

## Attack continues on falling safety inspections

TUC's warning last week that the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) must reverse a dangerous and dramatic reduction in workplace safety inspections ([Risks 257](#)) has received backing from unions and safety professionals. Scottish Trades Union Congress (STUC) health and safety officer Ian Tasker said the 25 per cent reduction in inspections over three years "is quite clearly an indication that the Health and Safety Executive is applying inspection resources in other areas rather than frontline enforcement." He added: "Any other interventions in workplaces by the HSE other than enforcement should not be at the expense of inspections, the key tool in protecting workers' safety, but through provision of additional resources". He said it was "even more concerning" that the massive reduction only came to light as a result of a series of Freedom of Information requests by the TUC-backed safety journal *Hazards*, with HSE initially denying it had the relevant data. Neil Budworth, president of the safety professionals' organisation IOSH, when quizzed about the TUC-backed report on BBC Radio 4's Today Programme, said: "Some companies really need to be coerced in order to take health and safety seriously. IOSH would like to see something like a doubling of the number of inspectors out there on the streets." Other "regulatory contacts" by HSE have also fallen dramatically. In the Lords, Lord Harrison this week asked the government to respond to the findings of The *Hazards* report. A written reply is expected next month.

- [STUC news release](#). [IOSH news report](#). [Evening Standard](#). [The Guardian](#). [Financial Times](#). [Federation of Small Businesses](#).
- Full report: [Sure, we'll be safe: HSE is walking away from inspections](#), *Hazards*, number 94, Summer 2006.