



SAFETY UPDATE

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NEWS

HSE ANNUAL INJURY STATISTICS

HSE confirm lowest number of construction fatalities on record

The latest annual injury and ill health statistics from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) show 1.3 million workers were suffering from work related ill-health and there were 609,000 workplace injuries in 2016/17.

Workplace injury and new cases of ill health cost Britain £14.9bn a year with 31.2 million working days lost.

Top line statistics show that in 2016/17 there were;

Deaths – 137 fatal injuries in Britain's workplaces

Injuries – 70,116 other injuries reported by employers

Disease – 12,000 lung disease deaths estimated to be linked to past work exposures

Fines – 554 cases prosecuted with fines from convictions totaling £69.9 million

Construction – fine average up by 58%

There were 219 construction prosecution cases resulting in: 206 (94%) with a conviction for at least one offence and resulting in almost £16 million in total fines averaging over £77,000 per conviction.

By contrast in 2015/16 there were 265 cases resulting in: 246 convictions (93%); almost £8 million total fines; and average fines of £32,000.

Construction – fatalities lowest ever

There were 30 fatal injuries to workers in the Construction sector which is around 30% lower than the five-year average for 2011/12-2015/16 (43) and the lowest number on record. This brings the total number of fatal injuries to workers in the sector over the last five years to 196.

Almost half of the fatal injury cases were caused by fall from a height. There were also four fatalities to members of the public involving construction work in 2016/17.

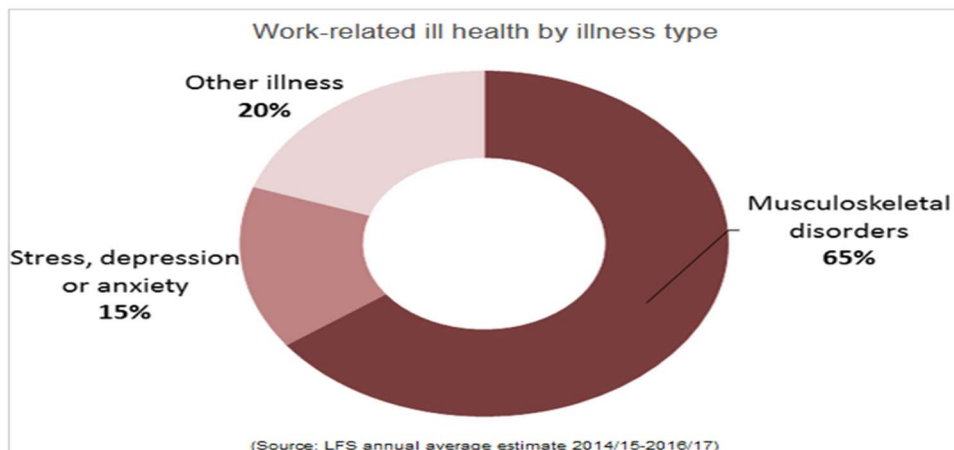


Health and safety statistics in the construction sector in Great Britain

80,000 workers suffering from work-related ill health each year (LFS)

30 fatal injuries to workers in 2016/17 (RIDDOR)

64,000 non-fatal injuries to workers each year (LFS)



DESIGNERS AVOID HSE ENFORCEMENT UNDER CDM 2015

HSE find Designers and Principal Designers complying with CDM 2015

MPW R&R Ltd (provider of Consulting, Forensic Engineering & Expert Witness Services) has published the findings of an analysis of construction sector improvement and prohibition notice data from HSE online enforcement database.

<http://mpwrandr.co.uk/hse-enforcement-notices-cdm-2015-construction-health-safety/>

The data indicate where HSE found took formal enforcement on construction projects in the first full year where CDM Regulation 2015 were in force and reveals that in 2016/17:

A total of 3,155 enforcement notices issued to construction sector duty holders. Improvement notices accounted for 1,362 of the total and prohibition notices accounted for 1,793. The notices identified 7,993 potential breaches of acts or regulations.

PDs in compliance or under the radar?

This report shows that of the 1,669 potential breaches of CDM Regulations 2015 the Principal Contractor (489) and Contractor duties (278) were by far the most frequent cited in HSE enforcement notices.

There were 99 potential breaches of Client duties and only 5 potential breaches of Principal Designer (PD) duties and 2 of Designer duties.

It may be that HSE Inspectors found widespread compliance by Designers and PDs during 2016/17 or that these parties remain 'under the radar' and that the planned HSE increase in interventions with designers and PDs are not yet taking place as intended.



Industry guidance for
**Principal
designers**



HEALTH, SAFETY & ENVIRONMENT TEST REDEVELOPMENT

CITB is reviewing the Health, safety and environment (HS&E) test to ensure that it continues to contribute towards a qualified workforce with the right knowledge, skills and training.

New question styles

From January 2018 the test will include two new question styles:

- Multiple-choice with images
- Drag and drop with text

The content of the questions will not change, but some questions will be presented using the two new styles.

