



Brussels, 14 June 2005
RG/JM/WK/hc

Ref.: Optical Radiations, Directive, Draft

Dear Member of the European Parliament,

Among the workers exposed to optical radiations, are the workers who are exposed to solar radiations in the building and the agriculture sectors, park constables, postmen, beach and sport monitors etc.; they are seriously at risk of developing a skin cancer such as a malign melanoma (often lethal).

Following the WHO, hundreds of people die yearly in Europe although the prevention of skin cancer is simple and extraordinary cheap: what is required is to check the sun index (given by the national meteorological institute like the rain and temperature forecast which already is a daily routine) and, when needed, to ask the worker to cover torso and arms and wear a cap! Nothing else is needed. In several countries it has proven to be an excellent preventive measure.

Not considering this huge health at work and public health problem will be an inexcusable mistake because:

- no extra costs are associated to this measure at company level
- the preventive information systems already exist
- people at risk are not the one spending long holidays on the beaches but workers having strenuous jobs or precarious and low paid ones (biases due to overexposure during leisure does not hold the comparison with the long lasting exposure at work, sunny day after sunny day).

To limit the directive to exposure, to e.g. laser rays, will not offer any added value to the European workers' population (due to the relatively low incidence rate of damages).

Yours sincerely,

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General Secretary ETUC

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