Increasing job insecurity often leads to lower socio-economic status groups.

Other problems

- Stress and mental ill-health: A TUC safety reps' survey identified workplaces, staffing levels, new management techniques and long hours as the top causes (Hazards 64).
- Musculoskeletal disorders: Jobs are increasingly boring, repetitive, monotonous, highly paced and tiring (Hazards 68).
- Violence and bullying: Bad management, re-organisation and downsizing are driving workers to breaking point (Hazards 65).
- Overwork: UK workers endure the longest hours in the European Union, and do more work for less pay. Japan recognises overwork-related deaths from karoshi and kankōsu - the UK government may have to follow.
- Sickness absence and presenteeism: Punitive sickness absence policies combine with unhealthy work practices to make us too sick to work and too scared to take sick leave (Hazards 66).

The economy is bountiful, but we work harder for less pay. We know more about hazards and their control, but work-related stress, strains, depression and violence are soaring. We have never been more productive, and we are rewarded with temporary contracts, long hours and back-breaking workloads. What on earth is going on?

A lan Greenspan, chairman of the Federal Reserve and the person with this on the bill of the US economy, calls it “constructive destruction.” At work this merger mania, takeovers, economic “constructive destruction”. At work this tiller of the US economy, calls it N

British workplace.

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earth is going on?

questions of workplace change

Poorly motivated or ill-thought out change can mean more than potential new hazards in the workplace, it can mean a union’s bargaining position is undermined. US union advisor Dave Arnott explains that changes in work organisation or technology can affect many different issues and conditions. When evaluating any proposed changes at work, even when management and union are motivated by a concern for safety, union reps should consider all the implications.

- Will there be more or fewer jobs?
- What will the effect be on working conditions, on the day-to-day lives of the members?
- Will the change make it easier for management to keep the pace of work change?
- Will there be subcontracting of work for any reason and will the pace of work change?
- Will there be more or fewer jobs?
- What will be the effect on wages and pay scales?
- Will it be easier or harder for the boardroom, but it is likely to be a dangerous development for the lower ranks.
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