25 safety management audits, but in the event these audits proved to be more labour intensive than anticipated. It was decided to restrict work to two companies only, which, because of their size and the nature of their operations, would allow useful lessons to be learned for the future.

2-3 inspectors working together and using the following inspection strategy carried out each audit:

- Preliminary meeting with senior management to discuss objectives of audit, overview current safety management system, identify relevant documentation, e.g. safety statement, risk assessments and organisation chart and agree approach to performing safety management audit.

- Preparatory work by HSA inspectors to identify key issues to be addressed, identify individuals to be interviewed, set audit agenda, secure necessary documentation, prepare questionnaires, design audit report, communicate key issues, agenda and necessary documentation to the company being audited.
- Information gathering on-site by interviewing individual senior managers, supervisors, selected employees and safety representatives, examining company documents, observing workplace safety precautions, collating and verifying evidence and producing preliminary summary of main findings.
- Short audit report with summary of strengths and weaknesses, evidence supporting specific strengths and weaknesses, recommendations for action.
- Presentation of report to senior managers, obtain agreement on action plan and on follow-up.
- Follow-up to ensure action plan is delivered and any necessary enforcement action is taken.

The overall results of the audits were:

- Client-driven safety management works best.
- Successful safety management is possible only when all employees take ownership of their problems and all work together with management to achieve solutions.
- An active, adequately resourced and supported safety representative will greatly help with the development of a safety management system (SMS).
- On-the-job discussions, like toolbox talks, should be an integral part of the safety consultation process.
- Equipping and training workers to do simplified risk assessments before starting a hazardous job will minimise the likelihood of accidents occurring.

- Ill-health effects need to be considered as part of the risk assessment process.
- Adequate policies on the control of contractors and sub-contractors are essential in the light of current employment trends.
- Ongoing monitoring and periodic detailed reviews are necessary in order to ensure that the SMS is kept up to date and operates successfully.
- Senior management needs to take active leadership in the SMS monitoring and review process.
- The use of in-company health and safety competence has many advantages.
- With the development of Information Technology systems the use of central databases to record the results of safety audits and to provide access to health and safety information is recommended.

LEGISLATION AND GUIDELINES

The Authority has an extensive programme of legislation and guidance, which were developed or promulgated during the year. Full details are set out in the Appendix.

EXHIBITIONS

The Authority exhibited at a large range of events including the National Ploughing Championships, Agriculture '97, Enterprise Ireland, Forestry Ireland, the Small Firms Association and the NISO Annual Conferences. Inspectors alone spent approximately 0.5 man-years in promotional work for the Authority.

The Authority's Farm Safety Task Force (and particularly FBD Insurance, the IFA and the Farmers Journal) organised a major farm safety competition for primary school children. Over 10,000 entries were received from all over the country. This competition also helped raise awareness of safety generally among teachers and pupils in primary education.

PUBLICATIONS

Among the texts published during 1997 were the Programme of Work for 1997, the Annual Report for 1996, Manual Handling for Health Care Staff, Safety in Forestry Operations, Safety in Small Shops, Safety Watch (Transport) and Revised Information Note on the Role of the Authority. Between 250,000 and 300,000 publications were distributed to interested persons during 1997. The demand for the Authority's publications continues to increase. Significant financial and staffing resources are utilised in meeting this ever-increasing demand. At year-end the designs of a number of new publications are being finalised for launch early in 1998. Our publications reflect our customer needs and we continue to respond to the demands from the public.

REVIEW OF REPORTS OF ALL ADVISORY COMMITTEES

The Authority undertook a review of all the recommendations made by the various Advisory Committees that have been established. Broadly the findings were as follows:

- Advisory Committees provided the Authority with a rapid entrée and good contacts in new entrant sectors in the early years of the Authority.
- They provide a worthwhile and useful forum for consultation, particularly as regards the development of new Regulations and Guidelines.
- Given the administrative cost of servicing such Committees, good management practice requires the Authority to keep under constant review the costs and benefits of maintaining all such consultative forums.

Any new Advisory Committees should only be set up where:

- (a) Their objectives and the expected outcomes are clearly defined; and
- (b) the alternative methods for obtaining the required goals are assessed.

Compliance Programme

MANUFACTURING

This sector includes all traditional manufacturing, printing, production of recorded media, and recycling of waste and scrap.

MANUFACTURING	1996	1997	
Employment	249,900	271,300	
Injury rate (per 100,000 at work)	1,761	1,622	
Fatalities	4	2	
Total manufacturing inspections	2,755	PLANNED 3,000	ACTUAL 2,313
Metal manufacturing	252	500	398
Food industry	121	600	441
Improvement Directions	48	58	
Improvement Notices	732	437	
Prohibition Notices	32	30	
Prosecutions Heard	11	13	
Prosecutions Initiated		20	

TABLE 4.1

Inspections in the manufacturing and food industries did not reach the targets set for 1997 because more resources needed to be targeted at the construction sector in the course of 1997 than was originally anticipated.

It should be noted that there was a decreased use of Improvement Notices in 1997 over 1996. This was due to the need to carry out follow up inspections on the 1996 Notices in the high risk manufacturing sectors of metal manufacturing, food manufacturing and wood working premises. In these areas machine guarding, machine maintenance and manual handling were still a problem.

The use of Improvement Directions, which require the employer to prepare an Improvement Plan and have it approved by an inspector, ensured employers took ownership of their health and safety problems. Other areas of concern noted throughout the rest of the manufacturing industry included:

- The use and handling of dangerous substances
- Housekeeping
- Work environment (temperatures, humidity)
- Welfare facilities (sanitary and canteens)
- Noise
- Manual handling
- PPE
- Dangerous machines

ELECTRICITY, GAS AND WATER SUPPLY

This sector includes the generation, transmission and distribution of electricity, the production and distribution of gas, the storage, purification and distribution of water.

ELECTRICITY GAS & WATER	1996	1997
Employment	13,700	12,200
Injury rate (per 100,000 at work)	N/A	1,639
Fatalities	0	0
Dangerous Occurrences Reported to the Authority *	1,058	1,105
Inspections	58	PLANNED 100 ACTUAL 104
Improvement Directions	2	0
Improvement Notices	4	1
Prohibition Notices	1	6
Prosecutions Heard	1	0
Prosecutions Initiated		1

TABLE 4.2

* These dangerous occurrences related mainly to fallen electrical lines and were reported by the ESB.

Areas of concern noted during inspections were:

- Carrying out 'live work'
- Electrical isolation procedures
- Falling electricity lines
- Contact with underground cables
- Handling hazardous substances

WHOLESALE & RETAIL TRADE

This sector includes wholesale and retail outlets (e.g. shops, supermarkets) and the repair of motor vehicles, motor cycles, household and personal goods.

Areas of concern that arose during inspections were:

- Workplace ergonomics
- Seating in shops for marketing demonstrators
- Trips, slips and falls
- Violence to staff
- Welfare facilities.

WHOLESALE & RETAIL TRADE	1996	1997
Fatalities	6	2
Inspections	755	PLANNED 400 ACTUAL 421
Improvement Directions	12	11
Improvement Notices	194	94
Prohibition Notices	5	6
Prosecutions Heard	0	2
Prosecutions Initiated		2

TABLE 4.3

A short booklet 'Box Clever' was produced by the Authority outlining the main hazards likely to arise in smaller retail outlets. The booklet was produced with the assistance of the O'Donnell's SPAR outlet in Ballylanders, Co. Limerick. In addition, the Authority assisted IBEC in the production and distribution of an information pack for retail premises. Given the relatively low risks associated with retail premises the provision of advice in written form is often all that is required to effect an improvement.

HOTELS AND RESTAURANTS

This sector also covers camping sites, caravan sites, short stay accommodation and youth hostels.

HOTELS & RESTAURANTS	1996	1997	
Fatalities	1	0	
Inspections	48	PLANNED 100	ACTUAL 95
Improvement Directions	0	1	
Improvement Notices	5	25	
Prohibition Notices	0	1	
Prosecutions Heard	0	2	
Prosecutions Initiated		1	

TABLE 4.4

Alternative contacts were made with CERT and IBEC on health and safety issues for these sectors. The Authority co-operated with IBEC in the production and distribution of an information pack for hotels and restaurants.

TRANSPORT, STORAGE AND COMMUNICATIONS

This sector includes all forms of goods transported by road, rail or pipeline and storage and various communications activities (e.g. post, telephone etc.)

TRANSPORT, STORAGE & COMMUNICATIONS	1996	1997
Employment	80,700	83,800
Injury rate (per 100,000 at work)	2,354	1,790
Fatalities	10	6
Inspections	960	832*
Improvement Directions	10	10
Improvement Notices	68	25
Prohibition Notices	2	0
Prosecutions Heard	4	0
Prosecutions Initiated		8

TABLE 4.5

* Including 297 dangerous substance road checks, 78 petroleum stores and 8 oil jetties.

While the level of fatalities in 1997 was down to 6 compared to the 1996 figure of 10, this figure is still very high and effective safety management systems are required to reduce deaths. Many of the accidents were due to non-segregation of pedestrian and vehicular traffic or crushing by discharged or overbalancing loads. During 1997 a series of seminars were held around the country to highlight the main risks in the industry and to better enable participants to assess the risks in their own workplaces. This sector will be targeted in 1998 with an integrated publicity and inspection campaign.

Areas of concern that arose during inspections were:

- Road transport of hazardous substances
- Fork lift truck overturning
- Welfare facilities (sanitary and temperature)
- Goods handling
- Housekeeping
- Safety statement preparation

FINANCIAL INTERMEDIATION

This sector includes banking activities, financial leasing, insurance and pension funding, financial markets.

FINANCIAL INTERMEDIATION	1996	1997	
Fatalities	0	0	
Inspections	29	PLANNED 30	ACTUAL 35
Improvement Directions	0	1	
Improvement Notices	2	4	

TABLE 4.6

Areas of concern noted during inspections were:

- Means of escape from secure areas
- Workplace ergonomics
- Trips, slips and falls
- Security and violence to staff

REAL ESTATE, RENTING AND BUSINESS ACTIVITIES

This sector includes real estate activities, renting of machinery and equipment, computer engineering and architectural consultancy, legal and accounting practices, research and development, advertisement, and a range of professional business activities.

REAL ESTATE, RENTING & BUSINESS	1996	1997
Fatalities	0	0
Inspections	91	116
Improvement Directions	3	1
Improvement Notices	33	22
Prohibition Notices	4	4

TABLE 4.7

Areas of concern noted during inspections were:

- Training
- Stress and violence to staff
- Safety statement preparation
- PPE

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND DEFENCE; COMPULSORY SOCIAL SECURITY

This sector includes a range of general public service activities, public security, law and order and fire service activities. The bulk of the Authority's work here focused on Local Authorities.

