

Organising for Health & Safety



Safety in numbers toolkit

A recruitment, organising and campaigning pack for
UNISON branch health and safety officers

**Three simple ways to join UNISON today
and get essential cover wherever you work**



Join online at
joinunison.org



Call us on
0800 171 2193



Ask your UNISON rep
for an application form

**Following
26 pages
is the
toolkit guide**

Safety in numbers It's easy as 1, 2, 3

A recruitment, organising and campaigning guide for UNISON
branch health and safety officers

Contents

Letter from Dave Prentis, UNISON general secretary	3
UNISON and health and safety – a briefing	4
Step one – recruiting safety reps	5
Step two – organising for health and safety	7
Step three – campaigning for health and safety	8
Building an effective voice: it's easy as 1, 2, 3	12
Ensuring success: case studies	13
Appendix one: Understanding your workplace	14
Appendix two: Defending health and safety workshop	14
Appendix three: UNISON resources	17
Appendix four: Model article for branch newsletters and websites	18
Appendix five: Using social media	19
Appendix six: Recruitment tips and techniques	20
Appendix seven: The importance of one-to-one conversations workshop	21
Appendix eight: Campaigning and recruiting around hazards workshop	23
Useful links	24

Dear Colleague

A matter of life and death



UNISON believes that everyone should be able to go to work without having their health damaged by their job. But for millions of workers this is not the case. While carrying out their jobs, our members regularly face violence, bullying, stress, back and other musculoskeletal injuries, slips, trips and falls.

Our safety reps are very important. They carry out functions that we rely on to help make workplaces safer. They deal with a range of issues while protecting our members and ensure that employers are not cutting corners or breaking health and safety law.

As UNISON's general secretary I know what a great job our safety reps do and I would like to thank them for their efforts on behalf of UNISON members.

However, health and safety cuts are threatening to turn the clock back on UNISON's progress on safety at work. The government is wrong to say that health and safety rules are a burden on employers. Cutting health and safety enforcement will lead to an injured and unwell workforce, for which the taxpayer will have to foot the bill.

Because of the government's attack on health and safety, we will need more safety reps who can organise and campaign to help make our

workplaces even safer – there really is safety in numbers. That is why we are launching this guide for branch health and safety officers, to support them in encouraging more members to take on and use the role of a safety representative to further the bargaining and organising aims of the union.

Our main aim is to ensure that there is at least one safety rep in every workplace where we have members. This is more important now than ever because the government's cuts to both the Health and Safety Executive and local authority budgets mean that in most of our members' workplaces there will no longer be any proactive inspections.

Health and safety is a key issue for UNISON's members and potential members, and in workplaces that are well organised, with a high density of membership, we have a much greater influence on local management and employers.

Use the Safety in Numbers guide to help you recruit, organise and campaign to defend health and safety at work – there is plenty of material that will help. You can also order copies of the poster and leaflet to use in your workplace.

Thanks again for the work you do.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dave Prentis." The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Dave Prentis
General secretary, UNISON

UNISON and health and safety – a briefing

Health and safety is at the heart of UNISON's work. Working conditions play a vital role in the health, safety and wellbeing of our 1.3 million members who provide crucial services to the public. Ensuring that people are not at risk of death, injury or ill health as a result of going to work is a trade union issue that cannot just be left to employers, even though they have a clear legal responsibility.

This is why our safety representatives work tirelessly to make our members' working environments safe and healthy. We recognise the invaluable work that safety representatives do to achieve safe workplaces, and we will continue to provide support for this work.

How UNISON supports the work of safety reps

Health and safety has been identified in many surveys as the single most important issue for UNISON members and potential members. We research and produce a range of materials on hazards, standards and good practice at work to assist safety representatives in their organising and campaigning activities. To search for and download materials go to unison.org.uk.

We are constantly demanding that the government and the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) improve legislation, codes of practice and guidance to make the working environment less dangerous. As a result, big strides have been made towards protecting people at work from injury and ill health.

But the government's attack on health and safety is threatening to turn the clock back on UNISON's progress on safety at work.

The government's attack on health and safety

Prime minister David Cameron has referred to health and safety legislation as an "albatross around the neck of British businesses," and has vowed to "kill off the health and safety culture for good."

The government has:

- cut the HSE budget by 35%, which has reduced the number of health and safety inspections in workplaces by one-third and affected its positive campaigning work;
- stopped the HSE and local authorities making proactive inspections of those businesses that have been designated 'low-risk'. The government's interpretation of low-risk encompasses most of the workplaces in which our members are employed, including office work, catering, health and social care. It does not take into consideration occupational ill health such as musculoskeletal disorders (aches and pains in joints and soft tissue) and work-related stress, which are the most common types of ill health in so-called 'low-risk' workplaces and account for more than three quarters of all work-related injuries and illness currently suffered in the UK;
- undermined the ability of councils to enforce health and safety rules due to the largest cuts to council budgets in living memory. One council has cut its environmental health team by one-third, a move that could see public health put at risk; and
- announced plans to scrap or improve 84% of health and safety legislation, despite the government's own adviser Professor Löfstedt stating that there was no need to reduce the level of protection.

UNISON believes that by cutting the funding to develop and enforce health and safety rules, businesses and the taxpayer will face the bigger burden of an injured and unwell workforce. Now more than ever, it is important that we organise and campaign to challenge the government's attack on health and safety at work.

Speaking up for health and safety is as easy as 1, 2, 3

This guide aims to provide branch health and safety officers or other branch officers with information on how to take a stand against the government's attack on health and safety at work in three simple steps.

Step one of the Safety in Numbers campaign is to recruit safety reps in your branch. This section includes information on why safety reps are important, what they do and how you can recruit and support new safety reps.

Step two of the Safety in Numbers campaign is to organise safety reps in your branch and help them identify health and safety issues and recruit new members. This section includes information on why it's important to organise, how to support your safety reps when organising in their workplaces, and identifying issues for future campaigns.

Step three of the Safety in Numbers campaign is to use the health and safety issues identified by your safety reps to develop and deliver a campaign that will deliver health and safety improvements in the workplace, raise the union's profile and encourage non-members to join us in UNISON. This section includes information on what a campaign is, what makes it successful, and how it should be funded and evaluated.

Step one – recruiting safety reps

Step one of the Safety in Numbers campaign is to recruit safety reps with the aim of building branch capacity to challenge the government's attack on health and safety.

The safety rep – a vital member of the UNISON team

HSE evidence continues to demonstrate widespread law breaking in many workplaces. Employers' failure to carry out risk assessments, consult workers or implement preventative and control measures is resulting in more injuries and ill health that could be prevented.

The situation is only likely to worsen with the government's attack on health and safety; it has already resulted in a cut in the HSE's proactive inspections by one third. This is despite evidence that almost half of workplaces in the UK have never been visited by a health and safety inspector.

In future, 'low risk' workplaces such as offices and schools are only likely to receive unannounced inspections, where an inspector has been notified of a problem by somebody courageous or confident enough to blow the whistle on their employer.

Because of this, an effective voice through unionised safety representation is more important than ever to prevent health and safety abuses falling beneath the HSE's ever shrinking radar.

What does a safety rep do?

The Safety Representatives and Safety Committee (SRSC) Regulations 1977 spell out in detail the wide range of rights and functions of safety representatives. In short they have powers to:

- investigate complaints on behalf of their members
- take up issues they notice or that members bring to their attention
- carry out health and safety inspections of their workplace at least four times a year
- demand information if it affects the health and safety of their members
- engage in consultation
- have time off, with pay, to do their job as a safety rep and to attend trade union courses.

The SRSC Regulations make it clear that your role and functions as a safety rep do not impose any duty or legal responsibility on you. You cannot be legally penalised if you do not carry them out.

For further information about the SRSC Regulations see UNISON's guidance the Brown Book (see unison.org.uk).

How do I recruit safety reps?

Identify the workplaces where you do not currently have UNISON safety reps. UNISON members and potential members in these workplaces will become the target of your recruitment activities. For further information on how to map workplaces see *appendix one*.

Ask the employer if you can organise workplace meetings, or have stalls, to highlight the importance of health and safety and the role of the rep. You could ask the employer to take part to illustrate how employers and reps work in partnership to make our

workplaces safer. At the meetings you can:

- deliver the Safety in Numbers PowerPoint presentation (see *unison.org.uk*).
- deliver the defending health and safety workshop (*appendix two*).

Order copies of the Safety in Numbers posters (stock number 3249) and put them up in your target workplaces.

Order copies of the Safety in Numbers leaflet (stock number 3250) and keeping our public services healthy and safe factsheet see *unison.org.uk* (stock number 0032) and give them to members. Use the opportunity to talk about the importance of health and safety reps and how much support UNISON gives members who take on this role.

