

Pay and Rights are the Big Autumn Issues

It seems that once the leaves start to fall, you can be sure that legislation will change and this year is no exception.

A whole raft of Employment Law amendments come into force at the beginning of October with a number of other issues looming for the coming months.

The National Minimum Wage rises by 7p per hour to £5.80 for workers aged 22 and over with commensurate rises for the lower age groups. The Government has indicated that the age limit for the upper rate will drop to 21 from October next year.

With a General Election looming, it is hard to predict which promises will be kept, which



will be ditched or which current laws might be repealed but the PM, Gordon Brown, has recently said that the NMW will continue to rise every year.

With redundancies becoming a fact of life, the maximum limit for a week's pay will rise from £350 to £380 and this will remain in force until February 2011. Changes to maternity and adoption pay rules will

mean that there is no longer a distinction between ordinary and additional leave when it comes to entitlement to benefit of terms and conditions, other than pay. This will affect such areas as annual leave, bank holidays, car allowance and child-care vouchers.

Contract agency workers will also be entitled to SSP even if their contract is for 3 months or less.

It is clear that the Government has concentrated on strengthening regulations to protect the most vulnerable workers in this round of changes. How many of these will still be in force this time next year remains to be seen! For further information, visit workplacelaw.net



ISA Rules come into force

From 12th October, the new Vetting & Barring Scheme that could potentially affect 11 million people, comes into force.

Under the auspices of the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) it establishes two new barred lists designed to prevent unsuitable individuals from working or having contact with children or vulnerable adults in the workplace. Unlike CRB checks, which re-

main in force, the ISA will consider a wider range of information, including 'soft intelligence' which has led to public concern that individuals could be barred based on unproven allegations and subjective opinion.

From October, employers can face fines or even a prison sentence if they fail to check the barred lists prior to an offer of employment. Standard CRB checks will no longer be sufficient in most cases so anyone working with these groups will need an Enhanced level check. From July next year, workers will be able to apply for registra-

tion on the scheme, which throws up a number of questions. Who is going to fund the fee of £64 - will it be the worker, many of whom are in lower paid professions? Will it be the employer as an additional hiring cost?

Employers need to look at their recruitment, transfer and promotion procedures, who is responsible for identifying the types of roles covered, how to deal with a current employee who appears on a barred list and how they will handle registering existing staff.

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HSS Hire take Overall title

BIFM golfers from all over the country gathered at Breadsall Priory near Derby recently for the 9th National Finals, organized by Catch 22. As usual, the competition was fierce in all three sections but sponsors HSS Hire came out on top of the pile. Pre-

ented by ex-England captain, Graham Gooch, the prize for the members event went to London Region. Thanks to Turner FM and HSS Hire, our major sponsors and to InterfaceFlor, Interiors of Richmond and Claremont for their continuing support.



Off to Portugal - London Region IMT



HSS Hire - Champions for 2009

Catch 22 backs Punters at BIFM Awards



Guests at this year's annual BIFM International Investors in FM Excellence Awards Dinner at the Grosvenor House will be able to have a flutter in aid of charity at the Casino, thanks to the backing of Catch 22. Betting with 'fun money', they can take

advantage of the 12 authentic casino tables to see if they can break the bank and win a prize. Proceeds from the casino will be shared between the BIFM chairman's nominated charities and The Lord's Taverners, on behalf of Catch 22.

REC: Jobless Figures up but Positive Signs

Despite unemployment figures recently hitting 2.5 million, the Recruitment & Employment Confederation (REC) hits an optimistic note in its latest take on the economy.

Although issuing a warning about potentially onerous new legislation like the EU's Agency Workers Directive, the REC's chief executive, Kevin Green says 'though these statistics may paint a sombre picture, many professional recruiters are reporting positive signs within UK jobs market with recent industry data in our Report on Jobs showing mod-



est increases in both permanent and temporary appointments.' While acknowledging that employer confidence is on the up, he points out that the jobless total is expected to continue to rise in 2010 and that there is a need for agency businesses to offer professional support and

guidance to new jobseekers who may not have previously experienced the tribulations of joblessness.

The September report was the first in 17 months to show an increase in permanent recruitment and growth in temporary placements. Reductions in salaries and hourly wages have slowed considerably and candidate availability has risen at a weaker pace.

Although the return to growth may only be marginal, it offers some encouragement to both employers and work seekers in the months to come.