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION	1996	1997	
Fatalities	3	0	
Inspections	234	PLANNED 300	ACTUAL 285
Improvement Directions	8	36	
Improvement Notices	19	9	
Prohibition Notices	0	0	
Prosecutions Heard	2	2	
Prosecutions Initiated		0	

TABLE 4.8

The main problems found during inspections of Local Authorities included:

- Stress and violence
- Working alone
- PPE
- Manual handling
- Welfare facilities (sanitary and canteen facilities)
- Housekeeping
- Safety consultation

Alternative contacts were made with various Local Authorities through the Institute of Asphalt Technology at two national seminars on the 1995 Construction Regulations. Other contacts were made at the Institute of Engineers of Ireland seminar on waste disposal management and through the Local Authority Safety Engineers and Safety Officers Association.

EDUCATION

This sector includes primary, secondary and higher level education, adult education and driving school activities.

EDUCATION	1996	1997	
Fatalities	0	0	
Inspections	63	PLANNED 100	ACTUAL 97
Improvement Directions	7	6	
Improvement Notices	10	19	
Prohibition Notices	0	1	
Prosecutions Heard	0	1	
Prosecutions Initiated		1	

TABLE 4.9

Areas of concern noted during inspections were:

- Inadequate school buildings
- Use of gasses
- Chemical experiments
- Use of fume cupboards
- Violence and aggression
- Welfare facilities

The Education sector is important not just as a major employer but also because it provides a major opportunity to influence young people. It is critical that schools and other places of education provide safe places of work in order to inculcate in future employees the habit of regarding safety both as a right and a matter of personal responsibility. Two programmes - one at primary and one at second level - were particularly focused on this work of 'Winning hearts and minds', the competition organised for all primary school children on farm safety helped raise awareness at this level while the National Parents Council (Post Primary) health and safety programme for transition year students introduces the subject to the second level syllabus.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL WORK

This sector includes hospitals, medical and dental activities, veterinary and social work activities.

HEALTH & SOCIAL WORK	1996	1997	
Fatalities	0	0	
Inspections	161	PLANNED 254	ACTUAL 204
Improvement Directions	4	2	
Improvement Notices	23	37	
Prohibition Notices	0	4	
Prosecutions Heard	0	1	
Prosecutions Initiated		1	

TABLE 4.10

Areas of concern noted during inspections were:

- Awareness of safety management by professional medical staff
- Patient/manual handling
- Violence to staff
- Stress
- Hepatitis infection
- Clinical waste disposal procedures
- Asbestos stripping in hospitals
- Post mortem rooms - disease control and machine safety

Because of the level of concern expressed by employees about some of these issues, it was decided that the Health Sector would be targeted as a 'priority topic' for the 1998 work programme.

A booklet on patient handling "Caring with Minimal Lifting" was published in the course of the year. The Authority was represented on two committees set up by the Department of Health, which met during 1997. They were the National Consultative Committee on Health Promotion and the National Environmental Health Action Plan Committee.

The former committee is considering occupational health and safety as part of the overall national health promotion policy while the latter one is preparing a national plan as part of the overall Environmental Health Action Plan for Europe.

OTHER COMMUNITY, SOCIAL AND PERSONAL SERVICES ACTIVITIES

This sector includes sewage, refuse disposal, sanitation and related activities; the activities of business, employers, trade unions and professional organisations, recreational, cultural and sporting activities, funeral and hairdressing activities.

OTHER SERVICES	1996	1997
Fatalities	0	2
Inspections	287	279
Improvement Directions	1	10
Improvement Notices	45	18
Prohibition Notices	3	1
Prosecutions Heard	1	0
Prosecutions Initiated		0

TABLE 4.11

Areas of concern noted during inspections were:

- Safety standards for sewage disposal workers
- Inadequate First Aid
- Dangerous machinery

Chapter 5: Organisational Development Programmes



5

Staffing & Resources

1997 saw further improvements in the resources allocated to the work of the Authority from central Government. The total approved staffing complement of the Authority rose from 112 to 119 during 1997, while the financial grant rose from £3.938m in 1996 to £4.256m in 1997 (there was in addition a supplementary provision of £285,000 in respect of salary arrears under the Programme for Competitiveness and Work).

STAFF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

The Authority continued its policy of ongoing staff development during 1997, with significant expenditure on training in order to ensure that all inspectors are trained to Diploma level and all front line administrative staff to Certificate level in Occupational Health and Safety. A major part of the staff development programme will be the introduction of staff appraisal at all levels throughout the organisation which was further advanced in 1997 through staff training and participation.

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

Negotiations with staff unions under the Programme for Competitiveness and Work saw agreements introduced allowing for new flexibility in relation to a range of issues including the organisation of work, new technology and recruitment practices. Progress was made on the development of a formal structure for Industrial Relations and a Code of Conduct. A draft Equality Code for staff was finalised for submission to the Board.

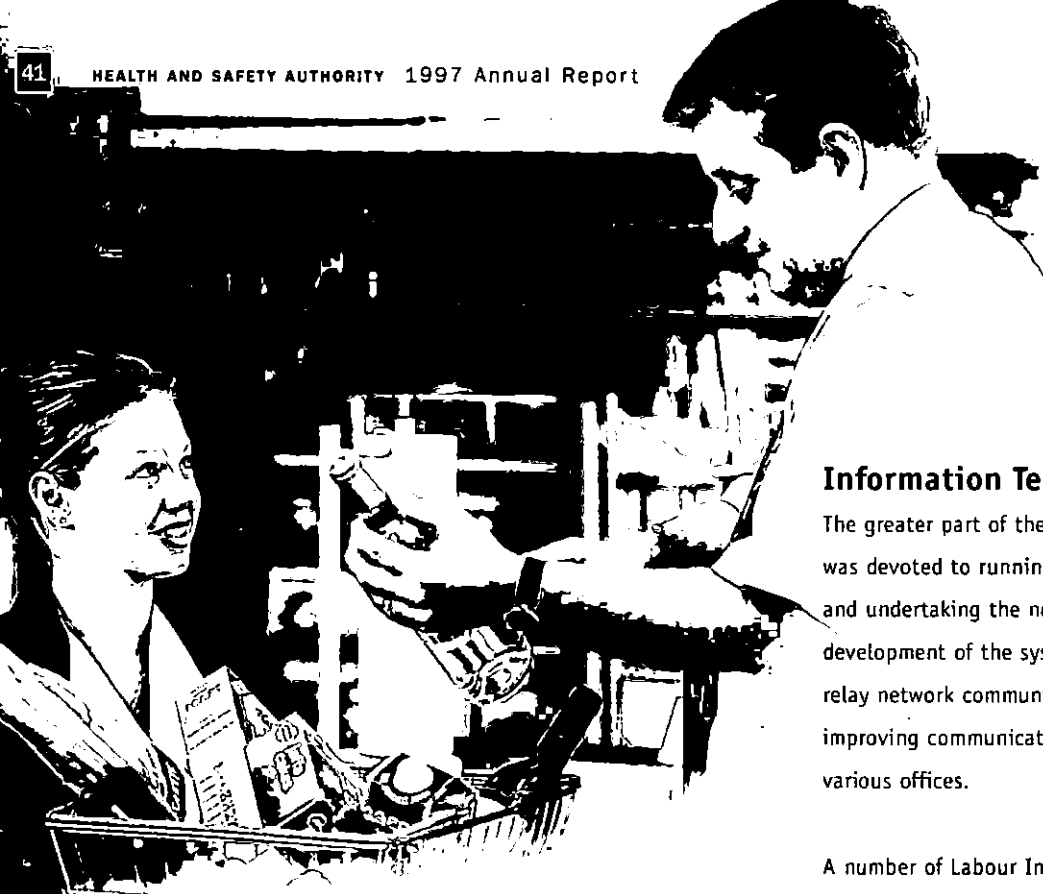


ACCOMMODATION

The upgrading of Regional Offices continued in 1997 with the opening of the new Regional Office at Odeon House, Eyre Square, Galway and with the reservation of new larger office accommodation for the Cork and Waterford Regional Offices which will be opening in 1998.

Financial Management

The Authority's financial affairs continued to be discharged in an effective and proper manner in 1997. The devolution of greater responsibilities to line managers did not proceed in 1997 but is expected to follow in 1998.



The following table outlines some of the main expenditure items in 1997 with comparative figures for 1996:

	1996 (£)	1997 (£)	% increase
Department Grant	3,938,000	4,256,000	8.1%
Staff Salaries	2,622,000	2,800,000	6.8%
Accommodation	332,000	456,000	37.3%
Staff Travel & Subsistence	269,000	274,000	1.9%

Information Technology

The greater part of the resources of the IT Section was devoted to running the existing IT system and undertaking the necessary expansion and development of the system during the year. A frame relay network communications system was introduced improving communications between the Authority's various offices.

A number of Labour Inspectorates around the world have expressed an interest in the Authority's accident and inspection recording system and sought advice on the development of their own systems.

Library cataloguing continued during the year and is now available on-line to staff on a pilot basis.

A diary and scheduling system was piloted successfully in the Development Directorate during 1997 and will be extended throughout the Authority in 1998.

Other ongoing development work included support for the Authority's Internet website.

RESEARCH

The international consortium led by the Authority continued work on the Telematics Project HSPRO-EU. The Project is developing a system of disseminating health and safety information based on the Internet. The project was adopted as the model for the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work's health and safety information network.



Planning and the Strategic Management Initiative

The Authority has commenced work on the development of more qualitative performance measures and in doing so is examining other models including that used by the British Health and Safety Executive.

A number of strategic alliances are being developed with other state organisations such as the County Enterprise Boards and the Health Promotion Unit of the Department of Health to streamline complementary State services and improve the dissemination of information on workplace safety.

A staff planning conference at mid-year provided all staff with an opportunity to make an input into the 1998 National Programme of work at an early stage. This conference was also addressed by a Mr. Davis Layne, South Eastern Regional Manager of OSHA, the United States Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

In order to evaluate better the work done by the staff of the Authority a project to measure the work done on each of the Authority's work programmes is being developed and should be piloted in the course of 1998.



Chapter 6:

Reports from Headquarters & Regional Offices



6

Overview

As well as the headquarters in Dublin, the Health and Safety Authority has a number of offices throughout the country, divided into 6 regions as below:

- Dublin City and County served by Dublin headquarters
- Midlands served by Dublin headquarters
- North Eastern Region served by offices in Dublin and Drogheda
- South Eastern Region served by the Dublin office
- Western Region served by offices in Galway, Athlone, Sligo and Limerick
- Southern Region served by the Cork and Waterford offices

Local offices offer an extensive local outreach programme in addition to carrying out the Authority's inspection and enforcement activities.

HEADQUARTERS, DUBLIN

Total staff of 72.5 including: 7 Senior Management; 6 Inspectors Grade 1; 10 Inspectors Grade II; 17 Inspectors Grade III; 2 Occupational Medical Advisers; 3 Assistant Principal Officers; 9.5 Executive staff; 15 Clerical staff and 3 Support staff.

The headquarters at Hogan Place, Dublin 2, accommodates the Authority's administration, together with the National Health and Safety Information Centre, the Occupational Medical Services, the Occupational Hygiene Unit and the Hazardous Substances Assessment Unit.

