

Health and Safety Representatives

Sipho has worked at Sasol in Secunda for over 10 years as a quality controller in the chemical laboratories. He is a highly experienced worker who was also previously a shopsteward in his department. He was recently elected as a health and safety representative although a few of his work colleagues do not believe that he is the right candidate for the job because they think that he lacks experience as a worker at Sasol and that he is not familiar with the workplace. His employer has supported the decision for Sipho to be a health and safety representative.

1. What are health and safety representatives?

They are full-time employees who must be designated in writing by an employer after the employer and workers have reached an agreement about who will be health and safety representatives. The appointees must at least be familiar with conditions at that part of the workplace for which they are designated.

2. When must health and safety representatives be designated?

Within four (4) months after the commencement of an employer's business. An employer with more than 20 workers, whose business is operative for less than 4 months, does not have to designate representatives.

Procedure for selection:

- i. For every 50 employees there shall be 1 health and safety representative
- ii. For shops and offices, there must be 1 rep for every 100 employees
- iii. The inspector can, in writing, recommend more health and safety reps
- iv. Every employer who has more than 20 employees must elect 1 health and safety rep within 4 months of commencing business

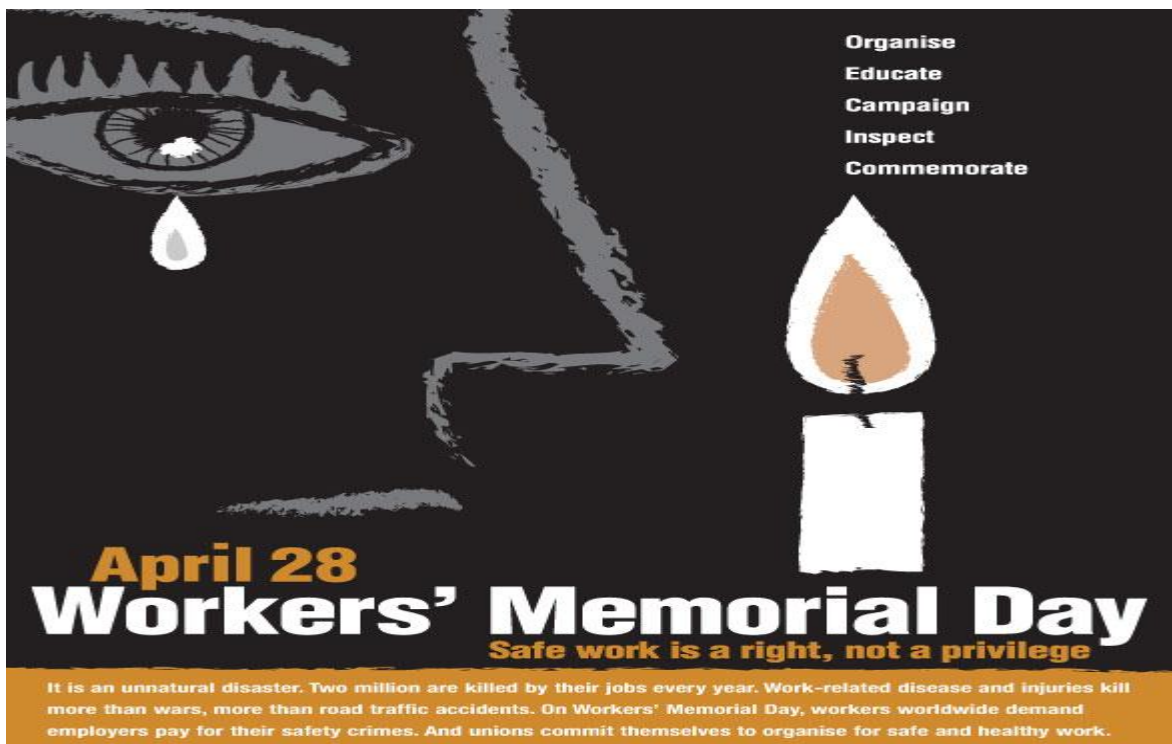
3. When must health and safety representatives perform their activities?

All activities regarding the designation, function and training of representatives must be performed during normal working hours.

4. Duties of health and safety representatives:

According to the Occupational Health and Safety Act 85 of 1993, health and safety representatives are entitled to:

- Review the effectiveness of the employer's health and safety measures [S(18)(1)(a)]
- Identify potential hazards and potential incidents
- Examine causes of incidents with the employer [S18(1)(c)]
- Investigate complaints from workers [S18 (1)(d)]
- Make representations to the employer [S18 (1)(e)]
- Inspect the workplace after notifying the employer of inspection [S18 (1)(g)]
- Participate in discussions with inspectors at the workplace and accompany inspectors on inspections [S18(2)(d)]
- Inspect any health and safety document or records from the employer [S18(2)(c)]
- Attend health and safety meetings [S18(1)(j)]
- Attend the site of an incident [S18(2)(a)]
- Attend any investigation/inquiry [S18 (2)(b)]
- Participate in an internal health and safety audit [S18(2)(f)]
- Health and safety reps training
- Attend health and safety committee meetings [S18(1)(j)]



Union safety rep: The union protecting this workplace:

28 April event:

www.hazards.org/wmd