

Safety Representatives Charter



Key Message:

The people best placed to make workplaces safer are the staff and managers who work in them. Effective consultation and joint ownership is the process through which issues of health and safety will be resolved.

Fact:

Workplaces with Trade Union Safety Representatives are safer workplaces because Safety Representatives Don't just see it, they sort it! Safety Representative Activity encourages the early identification and correction of unsafe conditions and work practices.

This Charter:

Defines the role, expectations and activities of UK Power Networks TU Safety Representatives and demonstrates the joint UK Power Networks/TU commitments to promoting a working relationship that supports effective worker participation and resolution.

Legal Framework:

In UK Power Networks, the Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977 (as amended) provide the legal framework for consultation. The HSE/ HSC collective Declaration on Worker Involvement reinforces them and develops core principles, notably that effective worker involvement means management and staff working together in a climate of openness and trust to achieve sensible and proportionate health and safety management through the active engagement of all staff.

Health and Safety Policy Statement:

Whilst we each have responsibilities for health and safety, we do much better when we work as a team.

'Better together' to ensure our workplace is Safe for All.

TU Health and Safety Representatives Policy

The Trade Unions aim is to provide a network of competent Safety Representatives, suitably trained, supported and accredited in accordance with TUC protocol, and committed to cooperating effectively with management in promoting and developing health and safety risk control measures.

The Role of the Safety Representative

The role of the Safety Representative is to:

- Participate in assessments of risk and the development and implementation of proportionate risk control solutions.
- Relay, to constituents, management consultations on matters affecting staff health and safety.
- Actively represent the health and safety concerns of their constituents.

Activities of Trade Union Accredited Safety Representative

Safety Representatives:

- Are entitled to carry out health and safety inspections, investigate potential dangers, incidents and staff complaints.
- Must consult their constituents, involve them in all health and safety related issues, and report back regularly.
- May liaise with other safety representatives (both in the workplace and in safety representative networks) and their Trade Union where this assists their representations
- Will attend formal health and safety meetings in addition to maintaining informal, regular links with management representatives.
- Work cooperatively with other safety representatives collectively to represent constituencies, for example by agreeing common positions before and after meetings.
- Have the authority to challenge the competences and safe practices of all personnel working on UK Power Networks systems or equipment.

Safety Representative Entitlements

Safety Representatives are entitled, without compromising their job role and responsibilities, to:

- Such time-off with pay during working hours to attend safety rep training and perform their role.
- Participation in consultation. This may require UK Power Networks health and safety team input to provide background briefings to ensure informed and transparent consultation.
- Such facilities and assistance they may reasonably require to fulfil their role.

UK Power Networks Commitments

In addition to supporting Trade Union accredited Safety Representatives' entitlements, UK Power Networks is committed to:

- Consulting Safety Representatives 'in good time' about health and safety measures. This means allowing enough time to tell Safety Representatives of their proposals, for constituents' views to be obtained, and for these to be reported back to management in order that they may influence decisions and actions.
- Notifying Safety Representatives of notifiable accidents, ill health or dangerous incidents and take part in a joint investigation. This includes cases where injured colleagues do not give consent to the release of personal information – safety representatives will be provided with suitable anonymised data.
- Resourcing Safety Representatives by recognising their work in performance agreements and reducing individual, team and day-to-day work targets pro rata.

In partnership with



CHARTER PRINCIPLES

Partnership Framework

Expectation 1:

Safety Representatives are volunteers who demonstrate a willingness to promote sustained health and safety improvement. Their effective performance is an asset to UK Power Networks health and safety management system. The Trade Unions, therefore expect:

- a) Safety Representatives to be valued and to be free from harassment, intimidation and discrimination.
- b) Safety Representatives representations and referrals to secure constructive and timely responses.
- c) Safety Representatives to retain health and safety issues out of industrial relations disputes.

Disagreements will be dealt with using UK Power Networks internal HESEC machinery. If still not resolved the matter will ultimately be referred to the Trade Union FTO and relevant UK Power Networks Director.

Contacting Environmental Health or HSE is an option regarded as a last resort as it is a sign that Health and Safety discussions have failed.

Expectation 2:

The appointment and continued accreditation of all Safety Representatives in UK Power Networks shall be the responsibility of the recognised trade unions. Safety Representatives are accountable to their constituencies and their Trade Unions. They are expected to carry out their functions in accordance with the SRSC Regulations, Trade Union protocol and with due regard to UK Power Networks internal communication policies and values.

They have a statutory duty to encourage cooperation between UK Power Networks and its workforce.

AVAILABLE SUPPORT

TU Support

The Trade Union movement undertakes to support, assist and promote Safety Representatives in their role by providing information, training, advice and assistance. UK Power Networks, Trades Unions and the TUC provide programmes of accredited Safety Representative training, including negotiating skills, conflict resolution, IT skills and refresher courses. Safety Representatives are expected to develop safety representative competencies and keep themselves informed and up to date with any changes.

UK Power Networks Support

In adopting the provisions of this Charter, UK Power Networks is demonstrating its recognition of the vital contribution of Trade Union Safety Representatives to UK Power Networks workplace health, safety and welfare.

Adoption of the Charter demonstrates UK Power Networks commitment to engaging in genuine consultation with the Trade Unions by accepting joint ownership by promoting a climate that is transparent, fair and works in partnership with each other. It is intended that this Charter is subject to on-going joint review under the aegis of the UK Power Networks HSS Committee meeting, and any proposed changes will be agreed by the Committee trade unions, at least on an annual basis.



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