Hogan Place is also the Dublin Regional Office - the base for operational staff covering all employment sectors and workplaces in twelve eastern and midland counties and four regions (Dublin City and County, Midlands, North East Region and South East Regions).

MIDLANDS REGION

The Midlands region of Longford, Offaly, Westmeath and Laois is managed from the Dublin Regional Office.

DUBLIN REGIONAL OFFICE STAFF

- 1 Inspector Grade I
- 2 Inspector Grade II
- 3 Inspector Grade III

Inspections in this area concentrated on the targeted areas of construction, agriculture, metal manufacturing, local authorities, etc. This is a mixed industry area, farming, manufacturing, etc., which contains mostly small and medium sized companies.

There were two fatal accidents in the region, one occurred on a farm and one in a quarry.



NORTH EAST REGION

The North East Region of Counties Meath, Louth, Cavan and Monaghan is managed by the Dublin Regional Office assisted by the Drogheda Area Office. The following Operations Staff are assigned to the region.

DUBLIN REGIONAL OFFICE STAFF

- 1 Inspector Grade I
- 2 Inspector Grade II
- 3 Inspector Grade III

DROGHEDA AREA OFFICE STAFF

- 1 Inspector Grade II

Inspections in the Drogheda office concentrated on fishing and the construction industry. Meetings were arranged with fishermen and the Local Authorities to review safety, health and welfare arrangements on piers and in harbours.

The construction inspections carried out in this area revealed a large number of cross border contractors which poses difficulties in the enforcement area, particularly in the serving of documents and follow up inspections. This is a problem we hope to resolve through the Joint Forum we share with the Health and Safety Agency of Northern Ireland and the Health and Safety Executive of the U.K.

A number of faulty processors were discovered during the food processing survey and satisfactory progress is being made in correcting these.

Other areas investigated included needlestick injuries, particularly to non-medical personnel. An investigation into the amount of handling involved in clinical waste disposal was also carried out.

A number of complaints were received from employees in the education sector about poor welfare and badly maintained schools.

Joint inspections with the occupational hygiene unit were carried out on laboratories and spray painting facilities.

There were 6 fatalities in the region during 1997.

The number within each sector is as follows:

Construction	2
Mines and quarries	2
Transport	1
Agriculture	1

SOUTH EAST REGION

The South East region of Counties Kildare, Carlow, Kilkenny and Wicklow is managed by the Dublin Regional Office.

DUBLIN REGIONAL OFFICE STAFF

- 1 Inspector Grade I
- 2 Inspector Grade II
- 3 Inspector Grade III

Inspection in this area concentrated on the targeted areas of construction, agriculture, mines and quarries. Manufacturing and other areas were inspected on a less prioritised basis.

Two major mining projects were of particular note. The Galmoy Mine project in Kilkenny completed its development and by end of March, 1997 had exported its first shipment of zinc. The project, wholly owned by Arcon International was commissioned at a total cost of US\$134 million. Notably there were no lost time accidents at Galmoy in 1997.

The development of the Lisheen Mine commenced in 1997 near the Kilkenny/Tipperary border. This is a US\$230 million project with Minorco the project managers. Again this involves major surface and underground infrastructure development.

Two of the counties in this region are very close to Dublin and as a result there has been considerable residential development carried on.

During the year there were five fatal accidents in the region-three in the agricultural sector and two in the construction sector.

SOUTHERN REGION

The Southern Regions, established in 1997, covers counties Cork, Kerry, Waterford, Wexford and Tipperary South Riding. It is managed by the Cork regional office and has an area office in Waterford.

CORK REGIONAL OFFICE STAFF (Operations Directorate)

- 1 Inspector Grade I (Regional Manager)
- 2 Inspectors Grade II
- 2 Inspectors Grade III
- 1 Clerical Officer: (covers counties Cork and Kerry).

Staff (Specialist Services)

- 1 Inspector Grade I (Divisional Manager)
- 2 Inspector Grade II
- 2 Inspector Grade III



The inspection of both the chemical process industries nationwide and of off-shore installations is managed from the Cork Regional Office. General inspections carried out by staff of the Cork Regional Office, concentrated on construction, metal manufacturing, food manufacture, farming, local authorities, quarries, fishing and fish farming. Inspections were also carried out on offshore oil and gas installations and on diving operations. As in 1996 considerable attention was paid to multi-storey construction sites in the area and to the major Lee Tunnel project. There were a number of seminars and lectures provided for the farming and fishing communities in the region.

WATERFORD AREA OFFICE STAFF

1 Inspector Grade II

2 Inspectors Grade III

1 Clerical Officer: (covers counties of Waterford, Wexford and Tipperary South Riding).

There were 13 fatal accidents at work in the Southern Region during the year. They were in the following sectors:

Construction	3
Agriculture	5
Fishing	3
Wholesale, retail and motor repairs	1
Circus Employee	1

Inspections carried out by the Waterford Office concentrated on construction, manufacturing, farming and fishing. The construction industry has undergone considerable expansion in the area over the year and the inspection programme was adapted to meet this. Metal manufacturing also came in for particular scrutiny during 1997.

Among other promotional activities the office took part in the Solbase programme which is an experimental system to provide practical solutions to health and safety problems for SME's sponsored by the EU.

WESTERN REGION

The Western Region was established during 1997.

Its headquarters is located in Galway City and it has Area Offices in Athlone, Limerick and Sligo. It covers the counties of Galway, Mayo, Donegal, Sligo, Leitrim, Roscommon, Limerick, Clare, Tipperary North Riding and part of Westmeath (around Athlone).

GALWAY REGIONAL OFFICE STAFF

1 Inspector Grade 1

1 Inspectors Grade II - Operations

1 Inspector Grade II - I.T.

1 Inspector Grade III

1 Clerical Officer: (covers counties Galway and Mayo).

12 fatal accidents occurred in the Western Region during 1997. The number within each sector is as follows:

Agriculture	3
Construction	3
Fishing	2
Manufacturing	2
Transport	1
Other community	1

Lectures were provided throughout the region for the farming, construction, fishing, transport and education sectors. A series of seminars on 'Preventing Transport Accidents in the Workplace' was also organised.

There was an excellent response to and participation in the activities centred on European Safety Week by companies throughout the region.

Inspections in Galway and Mayo concentrated on agriculture, construction, manufacturing and coastal activities - fishing and fish farming.

In December Minister Noel Treacy TD opened the new Galway Regional Office at Eyre Square and the Authority's Board held its December meeting in Galway.

SLIGO AREA OFFICE STAFF

1 Inspectors Grade II - ADR
 1 Inspector Grade II - Operations
 1 Clerical Officer. (covers counties Donegal, Sligo, North Leitrim).

The Sligo Office concentrated on construction, manufacturing, farming, mines & quarries and fishing together with road checks under the Dangerous Substances Acts.

LIMERICK AREA OFFICE STAFF

1 Grade II Inspector,
 2 Grade III Inspectors,
 1 Clerical Officer. (covers counties Clare, Limerick, Tipperary North Riding).

Staff in the Limerick Office focussed particularly on the construction, manufacturing, farming, mines and quarries, and food sectors. Attention was also focused on the inspection of sewage treatment works.

ATHLONE AREA OFFICE STAFF

1 Inspector Grade II
 (covers counties Roscommon, Leitrim South and Westmeath, *environs of Athlone*).

Inspection from the Athlone Area Office concentrated on construction, mines and quarries, farming, local authority, and manufacturing activities.

Appendices



Appendix 1

ACCIDENTS, DANGEROUS OCCURRENCES & COMPLAINTS REPORTED TO THE AUTHORITY & INSPECTION ACTIVITIES FOR 1997						
¹ NACE	Industry	² Injured	Fatal	Dangerous Occurrences	³ Complaints	Inspections
A	Agriculture, Hunting & Forestry	41	15	1	23	964
B	Fishing (including Diving Operations)	5	5	0	0	162
C	Mining & Quarrying	99	1	3	34	321
D	Manufacturing	2492	2	30	308	2313
E	Electricity, Gas & Water Supply	288	0	1105	20	104
F	Construction	492	15	23	661	4332
G	Wholesale & Retail Trade; Repair of Motor Vehicles, Motorcycles & Personal & Household Goods	202	2	9	269	421
H	Hotels & Restaurants	109	0	0	49	95
I	Transport, Storage & Communication	595	6	7	86	832
J	Financial Intermediation	47	0	0	36	35
K	Real Estate, Renting & Business Activities	134	0	5	93	116
L	Public Administration & Defence; Compulsory Social Security	483	0	6	89	285
M	Education	95	0	0	47	97
N	Health & Social Work	348	0	6	100	204
O	Other Community, Social & Personal Services Activities	81	2	1	78	279
	Total	5511	48	1196	1986	10560
	Advisory/Other Visits					596
	Overall Total					11156

¹ NACE Code is the general economic activity classification used within the EU.

² Injured also includes fatal accidents (as recorded up to 30 June 1998).

³ Complaints are recorded by topic code and any one complaint may cover a number of topics complained about.

Appendix 1

Labour Force Survey 1992-1997

OCCUPATIONAL INJURIES FOR PERSONS AT WORK (3 DAYS LOST)

Industrial Sector	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	1,700	2,100	2,000	1,900	1,900	1,900
Manufacturing	2,900	3,800	3,400	3,600	4,400	4,400
Building and construction	1,200	1,300	1,200	1,500	1,500	1,900
Commerce, insurance and finance	1,600	1,600	1,900	1,700	2,300	2,500
Transport, communication and storage	1,000	1,500	1,100	900	1,900	1,500
Public administration and defence	700	900	900	1,100	1,200	1,000
Other non-agricultural	1,200	2,800	2,400	2,600	2,700	3,300
All Industries	11,000	13,900	13,800	13,500	16,500	16,600

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRIAL SECTOR

Industrial Sector	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	154,000	144,200	141,700	143,000	138,000	134,200
Manufacturing	226,000	225,200	236,100	247,500	249,900	271,300
Building and construction	74,000	70,800	77,900	82,800	86,700	96,700
Commerce, insurance and finance	234,100	243,900	244,900	261,900	274,700	280,700
Transport, communication and storage	67,700	69,700	73,000	76,000	80,700	83,800
Public administration and defence	69,600	67,000	68,500	72,600	77,200	74,200
Other non-agricultural	318,300	330,200	344,800	362,900	389,400	394,000
All Industries	1,144,600	1,151,600	1,187,600	1,247,600	1,297,200	1,338,400

Appendix 1

OCCUPATIONAL INJURY RATE (PER 100,000 AT WORK)						
Industrial Sector	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	1,283	1,456	1,411	1,329	1,377	1,416
Manufacturing	12,832	1,687	1,440	1,455	1,761	1,622
Building and construction	1,622	1,836	1,540	1,812	1,730	1,965
Commerce, insurance and finance	683	656	776	649	837	891
Transport, communication and storage	1,477	2,152	1,507	1,184	2,354	1,790
Public administration and defence	1,006	1,343	1,314	1,515	1,554	1,348
Other non-agricultural	377	848	696	716	693	838
All Industries	961	1,207	1,162	1,082	1,272	1,240

Notes

LFS industrial sectors do not correspond exactly with the NACE classification used by the Authority.