You can also design and print your own materials via the online print service. This gives you the opportunity to drop your own locally relevant text into professionally designed templates with the correct UNISON branding. For further information on ordering and creating materials see *appendix three*.

Use the model article (*appendix four*) in your branch newsletter and on your branch website. Add some quotes and local information to make it more relevant to you. Don't forget to add your contact details so people know where to go for more information. Alternatively, you could create a branch health and safety newsletter using our Microsoft Publisher template (see *unison.org.uk*).

Use social media such as Twitter and Facebook to promote the article on your branch website. For further information on using social media see *appendix five*.

If your branch is low on resources, you can apply to use the regional pool for purchases, to provide staff or to fund activists for your organising project, or other costs necessary to meet the objectives of your proposal. For further information about the regional pool see *appendix three*.

Review your recruitment activities on a regular basis to ensure they are as effective as possible.

For further information on recruitment tips and techniques see *appendix six*.

Proportionality and fair representation

Currently well whereas women account for over three quarters of UNISON's membership, they account for under half of UNISON's safety reps. This means women are currently under-represented in terms of representation and the health and safety decision-making process.

In a recent survey by UNISON, women safety reps said that more women would be encouraged to take on the role if they had more time and were told that they could do it. So, when encouraging women to become safety reps give them confidence by explaining that they don't need to be a health and safety expert, and that the role is about talking to and helping members. Furthermore they are given time off to do the role.

It is also important to ensure that all members' health and safety concerns are considered and fairly represented. Encouraging members from under-represented groups (young members, Black members, disabled members, LGBT members, migrant workers and more) to become safety reps is one way of doing this.

For further information about proportionality and fair representation see UNISON's Organising for equality guide on the UNISON Equality Website.

How does a member become a safety rep?

Branches should encourage members to elect safety reps to cover their workplace or group of workplaces. UNISON can then officially appoint them under SRSC regulations. Once a safety rep is appointed, the employer must be notified of that appointment in writing.

In all cases, the new safety rep must notify the branch secretary of their appointment so that they can be offered training, be placed on mailing lists and be issued with appropriate credentials. The new safety rep can do this by completing the notification

of UNISON workplace representative form (stock number 0852).

How can I support safety reps?

UNISON reps are crucial to the effectiveness of the union. UNISON is absolutely committed to supporting safety reps through the provision of first class training and resources. The next step is for branches to encourage both new and existing safety reps to:

- take full advantage of UNISON's training opportunities – for further information about training courses for safety reps see unison.org.uk
- make it as easy as possible to put what they learn into practice.

UNISON has produced a guide for branches called *Developing and supporting workplace representatives* see unison.org.uk. This guide sets out some options for how you can most effectively support reps in your branch, including informal buddy systems and formal mentoring schemes, as well as practical ideas to encourage safety reps to become more active.

Step two – organising for health and safety

Step two of the Safety in Numbers campaign is to organise safety reps in your branch by supporting them to identify health and safety issues and recruit new members.

Why organise?

We organise because it helps us to build a strong, effective union capable of delivering for members in the workplace and beyond. Organising gives us a chance to turn what we have (our resources) into what we need (power and influence) to get what we want from the specific campaigns that we get involved in (see step three on [page 9](#)).

In an organised workplace:

- there is a high level of union membership
- there is a high level of membership activity
- there are reps in all areas of the workplace

- meetings are well attended
- members prioritise and participate in union activity
- there is effective and regular two-way communication between the union and its members.

Negotiating with an employer

Organised workplaces with a high membership density give your safety reps greater influence with local management and employers when negotiating. Your safety reps will get involved in discussions with management following any inspections or if members raise any health and safety issues specific to their workplace. When this happens tell your safety reps to:

- consult and inform the UNISON members affected before discussions with management, during negotiation, and before any agreement
- set clear objectives
- know their rights
- listen as well as speak
- avoid personalising issues
- ensure that the branch is aware of important negotiations and ask for support if necessary.

How can safety reps organise in their workplace?

Mapping

Encourage your safety reps to use a mapping exercise to look at the density of members and non-members in their workplaces. UNISON members and potential members in these workplaces will become the target of their recruitment and organising activities. For further information on how to map workplaces see [appendix one](#).

Identifying key issues

Safety reps can use their rights under the Safety Representatives and Safety Committee (SRSC) Regulations 1977 to identify issues affecting UNISON members and potential members. For example, safety reps can carry out health and safety inspections of their workplace at least four times a year.

It is the job of the branch health and safety officer to co-ordinate the activities of your safety reps (see section 6.7 of the Code of Good Branch Practice - your branch should have a copy), including workplace inspections. Help your safety reps to plan an annual calendar of inspections at the start of the year and encourage them to book their time off well in advance. For further information see UNISON's *Health and safety inspections at work guide* (see unison.org.uk).

Members and other workers should be asked during an inspection whether they want to raise any issues or problems that they have experienced or witnessed, or make any other contribution they believe is relevant. You can deliver the importance of one-to-one conversations workshop (see *appendix seven*) to help give your safety reps the confidence to talk to members and potential members about health and safety issues at work.

Under the SRSC regulations, an employer must establish a joint safety committee if two or more health and safety reps request this. Health and safety committees should be involved in identifying current and potential health and safety hazards and problems.

Other ways of identifying key health and safety issues include:

- talking to or surveying workers about their health and safety concerns, including current or past work-related symptoms, accidents, injuries and illnesses
- body mapping, hazards mapping and other activities to identify and track hazards and their impact on the workers – put simply these involve using a drawing of a body or the workplace on which health and safety concerns can be marked. For further information on body and hazards mapping see hazards.org/tools
- engaging in regular communication with workers on health and safety issues
- researching past Health and Safety Executive (HSE) or local authority inspections and evaluations at their workplace
- analysing workplace injuries and illnesses by requesting copies of accident report forms –

safety representatives are entitled to see copies of these

- finding out which substances workers use and how much they're exposed to. Safety reps can request the list of hazardous substances safety data sheets and worker exposure measurements
- asking individuals and groups to take proactive steps such as filing complaints on hazards, publicising workplace hazards, making sure that all accidents are recorded in the accident book
- publicising awareness dates – for example, International Workers' Memorial Day is on 28 April every year and is observed internationally with events, demonstrations, vigils and many other activities. You can find details of other health and safety campaigning dates in the UNISON diary
- analysing sickness absence patterns to identify any that are work-related and might indicate a health and safety concern that needs to be tackled.

For further information see UNISON's Organising for health and safety guide for safety reps (see unison.org.uk).

Recruiting members

"Nobody asked me!" That's the single biggest reason people give for not having joined a trade union. When identifying key issues while talking to non-members, safety reps should remember to give them a UNISON membership application form and explain how being in a trade union can help resolve such issues collectively. For further information on recruitment tips and techniques see *appendix six*.

Safety reps should always carry copies of UNISON membership application forms and other relevant recruitment materials. Alternatively, you can order copies of the latest safety in numbers newsletter from UNISON's online ordering system (stock number 3200). This newsletter, which is produced on a quarterly basis, has been designed for safety reps and other branch activists to use when recruiting potential members. For further information on ordering and creating recruitment materials see *appendix three*.

Safety reps' meeting

Organise a meeting for safety reps to attend and discuss members' key health and safety issues identified during their workplace inspections. These issues can be collated and used in step three to develop a campaign that most members and non-members feel strongly about and find relevant to their situation.

Step three – campaigning for health and safety

Step three of the Safety in Numbers campaign is to use the health and safety issues identified by your safety reps to develop and deliver a campaign, which will improve health and safety in the workplace, raise the union's profile and encourage non-members to join us in UNISON.

What is campaigning?

Campaigning is about achieving change. When you campaign you are trying to persuade people to take a particular course of action in relation to a particular issue. You are also trying to change people's attitudes or opinions.

Campaigning means having a clear aim or purpose, knowing what change you want to achieve and what is required to bring that change about. Without such an aim, you have no campaign.

Criteria for a successful campaign

You will need to identify clearly what issues you wish to campaign on. A good campaign issue should match as many of these points as possible.

- 1. Have a good chance of success:** the problem must not be so large and insurmountable that there will be no successes to report at the end of the campaign.
- 2. Be widely felt:** the issue must be relevant to the great majority of members and potential members and there must be widespread agreement about the solution proposed.
- 3. Be deeply felt:** the issue must be something that people feel very strongly about.

- 4. Be an issue that can involve members and potential members:** members and potential members should feel that they rather than outsiders have won the campaign.

5. Be worth the effort: members should feel it is an issue that is worth their time and effort. If the issue is not that important but requires enormous time and commitment it might not be worth the effort.

