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Health and safety review risks injury to workers

Workers could be exposed to unnecessary risk of injury if Britain's health and safety regulations are watered down, a not-for-profit campaign group has warned.

The Association of Personal Injury Lawyers (APIL) has spoken out after it responded to the Department for Work and Pensions' review of health and safety legislation, which closed today (29 July).

APIL vice-president Karl Tonks said: "Any assault on health and safety, in a bid to cut back on what is perceived to be too much regulation, is a shot at the wrong target. All that's needed is to ensure people understand the existing rules properly and apply them with commonsense.

"The number of deaths in the workplace has fallen by 73 per cent since the Health and Safety at Work Act took effect in 1974. The regulations have clearly helped save lives and protect workers from needless injury."

As part of its response, APIL submitted that the levels of expertise a health and safety consultant has should be officially recognised with a kitemark. This would allow an employer to know whether or not he is being given the best possible advice.

"Employers should feel confident in the knowledge that they are taking the right steps to prevent needless injury," added Mr Tonks.

"Health and safety should not be seen as a burden, but as a way of helping to ensure that people who turn up for an honest day's work are not unnecessarily injured. If you cut the negligence, you cut the harm to workers. Not only does it make moral sense, but it makes economic sense too."

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- 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
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