Total due to rounding of figures to nearest 100 or non-statement of specific category in some cases. LFS estimates are revised from time to time so in some cases the figures for 1995 & 1996 differ from those published in the 1996 Annual Report.

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE - Occupational Injury Benefit Claims Allowed	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
	16,384	13,095	11,700	10,344	9,981	10,293	11,169

IRISH INSURANCE FEDERATION - Employees Liability Insurance Claims Allowed	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
	8,800	8,200	7,400	7,500	8,300	8,921	9,758

Appendix 1

The Sword surveillance team has been collecting data for Ireland since the beginning of 1995. 17 chest physicians are reporting to the scheme on a voluntary basis.

SURVEILLANCE OF WORK-RELATED AND OCCUPATIONAL RESPIRATORY DISEASE IN IRELAND (SWORD)			
Group	No. Cases Reported	Male% ¹	Mean Age ²
A Asthma	87	67	37
B Inhalation accidents	24	71	37
C Allergic alveolitis	5	100	42
D Bronchitis/Emphysema	4	25	46
E Infectious Disease	1	100	27
F Non-malignant pleural disease	17	100	62
G Mesothelioma	7	100	63
H Lung Cancer	-	-	-
I Pneumoconiosis	5	100	56
J Other	9	45	31
Total	159	72	41

¹ where sex was stated: 159 cases

² where age was stated: 156 cases

Number of cases reported has risen from 99 in 1995 to 106 in 1996 to the present 159.

Fifty five percent of all reports were of occupational asthma, followed by diseases of long latency (18%) and inhalation accidents (15%). A detailed analysis of the former is given below using data from the CSO Labour Force Survey, with allocation of reported cases so far as possible to the appropriate economic sectors.

SURVEILLANCE OF WORK-RELATED AND OCCUPATIONAL RESPIRATORY DISEASE IN IRELAND (SWORD)			
Sector	Total number of Employees (000)	Observed cases	Rate per 100,000
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	134	6	4
Mining, quarrying and turf production	6	-	-
Manufacturing	271	47	17
Building and Construction	97	8	8
Electricity, Gas, Water	12	-	-
Commerce, Insurance, Finance	281	-	-
Transport, Communication and Storage	84	10	12
Public Administration and Defence	74	1	1
Other Economic Activity	379	15	4
Total	1,338	87	7

The highest rate was in the Manufacturing sector which includes soldrers and pharmaceutical operatives - 17 per 100,000; closely followed by Transport, Communication and Storage 12 per 100,000.

Appendix 1

CAUSATION TYPES FOR ALL WORKPLACE ACCIDENTS IN 1996/1997

Accident type	Number 1996	Number 1997
Handling, lifting or carrying	1,262	1,384
Slips, trips or falls on same level	588	568
Fall from height	406	521
Contact with moving machinery parts	393	404
Falling objects	259	330
Injured by a person - malicious	178	255
Working with hand tools	153	182
Road traffic accidents	141	171
Exposure/contact with harmful substances	153	163
Transport (excl. road traffic accidents)	105	114
Struck by something collapsing/overturning	69	95
Injured by a person - non malicious	30	61
Fire or explosion	66	39
Contact with electricity	19	30
Injured by an animal	20	14
Drowning or asphyxiation	5	8
Miscellaneous	1,251	1,228
Not classified	148	103
Total	5,246	5,670

Appendix 1

CAUSATION TYPES FOR ALL WORKPLACE ACCIDENTS IN 1997 FOR SELECTED NACE CATEGORIES

Accident type	NACE CATEGORIES						
	D	E	F	G	I	L	N
Contact with moving machinery parts	277	6	17	11	19	6	5
Working with hand tools	109	7	15	2	10	3	0
Falling objects	138	25	56	11	36	10	11
Transport (excl. road traffic accidents)	40	3	5	7	26	6	0
Road traffic accidents	5	14	2	6	48	93	7
Handling, lifting or carrying	773	61	100	56	126	41	94
Slips, trips or falls on same level	207	26	64	31	73	35	46
Fall from height	184	27	83	23	66	34	33
Struck by something collapsing/overturning	35	2	22	4	10	7	3
Drowning or asphyxiation	2	0	0	0	0	1	0
Exposure/contact with harmful substances	85	5	9	3	11	6	6
Fire or explosion	11	0	2	0	3	5	1
Contact with electricity	6	7	8	0	1	1	0
Injured by an animal	5	0	0	0	0	1	2
Injured by a person - malicious	0	0	0	7	34	149	52
Injured by a person - non malicious	9	1	2	1	4	11	10
Miscellaneous	554	78	109	42	125	68	68
Not classified	6	26	10	0	2	4	1
Total	2,446	288	504	204	594	481	339

D = Manufacturing

E = Electricity, Gas and Water Supply

F = Construction

G = Wholesale and Retail Services

I = Transport, Storage and Communication

L = Public Administration and Defence, Compulsory Social Security

N = Health and Social Work

Appendix 2

Inspection, Monitoring and Enforcement Actions 1992-1997

INSPECTIONS AND OTHER ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITIES 1992 - 1997						
Activity	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Total Workplace visits	10,944	12,379	10,182	11,085	11,985	11,156
Formal inspections ⁴	8,837	9,868	9,856	10,759	11,525	10,560
Advisory and other visits	2,107	2,511	326	326	460	596
Complaint investigations ⁵	355	522	750	756	1,329	1,834
Accident investigations	314	348	322	358	345	388
Fatality investigations	46	82	103	131	134	111

⁴ In addition to work programme inspections this includes inspections carried out as a result of complaints, accident and fatality investigations.

⁵ Complaints are recorded by topic code and any one complaint may cover a number of topics complained about. The new format for recording complaints was introduced in 1996.

OVERALL ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS FOR 1996 AND 1997			
	1995	1996	1997
Improvement Directions	29	99	177
Improvement Notices	1,476	1,799	1,044
Prohibition Notices	148	381	295
Prosecutions Heard	39	35	39
High Court Orders	0	1	2
Total	1,692	2,294	1,557

Appendix 2

NUMBER OF ENFORCEMENT NOTICES ISSUED PER ACT/REGULATION IN 1997		
Act/Regulation Notice	Improvement Notice	Prohibition Notice
European Communities (Major Accidents Hazards of Certain Industries) Regulations, 1986 to 1992	2	0
European Communities (Protection of Workers) (Exposure to Noise) Regulations, 1990	19	0
Factories (Woodworking Machinery) Regulations, 1972	4	0
Dangerous Substances (Storage of Liquefied Petroleum Gas) Regulations, 1990	4	0
Mines and Quarries Act, 1965	18	0
Safety in Industry Acts 1955 & 1980	168	10
Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Construction) Regulations, 1995	80	196
Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations, 1993	245	38
Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Chemical Agents) Regulations, 1994	10	0
Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Signs) Regulations, 1995	1	0
Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 1989	468	41
Others	21	10
Total	1,040	295

(Note: Some enforcement actions do not require a breach of legislation)

Appendix 2

Description of fatal accidents for 1997 (Total = 48)

A. AGRICULTURE & FORESTRY - 15			
No. of Deaths	Employment Category	Description	Date
1	Self employed	Fell through perspex roof	13.01.97
1	Self employed	Deceased walked too close to hedge cutter	27.01.97
1	Self employed	Tractor slid down slope	17.02.97
1	Self employed	Slipped while moving feeder	01.03.97
1	Self employed	Slipped into slurry tank	28.03.97
1	Child	Slipped off cab step of moving tractor	13.06.97
1	Employee	Crushed under dumper	17.06.97
1	Child	Fell into slurry	17.06.97
1	Employee	Struck on the head by potato box	30.06.97
1	Employee	Electrocuted using power hose	21.08.97
1	Self Employed	Fell through Asbestos roof	11.10.97
1	Self Employed	Hit by a bullock and fell to the ground hitting his head	17.10.97
1	Child	Climbed into mowing machine and fell	25.10.97
1	Child	Hit by 6' high cavity block wall which was knocked by a bullock	06.12.97
1	Self Employed	Fell through perspex roof of shed	24.12.97

B. FISHING - 5			
No. of Deaths	Employment Category	Description	Date
1	Self employed	Collision between trawlers	09.03.97
1	Employee	Hanging onto net which pulled him overboard	24.09.97
2	Self Employed	Trying to pull net into boat	23.10.97
1	Employee	Tow rope broke and whiplash struck worker	15.12.97

Appendix 2

C. MINING & QUARRYING - 1

No. of Deaths	Employment Category	Description	Date
1	Employee	Crushed by "Dolly"	06.09.97

D. MANUFACTURING - 2

No. of Deaths	Employment Category	Description	Date
1	Employee	Asphyxiated by solvent fumes	06.03.97
1	Employee	Fell into rollers	03.04.97

F. CONSTRUCTION - 14

No. of Deaths	Employment Category	Description	Date
1	Employee	Galvanised steel handrail hit deceased on head	19.02.97
1	Employee	Tiling roof - came in contact with 10Kv line - fell off roof.	11.03.97
1	Employee	Lost balance and fell through temporary handrail	13.03.97
1	Self employed	Collapse of wall holding steel girders	14.03.97
1	Employee	Lowering himself down by a pulley & rope - fell to the ground	22.05.97
1	Employee	Lost control of construction site dumper	28.05.97
1	Self employed	Fell from scaffold to ground floor	16.07.97
1	Employee	Fell from roof	19.08.97 D (31/8/97)
1	Employee	Fell into stairwell on a construction site	25.08.97
1	Employee	Section of shuttering fell pinning deceased against side of excavation	25.10.97
1	Self Employed	Wall collapsed on him	26.10.97
1	Employee	Fell through open hole in roof	03.11.97
1	Employee	Hit by car	08.12.97
1	Self Employed	Hit by car whilst working in trench	27.12.97

Appendix 2

F. CONSTRUCTION MAINTENANCE - 1

No. of Deaths	Employment Category	Description	Date
1	Self Employed	Surveying paint work on roof when he fell through perspex sheet	19.06.97

G. WHOLESALE AND RETAIL OF MOTOR VEHICLES, MOTORCYCLES AND PERSONAL AND HOUSEHOLD GOODS - 2

No. of Deaths	Employment Category	Description	Date
1	Self employed	Repairing car which collapsed	04.05.97
1	Employee	Struck by galvanised gate which was caught by wind	11.10.97

I. TRANSPORT, STORAGE AND COMMUNICATION - 6

No. of Deaths	Employment Category	Description	Date
1	Employee	Victim was crushed by glass doors	11.02.97
1	Employee	Crushed between reversing concrete mixer & stationary loading shovel	28.02.97
1	Employee	Discharging cargo when fell between two reels of paper	26.05.97
1	Employee	Releasing net from top of waste disposal truck	06.09.97
1	Employee	Fork Truck collided with worker while unloading timber	13.09.97
1	Employee	Articulated Tanker left road and overturned	18.09.97

Appendix 2

0. OTHER COMMUNITY, SOCIAL AND RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES - 2

No. of Deaths	Employment Category	Description	Date
1	Employee	Crushed between heater unit and tractor	05.05.97
1	Employee	Deceased fell into Septic Tank	24.09.97

HSA Prosecution Outcomes, 1997

COMPARATIVE SUMMARY

YEAR	TOTAL HEARD	CONVICTIONS	DISMISSALS	PROBATION OF OFFENDERS ACT	TOTAL FINES	AVERAGE FINE PER CASE	COSTS ETC. AGAINST DEFENDANTS	COSTS ETC. OF FINES AGAINST HSA
1993	30	26 (87%)	2	2	£11,925	£459	£645	-
1994	37	29 (78%)	5	3	£31,035	£1,070	£3,617	£500
1995	24	23 (96%)	0	1	£13,440	£584	£4,440	-
1996	35*	27 (77%)	2	1	£19,600	£726	£7,285	-
1997	39	30 (77%)	4 (plus 3 S/O)	2	£24,000	£800	£3,440	-

*Notes Re. 1996. Submissions made by the defendants in two cases for referral to the High Court, the charges were dropped in one case, in one case the defendant successfully appealed a District Court conviction in the Circuit Court, and, in another case, the charges were struck out in view of pending civil legal proceedings.

