

Health and Safety Executive turns 50

The national regulator for health and safety in Great Britain today (1 January) celebrates its 50th Anniversary.

Created by the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974, the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) was officially launched on 1st January 1975.

For the last 50 years it has played a central role in reducing workplace death and injury, helping Great Britain become one of the safest places in the world to work. In 1974, 651 employees were killed at work; HSE's latest annual statistics for 2023/24 show that number had reduced to 138.

Sarah Albon, chief executive of HSE, has said that despite the transformation of Britain's workplaces over the past half century, the mission of the regulator remains as relevant as ever.

Sarah said: "Over the past half century, the Health and Safety Executive has led the way in establishing Great Britain as a safe place to work. As we look ahead to the next 50 years, we recognise there is still much for HSE to take on.

"We're proud of our successes over the last five decades, but the fact remains that any work-related death is a tragedy, and there are still far too many workers suffering ill-health brought about by work activity.

"In 2022, we launched our 10-year strategy, Protecting People and Places, to build on HSE's strong foundations and address our current and future challenges.

"So today, HSE's role goes beyond worker protection to include public safety assurance on a range of issues. Recent years have added new responsibilities, such as becoming the appointed Building Safety Regulator and playing an extended role in chemical regulation, post Brexit.

"It is hard to foresee what the world of work will look like in the next 50 years but as ever, our fundamental principle will continue to be to make sure that those who create risk, take responsibility for controlling risk, and those who fail to do so will be held to account.

"We will continue to work with businesses, with industry, with other regulators and with government, to enable strong economic growth, while we continue to deliver our founding principles as we work to protect people and places."

Minister for Social Security and Disability, Sir Stephen Timms, said: "I'm delighted to wish a very happy 50th anniversary to the Health and Safety Executive.

"Over the last half-century this organisation has been at the heart of efforts to protect people and places across Britain: I would like to thank

them for this vital work.

“As we support more people to get into work through our Get Britain Working White paper, and as we move to strengthen protection for workers, their mission will be as important as ever – now and long into the future.”

Notes to editors:

1. [The Health and Safety Executive](#) (HSE) is Britain’s national regulator for workplace health and safety. We are dedicated to protecting people and places, and helping everyone lead safer and healthier lives.
2. More information about the [legislation](#) referred to in this case is available.
3. Further details on the latest [HSE news releases](#) is available.