



# RED FLAG WEEKLY

ACTIONABLE INTELLIGENCE FOR SAFETY PROFESSIONALS

EDITION 5

MONDAY 19 MAY 2026

SAFETYSOLUTIONSTRAINING.CO.UK

THIS WEEK

## Workplace safety intelligence for employers.

This Week Five stories. Five sectors. One consistent finding: the people we rely on to run our public services, care for the vulnerable, and keep transport moving are being attacked at work, and the systems designed to protect them are not keeping pace. This week parliament called it out, unions passed emergency motions, workers walked out, and the

### PARLIAMENT

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A cross-party group of MPs has told the government in formal terms: workers are being pun

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A delegate stabbed with a broken biro pen described being escorted to her car by security

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Prison officers are being hospitalised on a weekly basis. The Prison Officers' Association

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London Underground drivers walked out this morning. Whatever the headline says about shift

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Employers must comply with "all reasonable steps" from October 2026. The government has no

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## PARLIAMENT

# MPs Declare Workplace Violence "Out of Control"

A cross-party group of MPs has told the government in formal terms: workers are being punched, spat at and threatened simply for doing their jobs, and not enough is being done about it.

## SECTOR

PARLIAMENT

## STORY FOCUS

A cross-party group of MPs has told the government

## ARCHIVE EDITION

Edition 5

## RESPONSE

Practical training and clear reporting

An All-Party Parliamentary Group on workplace violence published a report this month finding that current approaches are leaving frontline workers to manage violence personally rather than having it prevented structurally. The APPG heard evidence from a bus driver held at gunpoint, and from the Prison Officers' Association, which described attacks on prison staff as a "moral failure", with multiple workers hospitalised weekly. The report calls for prosecution of repeat offenders, improved incident reporting systems, and proper de-escalation and prevention strategies across transport, schools, retail, and local authorities.

## VINCE'S VIEW

When parliament uses the words "out of control", that is not a press release. It is a formal finding after taking evidence from workers across multiple sectors. The bus driver held at gunpoint was not an anomaly. He was one data point in a much larger pattern. The question every organisation should be asking right now is: if one of my staff gave evidence to that APPG, what would they say?

## WHAT EMPLOYERS SHOULD DO NOW

- Review the risk in the context of the role.
- Check staff have clear reporting and escalation routes.
- Use practical training based on what staff actually face.



NHS / AMBULANCE

# "Zero Tolerance Isn't Working. The Posters Are Ignored."

A delegate stabbed with a broken biro pen described being escorted to her car by security every night. She told the UNISON health conference: zero tolerance is not working.

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|-------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <div>SECTOR</div> <div>NHS / AMBULANCE</div>    | <div>STORY FOCUS</div> <div>A delegate stabbed with a broken biro pen describe</div> |
| <div>ARCHIVE EDITION</div> <div>Edition 5</div> | <div>RESPONSE</div> <div>Practical training and clear reporting</div>                |

At UNISON's national health care service group conference in Edinburgh in April, one of the first motions passed called for greater protections for NHS workers facing violence. Delegates heard that zero tolerance policies and posters in hospitals are routinely ignored by patients and staff alike. One delegate described being stabbed with a broken biro and having to be escorted to her car by security after every shift. Becky Anstead, from the East of England ambulance service, told conference that incidents go unreported because they are deemed part of the job. In 2023, her service recorded 1,455 attacks on staff, an 18% increase on the previous year.

### VINCE'S VIEW

A poster saying zero tolerance is not a policy. It is a piece of paper. The delegate who said "we get paid to help people, not to get beaten up" has articulated the fundamental problem more clearly than any employer document I have read. The organisations that get this right are the ones that train their staff in what to actually do, not the ones that laminate a sign.

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PRISONS

# Prison Officers Hospitalised Weekly. Government Response Called a "Moral Failure."

Prison officers are being hospitalised on a weekly basis. The Prison Officers' Association called the government's response a moral failure. The APPG agreed.

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|-------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <div>SECTOR</div> <div>PRISONS</div>            | <div>STORY FOCUS</div> <div>Prison officers are being hospitalised on a weekly</div> |
| <div>ARCHIVE EDITION</div> <div>Edition 5</div> | <div>RESPONSE</div> <div>Practical training and clear reporting</div>                |

Evidence given to the All-Party Parliamentary Group on workplace violence by the Prison Officers' Association described a pattern of escalating attacks on prison staff, with multiple workers requiring hospital treatment every week. The POA described the government's response as a "moral failure" and the APPG report backed a rethink on the ban on prison officers' right to strike. The report warned that current approaches are failing workers and leaving them to manage violence personally rather than having it prevented through structural intervention.