SUMMARY PROCEEDINGS - CASES HEARD 1st JANUARY TO 31st DECEMBER, 1997

(1) Cleary & Doyle Contracting Limited was fined £750 in the Dublin District Court on 27th January, 1997, for breach of Section 8 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 1989.

(2 & 3) Taltech Engineering Holdings Ltd., was fined £300 having pleaded guilty to a breach of Section 6 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 1989. The company was also fined £500 having pleaded guilty to a breach of Section 23 of the Factories Act, 1955, and Regulation 59 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations, 1993, in two separate cases in the Dublin District Court on 10th April, 1997.

The first case arose from an accident in July, 1995, in which a worker had his index finger and part of his thumb on both hands amputated due to failure of a component which caused a power press to run continuously.

The second case arose from an accident in October, 1995, when a worker had four fingers on his right hand amputated due to the absence of interlocking guards on a power press which was being operated by a one button control.

Appendix 2

(4) Sean Melia, Butcher, Newbridge Shopping Centre, Co. Kildare, was fined £250 having pleaded guilty to a breach of Section 6 (2) of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 1989, at Newbridge District Court on 1st May, 1997.

The case arose from an accident in which an employee lost his right hand and part of his arm in a meat mincing machine.

(5) Impulse Engineering Ltd., The Island, Newmarket, Co Cork, was fined £300 at Kanturk District Court on 7th May 1997.

The case arose from persistent failure to safeguard three hydraulic press brakes. Improvement Notices had been served in relation to the machines and the defendant had not appealed against them. The machines had been fitted with suitable safeguards before the case was heard.

(6) Clancy Construction (Drangan) Ltd., was fined a total of £600 with £100 costs imposed at Thurles District Court on 9th May, 1997, (Heard by the President of the District Court) following a guilty plea on two counts relating to failure to identify hazards and assess the risks in a Safety Statement (£100) and failure to provide a safety harness under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Construction) Regulations, 1995, (£500).

The case arose from an accident in June, 1996, in which an employee of the company fell from a roof during construction work.

(7 & 8) In the Dublin District Court two combined cases were heard on 19th and 20th May, and 19th June, 1997, against the Sean Quinn Group Ltd. and Gabriel O'Brien Crane Hire Ltd. arising out of a fatal accident in February, 1995, at Avoca Avenue, Blackrock, when a concrete slab fell on a lorry driver and floor erector employed by the Sean Quinn Group, from a crane operated by O'Brien Crane Hire Ltd.

[The matter was first dealt with at the Dublin District Court on 1st April, 1996, when legal proceedings arising from the accident were taken in a joint prosecution against Granbrind Ltd., the Sean Quinn Group Ltd. and Gabriel O'Brien Crane Hire Ltd. At that hearing Granbrind Ltd. was fined £500 having pleaded guilty to a breach of Section 12 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 1989, relating to a Safety Statement. Submissions were made on behalf of the other two defendants for a consultative case stated. The Sean Quinn Group Ltd. raised two issues in the District Court relating to the summonses in the case:-

(i) That the Authority did not have jurisdiction against the Sean Quinn Group Ltd. because it is registered in Northern Ireland. Summonses were issued on the directors who lived in the Republic of Ireland and the District Court allowed the summonses to stand on this point.

(ii) That the summonses were issued six months after the inquest date. This arose because the summonses were issued twice and the second set were outside the date in question. The District Court held that the summonses were invalid on this count, but allowed the Authority to proceed on charges relating to the Safety Statement and the fact that the lifting equipment was not marked.

Appendix 2

Gabriel O'Brien Crane Hire Ltd. took a case to the High Court on the basis that the Authority's proceedings had commenced by way of summons instead of by way of complaint. The High Court ruled in favour of the Authority, but noted that an important point of law had been raised, ordered the Authority to pay costs of £2,897.]

Gabriel O'Brien Crane Hire Ltd. was fined a total of £2,250 for breaches of Sections 7, 8 and 48 (17) (causing death) of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 1989, and Regulation 6 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations, 1993.

The Sean Quinn Group Ltd. was fined a total of £1,500 for breach of Section 12 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 1989, and because the Safe Working Load was not marked on the lifting equipment.

(9) O'K Tools Hire and Sales Ltd. was fined a total of £300, with £450 costs and £200 expenses at Cobh District Court on 28th May, 1997, for breaches of Section 10 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 1989, and Sections 35 and 36 of the Factories Act, 1955.

The case arose from an accident in October, 1992, when a lorry-mounted 'Simon' hydraulic platform collapsed causing the machine's cage and its occupant to fall approximately 25 feet to the ground.

(10) The Mid Western Health Board was fined the maximum £1000 with £300 costs for breach of Section 48 (17) of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 1989, (with other charges under Section 6 of the Act taken into account) following guilty pleas at Limerick District Court on 24th June, 1997.

The case arose from an explosion of a boiler of a self-generating potato steamer in the main kitchen of the Regional Hospital, Dooradoyle, Limerick, in June, 1996, when an employee was seriously injured.

(11) G & T Crampton Ltd. was fined £500 at the Dublin Metropolitan District Court on 30th June, 1997, for breach of Regulation 78 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Construction) Regulations, 1995.

The case arose following a scaffolding collapse at Duke Lane, Dublin 2, in May, 1996. The scaffold had been overloaded with six pallets of bricks. A granite window cill which fell down through the scaffold precipitated the collapse.

(12) Lawter International B.V., Grannagh, Waterford, was fined a total of £2,700 (£900 on each of three charges) with £200 expenses at Waterford District Court on 4th July, 1997, having pleaded guilty to breaches of Sections 6 and 48 (17) of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 1989.

The case arose from an explosion at the company's factory at Grannagh, Waterford in April, 1996, in which four employees were injured.

(13) Thomas Ivory trading as Drain Rod, Navan Road, Dublin was fined a total of £300 at Dunshaughlin District Court on 15th July, 1997, having pleaded guilty to breaches of Sections 6 and 12 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 1989.

The case arose from an accident in October, 1996, at Ashbourne, Co. Meath, in which a worker was seriously injured when, in attempting to turn up the pressure of a water jetting machine, he was struck by the high pressure hose which came apart.

Appendix 2

(14) John Ronan and Co. Ltd., Clonmel, was fined a total of £2,100 with £420 costs, having pleaded guilty to breaches of Sections 6 and 12 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 1989, at Clonmel District Court on 22nd July, 1997.

The case arose following the investigation of a boiler explosion.

(15) The Right Honourable the Lord Mayor, Aldermen and Burgesses of the City of Dublin (Dublin Corporation) was fined a total of £1,600 for breach of Section 6 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 1989, and Regulation 36 (2) of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Construction) Regulations, 1995, at the Dublin Metropolitan District Court on 30th July, 1997.

The case arose from a fatal accident involving a maintenance fitter with Dublin Corporation, who was repairing a pump in a sewage pumping station approximately 30 feet below street level at Mayor Street, Dublin 1. He climbed down a vertical ladder into the sump, but stopped working after about a minute and started to climb back up the ladder when he collapsed back into the sewage to his death. There was no hoist, gas detector or breathing apparatus available, so no attempt could be made to rescue him.

(16) Hammond Lane Metal Company Ltd., Sir John Rogerson's Quay, Dublin 2, was fined a total of £2,000 with £600 costs at the Dublin District Court on 3rd September, 1997, having pleaded guilty to breaches of Section 6 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 1989, and Regulation 17 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations, 1993.

The case arose from an accident in December, 1995, when a skip used for collecting rubber waste fell from a moving forklift and struck an employee, who suffered a broken pelvis and other injuries.

On appeal to the Circuit Court the fine and costs were reduced to £400 and £200 respectively.

(17) John Paul Construction, Dundrum Industrial Estate, Dublin 14, was fined £250 at Urlingford District Court on 4th September, 1997, for breach of Section 6 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 1989.

The case arose from an accident in December, 1995, when a worker was seriously injured when crushed by a 1.25 tonne roll of lagoon lining membrane which became dislodged from a stack of rolls.

(18) Mica & Micanite (Ireland) Ltd., Mallow, Co Cork was fined £500 with £50 costs at Mallow District Court on 23rd September, 1997, having pleaded guilty to breaches of Section 6 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 1989, and Regulation 19 (a) of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations, 1993.

The case arose from an accident in September, 1996, in which an employee sustained injury resulting in the amputation of the tips of his fingers. The accident occurred on a tube-winding machine when the top roller fell under its own weight during cleaning operations.

(19) David Allen, Mahon, Cork was fined £100 with £50 expenses at Cork District Court on 25th September, 1997, having pleaded guilty to breaches of Regulations 51 and 55 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Construction) Regulations, 1995.

Appendix 2

The case arose from inadequate scaffolding on a site in Cork in February, 1997. A Prohibition Notice had been served in September, 1996, in relation to similar contraventions.

(20) Michael Nulty Fireplaces, Cooperhill, Drogheda was fined £250 at Drogheda District Court on 26th September, 1997, having pleaded guilty to breach of Section 6 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 1989.

The case arose from an accident in which a worker was killed when a large piece of stone fell on him.

(21) Cork County Council was fined £500 with £50 expenses at Bantry District Court on 26th September, 1997, having pleaded guilty to two breaches of Regulation 41 (1) of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Construction) Regulations, 1995.

The case arose from an accident in August, 1996, in which a roadworker was killed during resurfacing operations when he was crushed between a stationary tar tanker truck and a reversing tipper truck.

