

Powers of HSE

Prepare: Quiet location? No distractions? Talk aids ready?

Reason: It is in everyone's interest to know what an HSE Inspector can do when arriving on site.

Why: They have considerable power and authority.

Outline: This talk will cover what you should be aware of, and do, if an Inspector visits your place of work.



An Inspector Calls

- An HSE Inspector may visit a site for any of several reasons.
- It may be a random inspection or it could be due to the number of accidents reported or other information received.
- An Inspector can arrive unannounced with no notice given.
- Inspectors carry warrant cards as proof of identity.
- An Inspector will first make his or her presence known to the person in charge of the site.

Q: In what circumstances do you think that an Inspector would want to interview you?

What Can An Inspector Do?

- Demand entry to the workplace. Enlisting the help of the police if necessary.
- Inspect the site and carry out investigations as necessary.
- Require that areas remain undisturbed (usually after an accident).
- Take measurements, photographs and recordings.
- Remove articles, substances or samples from the site.
- Require a person to give evidence or make a statement.
- Inspect and copy relevant documents and registers.

Q: What should you tell an Inspector if you were interviewed

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following an accident that you saw?

- Serve Improvement Notices which require that certain improvements be made when the law is being broken.
- Serve Prohibition Notices which stop specified work activities from taking place when there is imminent danger.
- Prosecute people judged to have committed a health and safety offence

Q: Do you think that employees can be prosecuted or only their employer?

What You Must Do?

- Make a statement or appear as a witness in court if required.
- Be truthful. It is an offence to make a false statement or to make a false entry in a register.
- Assist Inspectors in their enquiries. It is an offence to obstruct Inspectors in the course of their duty.
- Allow other people to tell an Inspector what they know or saw. It is an offence to prevent them from doing so.

Q: What do you think is the maximum fine for obstructing an Inspector in the course of his or her duty?

Do you have any questions for me?

Questions for you

Q: After seeing an accident how soon would it be best to speak to an Inspector?

Q: Why do you think that Inspectors carry out random inspections of construction sites?

REMEMBER:

THE MAIN POINT OF AN INVESTIGATION IS TO FIND OUT WHY AN ACCIDENT HAPPENED SO THAT A REPEAT CAN BE PREVENTED

Sources

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/pdf/fatalinjuries.pdf>

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/industry/construction.pdf>

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