

Mitigating workplace risks arising from the use of AI: Advice for health and safety professionals

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A new poll by [WorkNest](#), has found that whilst only a small percentage (12%) of health and safety professionals are currently using Artificial Intelligence (AI) to support health, safety and compliance efforts in their organisation, more than one third (34%) say that they would like to utilise the burgeoning technology.

With a growing appetite to use AI in the workplace but lack of regulation or legislation in this area, Health and Safety specialists at WorkNest are warning that employers need to take decisive action to mitigate against possible risks to safety from recommendations generated by these tools. Failing to do so may not only result in legal consequences but could lead to increased incidents or accidents.

Nick Wilson, Director of Health and Safety Services at WorkNest and a former HSE inspector, comments:

“AI can clearly have a positive impact in the workplace. This might be through the identification of hazards and unsafe conditions, predicting and monitoring potential risks, or in ensuring compliance. It is therefore unsurprising that our polling shows many employers are looking to adopt the technology to help improve their workplace safety. But with no AI specific legislation currently in place, it can be a bit like the wild west out there for employers.

“The good news is that the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology recently established a central function to support UK regulators’ understanding of the AI risk landscape and to ensure a coherent and streamlined AI regulatory landscape.

“But now that a General Election has been called, this progress could be thwarted. Given the pace of change in this area, any new Government may come under pressure to fast forward bringing in formal legislation and employers should be aware of future regulatory changes.

“Until this time however, our recommendation to those who are already embracing AI is to be proactive and take the necessary reasonably practicable steps to ensure they are still complying with current laws, in this case, the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.

Nick has three top tips for H&S professionals:

1. Conduct a thorough risk assessment that identifies specific AI risks relevant to your organisation.
2. Create a specific AI framework and policies that detail how you will use AI. Some companies are now appointing AI leads who are tasked with overseeing how the technology is deployed in their organisation and ensuring that employees are kept up to date with developments in this evolving area.
3. Many people are apprehensive about AI so ensure staff are fully trained and supported to understand AI and how it will be used in your workplace.

AI was discussed on a recent free webinar hosted by WorkNest: *Proactive compliance: Regulatory updates and recent prosecutions*. [Available here](#), it offers an update on recent and upcoming legislative changes, what's on the HSE's agenda, and lessons from recent prosecution cases.