Workers Uniting is the global union the USW and Unite formed in July 2008. Please copy Workers Uniting Pulp Truth front and back and distribute it during non-work time using your Communications and Action Teams, steward system, Unite Chapel Representatives and members or Rapid Response network. Be sure to leave copies in lunchrooms, break rooms, Chapel notice boards, etc. We want to hear what's happening in your workplace. Send your news to Lynne Hancock at lhancock@usw.org

Unite Launches ‘2020 Vision - Unite strategy for manufacturing’

At Unite’s annual sector conferences in November 2011 Unite Assistant General Secretary Tony Burke launched ‘2020 Vision - Unite strategy for manufacturing,’ setting out the union’s policy to revive and rebuild the UK’s manufacturing sector over the remainder of the decade.

Unite, the UK’s largest union and partner union with the USW in Workers Uniting, believes a strong and sustainable manufacturing sector is essential to the economic prosperity of the UK. Tony Burke, who has overall responsibility for manufacturing in the union, highlighted the importance for the UK economy to have a robust and skilled manufacturing base.

However, he warned delegates of the dangers faced by UK manufacturing where “this Tory-led coalition government is doing more damage to UK manufacturing than any previous Conservative government.”

Tony Burke said: “Manufacturing is the lifeblood of our economy. However, the problem is this Tory-led coalition government has no long-term strategy on UK manufacturing and is doing more damage to UK manufacturing than any previous Conservative government.”

“This government is strong on manufacturing rhetoric but weak on delivery. Actions speak louder than words and the actions, so far, have fallen woefully short of what is needed to provide the support for manufacturing which has been missing for so long. If this government is serious about rebalancing the economy, we need to invest in the UK’s manufacturing skills base with a long-term solution.

“2020 vision sets out Unite’s strategy and calls for the need for a strong and robust manufacturing base which uses the latest technology, invests in the future and invests in apprenticeships and skills in order to avoid skill shortages and create a successful and balanced economy.”

Unite has proposed the ten pillars upon which manufacturing should be based which are:

1. Build a framework of policies to defend strategically important industries.
2. Continued financial support through interventionist policies.
3. Targeted support for small and medium-sized enterprises.
4. Better use of government purchasing power to secure manufacturing jobs in the UK.
5. Maximizing the opportunities that the low carbon revolution offers.
6. Delivery of an education and skills framework which meets all industry’s needs.
7. Creating a university structure which builds on the science base so necessary to secure high skilled jobs.
8. Create right investment environment for research and development.
9. Creation of a level playing field to deliver security and fair pricing for energy.
10. A framework of legislation which promotes transparency and engagement for all stakeholders in the future of manufacturing.

Kimberly-Clark in the UK Prosecuted over Factory Worker's Death

Kimberly-Clark in the UK has been fined £180,000 ($279,522) after a worker was killed at an Andrex factory in Barrow-in-Furness, UK.

Christopher Massey, a former Barrow Raiders rugby football player, was struck by a piece of machinery while working on a night shift at the Kimberly-Clark plant on November 8, 2007.

The company was prosecuted by the UK’s Health and Safety Executive (HSE) after an investigation found a dangerous part of a machine, used to produce rolls of Andrex toilet tissue, had been left unguarded.

A UK Court heard the 28-year-old had been looking through a gap in the machine to make sure the tissue was being fed through correctly.

As he checked inside the machine at around 5:10 a.m., it began to move a large, two-metre (two-meter) wide reel of tissue into place, striking him on the head. His body was discovered around 20 minutes later by
colleagues shortly before the end of their shift.

The HSE investigation found the machine had been modified four months earlier so that reels of two-ply as well as single-ply toilet paper could be fed through it.

The part of the machine used to hold the large reels of tissue had been moved back so that another piece of machinery could be added to handle the two-ply toilet paper. This created a potentially dangerous gap which Mr. Massey and other workers had used to check if the tissue was being fed through correctly.

The court was told the factory had been short-staffed on the night of Mr. Massey’s death, with two of the four workers in the team off sick. He was moved to work on the part of the machine that fed through the giant reels, despite not having had training on how to operate it since its modification.

The gap in the machine gave him the best vantage point to check the tissue, and none of the workers had been told it was not safe to stand in that position. Following his death the company fitted two sheets of clear plastic over the gap which allowed employees to check the machine without being put at risk.

David Massey, Christopher’s father, said: “Never a day goes by when we don’t think of our son, Christopher. We are still struggling to come to terms with his death. The pain will always be with us.”

“He had so much to live for. We’ll never know or understand the reasons why he had to live a life so short. And still, four years on, it is hard to comprehend what happened. He went to work and didn’t return home.”

“He now, not a day goes by that we don’t visit Christopher’s grave. It evokes only sorrow and unbearable memories. We will go to our graves not ever being given the chance to say goodbye to him,” David Massey said.

Kimberly-Clark Ltd pleaded guilty to a breach of the UK Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 by failing to ensure the safety of its employees. The company, of Tower View, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent, was ordered to pay £20,000 ($31,058) in prosecution costs in addition to the fine of £180,000 ($279,522) on December 14, 2011.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE Principal Inspector Mark Dawson said: “Significant modifications were made to this machinery which resulted in the creation of a dangerous trap point. Kimberly-Clark failed to notice this and, as a result, a young man in his prime was killed.

“None of the workers at the factory had received training on how to use the machine after it had been modified, or on how to safely check the tissue was being fed through correctly. This meant that, for several months after the modification, their lives were put at risk.

“Tragically, Chris Massey lost his life when he looked inside the machine at the moment when it moved a new reel into place. If all of the dangerous parts on the machine had been properly guarded then his life could have been saved,” Dawson said.

Mr. Massey was one of 29 workers to be killed while working in the manufacturing industry in Great Britain in 2007/8. More than 5,000 workers also suffered major injuries. Information on improving manufacturing safety is available at www.hse.gov.uk/manufacturing.

Workers Uniting Issues Statement on Behavioural Safetys’

At the first ever congress of Workers Uniting in November 2011 in London, Workers Uniting, the global union created by Unite and United Steelworkers, agreed on a joint policy on behavioural (behavioral) safety which was signed by Unite General Secretary Len McCluskey and USW International President Leo Gerard.

Unite National Health and Safety Adviser Bud Hudspith, who worked with Jim Frederick, assistant director of the USW health, safety and environment department, on the policy said: “This is an important step for Workers Uniting and the campaign to inform our members about the potential dangers with behav-