

# Pallet networks host week-long Health and Safety Focus



The Association of  
Pallet Networks

25 April 2022 – For immediate release

## All APN Pallet Network Members hold a week-long safety focus, coinciding with World Health and Safety Day, to make workplace injury a thing of the past

### Key points include:

- The UK's pallet networks will be hosting Health & Safety awareness activity for HGV drivers and other staff between 25 and 29 April
- APN stats show networks have driven Hub incident rates down for the fourth year running
- One quarter of all injuries are caused by curtains and straps
- APN has produced resources for the event, and will engage with drivers and network teams through social media to support the in-person events

The Association of Pallet Networks (APN) has organised a sector-wide focus on Health and Safety for the week of 25-29 April to coincide with World Health and Safety Day.

All nine member networks will host events and offer resources to drivers and other staff during the week, including Fortec, The Hazchem Network, Pall-Ex, Pallet-Track, Palletforce, Palletline, Palletways, THE Pallet Network and United Pallet Network.

Among other things, employees will be asked to sign personal safety pledges.

“Safety is everyone’s responsibility,” says APN chairman Paul Sanders. “We hope the pledges will help to remind us all, whether MD or forklift driver, that we must all prioritise safety in everything we do at work, not just in policies but in actions.”

Safety has been a consistent and key focus of the APN’s sectoral work, with its H&S forum, established in 2006, meeting quarterly to discuss incidents, prevention and messaging. Sanders credits the forum and its influence upon Hub activity with driving Hub safety incidents down for the fourth year running in 2021.

“Despite delivering record volumes in 2021, of 31.5 million pallets, the Hub incident rate fell to 0.49 per 100,000 pallets,” says Sanders.

However, there are specific areas of concern. “One quarter of all incidents are caused by the mishandling of curtains or straps,” says Sanders. “Drivers need proper training in how to move curtains, how to protect their bodies while pulling and the specific hazards they must be aware of.”

“We’d also like everyone participating to remember the importance of wearing proper PPE at all times, including good grip shoes and bump caps. Many drivers forget the importance of their bump caps, but it will help protect them should a pole or buckle fall onto their head,” he says.

“Workplace injury has a huge cost, which is tallied in lost profits and downtime as well as pain and suffering. If everyone does their part, these are not costs any of us should need to pay.”

The APN resources highlight the main causes of injury, which include poor posture, poor load restraint, bad weather, poorly maintained kit and poor technique when fastening or releasing buckles.

The Health and Safety Week will also address other common safety issues in logistics such as slips, trips and falls, working at height, and tail-lift safety.

“We worked hard with the Road Haulage Association and the Health and Safety Executive to finalise the tail-lift safety guidance,” says Sanders. “Now it’s for freight owners, hauliers, networks and the end customers to understand that we all have a part to play in making safe deliveries a reality. Delivery drivers must be empowered to say if a delivery is not safe at that time and be supported by everyone. We cannot allow pressure from any source to lead to risky decisions.”

For information on health and safety events at specific network Hubs, please contact your network head office.

*ENDS*

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#### **Notes to Editors**

The **Association of Pallet Networks** has a membership of eight pallet networks in the UK: Fortec, Pall-Ex, Pallet-Track, Palletforce, Palletline, Palletways, THE Pallet Network and United Pallet Network. This in turn represents a total of 750 hauliers, almost 30,000 vehicles and over 13 million sq ft of warehouse space.

Contact details: Paul Sanders, Chairman, 01543 420120 or 07831 480048 [www.theapn.co.uk](http://www.theapn.co.uk)

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