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Britain's dockers at risk as safety measures face the axe

Britain's dock workers could be left without the specialist safety protection they need if plans to water-down safety regulations go ahead.

The Association of Personal Injury Lawyers (APIL) says proposals by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) to axe safety rules specific to dockyards could have 'tragic consequences'.

"Five times more dock workers die than the national average for workplace deaths so the last thing the port industry needs is weaker safety measures," said APIL president Karl Tonks, who specialises in employers' liability cases.

Under the plans, regulations which are specific to docks, such as those ensuring ladders are in place as a means of escape if workers fall into the water, will be scrapped and replaced with guidance.

"Guidance isn't compulsory, and an industry as dangerous as this needs robust rules to protect its workers," said Karl.

"The HSE believes that other regulations, such as those in place for the construction industry for example, will cover the most important safety issues - but they won't. Those regulations even say that sections within them do not apply to dockyards. It's ludicrous.

"The HSE should consider why explicit regulations for dockyards were introduced in the first place. This current obsession with cutting red-tape could have tragic consequences".



Notes for editors:

- APIL's response to the Health and Safety Executive's consultation *Proposals to Remove Fourteen Legislative Measures* is on the APIL website [here](#). 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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