6. Be easily understood: the issue can be expressed simply so that it can convince members and potential members

7. Be consistent with your values, priorities and strategic plans: the issue must be consistent with UNISON's values and reflect your union's priorities and plans.

Planning your campaign

There are several steps that you should take when planning your campaign. Many of these planning stages will need to be kept under review as the actual campaign activities progress so that you can respond to changing situations.

- 1. Organise a worker communication system**

Set up a communication network – agree how you will keep in touch with your colleagues and who will be the campaign lead in each workplace or department.

- 2. Analyse union and employer strengths and weaknesses**

Consider what your strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats are, and think about how to:

- maximise strengths
- minimise weaknesses
- create opportunities
- avoid threats.

3. Identify workers' and union issues

Check potential issues against the criteria for a successful campaign (above). You can deliver the campaigning and recruiting around hazards workshop (*appendix eight*) to help your safety reps identify a good campaign issue. It is vital that you involve union members in this process if you are to be successful.

4. Determine the organisation's goals

What are your overall objectives? What do you want to achieve from this specific campaign and more generally at the employer you are organising in? A key role of UNISON reps is to negotiate so you need to consider what your negotiating strategy will be.

5. Create the campaign theme

What is the main idea behind your campaign and what slogan will best capture the imagination of your allies and targets?

6. Select targets and allies

Your target has the power to grant you your objective, eg the employer. Your allies are those you can trust to share your plans with, eg other trade unions. Your indirect target is a person or other entity that can influence or persuade the direct target to grant your demands – for example, a local councillor who might be able to put pressure on a local public services provider to improve health and safety in the workplace.

7. Develop the campaign strategies

What kind of strategy will you attempt to adopt? Will it be a high profile mass protest? Will it be a behind the scenes lobbying campaign? This will depend largely on who your target is.

8. Develop tactics that fit your strategies

Not every tactic fits every campaign. What will you need to do to deliver your strategy?

9. Create a campaign timeline

What will happen when? How will you try to increase the intensity of your campaign? Have you planned your campaign to take account of any events you know are taking place in the campaign period?

10. Evaluate your strategies

Check how things are going regularly.

11. Develop new tactics to fit the new strategies

Don't be afraid to make changes to your timeline to reflect how things are going so far.

Recruiting new members

Campaigning gives you a chance to recruit new UNISON members. Your campaigning activities will make you visible in the workplace. For further information on recruitment tips and techniques see *appendix six*.

Carry recruitment leaflets around with you and ask non-members about any problems they may have. You should also make sure that recruitment leaflets (and membership application forms) are available at any stand, stall or exhibition you organise as part of your campaigning. For further information on ordering recruitment materials see *appendix three*.

Campaign materials

An effective way to start to raise awareness of an issue and get people interested is to distribute materials carrying your campaign message. These can range from simple stickers and posters to leaflets that explain the issues in more detail or special newsletters with information about the issues and details of other campaign activities.

In the campaign against public service cuts and privatisation, UNISON developed an online tool to help branches and regions to campaign effectively and professionally at a local level. UNISON's online print service is a one-stop shop for printed campaign material offering professionally designed, UNISON-

branded templates that are easy to customise with local information.

For further information on ordering and creating campaign and recruitment materials see *appendix three*.

Using new and social media

Not all your campaigning needs to be done face-to-face. We are increasingly using online campaigning to help us get our messages out and win support for our campaigns.

There are several ways of doing this. If your branch has a website, you could create new pages dedicated to your current campaign. But before rushing to build pages, it's worth considering if this is the most effective way of getting your campaign to a wider audience.

With so many other options – YouTube, blogs, Facebook and Twitter – what's the best thing for your branch? And do you need new web pages at all? For further information on using social media see *appendix five*.

Funding your local campaign

Campaigning takes time and it can take resources. That's why UNISON has a general political fund (GPF) to support organising and campaigning. For further information about the GPF see *appendix three*.

Strategic campaigning course

A UNISON training module on strategic campaigning can assist branch officers in the planning and delivery of a campaign. Contact your regional education officer for more information.

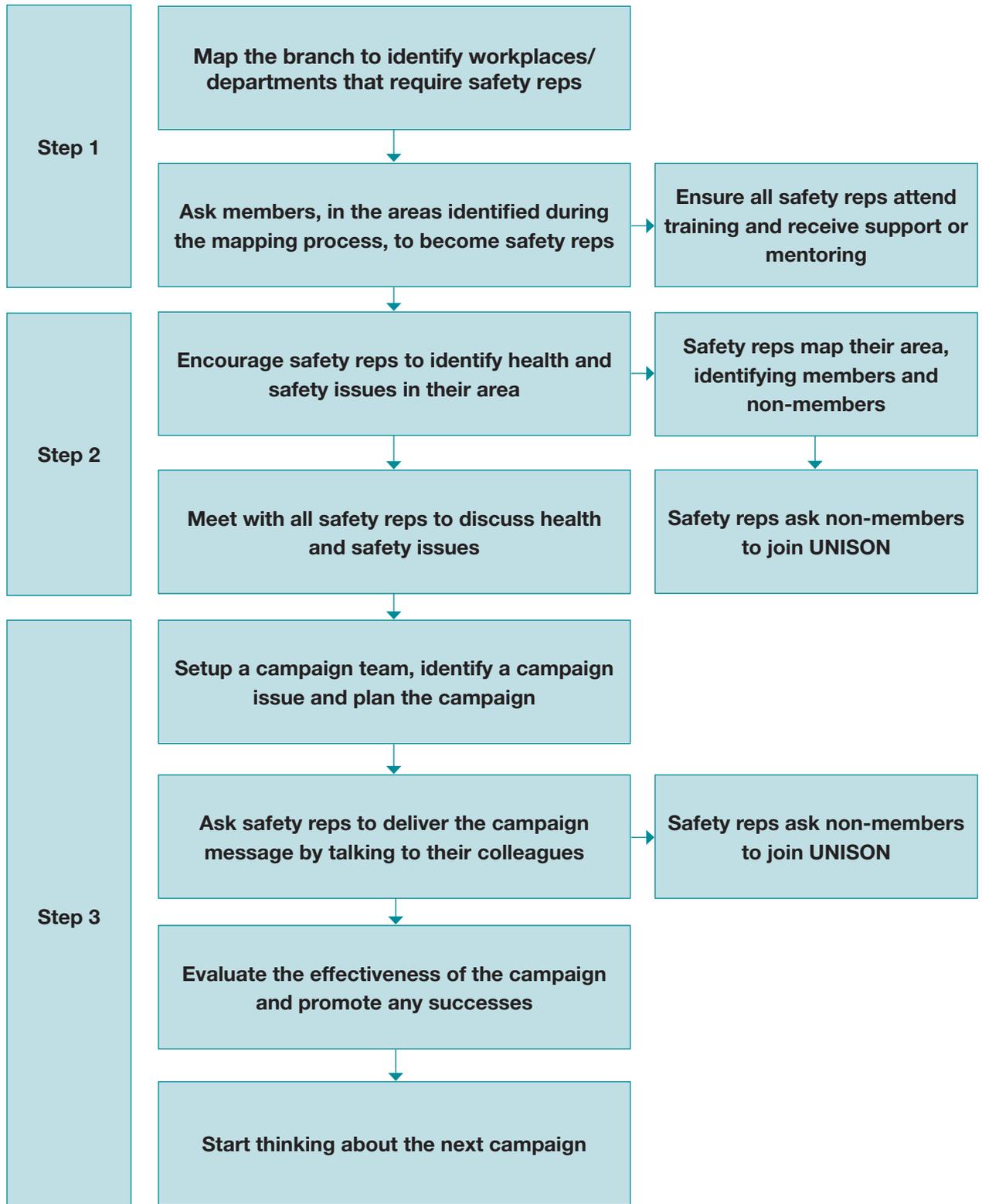
After the campaign

Once your campaign is over it is important that you don't just stop – you need to communicate what you did and what you achieved so that people can see campaigning and the union really do make a difference.

1. Tell members what you did and promote your successes – people need to see what the union can achieve.
2. Promote the outcome of your campaign in branch newsletters and on your web pages.
3. Tell the wider union about it because it's good to share and you may inspire another branch to organise a campaign. Let your area or regional organiser know and tell UNISON's health and safety unit (email: healthandsafety@unison.co.uk).
4. Thank people for taking part in or supporting your campaign.
5. Start thinking about the next campaign.

For further information on campaigning see UNISON's Guide to effective campaigning (see unison.org.uk).

Building an effective voice: it's easy as 1, 2, 3



Ensuring success: case studies

Using the safety in numbers guide, UNISON Craigavon Health Branch increased the number of safety reps they had by 122%, and consequently managed to reduce their member to safety rep ratio. They also increased their membership.