Digital revision materials

All digital revision materials have been updated (DVD's, downloads and apps) and can be purchased at shop.citb.co.uk. The hard copy revision materials will not be updated, but can still be used to revise for the test as the question content has not been changed.

For further details of the changes, and to try the new question styles go to citb.co.uk/hsetestdev.

CASES

FINGERS CRUSHED IN MANUAL HANDLING OPERATION

Firm failed to avoid manual handling task or assess and manage risk

An engineering company has been fined after a workman suffered injuries to three fingers crushed by a metal frame he was lifting with colleagues in February 2017.

Norwich Magistrates Court heard he was injured when the metal frame weighing approximately 250kg fell whilst it was lifted manually to a position for welding.

Avoidance or risk reduction required

HSE found that the lifting and turning of the frames was not an isolated occurrence and that a number of the frames had been made in this manner over the three years the company had been in operation.

Steps had not been taken to avoid the manual handling or to assess the manual handling operation and take steps to reduce the likelihood of injury.

The company from Thetford in Norfolk, pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 4(1) (b) of the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 and was fined £20,000 and ordered to pay £884.00 costs.

Speaking after the case, HSE Inspector Anthony Brookes said:



“This incident could so easily have been avoided by simply carrying out correct control measures and safe working practices.

Companies should be aware that HSE will not hesitate to take appropriate enforcement action against those that fall below the required standards.”

CUTTING THROUGH LIVE CABLE FINED £900,000

Equipment removed without effective checks on electrical isolation

A waste management company has been fined £900,000 after a workman suffered an electric shock whilst cutting through a live cable in March 2016

South Tyneside Magistrates heard how the injured person was removing an item of industrial equipment at the site on the understanding that the equipment was electrically isolated.

The workman started work to remove equipment having been told it was safe to do so. During the work he cut through an electric cable to a fan which caused an electric shock and hospital treatment.

Failure to isolate not an isolated incident

The incident investigators found several pieces of equipment that had not been electrically isolated.

The defendant from Billingham, Cleveland, were found guilty of breaching Section 3(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and was fined £900,000 with £5390 costs by South Tyneside Magistrates' Court. After the hearing, HSE Inspector Shuna Rank said



“This incident could so easily have been avoided if the work had been properly planned, the risks identified and steps taken to ensure that all equipment was electrically safe before the contractors started work at the site. Fortunately, in this case, the injured person has made a full recovery, however the outcome could have been fatal.”

MAJOR SUPPLIER FINED £1.2M OVER DRIVER DEATH

Delivery driver crushed by overloaded FLT at supplier factory premises

A national manufacturer and supplier of fitted kitchens, appliances and joinery products has been fined £1.2 million after the death of a visiting HGV driver to the company premises in November 2014.

Carlisle Crown Court heard how agency driver was delivering kitchen worktops to the site in Workington when he was crushed to death as a forklift truck (FLT) overturned whilst used to lift kitchen worktops from the HGV trailer.

Failed to keep drivers safe distance from overloaded truck

HSE investigators found that the FLT was overloaded and visiting delivery drivers were not kept at a safe distance from the loading and unloading operations.

The company pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2(1) and 3(1) of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. The company was fined £1.2 million and ordered to pay costs of £33,902.00.

Speaking after the hearing HSE inspector Steven Boyd said:



“Standing too close to where loading or unloading work is being carried out can put people in harm’s way so people, such as delivery drivers, should be in a position of safety when forklift trucks are operating.”

This tragic incident could have been avoided if the defendant had implemented a safe procedure to ensure that pedestrians were kept at a safe distance during loading and unloading work.”

LORRY SHEETING ARRANGEMENTS PROVED FATAL

Driver fell 4m to death during unsafe un-sheeting of lorry

A wood waste company has been fined £216,000 after a lorry driver died when he fell 4m from a trailer in South Yorkshire whilst manually un-sheeting the unit in June 2014.

The trailer access to the work platform located at the front of the trailer was protected by a single manually fastened wire rope. The rope is normally fastened to a vertical post with a carabiner.

At the time of the incident the wire rope was hanging loose and the access point was unprotected.

Automatic sheeting not installed

Sheffield Crown Court heard the company failed to carry out a suitable and sufficient assessment for [sheeting and un-sheeting trailers](#). Automatic sheeting was not used and the protection which provided was inadequate to protect workers from the risk of falls.

The company from pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2 (1) of the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 and Regulation 3 (1) of the Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999. The company was fined £216,000 and ordered to pay costs of £31,266.54.

After the hearing, HSE inspector Tim Johnson commented:



“The incident could have easily been prevented by providing either automatic sheeting or self-closing gates similar to those at the access point on Mobile Elevated Work Platforms, coupled with a double guard rail along the length of the work platform.

It is a requirement to carry out suitable planning for significant risks such as working at height. The sheeting and un-sheeting of lorry trailers is clearly working at height and the company should have identified the risks and control measures necessary to prevent this fatal accident.”

