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## **GOVERNMENT MUST TAKE URGENT ACTION TO PROTECT INJURED WORKERS, SAY LAWYERS**

Health and safety lawyers have urged the Government not to repeal an important workplace regulation which provides protection for injured workers.

Until now, employers have been required by law to retain their insurance policy records for 40 years. This is vital for workers who contract so-called 'long tail' diseases from their employers (such as the fatal asbestos-related cancer mesothelioma, which can take 30 or 40 years to develop in the body). As time passes and records are lost, it becomes increasingly difficult to trace the insurer of a negligent employer.

But the Government has said it will get rid of the regulation because it says it cannot be enforced and represents a burden to business.

“An injured worker has to be able to trace his employer’s insurer in order to obtain the compensation he needs to help him deal with an injury or disease caused by the employer’s negligence,” said Amanda Stevens, president of the Association of Personal Injury Lawyers.

“Removing the regulation which obligates employers to retain their insurance policies really weakens an already creaking system of protection for workers,” she went on. “It is not too late for the Government to change its mind on this and we urge ministers to consider the impact on injured people before going ahead with this move.

“What the Government should be doing is making the system stronger by retaining this regulation and also introducing a database of workplace insurance policies,” she said.



“A compulsory electronic database, similar to that used to record car insurance and TV licenses, would automatically record all employers’ liability insurance policies and would be an effective way to ensure workers who become ill in the future will be able to receive the help they will need.

If a database can be set up to record all the TV licences and car insurance policies in this country, one could most certainly be set up to help injured people.”

-ENDS-

Note to editors:

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- APIL (Association of Personal Injury Lawyers) was established in 1990 by a group of lawyers working on behalf of personal injury victims and now has more than 5,000 members. APIL campaigns for improvements in the law to help people who are injured or become ill through no fault of their own.

Further information can also be found at the organisation’s website - [www.apil.org.uk](http://www.apil.org.uk)