Clare Martin, branch health and safety officer, said:

“We decided to focus on February 14th (Valentine’s Day) to push a “look after your heart, look after yourself”, health and safety stall. It was setup outside the staff canteen which caters for around 500 staff and visitors a day.

“We used stress heart balls with the UNISON logo and small packets of love heart sweets as ice breakers, and used ‘we love the NHS’ placards to draw attention to the stall. A number of activists held the stall and engaged with staff by discussing the recent “stress survey” results and “Be Safe” (see UNISON Health Service Group Website) campaign.

“Discussions with potential new safety reps centred around identifying issues in their work areas, availability of training, and expectations of what would be required.

“We took down their names and details to make sure their interest was followed up. The safety in numbers resource helped us as stewards to focus on what we needed to say to achieve our outcomes.

“The allocation of facility time, dedicated campaign funds and support of the region helped to ensure success. As a result of the resource, we have setup a branch health and safety committee for the first time and two delegates attended UNISON’s National Health and Safety seminar.”

UNISON Walsall General Branch was another branch that successfully used the safety in numbers guide.

Mike Maley, branch health and safety officer, said:

“I recruited one safety rep during a workplace inspection. I explained what the role required and all

the training and support that is provided by the TUC and UNISON. She was booked on the next available safety reps stage 1 course.

“The new safety rep was interested after reading the safety in numbers quarterly newsletter that I had left in the workplace staff room. I then answered her questions regarding the role of a safety rep and what training is available. I will also arrange regular workplace inspections by UNISON safety reps in 2013.

“We also identified work-related stress as a campaign issue and will be developing a strategy to tackle the issue across the authority.”

Prior to using the safety in numbers guide, UNISON Anglian Water Branch had a very good safety rep to member ratio (1 for every 25 members). This enabled the branch to grow its membership by over 2% in four months.

Rod Glen, branch health and safety officer, said:

“As our branch already had a strong safety rep presence we focused on using our network of safety reps to identify health and safety issues. We identified the deeply, widely felt issue of work-related stress among call centre workers. We are using this issue to develop a campaign and engage with the employer on ways we can work together to prevent or control the stressors in the workplace.”

Appendix one: Understanding your workplace

A higher density of membership gives UNISON greater influence locally and nationally. Your branch needs to find out the membership density in the employers and workplaces it covers. Who are your members? Where are they based? What health and safety issues concern them? This will help you to recruit and organise new members. The most effective way of doing this is to map all employers and workplaces.

There are a number of ways to do this:

RMS (UNISON's membership system)

If your branch has access to the RMS you will be able to run reports which will assist you in mapping your workplace or employer. To find out more about how to do this or to attend a one-day organising with RMS course, contact your branch RMS buddy at the regional office.

RMS mapping tool

The membership count report provides quick and easy access to some of the information held on the RMS. It has three main functions – mapping, organising and data cleansing. Reports can be produced to show the number of members, stewards, safety reps and contacts by employer or workplace. If you would like a membership count report of your branch/employer please contact your branch if they have access to the RMS, or if they don't, ask your regional organiser.

Manual mapping

If you do not have access to the RMS you can map your potential workplace targets by recording:

- who are UNISON members (ask your branch, regional RMS department or payroll department)
- which workers belong to other unions
- who your potential members are, ie those not in a union
- if employers/workplaces operate shifts – do this for each shift.

You can ask the employer's human resources department or use an experienced union rep's knowledge to obtain staffing information about your potential workplace targets. Examples of mapping can be found here: unison.org.uk.

Identifying campaign issues

When mapping your workplaces try also to record issues that may help you in recruitment, for example:

- current (or potential) health and safety problems and where they occur
- any concerns staff have about health and safety, which staff and where they are based
- the extent to which members take an interest in getting involved
- any members who might be interested in getting more involved.

By adding your local knowledge you can plan your recruitment campaign and target groups of potential members or activists. Aim to talk to every member of staff you identify as not being in a union. For further information on identifying campaign issues see [page 9](#).

Appendix two: Defending health and safety workshop

What are the aims of this activity?

This short activity is to encourage UNISON members to:

- recognise that there is a need to organise against the cuts to health and safety
- commit to actions to support UNISON's Million Voices for Public Services campaign
- become a UNISON safety rep.

Who is it aimed at?

Any group of members. It can be used at a workplace meeting with UNISON members.

Who can run it?

A branch officer, lay tutor or organiser.

What resources do you need?

Internet access would be very helpful if possible. The statements on the following pages either photocopied or written onto A5 cards or post-it notes.

How long will it take?

Between 30 and 45 minutes (step 2 is additional)

Step 1 (essential)

Introduce the activity as follows:

“One issue facing UNISON at the moment is the government’s attack on health and safety, so we’re going to start off by spending a few minutes looking at some statements about health and safety at work.”

Hand out the five cards on the following page to pairs or threes around the room. Ask them to spend a minute deciding if they agree or disagree with the statement, and why.

- “Offices and schools are not ‘low-risk’ workplaces”
- “Health and safety is ‘red tape’ and a burden on business”
- “There is too much health and safety legislation”
- “Union safety reps make workplaces safer”
- “There is nothing any of us can do to stop the government’s attack on health and safety at work”.

Take feedback from each group and leave the last one till the end. Start with the group who looked at the card, then ask what everyone else thinks. Here are some responses to draw out:

“Offices and schools are not ‘low-risk’ workplaces” – True!

The government has stopped the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and local authorities making proactive inspections of those businesses that have been designated ‘low risk’. Their interpretation of low risk encompasses most of the workplaces in which

our members are employed, including offices and schools and sectors such as health and social care, catering and cleaning.

The government does not take into consideration occupational ill health such as musculoskeletal disorders (aches and pains in joints and soft tissue) and work-related stress. These are the most common types of ill health in so-called ‘low-risk’ workplaces and account for more than three quarters of all work-related injuries and illness currently suffered in the UK.

“Health and safety is ‘red tape’ and a burden on business” – False!

In 2011, a survey conducted by the Institution of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH) found that health and safety can be used as a driver for growth, given that protecting workers saves money – work-related accidents and ill health costs businesses nearly £8 billion a year through absenteeism, low productivity and legal bills. The research found that the overall cost of health and safety failures to the public purse, including welfare and health bills, is estimated at £22 billion.

What we are likely to see as a result of the government’s attack on health and safety is an increase in accidents and injuries at work, leading to greater human costs, increased costs to business and increased costs to the NHS.

“There is too much health and safety legislation” – False!

In 1974 the number of regulations on health and safety was 462. In April 2009 the number was 248. This means we have 46% less regulation than 35 years ago. It is not just the number of regulations that have declined. Over the last five years the HSE has also reduced the number of forms used for collecting information from business from 127 to 54 – a 57.5% reduction.

In March 2011, the government established an independent review of health and safety legislation. This review was chaired by leading risk management specialist Professor Ragnar Löfstedt. In his review, he concluded that there was no evidence for radically altering current health and safety legislation

and that the regulatory regime offered vital protection to employees and the public.

“Union safety reps make workplaces safer” – True!

Union safety reps have a dramatic, positive impact on safety at work. Their presence prevents thousands of major injuries every year, making unionised workplaces significantly safer than others. A 2009 report by the European Trade Union Institute (ETUI), *The impact of safety representatives on occupational health*, found that having trade union representation leads to better observance of safety rules, lower accident rates and fewer work-related health problems.

Step 2 (optional):

If you have time (10 minutes is adequate for this) reinforce these arguments as follows:

Swap the cards around and ask each group to spend a few minutes preparing how they would start a conversation with someone based on the statements above and the arguments you have discussed. Ask everyone to move around and practice starting conversations and responding to criticisms.

Step 3 (essential)

Actions:

“There is nothing any of us can do to stop the government’s attack on health and safety at work” – False!

UNISON is campaigning to challenge the government’s attack on health and safety at work. In 2012, UNISON supported the TUC campaign to make International Workers’ Memorial Day on 28 April a day of action to defend health and safety from the government’s attack. UNISON’s branches and members took part and organised regional and community-based events, lobbied their local MPs and approached local media. They successfully raised awareness of the issues by handing out 4,800 leaflets, putting up 2,400 posters and negotiating a one minute silence with their employers.

UNISON branches have already succeeded in overturning planned cuts. See the UNISON website for more information.

Start by asking the group for their suggestions for actions they can carry out and outline these on a flip chart. Then add the following:

The UNISON Million Voices campaign is sending out details of regular actions to anyone who wants to sign up to receive them. Here’s what to do:

- sign up to Million Voices now (if you have internet access, get people to sign on straight away – unison.org.uk and check the box saying you’d like to be kept up to date) and agree to carry out the actions
- start a conversation with at least five people in the workplace about these issues
- contact your MP or local councillors to tell them why they shouldn’t cut health and safety
- write to your local papers or go onto their website and tell them why health and safety matters to you
- become a UNISON safety rep and organise and campaign around health and safety issues at work – this is the best way of challenging the attack on health and safety.