(22 & 23) Donmac Industries Ltd., Ballymacoda, Co. Cork was fined £750 with £150 costs and £50 expenses and Mr John Paul O'Donoghue, Director of the Company, was fined £500 with £150 costs in a joint prosecution at Youghal District Court on 3rd October, 1997, both having pleaded guilty to offences under Section 48 (5) of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 1989, of failure to observe an Improvement Notice requiring the safeguarding of a hydraulic press-brake.

(24) Jurys Galway Inn, Quay Street, Galway was fined £100 at Galway District Court on 6th October, 1997, having pleaded guilty to breach of statutory provisions relating to the storage of LPG.

The case arose from a dangerous occurrence in December, 1995, in which gas cylinders stored in a yard behind the premises and an adjoining apartment block ignited and exploded causing damage to property and danger to persons.

(25) Hegarty and Barnett Ltd., Schull, Co Cork was fined £200 with £250 costs and £50 expenses at Bantry District Court on 8th October, 1997, having pleaded guilty to breach of Regulation 8 (1) (g) of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Construction) Regulations, 1995.

The case arose from an accident in June, 1996, on a construction site controlled by the defendant, in which the driver of a concrete readymix conveyor vehicle was electrocuted when the conveyor arm came into contact with a 10KV overhead power line.

(26) Pierse Contracting Ltd. was fined £100 at the Dublin District Court on 21st October, 1997, having pleaded guilty to a breach of Section 6 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 1989.

The case arose from an accident in June 1996 in the course of the construction of the Jervis Street Shopping Centre, Dublin, in which two workers were seriously injured as a result of a free-standing internal wall collapsing.

Appendix 2

(27) T. Donovan & Co. Ltd., Cork was fined a total of £1,800 at Cork District Court on 23rd October, 1997, having pleaded guilty to offences under Section 48 (6) of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 1989, of carrying on construction work in contravention of a Prohibition Notice, and offences under Regulation 74 (2) of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Construction) Regulations, 1995, at a construction site in Cook Street, Cork, on various dates in April, May and June, 1997.

(28) Ruibear Motair Teoranta, Bunbeg, Co. Donegal, was fined a total of £1,250 with £500 costs at Glenties District Court on 11th November, 1997, having pleaded guilty to breaches of Section 6 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 1989, and Section 23 of the Factories Act, 1955.

The case arose from an accident in August, 1996, in which a worker had three fingers on his left hand amputated while working on an injection moulding machine used in the manufacture of rubber components.

(29) Berne Hotels Ltd., trading as The Court Hotel, Killiney, Co Dublin, was fined a total of £2,300 in the Dublin District Court on 16th December, 1997, having pleaded guilty to breaches of Sections 6 and 48 (1) (a) of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 1989.

The case arose from an accident in the hotel on 25th July, 1996, when a fire occurred in an attempt to light a baked alaska desert being prepared for a wedding reception, resulting in fatal injuries to one employee and injury to two other employees.

(30) Galtee Meats (Mitchelstown) Ltd., Mitchelstown, Cork was fined £50 with £150 costs and expenses at Mitchelstown District Court on 19th December, 1997, having pleaded guilty to breach of Section 6 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 1989.

The case arose from an accident in which an employee sustained injury resulting in the loss of the fingers of one hand when he came into contact with the moving parts of a vacuum-packing machine. He had been attempting to remove fouled plastic wrap material from the chain drive mechanism.

Appendix 3

Safety Management Survey for 1997

OVERALL HEALTH AND SAFETY MANAGEMENT COMPLIANCE		
	1996*	1997**
% Safety Statement prepared	59	64
% Safety Statement adequate	54	49
% Safety Consultation in place	65	66
% Safety Representative selected	24	24

* Appropriate sample size 8300

** Appropriate sample size

HEALTH AND SAFETY MANAGEMENT COMPLIANCE IN MAIN N.A.C.E. CATEGORIES							
NACE Sector	Industry	% Safety Statement prepared		% Safety Consultation System in Place		% Safety Representative Selected	
		1996	1997	1996	1997	1996	1997
A	Agriculture	9.7	8.9	27.2	25.3	3.4	3.6
B	Fishing	23.3	19.5	68.0	88.2	8.9	6.5
C	Mining & Quarrying	67.3	75.9	73.1	65.5	38.0	29.0
D	Manufacturing	63.7	70.2	73.3	78.6	38.1	40.9
F	Construction	66.4	73.1	62.8	61.9	11.1	9.2
G	Retail Services	42.7	48.1	64.1	65.7	16.1	19.5
I	Transport, Storage & Communication	72.7	77.0	77.3	84.0	52.6	53.7
N	Health Services	74.1	83.2	87.4	97.5	63.7	87.0

HEALTH AND SAFETY MANAGEMENT COMPLIANCE VERSUS NUMBERS EMPLOYED						
Numbers employed (SAMPLE SIZE 1996/1997)	% Safety Statement prepared		% Safety Consultation System in Place		% Safety Representative Selected	
	1996	1997	1996	1997	1996	1997
0 - 11 (6000/ 4700)	49.0	54.5	58.0	61.5	14.0	14.9
12 - 50 (1680/ 1400)	79.0	82.7	76.0	70.4	38.0	29.5
Greater than 50 (680/ 615)	94.0	95.7	91.0	91.5	74.0	74.5

Appendix 4

Part A

New Legislation

Amendment of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 1989, the Dangerous Substances Act, 1972 and Safety, Health and Welfare (Offshore Installations) Act, 1987 through the Organisation of Working Time Act, 1997

The Organisation of Working Time Act, 1997, which was brought into operation (other than certain limited provisions) on 30th September, 1997, through the Organisation of Working Time Act, 1997 (Commencement) Order, 1997 (S.I. No. 392 of 1997), inter alia, provides for the following amendments of the above Acts:-

(1) Amendment of Section 51 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 1989 re. Time Limits for the Taking of Prosecutions

In accordance with a High Court judgement of 1996 arising from the Authority's summary proceedings against Fingal County Council, Section 38 of the 1997 Act amends Section 51 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 1989. The purpose of the amendment is to ensure that from 30th September, 1997, summary proceedings relating to a fatality may be taken by the Authority under the 1989 Act within 12 months of the particular contravention whether or not an inquest into the death has taken place. In addition, the amendment also ensures that summary proceedings may be taken within six months of the holding of an inquest or the production of a special report under Section 46 of the 1989 Act, where such inquest or report is relevant, even if more than 12 months has elapsed since the relevant contravention.

(2) Fines under Section 49 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 1989, Section 52 of the Dangerous Substances Act, 1972 (as amended by section 58 (j) of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 1989) and Section 39 of the Safety, Health and Welfare (Offshore Installations) Act, 1987.

Section 41 of the 1997 Act provides for the following amendments to the above Acts in relation to certain money penalties which may be imposed under them, in respect of offences committed after 30th September, 1997:-

(a) Section 49 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 1989

In Section 49 subsection (1), subsection (2) paragraph (a) and subsection (3) paragraph (c) (i), in each of the three places, £1,500 is substituted for £1,000 as the maximum fine that may be imposed on summary conviction under the Act.

(b) Section 52 of the Dangerous Substances Act, 1972 (as amended by Section 58 (j) of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 1989)

In Section 52 subsection (1) of the Dangerous Substances Act, 1972 (as amended by Section 58 (j) of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 1989) £1,500 is substituted for £1,000 as the maximum fine that may be imposed on summary conviction under the Act.

(c) Section 39 of the Safety, Health and Welfare (Offshore Installations) Act, 1987

In Section 39 subsection (1) paragraph (a) and subsection (2) of the Safety, Health and Welfare (Offshore Installations) Act, 1987, £1,500 is substituted for £1,000 as the maximum fine that may be imposed on summary conviction under the Act.

Appendix 4

In addition, in Section 39 subsection (1) paragraph (b) and subsection (7) paragraph (b), the existing maximum fines for conviction on indictment of £2,000 and £1,200 respectively, are repealed and both paragraphs, as amended read as follows:-

"on conviction on indictment, to a fine or, at the discretion of the court, to imprisonment for a term not exceeding two years, or to both a fine and such imprisonment."

In addition to advising the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment in relation to the above legislation, the Authority also advised on the development of the Chemical Weapons Act, 1997, (No. 28 of 1997) which implements the Convention on the prohibition, of the development, production, stockpiling and use of chemical weapons and on their destruction.

Part B

New Regulations

(1) Dangerous Substances Conveyance of Scheduled Substances by Road (Trade or Business)

(Amendment) Regulations, 1997

(S.I. No. 458 of 1997)

These Regulations which were signed by Mr Tom Kitt, TD, Minister of State at the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment on 17th November, 1997, and which came into operation from that date, amend Regulation 4 of the Dangerous Substances (Conveyance of Scheduled Substances by Road) (Trade or Business) (Amendment) Regulations, 1996 (S.I. No. 389 of 1996), by the substitution of the words "vehicles constructed before the 1st day of January, 1997" for the words "vehicles registered in Ireland before the 1st day of January 1997".

(2) Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Extractive Industries) Regulations, 1997 (S.I. No. 467 of 1997)

These Regulations which transpose the provisions of Council Directive 92/91/EEC on the minimum requirements for improving the safety and health protection of workers in the mineral extracting industries through drilling and Council Directive 92/104/EEC on the minimum requirements for improving the safety and health protection of workers in surface and underground mineral extracting industries, were signed by Mr Tom Kitt, TD, Minister of State at the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment on 21st November, 1997, and came into operation from that date.

Part C

New Codes of Practice

(1) 1997 Code of Practice for the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Chemicals Agents) Regulations, 1994 (S.I. No. 445 of 1994)

The Authority (by virtue of Section 30 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 1989, following consultation with the Advisory Committee on Dangerous Substances, and with the consent of Ms Eithne Fitzgerald, TD, Minister of State at the Department of Enterprise and Employment given on the 7th January, 1997) on 9th January, 1997, issued a revised Code of Practice entitled "1997 Code of Practice for the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Chemicals Agents) Regulations, 1994 (S.I. No. 445 of 1994)".

Appendix 4

The revised Code of Practice provides practical guidance as to the observance of Regulations 3 and 4 of the said Regulations as regards occupational exposure limits for the chemical agents listed in Schedule 1 to the Code. The revised Code of Practice came into effect on 10th February, 1997, and replaced the Code of Practice issued by the National Authority for Occupational Safety and Health on 23rd December, 1994. Schedule II to the revised Code lists the chemical agents for which the occupational exposure limit has changed compared to the Code issued in 1994. Notice of the issue of this revised Code of Practice was published in the "Iris Oifigiúil" of 14th January, 1997.

