



1

HSE has shrunk

- The number of staff at the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has decreased over the past few years.
- Employment numbers fell from 3,700 in 2009/10 to 2,400 in 2021/22.
- Funding for the HSE is 43% lower over that period in real terms on a comparative basis.
- There has also been a lack of results from the FFI scheme, which was implemented in 2012.

2

The HSE Leaders

Sarah Albon (Chief Exec.) since 2019 and Sarah Newton (Chair) since 2020



3

HSE's 2025 agenda: 7 highlights from its Annual General Meeting August 2025

Now four years into its ambitious 10-year strategy, the HSE used this year's Annual General Meeting (AGM) to clarify its 2025 agenda, sharpening its focus on today's most pressing health and safety challenges.



4

Mayfield* Review (published November 5th 2025)

- The Mayfield report describes the challenge of rising inactivity due to ill-health as a matter for the world of work as well as the welfare system.
- The Government should now fast-track the Review's recommendations, moving quickly from the initial phase to full deployment, according to the Resolution Foundation.
- The report confirms that rising ill-health and disability pose a genuine challenge to our labour market, our economy, and living standards.
- Employers will inevitably play a critical role in supporting people to stay in, or return to, the workforce, says the Resolution Foundation.
- Public spending or welfare changes alone would never enough to achieve this.

* Former
Head of
John Lewis

5

1. Work-related health will take centre stage

The HSE made it clear: work-related ill health is now its primary focus.

Each year, work-related ill health leads to an estimated 2.4 million working days lost in Great Britain, costing the economy billions and causing lasting harm to workers' wellbeing.

Ill health accounts for the majority of workplace absence and is a bigger threat to employees than many acute injuries.

For organisations which have historically prioritised safety over health, now's the time to rebalance.

6

In the year ahead, employers can expect:

- **More inspections and investigations** focused on occupational health risks – particularly dust (including silica), noise, asbestos, and manual handling.
- **Increased scrutiny of musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs)** and whether appropriate risk controls are in place.
- **Greater pressure to implement and evidence health surveillance**, particularly in higher-risk environments.
- **A continued focus on stress, burnout and work-related mental health**, with new insights expected from the HSE's ongoing research programme into stress prevention

7

This renewed focus builds on 2024/25 activity, during which the HSE:

- Completed **over 7,000 inspections** specifically targeting ill-health risks
- Carried out nearly **3,000 MSD risk assessments**
- Undertook **more than 2,000 checks on health surveillance compliance**
- Inspected **over 700 licensed asbestos removal contractors**

8

2. RIDDOR is under review

The HSE has announced a formal review of RIDDOR (the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations) to make the process simpler, more proportionate, and fit for modern work.

Expected areas of reform include:

- Clearer definitions of what must be reported
- Streamlined processes for submitting reports
- Better alignment with today's working patterns and technologies

Work-related violence and road traffic incidents are not part of this review – but the HSE confirmed that a separate consultation on violence at work is coming.

NB *The Worker Protection Act 2023 came into effect in October 2024*

9

3. Fee for Intervention could become 'fairer'

- The HSE is re-evaluating its Fee for Intervention (FFI) scheme, which enables the regulator to charge businesses for the time spent investigating and resolving material breaches of health and safety law – **currently set at £183 per hour.**
- While no final decisions have been made, the review seeks to make FFI:
 - Fairer and more transparent
 - Proportionate to the breach
 - More consistent across sectors
- FFI charges can become costly, especially if linked to improvement or prohibition notices. A review will likely be welcome news to employers and industry groups, many of whom have strongly opposed the current scheme.

10

4. Enforcement remains strong and strategic

The HSE shared some performance highlights, which showed that in the past year:

Over 4,400 enforcement notices were issued, including 1,200 prohibition notices for activities posing imminent risks to life

- **More than 200 prosecutions were brought**, with a 96% conviction rate
- **86% of fatal accident investigations were completed within 12 months**, exceeding the HSE's target

Looking ahead, the HSE says it will continue to embed and refine its risk-based decision-making model. This helps determine which reportable non-fatal incidents to investigate, allowing enforcement efforts to focus on the highest-risk areas.

HSE responds in full to only 24% of resolvable FOI requests, cabinet office reveals

11

5. HSE is embracing AI– and preparing to regulate it

Artificial intelligence (AI) featured prominently at this year's AGM, both in terms of how it's being used by the HSE and how it might be regulated in the future.

Internally, the HSE is already applying AI language models to improve its understanding of risk. Chair of the HSE Board, Sarah Newton, explained that AI is helping the regulator identify mismatches between the real hazards causing workplace incidents, and the risks commonly prioritised during site inspections. Initially used in the construction sector, this approach is now being expanded to analyse risk profiles in the major hazards sector.

12

AI Best practice

At the same time, the HSE is laying the foundations for AI regulation.

Chief Executive Sarah Albon said the regulator is compiling a database of real-world examples of how AI is being used across the industries it oversees.

This will serve as a repository to support risk assessments of AI applications in industrial settings.

The HSE is also working with technology developers to help shape safety benchmarks and standards – particularly where AI interacts with machinery and functional safety systems

How is your use of AI progressing?

13

6. Building safety regulation is changing hands

The Building Safety Regulator (BSR), a new body established in 2023 to oversee building safety, is gradually moving away from the HSE to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

It was confirmed that:

- The transfer will begin soon, with secondary legislation expected before Christmas, but the transition will be gradual.
- The HSE will continue supporting the BSR during the handover and will still regulate employment within construction.



14

Issues with Building Inspectors

Inspector shortages and poor-quality building control applications are currently slowing assessment and approval processes.

To improve efficiency, the BSR plans to:

- Deploy class two inspectors for lower-risk work, freeing class three inspectors to focus on higher-risk cases.
- Establish an internal multidisciplinary team to speed up application assessments, especially for new buildings and remediation projects.

15

7. Recognition that sensible and proportionate regulation is key

Throughout the updates, the HSE stressed the importance of *sensible and proportionate regulation* as the world of work changes. With new technologies, hybrid and gig working arrangements, and emerging risks like AI, the regulator recognises that:

- Regulations need to be fair and balanced to support both business growth and worker safety.
- Enforcement and interventions should focus on the highest risks without placing unnecessary burdens on employers.
- Flexibility and collaboration with industry are key to adapting regulations in a way that remains practical and effective.

This approach underlines the HSE's broader goal: to help businesses and workers thrive in a changing landscape while maintaining strong health and safety standards

16

Top 7 items on HSE's Agenda

1. Work-related health will take centre stage
2. RIDDOR is under review
3. Fee for intervention may become 'fairer'
4. Enforcement remains strong and strategic
5. It's embracing AI– and preparing to regulate it
6. Building safety regulation is changing hands
7. Recognition that sensible and proportionate regulation is key

17

Thank You

Any comments?

18