Safety reps have specific duties, as well as some very important legal rights including the powers to:

- investigate complaints on behalf of members
- take up issues they notice or that members bring to their attention
- carry out health and safety inspections of the workplace at least four times a year
- demand information relevant to the health and safety of employees
- have time off, with pay, to do their job as health and safety rep and to attend trade union courses.

You don’t need to be a health and safety expert to consider taking on this role as UNISON provides comprehensive training for all our reps.

To find out more about the role of the health and safety rep and how UNISON can help with training

and information, please contact your branch health and safety officer or your branch secretary.

Ask everyone in the room to commit to as many of these actions as possible. If possible get them to complete the first one then and there if you have internet access.

Appendix three: UNISON resources

Regional pool

The regional pool exists to provide additional financial support to branches so that they can undertake planning and activities aimed at building branch organisation in line with UNISON's objectives. There is no financial limit to individual claims, which may be for purchases, to provide staff or to fund activists for a defined organising project or other costs necessary to meet the objectives of your proposal. Claims will be considered by an appropriate regional committee and the branch will be accountable and must show how it has used any award made. Ask your regional organiser for more information. For full guidelines see unison.org.uk.

General Political Fund

UNISON uses the General Political Fund (GPF) to pay for political campaigning at branch, regional and national level as well as for research and lobbying in parliament to pursue UNISON's objectives and priorities. This campaigning activity may be of a political, though not party political, nature. For further information see unison.org.uk.

Any branch that has members who contribute to the GPF can apply for financial support for a local campaign or activity. Requests for GPF money to support campaigning must demonstrate how the proposed activity supports the objectives and must be submitted using the standard form (unison.org.uk) to the regional secretary.

Labour Link

The UNISON Labour Link fund is affiliated to the Labour Party and this allows the union to play an active and important role in the Labour Party at every level.

Branches with Labour Link members can form a Labour Link section within the branch, which can affiliate to the local Labour Party. They can send representatives and motions to party meetings to win support for UNISON's aims, including health and safety. Branches can also elect delegates to represent UNISON on the general management committees of the local Labour Party, where policy, campaigning and organisational issues are agreed and where there are important links with local councillors and MPs.

More information can be found at unison.org.uk.

Materials

Whether you or safety reps in your branch are visiting colleagues at work, attending a staff induction event or running a recruitment stall, you will need to have good recruitment materials and basic information to hand out.

UNISON health and safety materials, including those for recruitment, are available on the web at unison.org.uk. Job and sector specific materials are produced by the various service groups, and these are available on the website. Items such as guides, leaflets and posters can be ordered by contacting stock orders either through the online catalogue at unison.org.uk or by email: stockorders@unison.co.uk.

For email orders you will need to state the document title and stock number, the quantity required, your name, your branch name and number, your telephone number and full postal address.

General recruitment materials can be found on the UNISON recruitment webpage at unison.org.uk or downloaded or ordered from UNISON's online catalogue.

Promotional items

UNISON pens, lanyards, stress toys, coffee mugs, t-shirts, badges, bags and more are ideal for recruitment events and promoting your branch. The TC Advertising Gifts is the only supplier of promotional items approved by UNISON. They can supply a wide range of promotional items printed

with UNISON's logo and branch details. The items are all ethically sourced and comply with UNISON's standards.

For further information see www.tc-unison.co.uk. Alternatively, contact TC Advertising Gifts by email unison@tc-group.co.uk or call on 01844 275700.

Design and print via the online print service

This gives you the opportunity to drop your own locally relevant text into professionally designed templates with the correct UNISON branding. There are a number of templates on the site, ranging from letterheads to campaign leaflets, posters and pull-up stands. For further information see unison.org.uk.

Appendix four: Model article for branch newsletters and websites

You may wish to use this as the basis for an article in your branch newsletter or on your branch website. You can fill in branch details as appropriate.

Dear

Do you believe that everyone should be able to work without having their health damaged by their job?

The (add name of branch here) UNISON branch does. As a result of our health and safety campaigns on issues such as stress, repetitive strain injuries (RSI), violence and back pain, big strides have been made towards protecting people at work from injury and ill health. But, the government's attack on health and safety is threatening to turn the clock back on UNISON's progress on safety at work.

The government has cut health and safety funding, reduced the number of workplace inspections, and undermined the ability of councils to enforce health and safety rules. It also intends to scrap health and safety rules, which it claims are a burden on business; a view not shared by the majority of businesses.

Health and safety legislation has been introduced to keep you healthy and safe at work. UNISON believes that by cutting the funding to develop and enforce these rules, employers and the taxpayer will face the bigger burden of an injured and unwell workforce.

Now more than ever, it is important that we organise and campaign to challenge the government's attack on health and safety at work. If you share our belief that everyone should be able to work without having their health damaged by their job, join UNISON in speaking up for health and safety.

Speak up for health and safety

Here are some simple actions that you can take:

- go to unison.org.uk and add your voice to our campaign
- encourage your family and friends to sign up too
- contact your MP or local councillors to tell them why they shouldn't cut health and safety
- write to your local papers or go onto their website and tell them why health and safety matters to you
- join UNISON online today at unison.org.uk/join
- become a UNISON safety rep – evidence shows that the presence of a well-trained safety rep can halve the risk of accidents at work.

Safety reps have specific duties, as well as some very important legal rights including the powers to:

- investigate complaints on behalf of members
- take up issues they notice or that members bring to their attention
- carry out health and safety inspections of the workplace at least four times a year
- demand information relevant to the health and safety of employees
- have time off, with pay, to do their job as health and safety rep and to attend trade union courses.

You don't need to be a health and safety expert to consider taking on this role as UNISON provides comprehensive training for all our reps.

To find out more about the role of the health and safety rep and how UNISON can help with training

and information, please contact the branch health and safety officer (add details here).

Appendix five: Using social media

Not all campaigning and organising needs to be done face-to-face. We are increasingly using online campaigning to get our messages across and find support for our campaigns. One of the advantages that social media have is that they have the capacity to go viral. This means that a message can be spread from one user to another very quickly.

The internet must be part of our new campaigning tools, but it must not take over from traditional face-to-face and other forms of campaigning.

Setting up a website

This section looks at using social media, but you may first need to consider whether you need to be online and if the branch needs a website. Further advice about going online and setting up a website or blog can be found in the UNISON guide Effective campaigning, which is available online: unison.org.uk.

What are social media?

All social media are internet-based. This means that they are active 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and they require a more interactive relationship with the audience than a traditional website. You need time and commitment to update information and to read and moderate comments or contributions. The media are used to establish a presence with the audience, interact with the audience and build your membership.

The four main types of social media are:

1. Blogging

Blogging involves writing and posting a regular column, which allows for a longer analysis and comment. You will need to have set up an online blog or full website before you can do this. Blogs can host a variety of information and perform a number of functions:

- resources for campaigns
- comments, details and debate
- help people find each other
- host interactive maps to add local information
- allow people to add their own stories and advertise events
- bring blogs together and signpost to relevant blogs
- ask people directly to do something
- add Twitter feeds (see below).

Examples of blogs:

Touchstoneblog.org.uk

falseeconomy.org.uk/blog

2. Forums and networks (including Facebook)

Forums and networks allow an exchange of views and sharing of information in a shorter form than blogging. The main social network that people use is Facebook. Below are some examples of UNISON Facebook groups and other networks to join.

Setting up a Facebook group

Setting up a Facebook group is easy but it takes commitment to keep the group up-to-date. For help setting up a Facebook group for a branch or a specific campaign go to: facebook.com/help/?page=904#!/help/?section=using

The aim of a Facebook group is to update members and get members of the group to do something that hopefully makes a quick impact, for example emailing or writing to their MP or local newspaper or attending an event.

When running a facebook group, you should:

- include details of how people can take part
- refer to a specific request or action
- include links to other relevant information or websites
- give regular updates
- send messages directly to members of the group
- moderate comments

- close the group when appropriate.

- **UNISON Facebook pages**

UNISON: [facebook.com/home.php?#!/pages/UNISON/108190912534823](https://www.facebook.com/home.php?#!/pages/UNISON/108190912534823)

UNISON NHS: [facebook.com/home.php?#!/ourhnsourfuture](https://www.facebook.com/home.php?#!/ourhnsourfuture)

UNISON Million Voices: [facebook.com/home.php#!/amillionvoices](https://www.facebook.com/home.php#!/amillionvoices)

UNISON young members: [facebook.com/home.php?#!/youngunison](https://www.facebook.com/home.php?#!/youngunison)

Examples of network websites:

False Economy (supported by UNISON): falseeconomy.org.uk

Left Foot Forward: leftfootforward.org/

3. Twitter

Twitter is based on sharing information through a 140-character message. It is a way of connecting with other people who share your interests or who might be interested in what you have to say. It is also used to direct people to useful blogs or websites.

