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**Increase in Scots work death toll**

THE number of employees killed at work in Scotland during the 12 months to the end of March rose sharply, according to new figures.

The Health and Safety Executive said there were 33 fatal injuries to workers in the period, compared with nine the previous year. Nine deaths included in the latest figures resulted from a single explosion at the Stockline Plastics factory in Glasgow.

The news emerged as the number of people killed at work UK-wide fell by 16 to 220 during the year to March - the equal lowest since records began in 1974. Half of all fatalities were in construction and agriculture.

TUC general secretary Brendan Barber said: "The figures for some industries are still very high and we hope there will be strong enforcement action to bring the rate down further."

Bill Callaghan, chairman of the Health and Safety Commission, said: "Within the EU, only Sweden has a lower rate of workplace fatal injuries than Britain. But more deaths could be prevented with enough commitment from senior managers and the active involvement of employees."

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