



January 2009

LAWYERS CALL FOR ACTION TO PRESERVE COMPENSATION FOR PLAQUES VICTIMS

Lawyers acting for Northern Ireland's injured workers have called on the Executive to take action to ensure all pleural plaques victims receive compensation.

The plea to protect victims of the asbestos-related condition follows a high profile decision in which the House of Lords ruled sufferers could no longer claim compensation. The decision met with a barrage of opposition and a consultation paper was launched in England and Wales, and legislation to overturn the decision is already going through the Scottish parliament. The Northern Ireland Executive launched its own consultation shortly afterwards.

"We hope the Executive follows the same path as the Scottish Government and legislates to overturn the decision," said Stephen Gray, Northern Ireland's representative for the Association of Personal Injury Lawyers (APIL). "In our response to the Executive, we have made it very clear that plaques victims should not be denied compensation and overturning the decision will ensure this does not happen."

Commenting on the possible introduction of a compensation scheme, Stephen said he had concerns about the effect it would have on victims' rights. He also said it was entirely wrong for the state to be responsible for payments when it was clear who was responsible for causing the injury and, for many years, insurance premiums had been collected to cover potential compensation claims.

-ends-



Notes to editors:

- For more information, or a copy of APIL's response paper, please contact Lisa Wardle, Press & PR Officer, t: 0115 9388715, or Michael Johns, Assistant Press & PR Officer, t: 0115 9388702
- APIL (Association of Personal Injury Lawyers) is a not-for-profit organisation, whose members are dedicated to campaigning 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