You can find out about the different ways of using Twitter and get more technical details from the Twitter website twitter.com/about.

UNISON tweets:

twitter.com/unisonmv

twitter.com/unison_hs

twitter.com/unisontweets

4. YouTube

YouTube allows people to share video footage with a wide audience by uploading their own videos and posting them on social networking sites such as Facebook.

UNISON has started to use videos and TV on its main website and regions and branches are encouraged to do this too. Some regions have taken extracts from UNISON DVDs and put these

on YouTube as a way of sharing and promoting the DVD.

You can find out more about using YouTube and get more technical details from the YouTube website youtube.com/t/about_youtube

Examples of UNISON YouTube videos:

UNISON safety inspection video
youtube.com/watch?v=9ud5tcqcZhl&feature=youtu.be

UNISON Northern young members regional pay video
youtube.com/watch?v=GzYxbDkPWS0&feature=plcp

Appendix six: Recruitment tips and techniques

One of the most important roles for safety reps is to recruit new members. The most common reason people give for not being a member is “nobody asked me”. Face-to-face recruiting is proven to be the most effective way to attract new members, and the best people to recruit new members are you and your safety reps who work alongside them.

Everyone approaches recruitment in different ways but here are some ideas to try out.

A recruitment strategy might include:

- recruitment drives and activities such as recruitment stalls and desk drops
- establishing a recruitment team
- recruitment briefings for your safety reps
- training sessions on recruitment techniques.

As a result of the government’s austerity measures, more workers are being affected by health and safety issues. For example, redundancies have led to increased workloads, which raises stress levels. Health and safety issues are good organising issues because:

- health and safety affects all workers
- health and safety issues can be won

- health and safety can prompt workers to take action.

Always carry copies of UNISON membership application forms and other relevant recruitment material and encourage all your safety reps to do the same. Read *appendix three* for more information on ordering materials.

Have ready some examples of how UNISON membership has benefited members in local workplaces, for example successful cases the union has won (you don't need to name names) or successful local or national campaigns. Workers are more likely to join if they realise that we are an active and campaigning union. Local issues may seem more relevant to workers.

Speak with all new starters and staff you believe are not in the union about the benefits of union membership. Put forward the reasons for joining UNISON. UNISON membership is about providing fellow workers with support, campaigning together to improve things and promoting the core values that UNISON backs, like equality and fairness in the workplace. It may be about a local campaign that would benefit the potential member. But the approach needs to fit the person you are speaking to, and the individual benefits will vary.

Ask if they have any health and safety issues at work or questions about their employment. You may not be able to come up with an answer, but offer advice or support if you can. If you can't, say you'll find out and get back to them.

You should always listen, take time to learn about the worker and their concerns and be positive; workers are more likely to join if we are genuinely interested in them and try to help, even if we can't solve all their problems.

Don't argue – deal with objections to joining by giving examples of our successes. Be honest about the union. No organisation is perfect and we are democratic – our members' views can change things.

If you don't succeed, leave one or two leaflets that may be of interest. Go back another time.

Make sure the union is visible in your workplace by organising a UNISON notice board that is kept up to date with current campaigns and your contact details.

Use a branch newsletter to raise the profile of the branch and the union and to highlight current campaigns. Always include information on the benefits of union membership and how to join for non-members who may be reading it.

Review your recruitment activities on a regular basis to ensure they are as effective as possible.

For further tips see unison.org.uk.

Appendix seven: The importance of one-to-one conversations workshop

What are the aims of this activity?

- To understand the importance of one-to-one conversations in organising around health and safety.
- To offer the 'anger agitate hope action' method as an effective way of carrying out these conversations.
- To practice a one-to-one conversation with a member, potential member or member of the public.

Who is it aimed at?

Any group of activists or members. It can be used as part of a branch or workplace meeting or as a stand-alone activity.

Who can run it?

Any rep, branch officer, lay tutor or organiser with some experience of running discussions.

What resources do you need?

Flip charts. Pens.

Preparation

Write the following on a piece of flip chart paper before the session.

- We need to turn fear into anger.
- We need to turn despondency into hope. Being angry isn't enough.
- We need to turn apathy into action.

Timings

One hour and 30 minutes.

Step one – 15 minutes

Introduce the activity by outlining the following points.

- We know that we are going to face massive issues over the next few years.
- For example the government's cuts are going to reduce staffing levels, increase workloads and stress levels and tempt employers to introduce short cuts on health and safety, which will put lives and the health of our members at risk. We know it will be crucial to campaign, mobilise, form alliances, and get members and the public on our side.
- In order to do this we need to mobilise our members and recruit more activists. We may need to prepare people for action.

Ask the group these two questions and write up their responses on some flip chart paper.

1. How are your members feeling about health and safety at work at the moment?
2. What do your members say about the government's attack on health and safety at work and where do they get those messages from?

We need to try to educate members, potential members and the public about the government's attack on health and safety. We must convince them that there is an alternative and that they can do something about it. The most effective way to do this is to have one-to-one conversations so that we can get to the root of what is worrying them and their family and give them a sense that they can do something to make a difference.

Go through the flip chart paper that you prepared earlier. Explain that we can only achieve the things below by having one-to-one conversations with our members and potential members.

- We need to turn fear into anger.
- We need to turn despondency into hope. Being angry isn't enough!
- We need to turn apathy into action.

Step two – 45 minutes

Tell the group that we need to get out there to talk to members, potential members and the public.

- Talk to our members, not at them!
- Have a plan for the conversation and learn the skills.
- Find out what their health and safety concerns are. How will the government's attack on health and safety at work affect them personally?
- Ask members to take small actions so that when we ask them to take a major action, it's not the first time we have talked to them.
- Record who you have spoken to, when, and who showed interest and might become active. Then follow it up.
- We are often so used to answering members' questions, being the expert and representing members that it can be difficult to take a different approach. Reps should bear this in mind when talking to members and potential members.

Our method for having these important conversations involves 70% listening and 30% talking and asking questions.

We break the conversation down into a number of steps.

Method

Take the group through each stage of the 'anger agitate hope action' conversation and ask the group for their ideas and examples of the kinds of things they can say and questions they can ask at each stage.

1. Ask the group to think about a group of members, potential members or the public. Ask them to think about how we introduce ourselves.
2. Introduce the group to the 'anger' part of the conversation. This means asking general questions to find out their particular concerns and worries. Ask the group to come up with some ideas focusing on wider questions. During this part of the conversation, the group should identify an issue that the member or potential member feels angry about.
3. Tell the group that once it has found a particular concern, follow-up questions need to be asked. Ask the group to come up with questions that will 'agitate'. Use the issue the group has identified in the previous part of the activity.
4. Introduce the group to the 'hope' part of the conversation. This is the part of the conversation where we ask further questions about how we can do something about the situation and, explaining our union campaign, offer hope that we can make a difference. Ask the group to come up with the hope part of the conversation using the example they have created before.
5. Introduce the 'action' part of the conversation. Ask the person you are talking to to take some small achievable action, make a commitment, encourage members to join the campaign, give us their contact details and sign the union form. Ask the group to come up with the best way of asking the member and potential member to take action.

Step three – 20 minutes

Ask the group to practice the whole method. Put them into pairs and ask them to think of a situation that is familiar to them or ask them to focus on the government's attack on health and safety at work.

Ask the group to use the 'anger agitate hope action' method and practice on each other. Allow about 10 minutes for each role play. Don't play too much of an exaggerated character!

Debrief at the end of the practice session.

- What was the most difficult?
- How did you find listening and questioning, not doing all of the talking?
- What do you need to be aware of?
- How did you move on to the hope part of the conversation?
- Did you get the person to make a commitment to take some action?

Step four – 10 minutes

Ask the safety reps to write down a workplace area, group of members or potential members with whom they will try to have these conversations.

For example:

- Catering staff in hospitals
- Cleaners in universities
- Teaching assistants in schools
- Call centre staff in police headquarters.

Appendix eight: Campaigning and recruiting around hazards workshop

Aim: To practise campaigning tactics around a health and safety issue

For this session you will need cards and pens.

This session should last around one hour.

According to UNISON surveys, many members identify health and safety as the most important workplace issue for them. Organising effectively around health and safety can help us recruit new members, retain members and prevent disastrous and unintended changes in members' lives.

