

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



**AP340**

**25 July, 2006**

## **GOVERNMENT URGED TO ENSURE HEALTH AND SAFETY BEGINS IN BOARDROOM**

Lawyers have warned that pressure must be maintained on the Government to introduce new legislation which ensures company directors cannot hide behind the 'corporate veil' when dealing with health and safety issues.

As the Corporate Manslaughter and Corporate Homicide Bill finally receives Royal Assent tomorrow (26 July) Martin Bare, president of the Association of Personal Injury Lawyers (APIL) welcomed the bill expressed disappointment that the Government "missed a trick" by failing to impose health and safety duties on individual directors.

"This was a prime opportunity to ensure company directors were forced to take responsibility for the health and safety of their workforce, and we believe this is a significant and disappointing omission from the bill," he said. "The new offence applies only to companies and while this is a step in the right direction, something more needs to be done.

"Imposing statutory health and safety duties on directors will help to create a safety culture within every company. It isn't just about being able to prosecute a director when things go wrong – it is about creating a culture in which health and safety is treated with the same importance as financial issues, for example. And this culture has to start in the boardroom."

-ends-

For more information, please contact Lisa Wardle, t@ 0115 9388715 or Andrew Brentnall, t: 0115 9388702.