(2) Codes of Practice re. the Storage of Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG)

The Authority (by virtue of Section 30 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 1989, following consultation with the Advisory Committee on Dangerous Substances, and with the consent of Ms Eithne Fitzgerald, Minister of State at the Department of Enterprise and Employment, given on the 25th June, 1997) approved the following three Irish Standards:-

(a) Code of Practice for the Storage of LPG Cylinders and Cartridges I.S. 3213: 1987 as amended by Amendment No. 1 : 1990, dated 20th September, 1990 and by Amendment No. 2 : 1993, dated 22nd September, 1993;

(b) Code of Practice for the Bulk Storage of Liquefied Petroleum Gas - I.S. 3216: 1988, Part 1, General Requirements as amended by Amendment No. 1 : 1989, dated 18th October, 1989 and by Amendment No. 2 : 1996, dated 9th December, 1996; and

(c) Code of Practice for the Bulk Storage of Liquefied Petroleum Gas - I.S. 3216: Part 2 : 1989, Installation at Automotive Dispensing Facilities as amended by Amendment No. 1 : 1994, dated 27th May, 1994 and by Amendment No. 2 : 1996, dated 9th December, 1996;

as Codes of Practice for the purposes of the Dangerous Substances (Storage of Liquefied Petroleum Gas) Regulations, 1990 (S.I. No. 201 of 1990).

The above Codes of Practice, as amended, provide practical guidance as to the observance of the said Regulations as regards the prevention of risk of injury to persons or damage to property from the storage of Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG). They came into effect on 1st August, 1997, and from that date the Authority's approval of I.S. 3213: 1987, I.S. 3216: 1988 and I.S. 3216: Part 2 : 1989 was withdrawn. Notice of the approval of the Codes of Practice, as amended, was published in the "Iris Oifigiúil" of 8th July, 1997.

Part D

Proposals for Regulations submitted by the Authority to the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment during 1997

(i) Draft Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Children and Young Persons) Regulations and Guidelines, transposing certain provisions of Council Directive 94/33/EEC on the protection of young persons at work, not already transposed through the Protection of Young Persons (Employment) Act, 1996.

(ii) Draft Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Night Work and Shift Work) Regulations and Guidelines, transposing certain provisions of Council Directive 93/104/EC concerning certain aspects of the organisation of working time, not already transposed through the Organisation of Working Time Act, 1997.

Appendix 4

(iii) Draft European Communities (Classification, Packaging, Labelling and Notification of Dangerous Substances (Amendment) Regulations, transposing Council Directive 96/56/EC, Commission Directive 94/69/EC and Commission Directive 96/54/EC amending/adapting to technical progress Directive 67/548/EEC on the approximation of the laws, regulations and administrative provisions of the Member States relating to the classification, packaging and labelling of dangerous substances.

(iv) Draft European Communities (Dangerous Substances and Preparations) (Marketing and Use) Regulations, transposing Council Directive 76/769/EEC on the approximation of the laws, regulations and administrative provisions of the Member States relating to restrictions on the marketing and use of certain dangerous substances and preparations, as amended variously by Directives 79/663, 82/806, 83/264, 83/478, 85/467, 89/677, 91/173, 91/338, 91/339 and 91/659 [all of the above are already transposed through the European Communities (Dangerous Substances and Preparations) (Marketing and Use) Regulations, 1994 (S.I. No. 79 of 1994) which will be revoked and replaced by the current draft Regulations] as further amended/adapted to technical progress by Council Directive 94/60/EC re. creosote; Commission Directive 96/55/EC re. chlorinated solvents; Commission Directive 97/10/EC re. CMRs; Council Directive 97/16/EC re. Hexachloroethane and Council Directive 91/157/EEC on batteries and accumulators containing certain dangerous substances re. alkaline manganese batteries containing more than a prescribed level of mercury.

(v) Draft European Communities (Classification, Packaging and Labelling of Dangerous Preparations (Amendment) Regulations, amending the European Communities (Classification, Packaging and Labelling

of Dangerous Preparations Regulations, 1995 (S.I. No. 272 of 1995) [which already transpose Council Directive 88/379/EEC, on the approximation of the laws, regulations and administrative provisions of the Member States relating to the classification, packaging and labelling of dangerous preparations, as amended by Council Directive 92/32/EEC, and Commission Directives 89/178/EEC, 90/35/EEC, 90/492/EEC, 91/155/EEC, 91/442/EEC, 93/18/EEC, 93/21/EEC and 93/112/EC] as further amended/adapted to technical progress by Commission Directive 96/65/EC, 4th adaptation to technical progress of Directive 88/379/EEC and modification of Directive 91/442 re. child-resistant fastenings; those provisions of Commission Directive 96/54/EC, 22nd adaptation to technical progress of Council Directive 67/548/EEC, which are relevant to preparations and those provisions of Council Directive 94/60/EC relevant to the special labelling of preparations not transposed through the draft European Communities (Dangerous Substances and Preparations) (Marketing and Use) Regulations.

Part E

Legislative Proposals for Development during 1998

In addition to the finalisation of the draft Regulations listed in Part D above, the development of proposals for Regulations relating to the following is planned for 1998:-

(i) Transposition of Directive 94/27/EC, 12th Amendment of Council Directive 76/769/EEC on the approximation of the laws, regulations and administrative provisions of the Member States relating to restrictions on the marketing and use of certain dangerous substances and preparations, re. nickel (preparation of proposals for Regulations awaiting finalisation of test method by CEN).

Appendix 4

(ii) Transposition of Directive 94/48/EC, 13th Amendment of Council Directive 76/769/EEC on the approximation of the laws, regulations and administrative provisions of the Member States relating to restrictions on the marketing and use of certain dangerous substances and preparations, re. aerosol generators (preparation of proposals for Regulations awaiting finalisation of test method by CEN).

(iii) Transposition of Council Directive 95/63/EC amending Directive 89/655/EEC concerning the minimum safety and health requirements for the use of work equipment by workers at work, by the amendment of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations, 1993.

(iv) Transposition of Council Directive 96/82/EC amending the Directives on the Control of Major Accident Hazards (Seveso II).

(v) Transposition of Council Directive 93/103/EEC concerning the minimum safety and health requirements for work on board fishing vessels.

(vi) Transposition of Council Directive 94/9/EC on the approximation of the laws of the Member States concerning equipment and protective systems intended for use in potentially explosive atmospheres.

(vii) Transposition of Council Directive 94/26/EC on the approximation of the laws of the Member States concerning electrical equipment for use in potentially explosive atmospheres employing certain types of protection.

(viii) Transposition of Commission Directives 95/30/EC and 97/59/EC adapting to technical progress Council Directive 90/679/EEC on the protection of workers from risks related to exposure to biological agents

at work. (This will involve the replacement of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Biological Agents) Regulations, 1994 (S.I. No. 146 of 1994) - which already transpose Council 90/679/EEC as amended by Council Directive 93/88/EEC - with new Regulations and a Code of Practice.

(ix) Transposition of Council Directive 92/29/EC concerning medical assistance on board vessels.

(x) Confined Space Entry (Regulations and Code of Practice)

(xi) The amendment of the Dangerous Substances (Retail and Private Petroleum Stores) Regulations, 1979.

It is also proposed to develop proposals for Codes of Practice relating to:-

(i) the amendment of the 1997 Code of Practice for the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Chemical Agents) Regulations, 1994.

(ii) the Dangerous Substances (Storage of Liquefied Petroleum Gas) Regulations, 1990.

(iii) Safety of Children on Farms.

(iv) Fork Lift Trucks.

(v) Lifting Equipment.

(vi) Pressure Vessels.

and to develop guidance material relating to:-

(i) the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Extractive Industries) Regulations, 1997.

(ii) the provision of seating facilities in the Retail Trade.

Appendix 5

Regional Information

DATA CORRESPONDING TO LABOUR FORCE SURVEY REGIONS

The regional boundaries used by the Authority do not correspond exactly to the planning regions for which we have Labour Force data on employment and days lost through accidents. Therefore in the tables below, we have presented our data in the regional profile followed in the Labour Force Survey.

REGION - DUBLIN CITY & COUNTY		
	1996	1997
Employment [LFS]*	405,000	420,100
Work days lost through injuries [LFS]**	156,500	163,800
Fatalities	13	10
Inspections	3,957	3,317
Complaints	523	801
Prohibition Notices	53	123
Improvement Notices/Directions	157	421

REGION - SOUTH-EAST		
	1996	1997
Employment [LFS]*	134,200	137,300
Work days lost through injuries [LFS]**	93,400	49,500
Fatalities	10	7
Inspections	1,238	1,126
Complaints	55	74
Prohibition Notices	26	58
Improvement Notices/Directions	25	97

Covers Counties Carlow, Kilkenny, Tipperary South Riding, Waterford and Wexford.

REGION - EAST		
	1996	1997
Employment [LFS]*	131,100	138,300
Work days lost through injuries [LFS]**	102,800	89,400
Fatalities	7	4
Inspections	1,158	958
Complaints	78	115
Prohibition Notices	20	31
Improvement Notices/Directions	51	115

Covers Counties Kildare, Meath, and Wicklow.

REGION - SOUTH-WEST		
	1996	1997
Employment [LFS]*	190,000	195,700
Work days lost through injuries [LFS]**	79,900	79,400
Fatalities	9	11
Inspections	503	1,052
Complaints	22	65
Prohibition Notices	22	21
Improvement Notices/Directions	17	205

Covers Counties Cork and Kerry.

* Central Statistics Office: Labour Force Survey.

** Information from the LFS does not show 3-day work absences.
Total workdays lost are shown.

Appendix 5

REGION - MIDLAND

	1996	1997
Employment [LFS]*	73,100	75,100
Work days lost through injuries [LFS]**	27,700	37,200
Fatalities	3	2
Inspections	965	799
Complaints	30	39
Prohibition Notices	6	12
Improvement Notices/Directions	28	108

Covers County Laois, Longford, Offaly, Roscommon and Westmeath.

REGION - WEST

	1996	1997
Employment [LFS]*	119,800	124,300
Work days lost through injuries [LFS]**	64,300	57,900
Fatalities	6	11
Inspections	802	671
Complaints	39	40
Prohibition Notices	11	11
Improvement Notices/Directions	30	86

Covers Counties Galway and Mayo.

REGION - MID-WEST

	1996	1997
Employment [LFS]*	110,200	110,200
Work days lost through injuries [LFS]**	29,400	34,300
Fatalities	4	5
Inspections	1,539	828
Complaints	49	90
Prohibition Notices	6	13
Improvement Notices/Directions	28	82

Covers Counties Clare, Limerick and Tipperary North Riding.

REGION - BORDER COUNTIES

	1996	1997
Employment [LFS]*	133,900	137,300
Work days lost through injuries [LFS]**	72,400	62,600
Fatalities	8	17
Inspections	945	808
Complaints	36	74
Prohibition Notices	4	26
Improvement Notices/Directions	69	105

Covers Counties Cavan, Louth, Monaghan, Leitrim, Sligo and Donegal.

* Central Statistics Office: Labour Force Survey.

** Information from the LFS does not show 3-day work absences.

Total workdays lost are shown.

Appendix 6

Advisory Committees

HSA ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON CONSTRUCTION SAFETY (1997)

Terms of Reference

- (i) To consider and report, from time to time, to the Board of the Health and Safety Authority on any matters referred to it by the Authority, in support of the Joint HSA/CIF/ICTU Programme of Action for 1997, in relation to safety and health in the construction sector;
- (ii) To identify and advise the Board on appropriate initiatives related to construction safety, in support of the Programme referred to at (i) above, and in relation to any other high risk issues identified in the sector;
- (iii) To undertake appropriate practical initiatives in support of the above as approved by the Board;
- (iv) To submit an interim report to the Board by mid October, 1997; and
- (v) The Board will review the need to continue with this Advisory Committee and its terms of reference from time to time and at least annually.