Step 1

Divide the group into pairs or groups of three and ask everyone to discuss the health and safety issues facing their members. Write these issues on the

cards provided (one hazard per card). Bring the groups together and cluster all the cards with similar issues.

Step 2

Ask the groups to think about which of the hazards they identified on the cards would make the best campaign issues based on the criteria on *page 9*. Get them to pick one or two issues, then make a note of:

- which members/potential members would be affected by the issue;
- what the branch can/wants to achieve on this issue; and
- what needs to be done.

Useful links

UNISON resources

The following UNISON guides may be of interest and assist you with your recruiting, organising and campaigning activities to defend health and safety at work.

Organising for health and safety guide

See unison.org.uk

This guide suggests how branches can review their effectiveness in health and safety and use health and safety to recruit new members and new safety representatives. It will also help to develop the skills of existing activists. The guide outlines general organising techniques such as one-to-ones, workplace profiles and techniques to help overcome objections.

Effective campaigning guide

See unison.org.uk

This guide includes everything you need to run a successful campaign, from planning, delivery and how to deal with the media, to using social networking sites and new media, and accessing UNISON resources.

Recruiting and organising activist materials

See unison.org.uk

These materials are designed to provide a flexible approach to learning for health and safety representatives. The activities use trade union education methods to:

- build up participants' confidence in using a range of recruitment techniques
- identify barriers to recruiting and organising members and possible solutions to such barriers
- highlight daily workplace situations that might allow for the recruitment of new members.

The activities also encourage participants to think about what happens next in terms of planning and delivering recruitment and organising projects within their workplaces.

Further information

Further information, policy and guidance on health and safety can be found at: unison.org.uk

Websites

The following websites may also be of interest and assist you with your recruiting, organising and campaigning activities to defend health and safety at work. Please note that UNISON is not responsible for the content of any external websites.

BackCare

backcare.org.uk

BackCare is a registered charity that aims to reduce the burden of back pain by providing information and support, promoting good practice and funding research into back pain and back injuries.

Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC)

equalityhumanrights.com

The EHRC was established under the Equality Act 2006. It replaces and brings together the work of the

Equal Opportunity Commission, the Racial Equality Commission and the Disability Rights Commission. It also has responsibility for other strands of equality including age, sexual orientation, religion or belief and human rights.

The EHRC provides information and guidance on discrimination and human rights issues and guidance for employers. It also operates a helpline in England, Scotland and Wales. The address and helpline numbers can be found on their website.

Hazards

hazards.org

Hazards magazine provides comprehensive information for safety reps and is supported by the Trades Union Congress.

Health and Safety Executive (HSE)

hse.gov.uk

The HSE works to ensure that risks to people's health and safety from work activities are properly controlled. It provides advice, guidance and regulations on health and safety. It also inspects some workplaces along with local environmental health officers.

Repetitive Strain Injury (RSI) Awareness

rsi.org.uk

RSI Awareness offers advice and information about the many different aspects of coping with RSI. It also provides details of local support groups in many areas of the UK, whose members meet regularly, exchange experiences and information and offer one another mutual support.

Trades Union Congress (TUC)

tuc.org.uk

The TUC provides comprehensive information on a wide range of health and safety concerns. It also produces a free weekly online bulletin for safety reps.

UK National Work-Stress Network

workstress.net

The UK National Work-Stress Network actively campaigns for the eradication of the causes of work-related stress and associated illnesses. It offers advice and information on work-related stress and works in conjunction with the Hazards campaign, the TUC, UK trade unions and European organisations.

**Three simple ways to join UNISON today
and get essential cover wherever you work**



Join online at
joinunison.org



Call us on
0800 171 2193



Ask your UNISON rep
for an application form

**Following
page
is the
poster**

Safety in numbers

UNISON - taking your health and safety seriously

UNISON believes that everyone should be able to work without having their health damaged by their job.

But the government's latest attacks on health and safety are threatening to turn the clock back on progress we have made to make workplaces safer and healthier.

Help us to protect you and your workplace

- Join **UNISON** online today at joinunison.org or call 0800 171 2193
- Become a **UNISON** safety rep - evidence shows the presence of a well-trained safety rep can halve the risk of accidents at work.

To find out more contact your branch health and safety officer:

Or go to unison.org.uk/safety

**Following
2 pages
is the
leaflet**

Safety in numbers

UNISON – taking your health and safety seriously

Do you believe that everyone should be able to work without having their health damaged by their job?

UNISON does. As a result of our health and safety campaigns, big strides have been taken to protect people at work from injury and ill health.

But the government's attack on health and safety is threatening to turn the clock back on this progress.

The government has cut health and safety funding, reduced the number of workplace inspections and undermined the ability of councils to enforce health and safety rules. They also intend to scrap health and safety regulations, which they claim are a burden on business.

UNISON believes that by cutting the funding to develop and enforce health and safety at work, business and the taxpayer will face the bigger burden of an injured and unwell workforce.

Now more than ever, it is important that we organise and campaign against the government's attacks on health and safety at work. If you believe that everyone should be able to work without having their health damaged by their job, then join UNISON in speaking up for health and safety.

Here's how you can get involved

- If you work in public services or for a private company or voluntary sector organisation providing public services, join us online today at joinunison.org or call **0800 171 2193**
- Become a UNISON safety rep. Evidence shows the presence of a well-trained safety rep can halve the risk of accidents at work
- Go to the union's website unison.org.uk and find out more about what the union is doing to protect you at work
- Contact your MP or local councillors to tell them why they shouldn't cut health and safety
- Write to your local papers or go onto their websites and tell them

why health and safety matters to you.

What safety reps do

Safety reps have specific duties, as well as some very important legal rights including the powers to:

- investigate complaints on behalf of members
- take up issues they notice or that members bring to their attention
- carry out health and safety inspections of the workplace at least four times a year
- demand information relevant to the health and safety of employees
- have time off, with pay, to do their job as health and safety rep and to attend trade union courses.

You don't need to be a health and safety expert to consider taking on this role as UNISON provides comprehensive training for all our reps.

To find out more about the role of the health and safety rep and how UNISON can help with training and information, please contact your branch health and safety officer or your branch secretary.

For more information, or to join UNISON call **0845 355 0845**.
Textphone users call **0800 0 967 968**.
Visit unison.org.uk/safety.

UNISON –
taking your health and
safety seriously

**Following
4 pages
is the
Safety in
numbers
newsletter
Issue 2**

Safety in numbers

UNISON's health and safety newsletter

Issue 2 Spring 2013



Remember the dead, fight for the living

Research shows that 50,000 people die every year from injuries and illness related to their job. Most don't die of mystery ailments, or in tragic 'accidents'. They die because an employer decided their safety and health just wasn't that important a priority. International Workers' Memorial Day commemorates those workers.

International Workers' Memorial Day is held on 28 April every year, and all over the world workers and their reps hold events, demonstrations, vigils and a whole host of other activities to mark the day.

Fighting for the living

One of the many ways in which UNISON helps to fight for the living is by helping members to receive compensation for injuries at work, such as the healthcare worker who lost the majority of her sight in her left eye after a service user spat in it.

The 32 year old was working as a support worker for adults with challenging behaviour when she was spat at by the service user.

The service user had a reputation for spitting but the trust failed to put in place adequate preventative measures.

She is now awaiting a corneal transplant in her eye after the incident left her with only 20 per cent vision in the eye.

UNISON instructed Thompsons Solicitors to investigate a claim for compensation on the grounds that her employer, Bradford District Care NHS



Trust, failed to assess the risk to staff when dealing with patients. The Trust admitted liability and settled the claim out of court just weeks before trial for £110,000.

Unfortunately, such claims may become more difficult to win unless legislation aimed at making it harder to claim compensation for injuries at work is blocked.

Join us in speaking up for health and safety

Making compensation claims harder to win is not the only strategy used by the government to 'kill off the health and safety culture for good'. They have already cut health and safety funding, reduced the number of workplace inspections and undermined the ability of councils to enforce health and safety rules. They

also intend to scrap health and safety regulations, which they claim are a burden on business.

UNISON believes that these government cuts means that workers, businesses and taxpayers will face the bigger burden of an injured and unwell workforce.

Now more than ever, it is important that we organise and campaign against the government's attacks on health and safety at work. If you believe that everyone should be able to work without having their health damaged by their job, then join UNISON in speaking up for health and safety.

