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## **Royal Mail and BT/Openreach Preparing for European Health & Safety Week 2018:**

### **To: All Branches**

Dear Colleagues,

CWU safety reps at workplaces all across the country are asked to carry out workplace safety inspections and thorough checks later this month, with a focus on awareness-raising, risk assessment and accident prevention.

Wednesday October 24<sup>th</sup> has been chosen as the official 'TUC National Inspection Day', as it falls right in the middle of the 2018 European Health and Safety Week – and this year, as usual, our union will be playing its full part in supporting and highlighting the need for a safe workplace and workforce for all.

At the two companies where the vast majority of CWU members work, operational and safety managers will be fully supporting CWU safety reps in a wide range of joint activities, which will include safety inspections, work-time learning sessions, posters and leaflets and key messages to the workforce.

The headline theme of this year's European Health and Safety Week is – *Healthy Workplaces Manage Dangerous Substances* – something which affects many workers in the UK and all around Europe.

In recent decades many hazardous substances, such as asbestos, have been banned, restricted or subjected to strict regulatory control, however, dangerous substances continue to be a major safety and health issue in some workplaces.

From Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> through to Friday 26<sup>th</sup> October, the aim will be to raise awareness of the risks posed by dangerous substances in the workplace, to promote a culture of risk prevention to eliminate and, where that is not possible, to effectively and safely manage these risks.

"Royal Mail Group and BT Group/Openreach have endorsed and are fully supporting National Inspection Day and European Health and Safety Week and we're encouraging CWU Safety Reps to specifically prioritise inspections at higher risk workplaces, areas or functions or specific jobs and consider whether the workplace is healthy and safe for all," Dave pointed out.

Safety Rep workplace health and safety inspections don't just have to focus on the tangible hard hazards such accommodation issues, equipment, protective clothing, slip and trip risks,

fire risks, and work stations, spot checks can also focus on intangible hazards and solutions that do not have a physical presence, hazardous substances, chemicals, dust and fumes are just as important as are work patterns, specific tasks, working environment and flexible working.

So our message is, please play your full part in Health and Safety Week and National Inspection Day and remember, workplaces with active Safety Reps are twice as safe as those without.

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#### HSE Statistics

*At UK workplaces in 2017/18*

*137 deaths*

*621,000 injuries*

*0.5 million workers were suffering work-related musculoskeletal disorders.*

*0.5 million workers suffering from work-related stress, depression or anxiety.*

*30.4 million working days were lost due to work-related illness and workplace injury.*

*And...*

*12,000 lung disease deaths were estimated to be linked to past work exposures*

*2,515 Mesothelioma deaths were due to past asbestos exposures.*

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#### Key dates:

- *European Health and Safety Week 22-28 October 2018.*
- *National Inspection Day Wednesday 24 October 2018.*

#### Campaign objectives:

- *Target groups of workers with specific needs and functions with higher levels of risk*
- *Raise awareness of risk*
- *Promote risk assessment*
- *Increase knowledge of the legislative framework*

*For further information on EU Health & Safety Week: LTBs 503/18 and 550/18:*

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Yours sincerely



**Dave Joyce**  
**National Health, Safety & Environment Officer**