

Misleading Health and Safety Claims

◆OC 90/2

Target Audience:

All FOD Professional Staff
Railway Inspectors
OSD Operations Branch Inspectors

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SUMMARY

This OC alerts staff to the increasing interest being taken by the Cabinet Office Deregulation Unit in instances of misleading health and safety literature. It also advises on appropriate action when staff come across this material and similar misleading claims made by organisations.

BACKGROUND

- 1 The Cabinet Office Deregulation Unit (CODU) has drawn a number of examples of misleading health and safety literature to the attention of General Policy Branch (GPB). There remains a perception in CODU and some businesses that misleading claims are jacking up health and safety standards.
- 2 HSE normally responds swiftly and positively to such adverts. Therefore, GPB has agreed that HSE will continue to respond strongly to future cases where claims are made which are clearly misleading and will also consider the possibility of prosecution under the Trade Descriptions Act. Consequently, GPB has asked divisions to keep them informed of instances where such prosecutions may be appropriate.
- 3 For FOD this may appear to be a low priority matter, but it is in our interest to take whatever action we can to stop such misrepresentations. Not only because of the CODU's interest in this issue, but because it could be detrimental to both HSE's reputation and health and safety in general.

ACTION



16 February 1996
(FOD/411/94A)
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ASI headings

HSE logo: surveys: theft: Trade Descriptions Act: trading standards.

¹ Exemption 4 – 'Law enforcement and legal proceedings'