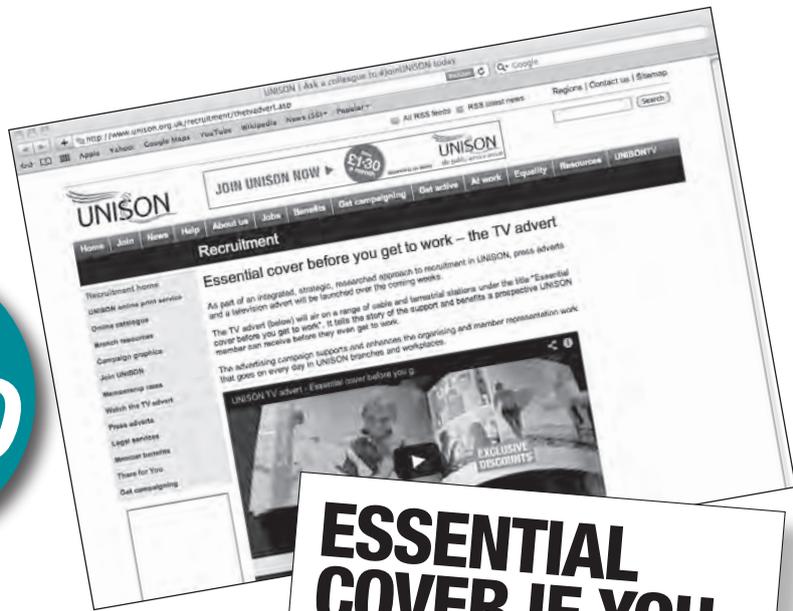
Here's how you can get involved

- If you work in public services, join us online today at joinunison.org
- Become a UNISON safety rep. Evidence shows the presence of a well-trained safety rep can halve the risk of accidents at work
- Go to the union's website unison.org.uk and find out more about what the union is doing to protect you at work
- Contact your MP or local councillors to tell them why they shouldn't cut health and safety or write to your local papers or go onto their websites and tell them why health and safety matters to you – email us at healthandsafety@unison.co.uk for help.

UNISON launches major recruitment campaign

ESSENTIAL COVER WHEREVER YOU WORK

From **£1.30** a month



On 11 March UNISON launched a major recruitment campaign to boost our strength in workplaces at a time when public services are under sustained attack from the coalition government.

General secretary Dave Prentis wants the union to represent thousands of workers who have not joined a union and who have little or no defence against the government's attack on their jobs.

He has told UNISON members and activists: "In many workplaces we're 50% unionised. We should be 100% unionised."

And he promises that UNISON will do everything in its power to help its activists achieve that saying: "We need to strengthen the union, we need to make sure that the activists are supported and we need to make sure that our members and potential members know that UNISON is there for them."

The first phase of the recruitment campaign kicked off on 11 March, spearheaded by a national advertising campaign including television adverts, national and local press advertising, online and social media.

A range of new recruitment materials is available for branches

to use in workplaces and the union has reviewed how it processes applications to ensure that people find it quick and easy to join UNISON.

This recruitment campaign is happening against the backdrop of disastrous government policies that Mr Prentis describes as "the most frightening we've ever dealt with, more so even than those under Margaret Thatcher.

"Our members are in the eye of the storm. What keeps them awake at night is the worry about losing their jobs, about privatisation and how they can continue to make ends meet after living with a pay freeze that has lasted over three years.

"As their union, they turn to us to help. And we've got to be there for them. So it's important that we as their union are strong. To be a strong union you have to have growing membership, you've got to speak on behalf of the whole workforce, not just a small part of it.

"This is about increasing density, making the union strong, putting the union in a position where it will weather the storm and set a legacy for future public service workers."

ESSENTIAL COVER IF YOU WORK IN PUBLIC SERVICES

From **£1.30** a month

Worried about your job in public services? In these uncertain times there's never been a better time to join UNISON.

For as little as £1.30 a month our members get:

- advice, support and help at work
- a helpline that is open until midnight
- legal help for you at work and your family at home
- plus a wide range of exclusive member discounts.

Annual salary	Monthly cost
Up to £2,000	£1.30
£2,001 - £5,000	£2.50
£5,001 - £8,000	£3.30
£8,001 - £11,000	£3.80
£11,001 - £14,000	£4.25
£14,001 - £17,000	£4.70
£17,001 - £20,000	£5.15
£20,001 - £25,000	£5.40
£25,001 - £30,000	£5.65
£30,001 - £35,000	£5.90
Over £35,000	£6.15

Join online at joinunison.org or call free on 0800 171 2193

UNISON essential cover for you **UNISON**
the public service union

What you can do

Find out what is happening in your branch and make sure you volunteer with recruiting new members in your workplace. You can put up posters, talk to your colleagues or make sure that our recruitment leaflets are available to non members where you work.

You can find out what resources are available to help on the UNISON website at unison.org.uk/recruitment.



"...we need to make sure that our members and potential members know that UNISON is there for them"

Job cuts lead to an ‘astronomical’ rise in stress

Thousands of work days are being lost to stress as hard-pressed council staff helping some of the South West region’s most vulnerable people struggle to cope in the wake of spending cuts.

Stress caused Somerset County Council staff to go sick on several hundred more days in 2012 than the year before. There are fears that the absence rate will only get worse in 2013 after the authority proposed another 189 redundancies.

Oliver Foster-Burnell, Unison Area Organiser said “job cuts and restructuring has already taken a shocking toll on staff health and morale. They are at breaking point. The rise in stress is astronomical and we are trying to engage with the council on how to reduce it”.

And it’s not only Somerset County Council employees that are suffering from work-related stress. A recent UNISON survey of 14,000 local government workers revealed that a staggering 87 per cent are struggling to cope with increased stress and pressure at work.

What is work-related stress?

Work-related stress is defined as a harmful reaction that people have to undue pressures and demands placed on them at work. Work-related stress is more common than you might think and can lead to depression, anxiety and other serious health problems.

Any job can cause stress and can affect anybody regardless of their status or grade. And stress isn’t just caused by overwork, it’s also caused by job insecurity, bullying and threats of violence.

Scale of the problem

According to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and the Labour Force Survey, the total number of cases of stress in 2011/12 was 428,000 (40 per



cent) out of a total of 1,073,000 for all work-related illnesses. The main work activities causing stress, or making it worse, was work pressure, lack of managerial support and work-related violence and bullying.

What is my employer’s duty?

Your employer has a legal duty to ensure your health, safety and welfare at work – and this includes preventing stress. They must assess the risk of stress and bring in measures to prevent or reduce that risk. As part of this process, employees should be asked to assist in the assessment.

Tackling work-related stress

The reality is that work-related stress is a problem for many UNISON members and is a difficult issue for them to raise with employers.

You don’t have to face stress alone. Our safety representatives have the legal right to raise health and safety issues on your behalf, so if you have a problem with stress, get UNISON involved. We will talk to your employer and look at practical ways to help you reduce your stress at work. Talk to your safety rep, visit unison.org.uk/safety or call 0845 355 0845.

Well-being in the workplace is not just about 'after-work yoga classes'

That is the message of the TUC Report 'Work and well-being'. When trying to improve employees' well-being, many employers prefer to look at changing the behaviour of workers and building up their 'resilience'. Rather than focus on prevention and remove the causes of ill health, many employers prefer to concentrate on superficial measures such as introducing on-site massage or after-work yoga classes.

The TUC and UNISON believe the real gains are to be made by preventing people becoming ill or injured. Every year 1.2 million people who are in work suffer from an illness they believe is caused by their work. A further 700,000 people who are no longer in work are suffering ill health because of a work-related illness.

The biggest cause of work-related sickness is musculoskeletal disorders such as back pain and RSI, followed closely by stress, anxiety and depression. Between them they make up over 70 per cent of work-related sickness absence. These illnesses are all avoidable, as are injuries at work.

Union involvement in workplace well-being

UNISON safety reps play an important part in ensuring that employers' risk assessments – which enable the employer to address the issue of illness and injury caused by work – are done properly.

That's why the safest workplaces are those where there are well-organised and active safety reps using their rights fully. Trade union involvement:



- helps reduce injuries at work
- leads to reductions in the levels of ill-health caused by work
- encourages greater reporting of injuries and near-misses
- makes workers more confident
- helps develop a more positive safety culture in the organisation
- saves the economy many millions of pounds.
- investigate complaints on behalf of members
- take up issues they notice or that members bring to their attention
- carry out health and safety inspections of the workplace at least four times a year
- demand information relevant to the health and safety of employees
- have time off, with pay, to do their job as a safety rep and to attend trade union courses.

If you are a UNISON member, why not think of becoming a safety rep. You don't need to be a health and safety expert to take this on as the union makes sure that all our reps have proper training and support in their role.

Safety reps have specific functions, as well as some very important legal rights including the powers to:

To find out more about the role of the safety rep and how UNISON can help with training, please contact your nearest safety rep, your branch health and safety officer or your branch secretary.

Three simple ways to join UNISON today:



Join online at
joinunison.org



Call us on
0800 171 2193



Ask your UNISON rep
for an application form

UNISON
the public service union