VINCE'S VIEW

Prison officers work in some of the most sustained, high-risk conditions of any sector, in a closed environment with limited withdrawal options. The fact that a parliamentary group has described the government's response as a "moral failure" is significant language. It signals that the gap between what workers need and what they are getting has passed the point of administrative shortfall. This is institutional accountability territory.

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TRANSPORT

# London Underground Drivers Strike Today Over Safety and Working Conditions

London Underground drivers walked out this morning. Whatever the headline says about shift patterns, the deeper story is about a workforce that no longer believes management will protect them.

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|-------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <div>SECTOR</div> <div>TRANSPORT</div>          | <div>STORY FOCUS</div> <div>London Underground drivers walked out this morning</div> |
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London Underground drivers began a 48-hour strike from Tuesday 19 May 2026, in a dispute involving a four-day working week. The action follows the APPG report earlier this month confirming that two thirds of RMT members experienced workplace violence in the past year, and seven in ten say it is getting worse. Transport for London recorded around 10,500 incidents of violence and aggression in 2023-24 alone. Most respondents to the RMT survey indicated willingness to take industrial action if safety continues to deteriorate.

VINCE'S VIEW

The issue on the surface is shift patterns. The issue underneath is that workers across transport have told a parliamentary group they feel unsafe and are now acting on it collectively. The same workforce absorbing 10,000-plus incidents of violence every year is refusing to absorb further operational pressure. Employers who treat violence as something staff should manage and absorb eventually reach this point.

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LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

# Government Publishes Consultation on What "All Reasonable Steps" Actually Means

Employers must comply with "all reasonable steps" from October 2026. The government has now published a consultation on what that means. The full regulations do not arrive until 2027.

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| <div>SECTOR</div> <div>LEGISLATIVE UPDATE</div> | <div>STORY FOCUS</div> <div>Employers must comply with "all reasonable steps"</div> |
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The government has published a consultation document setting out how it intends to define "all reasonable steps" under the Employment Rights Act 2025 sexual harassment duty. Expected steps include risk assessments, published policies, reporting mechanisms, and complaints procedures. However, secondary legislation does not come into force until 2027, following consultation, leaving employers to comply with the higher standard before receiving definitive regulatory guidance. Third-party harassment liability lands at the same time in October 2026, covering all nine protected characteristics.

VINCE'S VIEW

Read that carefully. Employers must meet a higher standard from October, but will not receive full regulatory detail until 2027. The government is telling you to start now and refine later. That is not a reason to wait. Role-specific, documented, scenario-based training is the only credible starting point. A policy review and an annual e-learning module will not be enough to satisfy a tribunal.

WHAT EMPLOYERS SHOULD DO NOW

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# October 2026 is approaching. Employers need evidence of all reasonable steps.

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MONTHS REMAINING UNTIL THE  
EMPLOYMENT RIGHTS ACT 2025  
DEADLINE

The consistent theme across Red Flag Weekly is foreseeable risk. Where staff engage with the public, lone work, visit homes, answer challenging calls or manage difficult behaviour, employers need practical evidence that staff were prepared for what they actually face.

- Policies should be clear, current and role-specific.
- Training should cover real scenarios, not generic awareness alone.
- Incident reporting should be straightforward and trusted.
- Managers should be able to evidence action taken before and after incidents.

**The safest position is to prepare now, not wait for further guidance.**

# RED FLAG

## WEEKLY

ACTIONABLE INTELLIGENCE FOR SAFETY PROFESSIONALS

## Training Built Around What Your Staff Actually Face

Safety Solutions Training Ltd delivers practical, role-specific training across the NHS, social care, housing, local authority and third sector.

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

LONE WORKER SAFETY

MANAGING CHALLENGING PHONE  
CALLS

PROFESSIONAL BOUNDARIES

SAFEGUARDING

DANGEROUS DOGS AWARENESS

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Safety Solutions Training Ltd | 7 Coryton Crescent, Cardiff CF14 7EP | 02920 657753 | [info@safetysolutionstraining.co.uk](mailto:info@safetysolutionstraining.co.uk)  
Registered in Wales No. 10515885 | [safetysolutionstraining.co.uk](https://safetysolutionstraining.co.uk)

*Red Flag Weekly is researched and written by Vince Donovan, Director, Safety Solutions Training Ltd. Every story in this edition is verified against a named, public source. No statistics are invented or estimated.*