

Press release

4<sup>th</sup> May 2017

## Employers Must Do More to Protect Staff from Harmful UV Rays, says Safety Expert

The UK's leading safety expert, Arco, is urging UK businesses to do more to protect their employees against the dangers of the sun this summer, following a recent survey that suggested only 5% of workers receive UV protection from their employers.

Following the survey, commissioned by Deb, and in preparation of Sun Awareness Week, which runs from the 9<sup>th</sup>– 14<sup>th</sup> May, Arco has launched its annual sun protection campaign, to educate employers about the danger of UV rays and the steps they can take to protect outdoor workers, including providing appropriate sun cream.

Although UV rays are extremely damaging to the skin and can cause a manner of health problems, the risks facing those who work outdoors are often overlooked. There are three types of UV:

- **UVA** - accounts for up to 95% of the UV radiation reaching the Earth's surface. UVA penetrates the skin more deeply than UVB causing skin cancer and premature ageing.
- **UVB** - main cause of skin reddening and sunburn and plays a key role in the development of skin cancer.
- **UVC** - blocked by the ozone layer, however, is created artificially during industrial processes such as welding.

UV exposure is extremely dangerous to humans and is hard to detect as it isn't related to temperature, cannot be seen or felt and can easily pass through the cloud; even on a cloudy day, workers still run the risk of damaging their skin. For this reason, it's important that employers take responsibility when encouraging employees to use protection when the UV Index level, which is available online, reaches three or above. Additionally, UV is carcinogenic (cancerous) to humans, meaning those who work outdoors have a greater risk of developing skin cancer.

Employers have a duty of care to protect their employees from hazards in the workplace and, according to HSE guidelines, UV radiation should be considered an occupational hazard for people who work outdoors. Arco is urging businesses to ensure UV protection is a staple PPE item this summer, and is readily available for workers to use.

Darren Williamson, Product & Procurement Management at Arco commented: "Sun safety is an incredibly vital subject as it's often an afterthought, or entirely forgotten. It's imperative for employers to remember that UV protection isn't just for sunny days, but instead when the UV Index is above level three. Skin cancer is the most common form of cancer in the World, with six people dying each day in the UK as a result of it. We believe sun protection is one of the most important items of PPE, which is why we supply and promote Deb Stoko's entire Sun Protect range."

To find out the daily UV level visit [www.metoffice.gov.uk](http://www.metoffice.gov.uk) or for more information about Arco's Sun Protection campaign please visit [www.arco.co.uk/sunsafety](http://www.arco.co.uk/sunsafety)

### **About Arco**

Arco is the UK's leading safety company. It distributes quality products and training and provides expert advice, helping to shape the safety world and make work a safer place. Founded in 1884 and with a heritage spanning four generations, Arco integrates traditional family values with pioneering innovation to offer a world-class range of over 170,000 quality assured, branded and own brand products, including personal protective equipment, clothing, footwear, gloves, workplace safety and hygiene products. Headquartered in Hull, Arco reaches its customers through its extensive product catalogue, interactive website and 48 strong trade counter network. The company has sales of over £281m and employs approximately 1700 people. Arco has been accredited a 'One to Watch' status in the Best Companies Times Top 100 Survey.

Arco is dedicated to its Corporate Social Responsibility policy and continually demonstrates its support of local business communities and charitable organisations, donating in excess of 1% of pre tax profits annually. In 2007, Arco became a member of the Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI) and in 2010 a member of Sedex, the Supplier Ethical Data Exchange. Going forward, Arco further demonstrates its position as the UK's leading safety company as the exclusive supplier of PPE, footwear and workwear to the BLOODHOUND project's support team involved with the design, build and race of a car to raise the world land speed record to 800 mph in 2015, and 1,000mph in 2016. For more information, visit [www.arco.co.uk](http://www.arco.co.uk).