

EDITOR'S COMMENT

It is now common knowledge that workplace absenteeism is costing the Irish economy in the range of €1.5 billion per annum, according to IBEC's Employee Absenteeism Report for 2011. However, are there any facts or figures on presenteeism in Ireland?

Following the cover story on workplace absenteeism in the previous issue of 'Health & Safety Times' the idea to check out the problem of presenteeism was suggested to the Editor.

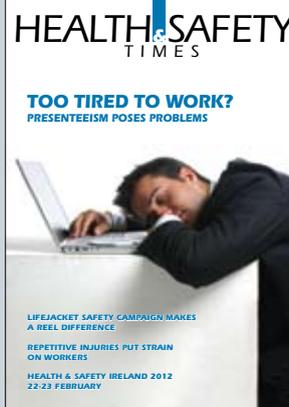
Our initial investigation into the possible scale of the problem and the cost to the Irish economy revealed very little by way of concrete information. For example, IBEC claimed that while some research has been carried on trends in productivity levels, this is somewhat different. In fact, presenteeism is not really an area that has been researched by the employers' body.

This does not bode well for the future, because with no signs of an upturn in the economy any time soon, fewer people are taking sick leave and opting instead to 'soldier on' rather than lose out on a day's pay, but at what cost to their co-workers?

A director of a Dublin-based motivational wellbeing coaching company claims that presenteeism is becoming a major problem and outlines the new forms presenting themselves across Irish workplaces today.

However, if other EU countries such as Germany can quantify and analyse the cost of the antithesis of absenteeism, well then why can't Ireland follow suit and do the same?

Grace Heneghan
grace@oceanpublishing.ie



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Following the success of the inaugural Health & Safety Ireland 2011 Conference & Exhibition this year's event takes place again in Dublin's RDS on 22 and 23 February.



21 SPECIAL REPORT

Absenteeism is costing the Irish economy €1.5 billion per annum, but do we know the cost of presenteeism? Life coach Deirdre Cronnelly says it's time to recognise the new signs of presenteeism, raise awareness and proactively do something about them.



26 SEA SAFETY

A new safety awareness campaign aims to change the mindset of Irish fishermen who continue to put their lives at risk by not wearing lifejackets at sea. The initiative has been well received since its launch last November, according to BIM.



29 WORKPLACE LEGISLATION

Siobhan Donnelly of SRT Donnelly, a leading specialist in health and safety law in Ireland and the UK, claims that all safety professionals must now be aware and take care that criminal prosecutions are on the rise.



32 WORKPLACE ERGONOMICS

Almost 50 per cent of Irish workers have experienced RSI or RSI-type pain and discomfort at some stage, according to new research carried out by Enable Ireland and IrishJobs.ie.



36 SAFETY LEADERSHIP

With cutbacks in staff numbers, training, equipment maintenance and replacement, in addition to other health and safety-related resources, true ethical leadership which strives to prevent all workplace injuries and deaths is absolutely essential, writes H&S consultant Mary Darlington.



40 NISO NEWS



43 COMMISSION FOR COMMUNICATIONS REGULATION

The Commission for Communications Regulation (ComReg) was recognised for its high standards of public service by winning a sector award at the 2011 NISO/NISG Occupational Health and Safety Awards.

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The Limerick-based civil engineering and building contractor Roadbridge won the Construction Category for Civil Engineering at the 2011 NISO/NISG Occupational Health and Safety Awards.



48 RPS GROUP

RPS Group took home the Construction Category for Consulting Engineers, at the 2011 NISO/NISG Occupational Health and Safety Awards ceremony. Group business director PJ Rudden talks about the future of engineering in Ireland.



53 BRISTOL-MYERS SQUIBB

Bristol-Myers Squibb followed up on its success in the NISO/NISG Occupational Health and Safety Awards over the past three years with a Platinum Award in 2011 for Swords Laboratories.



57 SAFETY REP OF THE YEAR

Good communication was a key factor in Wayne Taylor winning the NISO Safety Representative of the Year 2011. He credits team work and excellent safety management support at Carlow Local Authorities for his win.



59 ALKERMES PHARMA

A comprehensive strategy by Athlone-based Alkermes Pharma Ireland to integrate health and safety as a core business value was recognised when the company received the President's Award for New Entrants at the 2011 NISO/NISG Occupational Health and Safety Awards ceremony.



65 RACISM IN IRELAND

As research reveals a high level of racism in Ireland against migrants in both the workplace and their neighbourhoods, the Immigrant Council of Ireland is now calling on local authorities and community organisations to support victims of racism and to challenge racially motivated anti-social behaviour.

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Editor Grace Heneghan **email:** grace@oceanpublishing.ie

Managing Director Patrick Aylward **email:** patrick@oceanpublishing.ie

Graphic Designer Catherine Doyle **email:** catherine@oceanpublishing.ie

Circulation: admin@oceanpublishing.ie

Advertising Co-ordinator: Lynda Garry **email:** lynda@oceanpublishing.ie

14 Upper Fitzwilliam Street, Dublin 2. T. 01 6785165 F. 01 6785191

Email: healthandsafetytimes@eircom.net

Web: www.oceanpublishing.ie

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