

Health and Safety  
Executive



# Regulation and risk management – have we got the balance right?

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# 'Health and safety' headlines



Height of madness – ladder ban on firemen

**Health and safety killjoys**

**Have we become slaves to elf'n'safety?**

Army's bagpipers and drummers must play safe and use earplugs

**Going mad about safety?**

**Too much time on health and safety**

**Health and safety: the cancer of a civilized society**

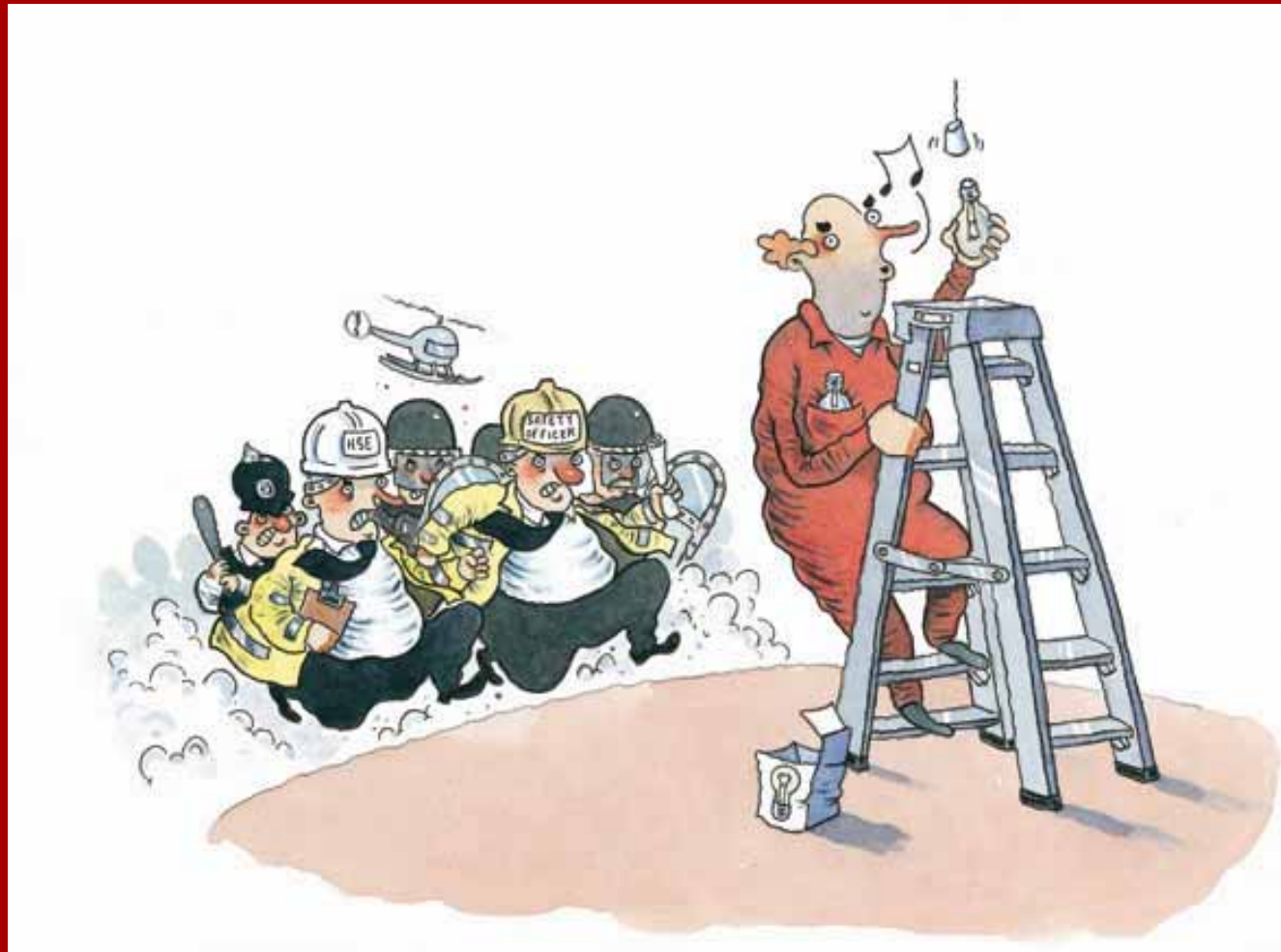
Those who walk under trees are at risk from these terrorising inspectors

The Health and Safety Executive is truly Satan's agent

**Safety Nazis ban 'killer' shoes**

**Health and safety stole my country!**

**Health and safety is not about  
creating a totally risk free society**



# Principles Behind HSWA



- Recognises the pace of change in business, technology and society.
- Removes rigid, specific prescriptive solutions.
- Promotes a more generic goal setting (or outcome-based) approach based on the principle that “Those who create the risk are best placed to manage it”.

# Reasonable practicability



- So far as is reasonably practicable (SFAIRP)
- As low as reasonably practicable (ALARP)

# Sensible risk management



- How much is enough? – example risk assessments
- Assessment leads to
- Sensible Risk Campaign

# Myth of the month: 'Kids must wear goggles to play conkers'



**Myth of the month (Nov 2008):**  
'Children need to be wrapped in cotton wool to keep them safe'





# Sensible risk is about



- Ensuring that workers and the public are protected
- Balancing risks and benefits
- Enabling innovation and learning
- Being clear about roles and responsibilities

# Sensible risk is not about



- Creating a totally risk free society
- Generating useless paperwork mountains
- Exaggerating trivial risks
- Stopping work, recreational and learning activities
- Reducing protection of people from risks that cause real harm and suffering
- <http://www.hse.gov.uk/risk/principles.htm>

# New strategy for HSE



**New strategy launched in early December, will emphasize:**

- Common sense and proportionality (sensible risk management)
- The importance of leadership
- Worker involvement and consultation

# Questions



How do we reverse the blame culture and reintroduce the importance of personal responsibility and common sense?

Is it time to rewrite the “precautionary principle”?