POWER DOOR INSTALLER JAILED FOR THREE YEARS

Falling electrically powered gate claimed life of resident

A 52 year old man has been jailed for gross negligence manslaughter following the death of Jill Lunn, aged 56, at her home April 2013 when she became trapped under a powered gate which became detached from rails.

At Norwich Crown Court the defendant was found guilty and sentenced to three and a half years in prison.

Critical stop not fitted by defendant

On 17 April 2013, Jill Lunn had driven to the front of the house through the gate which failed to close behind her. She then attempted to close the gate manually. However, the defendant had not fitted a ‘stop’ to keep the gate on the rails and it fell trapping her and causing fatal injuries. It later took three people to lift the gate.

In addition, the company employing the engineer was also prosecuted for installing an unsafe machine i.e. the automated gate.

A complete technical file, which demonstrates how the machine meets the necessary safety standards, had not been produced as part of the installation process. As well as a legal requirement, generating the file would have identified the safety deficiencies in the installation.

Detective Sergeant Darren Reade from Great Yarmouth CID, said:



“Jill’s death should never have happened. If Churchyard had undertaken all the safety work expected of him then she would have been protected from the gate breaking in such a way. By claiming that the family themselves had removed the stop he lied about fitting he caused further distress to her family.”

FALLING CONTROL PANEL CRUSHED WORKMAN

Planning lacking on how to safely move heavy electrical equipment

A specialist electric engineering contractor has been fined £60,000 after an employee suffered serious crush injuries when an electrical control panel he was moving fell in February 2016.

Newcastle-under-Lyme Magistrates Court heard how the workman was injured when the ‘top heavy’ 650-750kg panel fell causing life changing injuries including a fracture that split the left and right side of his lower pelvis apart.

HSE investigators found that the company, who provide electrical engineering and refurbishment services, failed to properly assess the risks involved.

Safe system of work absent

A safe system of work and the proper instruction and training needed for moving the panel were also not provided.

The firm from Stoke-on-Trent pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974. The company was fined £60,000 and was ordered to pay costs of £2923.62 and a Victim Surcharge of £120.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Marie-Louise Riley-Roberts said:



“Those in control of work have a responsibility to assess risk and to devise safe methods of working which their employees should then be trained in. If the company had ensured that their employees were following to a safe system of work, based upon proper planning, then the life changing injuries sustained by this worker could have been prevented”.

DEMOLITION WORKER LOST BALANCE IN FATAL FALL

Lack of measures in place to prevent fall from mezzanine floor

A Glasgow based demolition contractor has been fined after a workman fell to his death from a mezzanine deck during a demolition project in Edinburgh in January 2015.

Edinburgh Sheriff Court heard how Peter Millar died 10 days after he fell whilst dismantling the mezzanine deck at the Fort Kinnaird Retail Park south of Edinburgh.

He was on the mezzanine level to remove wooden boards when he “lost his balance” and fell. There were no measures in place to prevent him falling to the ground.

Failure to plan demolition activity

HSE found that the demolition activity had not been adequately planned to prevent danger as there were no measures in place to prevent access onto the mezzanine floor and no measures in place to prevent a person falling from the mezzanine deck.

The contractor pleaded guilty to breaching Section 3(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and was fined £40,000

Speaking after the hearing, inspector Gerry Muir said:



“Work at height is the single biggest cause of fatal and serious injuries in the construction industry. During demolition and dismantling, workers can be injured falling from edges, through openings, fragile surfaces and partially demolished floors. Duty holders have a responsibility to assess, eliminate and control the risks of falls from height.”

WORKMAN SET ON FIRE BY CABLE STRIKE

RAMS requirement for underground service checks not followed

A company undertaking excavation work has been fined for safety breaches after a workman was burned when underground electrical cables were damaged in February 2016.

Chelmsford Magistrates heard that during the work an electrical cable was struck and he “was set on fire” causing significant burns to his lower body. He was hospitalised for one month and unable to work for six weeks.

HSE investigators found that drawings were not obtained from the utility company detailing the position of underground cables and the ground was not rescanned to a sufficient depth whilst excavation work was proceeding.

Training found wanting

The injured workman and co-worker responsible for scanning the ground did not receive training for their tasks contrary to the requirements contained in the company risk assessment and method statement.

The contractor from Hertford, pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 13(1) of the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 and was fined £25,000 and ordered to pay costs of £3979.68.

After the hearing HSE inspector David King said:



“The injuries were very serious, and he could have easily been killed. This injury would have been prevented if the company had planned and implemented safe methods of working, and provided the necessary information and training to its workers.”

PUBLICATIONS

RoSPA road safety quiz looks at road speed limits and tests a driver’s knowledge of this vital area of road safety.

<https://www.qzr.com/c/quiz/452966/know-your-limits>

HSE Accident Statistics for 2016/ 2017

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/overall/hssh1617.pdf>



You're Not Paid to Take Risks (Image: RoSPA)