



Business Support on Your Doorstep

EU Alert

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enterprise europe

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Working Time Rules - 'The Shifting Goalposts' Free Workshop - 24th September 2009

Lawyers from leading international law firm Pinsent Masons will explore developments to the rules on worker's working time in this one-off briefing brought to you by Enterprise Europe Network West Midlands.

- The following are just some of the key elements to be covered during the briefing:
- Where the Working Time laws come from and why it is that they are constantly changing
- What it means to an employer when the law is changed and the ways in which such changes take place
- A review of recent developments in the law to include rest breaks etc

The session will explore recent changes to this area of the law and how employers have coped with these changes. The session will also share thoughts on the best practices being adopted by employers in order to implement developments in the laws relating to Working Time as well as acting as a reminder to employers as to what developments have taken place in this far-reaching area of the law.

We will assume a basic understanding of the key aspects of UK working time laws. This will enable delegates to gain a deeper understanding of what has changed, why the changes have occurred and what actions employers should take in response to such changes.

Programme - Hotel Du Vin, Birmingham

08:00 - 08:30: Registration and Breakfast

08:30 - 09:40: Presentations

09:40 - 10:00: Questions and Answers

10:00: Close

For more information, contact Enterprise Europe West Midlands on 0121 455 0268

Commission Endorses UK Carbon Reduction Commitment Scheme

The European Commission has authorised under EC Treaty state aid rules a scheme proposed by the United Kingdom introducing a trading system for CO₂ emissions related to energy consumption. The national system, called "the Carbon Reduction Commitment" (CRC), applies to non energy intensive sectors not covered by the EU Emission Trading system. All allowances in the CRC system would be sold by auction. Participants' environmental performance would be ranked in a performance league table, and the auction revenue would be paid back to participants as a subsidy. Participants ranked on the top of the Performance League Table would benefit the most from the recycling mechanism.

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/09/1135>

Commission Calls Time on Sub-Standard Landfills in the EU

16th July 09 marks the deadline for sub-standard landfills in the European Union to comply with EU rules. Member States have had eight years to ensure sites that existed before European legislation on landfills became applicable were brought into line or closed down altogether. The Commission has written to all Member States to remind them of their obligation and to gather data on compliance. Those found to be in breach of the legislation may face legal action. Sub-standard landfills are a hazard to public health and the environment. They have the potential to create air emissions and odours, pollute soil and water, and contaminate the groundwater. From today, Member States are also required to reduce the amounts of biodegradable municipal waste sent to landfills by half of 1995 levels.

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/09/1154>

Agreement to Prevent Injuries to Healthcare Workers

On 17th July 2009, employers and trade unions in the healthcare sector signed an EU-wide agreement to prevent injuries from needle sticks and other sharp objects. More than 1 million such injuries occur every year, forming one of the most common health and safety threats in the European workplace. The agreement was concluded after five months of negotiations by the European social partner organisations in the sector, which employs around 3.5 million people.

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/09/1157>

Iceland to Apply for EU Membership

On 16th July 2009 the Parliament of Iceland voted in favour of presenting an application for membership in the EU. Commenting the news Commission President José Manuel Barroso said: "The decision of the Icelandic Parliament is a sign of the vitality of the European project and indicative of the hope that the European Union represents. Iceland is a European country with long and deep democratic roots. Iceland has very close relations with the EU after some 40 years of EFTA membership and 15 years in the European Economic Area (EEA). It is now up to the Icelandic government to follow-up this decision by officially applying to the Presidency of the EU."

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/09/1159>

€28 Million EU Support for the Promotion of Agricultural Products

The European Commission has approved 16 programmes in 12 Member States (Austria, Belgium, Finland, France, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, Latvia, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain and the United Kingdom) to provide information on and to promote agricultural products in the European Union. The total budget of the programmes running between one and three years is € 62.1 million, of which the EU will contribute € 27.8 million. The selected programmes cover organic products, dairy products, meat, wine, fruit and vegetables, olive oil, honey and flowers.

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/09/1186>

Management Rules Eased to Help Regional Projects

The European Commission today adopted new measures aimed at simplifying management rules for the Cohesion Policy. In the context of the current crisis, the aim is to boost the European economy by improving the conditions for launching more projects in the regions. As part of the measures to combat the crisis, the Commission may reimburse 100% of the costs declared by the Member States for projects financed by the European Social Fund (ESF) in 2009 and 2010.

The Member of the Commission responsible for Regional Policy, Pawel Samecki, stated that: 'These new measures are intended to lend a hand to the regions of Europe to help them to recover more quickly. We are facing up to the current situation while continuing in the long term to accelerate the implementation of our policy and facilitate the management of the Funds'.

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/09/1175>

Consultation: Adaptation to Technical and Scientific Progress of the RoHS Annex

Öko-Institut e.V. together with Fraunhofer IZM have been contracted by Commission services with the project Adaptation to scientific and technical progress of Annex II to Directive 2000/53/EC (ELV) and of the Annex to Directive 2002/95/EC (RoHS). This project covers the evaluation of new exemptions requests under the RoHS Directive as well as the evaluation of existing exemptions and new exemption requests under the ELV Directive.

<http://rohs-elv.exemptions.oeko.info/>

Consultation: Public Procurement for Better Environment

On 16 July 2008, the Commission has adopted its 'Communication on public procurement for a better environment'. The Commission proposes a political target of 50% Green Public Procurement (GPP) to be reached by the Member States by the year 2010. The target is linked to a process for setting common - voluntary- GPP criteria, recommended for inclusion in tender documents for a series of priority product and service groups.

Criteria are developed in close cooperation with relevant Commission services, industry, civil society and Member States. A first set of criteria has been developed for 10 product and service groups, in consultation with stakeholders and Member State representatives. These criteria have been finalised and Member States will soon be invited to formally endorse them.

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/gpp/consultation_en.htm

If you have any queries about the EU Alert bulletin, or would like some more information about any of the topics in this edition, please contact Alison Hawkins by email at a.hawkins@birminghamchamber.org.uk

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