

Draft Letter from Chair to Lord Hunt

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Ratification of a new ILO Convention on a Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health

This is to inform you that the Health and Safety Commission (HSC) considered this new ILO Convention at its meeting on 17 October and would be pleased to support its early ratification.

I understand that DWP officials reported in July on the outcomes of the 95th International Labour Conference, including that the new Convention was adopted at the end of it.

HSE led for the UK Government in the negotiations on the Convention and was influential in bringing them to a satisfactory conclusion. This has resulted in the ILO adopting a new Convention that avoids being over-prescriptive and is sufficiently independent of other ILO Occupational Safety and Health Conventions that many Member States, including the UK, have not ratified. The Convention's key features are:

- to promote a safe and healthy working environment by formulating a national policy;
- to establish, maintain, progressively develop and periodically review a national system for occupational safety and health in consultation with the most representative organisations of employers and workers;
- to formulate, implement, monitor and periodically review a national programme on occupational safety and health in consultation with the most representative organisations of employers and workers.

These features are already successfully in place within the UK's occupational safety and health system.

As the Government will ratify an ILO Convention only when our domestic law and practice is fully in line with its requirements, HSE legal advisers have carried out a thorough examination of the legal requirements of this Convention. Following this, **I am pleased to inform you that Convention is fully consistent with current UK legislation and consequently the UK is able to ratify.** Early ratification of this Convention will help to maintain the UK

as a world leader of occupational safety and health, which is one of the aims of HSC as set out in its “Strategy for workplace health and safety in Great Britain to 2010 and beyond”. It will also confirm the UK’s commitment to the work of the ILO.

The HSC would therefore recommend that, when the Convention is brought to the attention of Parliament in the customary way, Parliament should be informed that the UK Government intends to ratify it.

Bill Callaghan
Health and Safety Commission Chair