

Hospitality

The hospitality industry has a poor health and safety record. In the 3 year period from 1998/9 to 200/1 over 5000 serious injuries to workers were reported to the local authorities. In common with other industries the level of reporting is low.

Hospitality workers have one thing in common whether they are working behind a bar, in a casino or waiting on tables - contact with members of the public. The public can often be difficult placing unreasonable demands on workers. Failure to meet these demands can lead to aggression and violence.

Passive smoking is also an issue – and at the time of writing this leaflet (2003) a code of practice on passive smoking for the UK had not been implemented, though the Irish government has decided to ban smoking in workplaces from 1 January 2004.

The industry is also one with a high turnover of workers, and many temporary staff, which raises issues of adequate health and safety information and training being provided by the employer.

See next page for **Hazards of Hospitality Work and Action Checklist**

Some Relevant Law

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999

The Workplace (Health Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992

The Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992

The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002

Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981

Some Further information

T & G leaflet Do you suffer from Aches and Pains in silence?

From the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). The HSE has a very large number of free leaflets on this subject

Violence at Work - a guide for employers INDG 69L - free

Passive Smoking at Work INDG63 - free

Slips and Trips. Summary guidance for the Catering Industry CIS 6 - free

Manual Handling in the Catering industry CIS 13- free

Health & Safety of new & expectant mothers in the catering industry CIS 19

Health and Safety for Waiting Staff CIS 20 - free

Noise at Work – Advice for Employers INDG362 – free

Protect your hearing or lose it! INDG363 - a handy card - free

Hazards of Hospitality Work

- **Kitchen** workers are exposed to a number of hazards namely: wet floors; contact cleaning chemicals and food substances causing skin problems; lifting heavy catering equipment leading to back and other musculoskeletal injuries; contact with hot surfaces causing burns; contact with cooking fumes; work in hot temperatures; cuts from knives and dangerous machinery.
- Workers in **pubs, bars and restaurants** are also exposed to tobacco smoke and are at risk of developing respiratory problems.
- Angry and abusive customers especially if intoxicated with alcohol or under the influence of drugs.
- Long hours and shift work.
- Bullying is especially prevalent in these industries particularly in restaurant kitchens and hotels.
- Noise from loud music is a hazard in pubs, bars and clubs

Action Checklist

1. Have risk assessments been carried out to cover all aspects of the work?
2. Have COSHH assessments been carried out on cleaning chemicals?
3. Have manual handling risk assessments been carried out and implemented?
Have workers been trained in safe handling and lifting techniques?
Have workers been trained properly about the dangers of kitchen work? Is there adequate first aid provision?
4. Is there a stress policy?
5. What controls are in place to limit workers' exposure to tobacco smoke?
6. What procedures are in place for dealing with violent customers? Have workers been trained in dealing with such situations?
7. Do workers have adequate rest facilities and regular breaks?
8. Is there a bullying policy?
9. What steps have been taken by the employer to limit or prevent noise exposure eg by putting up partitions?

Pregnancy Hazards

Passive smoking, heavy repetitive work, violence, stress, long working hours, shiftwork, hot temperatures and food smells.