Advisory Committee - Core Panel Membership

Mr Sylvester Cronin (Chairman)	HSA Board Member;
Mr Pat Walsh (Vice-Chairman)	HSA Board Member;
Mr Jim McCafferty	Manager Network Development Allied Irish Bank IBEC Representative;
Mr Peter McCabe	CIF CIF Representative;
Mr John Ryan	Quality Manager PJ Walls Ltd CIF Representative;
Mr Jim Moore	Union of Construction Allied Trades and Technicians (UCATT) (replaced - Mr Noel O'Neill) ICTU Representative

Mr Fergus Whelan	Industrial Officer ICTU ICTU Representative;
Mr Niall Irwin	General Secretary Operatives Plasterers and Allied Trades Society of Ireland (OPATSI) ICTU Representative;
Mr Robert Byrne	Construction Industry Specialist, FAS FAS Representative
(Mr Kevin Sheridan	FAS, in lieu of Mr Byrne.)
Mr John Graby	The Royal Institute of the Architects of Ireland (RIAI)
Mr Jack Kavanagh	Kavanagh Mansfield & Partners Association of Consulting Engineers of Ireland
Mr Gerard O'Sullivan	McBains Cooper International Society of Chartered Surveyors
Mr Vincent McGauran (Ms Marie Manning Secretary	HSA Inspector HSA).

Ad-Hoc Working Group on Scaffolding Code of Practice

CIF/Scaffolder/Employer Representatives;

Mr Joe Fanning, (Managing Director), Alloy Access; and
Mr Leo Harmon, (Associate Director), Ascon Ltd.;

Two Trade Union Representatives;

Mr Paul Hansard, SIPTU
Mr Fergus Whelan, ICTU

FAS Representative;

Mr Robert Byrne, Construction Industry Specialist, FAS
(or Mr Kevin Sheridan in lieu); and

HSA Representatives;

Mr Vincent McGauran, HSA
Mr Robert Roe, HSA

Ad-Hoc Working Group on Scaffolding Video

Employers Representatives;

Mr Paul Reynolds, Director, Scaffhire Ltd.; and
Mr Tommy Moloney, Safety Manager, G & T Crampton Ltd.;

Two Trade Union Representatives;

Mr Paul Hansard, SIPTU
Mr Fergus Whelan, ICTU

Appendix 6

FAS Representative;

Mr Robert Byrne, Construction Industry Specialist, FAS
(or Mr Kevin Sheridan in lieu); and

HSA Representatives;

Mr Vincent McGauran,
Mr Robert Roe,
Mr Conn Harrington,
Mr John Moran.

The Plenary Advisory Committee comprises the Members of the Core Panel plus the Members of each of the Working Groups. Members of the Working Groups who are not also Members of the Core Panel will cease to be Members of the Plenary Advisory Committee when the Working Groups finish their work.

HSA Advisory Committee on Dangerous Substances

Terms of Reference

- (i) To advise the Health and Safety Authority on the development of legislative proposals on draft EU instruments relating to dangerous substances, which may be referred to it by the Authority for advice;
- (ii) To advise the Health and Safety Authority on any other matters relating to dangerous substances upon which the Authority may ask it for an opinion;
- (iii) To advise on the potential for co-operation between the Health and Safety Authority, Government Departments, States agencies and representative sectoral bodies, in raising awareness regarding the safe handling and use of dangerous substances; and
- (iv) To report to the Board of the Health and Safety Authority from time to time.

Membership

Mr Frank O'Meara (Chairman)	Director of European Projects Merck Sharp and Dohme
Mr Michael O'Hart	HSA
Dr Brian Dunleavy	NISO
Mr Brian Leech	Department of the Environment and Local Government
Dr Christopher McCormack	Irish Road Haulage Association
Ms Ingrid Hook	Consumers Association of Ireland
Mr Frank Cunneen	IBEC
Mr Douglas Burns	NSAI
Dr Clive Cathcart	The Irish Pharmaceutical & Chemical Manufacturers Association (IPCMF)
Dr Ken Macken	Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
Mr Jack O'Sullivan	An Taisce
Mr Philip Chambers	Royal Irish Academy (RIA)
Mr Frank Barry	ICTU
Mr Tom Walsh	ICTU
Mr Kieran Reid	Irish Liquefied Petroleum Gas Association (ILPGA)
Mr Patrick Lynch	Irish Petroleum Industry Association (IPIA)
Ms Deirdre Fannin	Department of Public Enterprise
Mr Phil Lynch	Department of Enterprise Trade and Employment
Ms Blathin Tarpey (Secretary)	HSA

During 1997 Dr Christopher McCormack replaced Mr Robin Mulligan, Ms Deirdre Fannin replaced Mr Tom Kennington and Mr Phil Lynch replaced Mr William Coventry.

This Advisory Committee is the only one established by the Authority which is not time limited due to changing nature of the overall topic, ongoing technical and scientific developments and continually evolving legislation and standards in its area of interest. During 1996 the Committee's nominated membership was renewed for a further two years.

The Advisory Committee met on five occasions and reported regularly during the year and assisted in the development of proposals for new Regulations relating to dangerous substances and preparations.

Appendix 7

HSA Task Forces

Terms of Reference of Task Forces

In 1995 the Authority set up Task Forces for the Agriculture, Construction and Fishing sectors. Their role in each case was to:

- identify the main problems of the sector;
- set agreed targets for (a) a reduction in injuries and (b) an improvement in compliance in the relevant sector;
- identify the actions necessary to achieve these targets;
- establish the roles of the Authority and the sectoral organisations;
- develop an integrated national programme for all parties and;
- publicise, effect and monitor this programme.

The Agriculture Task Force

This Task Force is broadly based with a wide range of agricultural practitioners represented on it and met ten times in 1997.

The Task Force has developed or co-ordinated a range of programmes including a Safe Tractor Driving Skills Training Course for Teenagers launched in 1997; awareness raising among primary school children; regular newspaper coverage on 'Key Seasonal Risks'; and a more integrated approach to participation and promotion at agriculture related exhibitions, shows etc. The safe use at work of All Terrain Vehicles (ATVs) is also being examined by the Task Force.

Agriculture Task Force Membership

Ms Mary Slattery (Chairperson)	HSA Board Member
Mr John McNamara	Teagasc
Ms Brigid Cuniffe	Irish Association of Agricultural Contractors
Mr Michael Cody	FBD Insurance plc
Ms Mary O'Driscoll	Irish Countrywomens Association
Mr Michael Moroney	Irish Farmers Journal
Ms Pat O'Donnell	Mitchelstown Credit Union
Mr Aidan Larkin	Irish Farmers Association (IFA)
Mr Jim Devlin	Irish Farmers Association (IFA)
Mr Brian O'Reilly	ICMSA
Mrs Joan Fitzpatrick	IFA Farm Family Committee
Mr Malachy McGlynn	Irish Co-operative Organisation Society (ICOS)
Ms Bridget Kirwan	National Co-Op., Farm Relief Services
Mr John McGee	Macra na Feirme
Mr Jim Dockery	South Tipperary Farm Relief Services
Mr Paddy Furey	HSA
Mr Aidan McTiernan	HSA
Mr Peter O'Connell	HSA
Mr Tommy O'Sullivan	HSA
Mr John Moran (Secretary)	HSA
(replaced by) Ms Clare Eager	HSA

3.1 The Construction Task Force

Arising from a series of discussions with the Construction Industry Federation and the Construction Trade Unions in early 1997, the Authority decided to establish an Advisory Committee for the Construction Sector with revised Terms of Reference during 1997 to assist, inter alia, in the urgent development of a Code of Practice on Scaffolding Safety. The Advisory Committee (see Appendix 3) replaced the Task Force.

Appendix 8

Health and Safety Authority Staff (31st December, 1997)

Director General	T Walsh
Assistant Director General	B Neville
Director, Operations (Chief Inspector)	M Henry
Director, Specialist Services	I Pratt
Director, Corporate & Legislative Services	P Donnellan
Director, Development	S Wood
Director, Occupational Medical Services	D Murphy
Occupational Medical Adviser	T Donnelly
Deputy Chief Inspector	P J Claffey

Inspectors Grade I

J D'Art, D Dineen, P Furey, J P Goulding, C Harrington,
J Heffernan, V McGauran, A McTiernan, V Wall.

Inspectors Grade II

J Colreavy, N Flavin, M Flynn, P Griffin, M Harkin, D Healy,
J Hyde, F Kellaghan, S Lynch, F Mahon, R McEneaney,
P J Murphy, R O'Brien, P O'Connell, S O'Duibhir, P O'Halloran,
M O'Hart, P F O'Mahony, P O'Shea, R Roe, K Sludds, M Walsh.
(One Vacancy)

Assistant Principal Officers

C Body (Secretary to the Board), D Denny, R Walsh.

Inspectors Grade III

M Boylan, T Browne, M Bryan, P Conneely, F de Barra,
T Dowling, P Delaney, E Egan, J Fanning, S Fleming, P Foran,
B Gannon, J Harrington, J Holmes, J Kennedy, M Lowe,
G Mattimoe (Job Sharing), F Mitchell (Job Sharing),
W Murphy, M McCarthy, D O'Brien, M O'Dea, T O'Donnell,
T O'Sullivan, M Rowlands, B Tarpey. (Eleven Vacancies)

Higher Executive Officers

A Allen, J Moran, B Rutledge, E O'Reilly. (One Vacancy)

Librarian

V Robinson.

Executive Officers

C Barry (Job Sharing), C Eager, C Fitzgerald, J Hannigan
(Job Sharing), M Manning, M Ralph (Job Sharing). (One Full
Post and One Half-Post Job Sharing Vacancies)

Clerical Officers

H Forde, B Guihen, N Kavanagh, C O'Reilly, M O'Reilly
(Job Sharing), A Ryan (Job Sharing), E Robinson, P Truscott,
E Walsh. (Two Vacancies)

Clerical Assistants

O Cahalan, A Carson, P Clarke, A Deegan, M Kavanagh,
J Kelly, C Kenny, E Lawless, S Lyons, D McDonnell,
G Matthews, C O'Shea. (One Vacancy)

Paperkeeper

P O'Leary.

Services Officers

J Douglas, G Griffin.

Services Attendant

R Walsh.



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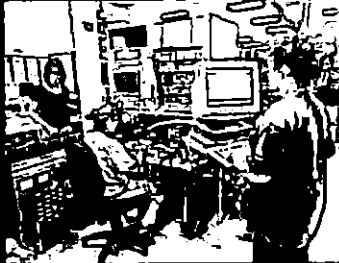
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Fax: (01) 614 7020

Website: <http://www.hsa.ie/osh>



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