

## Workers Memorial Day—28 April 2008

Remember the dead and fight for the living on International Workers Memorial Day. UNISON at UK level is campaigning for government recognition of the Day. UNISON member Cathy Peattie MSP is tabling a motion in the Scottish Parliament calling on MSPs to support WMD.

UNISON believes that there needs to be a cultural change in the way work related deaths, injuries, and ill-health are viewed. They are not just part of the job, or just unfortunate. In most cases they are also avoidable. Official recognition of the Day will bring us a step closer towards universal condemnation of the tragic and preventable loss of life, injury, and ill-health. This in turn may lead to better enforcement of existing health and safety laws, and thereby better health and safety at work.

Overleaf is the current list of events across Scotland that we hope branches will support. There are lots of other campaign materials and ideas at the Health and Safety

### Violence against public service staff

Dave Watson and Scott Donohoe reported to the last meeting of the Scottish Health and Safety Committee on their meeting with the minister, Shona Robison MSP on extending the Emergency Workers Act and further measures under the Government's Safe at Work Campaign.

The minister agreed to consider the list of additional workers we want to see covered by the Act and announced new initiatives to strengthen workplace measures in health and local government. The committee will be following up these issues in the coming months.

Over 1000 persons have now been prosecuted under the EWA. Not bad considering the view of the legal establishment that the Act wasn't necessary!

### Date of next meeting

The next meeting of the Health & Safety Committee will be held on **Tuesday, 12 June 2008.**

### Scottish Civil Courts Review

UNISON Scotland has responded critically to a review of civil courts in Scotland headed by Lord Gill. Speakers at a recent STUC conference attacked many aspects of the review that could seriously undermine the ability of trade unions to pursue personal injury cases.

We are concerned not only about the content of this review but over the process and underpinning principles upon which the review is based. We are concerned that key conclusions in the Civil Justice Review have been reached before the issue even went to consultation. We are therefore equally concerned over the extent to which this agenda will be followed irrespective of the consultation response. The narrowly drawn membership of the review, excluding other key stakeholders, gives us little confidence in the review outcome.

The full UNISON Scotland response can be viewed at: <http://www.unison-scotland.org.uk/response/civiljustice.html>

## Remember the dead Fight for the living



# Workers Memorial Day Events in Scotland

Aberdeen	Details not known as yet.	
Clydebank	Saturday 26 April, Clydebank TUC, International Workers Memorial Day Commemoration, Clydebank Plaza, Speakers include Ian Tasker, STUC Assistant Secretary	12 noon
Dundee	Friday 25 April, City Chambers, Annual Memorial Day lecture on the theme, Equality for All, Creating and Inclusive Scotland will be delivered by Mary Senior, STUC Assistant Secretary Monday 28 April, Service at the memorial tree adjacent to Discovery Quay, no further details as yet.	12.30pm
Edinburgh	Monday, 28 March, West Princes Street Gardens, near to Ross Band Stand, Speakers include Louise Adamson, Families Against Corporate Killers, songs from Protest in Harmony.	12 noon to 1 pm
Fife	Memorial Service in Beveridge Park, Kirkcaldy Health and Safety seminar on Health and Safety and the Corporate Manslaughter Bill	11.00am 12noon
Glasgow	Commemoration in George Square, Speakers Karen Thompson, Families Against Corporate Killers; Cllr Stephen Purcell, Leader, Glasgow City Council; Dave Moxham, STUC Deputy General Secretary, Sarah Jones Scottish Government & PCS member, Frank Maguire, Thompsons Solicitors.	1.00pm
North Lanarkshire	Unveiling of North Lanarkshire Workers Memorial, Summerlee Heritage Park, Coatbridge. Speakers include Elaine Smith MSP and Grahame Smith, STUC General Secretary	12 noon
Mid Lothian	International Workers Memorial Day Commemoration will take place as always on Monday 28th April at the commemorative memorial in George V Park, Bonnyrigg, Midlothian.	12.30pm
West Lothian	Health and Safety Seminar, Bathgate Sports Centre followed by commemoration at the workers memorial. Speakers include current STUC Vice President Fiona Farmer	

## Hazards Conference

The 19th UK Hazards conference will be held at Keele University on 18-20 July 2008.

Details and registration from:  
hazconf@gmhazards.org.uk.

## Corporate Homicide

Major Scottish conference on the new offence of corporate homicide will be held in Glasgow on 14 May. Details at [www.corporateaccountability.org](http://www.corporateaccountability.org)

## Personal Injury Cases 2008

UNISON Scotland raised 558 personal injury cases last year and won nearly £2 million in damages for members.

Trips, slips and falls remained the largest single cause of injury. Other significant case types included manual handling, road traffic and needle-stick injuries. The number of criminal injury cases remains low compared with the number of recorded assaults and branches are reminded to advise members to make a claim.

## Corporate Homicide

The new Corporate Homicide provisions came into force in Scotland on 6 April. STUC General

Secretary Grahame Smith has strongly criticised the adequacy of these provisions. He said:

“This legislation will not allow for prosecution of individuals, but only of the company. Even then, only if the failures of a senior manager can be identified”.

For the STUC, and the victim’s families, this is a fudge of the “controlling mind” test that has made the prosecution of companies so difficult in the past”.

The Scottish Government has put off a decision on Scottish legislation to strengthen the provisions. Commenting on this decision Grahame said:

“Is waiting for a negligent employer to cause a workplace fatality the Scottish Government’s vision of delivering justice to victim’s families?”

Government’s at UK and Scottish level appear reluctant to take firm action under pressure from big business. The campaign goes on.



## Branch Health & Safety Officers

Does your branch have a Health & Safety Officer? If so, please send details to Diane Anderson at the link below. Or, please ensure that we have a contact number of someone who is prepared to circulate materials to stewards.

*This Bulletin highlights issues from the Scottish Health & Safety Committee, and any other new information which may be of interest to Health & Safety activists in UNISON. For further information please contact [Diane Anderson](#) or [Dave Watson](#) in the Policy & Information Team*