

# SAFETY UPDATE

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## THIS ISSUE

### NEWS

HSE START PROJECT HEALTH RISK INTERVENTIONS

NEW HSE HAVS CALCULATOR TO HELP CONTROL RISK

AIF NATIONAL WORKING AT HEIGHT CONFERENCE

### CASES

TRAINEE DRIVER CRUSHED

VIBRATION FINE £100K

W.A.H. CUSTODIAL SENTENCES

SAFE SYSTEM OF WORK FAILURE

LOLER JAIL TERM FOR DIRECTOR

ASSISTANCE FROM THIRD PARTY PROVES COSTLY

FIRM FINED OVER FALL FROM LORRY

## NEWS

### NEWS

#### **HSE START PROJECT HEALTH RISK INTERVENTIONS**

##### **Regulator set to check health risks assessed and controls in place**

On 7th October 2019 HSE commenced construction project inspections which focus on those hazards which are a significant cause of construction worker ill-health.

In particular, there will be a concentration on the measures in place to protect workers from occupational lung disease caused by asbestos, respirable crystalline silica, wood and other dusts when carrying out common construction tasks.

The regulator is stressing that priority is often given to safety hazards yet thousands more workers suffer ill-health at work than are harmed by at-work accidents.

##### **Enforcement action where poor standards found**

Asbestos and these other dusts involve many years between exposure and the ill health effects. HSE estimates that annually there are around 8,000 work-related cancer deaths a year.

The construction industry accounts for around 3,500 of these with asbestos and silica the major cause. All those businesses involved on construction projects and the workers on site need to be aware of the danger to health presented by such substances.

HSE have stated that:

*"Inspectors will be looking to ensure those involved with construction projects know the risks, properly plan their work and use the right controls. Where poor standards are found, enforcement action will be taken."*

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## Respirable Crystalline Silica (RCS)

- Risk is from **Respirable Crystalline Silica (RCS)**
- Dust particles must be of ‘respirable’ size to cause harm
- **RCS penetrates to the deep lung**



### **NEW HSE HAVS CALCULATOR TO HELP CONTROL RISK**

#### **New calculator includes “cautious estimates” for common tools**

The HSE Hand-Arm Vibration exposure calculator helps estimate and record worker exposure to such vibration and compare the exposures with the action values in the regulations as part of a hand-arm vibration risk assessment.

The calculator has been updated and is available on the HSE website. The [updated version](#) includes a drop down menu of vibration magnitudes for common tools.

The data is taken from the HSE database of typical values which can be used to make “cautious estimates” of exposure before representative in-use data for specific tools is available.

#### **Reinforced emphasis on risk control and management**

The [HSE guidance book L140, Hand-arm vibration](#), has also been revised.

The new edition has been updated in keeping with changes to related legislation, technical advances and experience. The emphasis is on the control and management of risks from exposure to hand-arm vibration (HAV).

HSE stress that the policy on the control of HAV has not changed.

Vibration is a hazard for employees in many industries and occupations. Regular and frequent exposure can lead to hand-arm vibration syndrome (HAVS) and carpal tunnel syndrome (CTS).

**HSE**

**HAND-ARM VIBRATION EXPOSURE CALCULATOR**

Version 5.6 June 2018

Company name / work area: Employee ID and/or task name:										
Tool or process name Select HSE recommended initial values or enter your own information	Vibration magnitude $m/s^2$	Exposure points per hour	Time to reach EAV $2.5 m/s^2 A(8)$ hours	Time to reach EAV $5 m/s^2 A(8)$ minutes	Time to reach ELV $5 m/s^2 A(8)$ hours	Time to reach ELV $5 m/s^2 A(8)$ minutes	Exposure duration hours	Exposure duration minutes	Partial exposure $m/s^2 A(8)$	Partial exposure points
/ Chainsaws	7	98	1	1	4	5	0.3		1.4	29
/ Demolition or rotary hammers	18	648		9		37	0.4		4.0	259
/ Saws (cut-off) - Masonry cutting	13	338		18	1	11	0.1		1.5	34
/ Pneumatic hammers	25	1250		5		13	0.4		5.6	500
/ Sanders - Orbital	9	162		37	2	28	0.2		1.4	32
/ Trench hammers	13	338		18	1	11	0.1		1.5	34

**Zoom to fit** **Help**

**Reset** **Print (preview)**

**Reset Options:**

Lock tool or process information

Lock company and calc. by names

**Instructions for use:**  
Enter vibration magnitudes and exposure durations (for an individual worker or a task carried out by several workers) in the white areas. Results are displayed in the yellow areas  
Information on tool types may be entered directly into the tools/process names columns, or selected from a drop-down list of HSE recommended initial data values.  
To clear all cells, click on the 'Reset' button  
Tick the 'Lock tool or process information' check box to prevent 'Reset' clearing these cells  
Additional information such as company name, worker name may be added if printing or saving the calculation.  
For more information, click the 'Help' button

**Exposure calculation by:** **Job role:**

**Daily exposure** **7.5** **Total exposure points** **888**

**WARNING: Exposure above**

**Calculation date:** **23 Sep 2019**

## AIF NATIONAL WORKING AT HEIGHT CONFERENCE

### HSE Construction Head to speak at Access Industry Forum conference

The Access Industry Forum (AIF) is holding a national conference on Thursday 14th November 2019 at the AJ Bell Stadium, Salford.

A total of 13 [speakers](#) will address the national conference –*Working at height: Access for Life* to talk about the issues and topics set to shape the future of access and height safety.

The keynote address 'Working at height: State of play' will be delivered by Sarah Jardine, the HSE Construction Division Head. Sarah will cover the UK current position and standing on safety generally, latest trends and developments and the HSE response to the inquiry recommendations of the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Working at Height.

To book and more information go to [AIF Website](#).

### Impressive line-up of speakers

The proceedings will be introduced by Peter Bennett OBE, chair of the AIF who said:



*"With such an impressive line-up of speakers, this really is shaping up to be a must-attend event for anyone involved with work at height. It's the only conference dedicated exclusively to access and safety, making it a real highlight of the events calendar. I'm certain our delegates will go home with valuable new-found insights into the key topics set to shape the future of working at height."*

**Working at height: Access for life**

FROM DESIGNING FOR ACCESS AND THE ROLE OF VIRTUAL REALITY TO MENTAL HEALTH AND MANAGING RISK, THIS UNIQUE EVENT WILL BRING TOGETHER AN EXCEPTIONAL LINE-UP OF EXPERT SPEAKERS TO ADDRESS THE ISSUES AND TOPICS SET TO SHAPE THE FUTURE OF WORKING AT HEIGHT

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## CASES

### DRIVER UNDER TRAINING CRUSHED BY TELEHANDLER

#### Short Title:

#### Court sentences company director to unpaid work community order

The director of a waste management company has been ordered to carry out unpaid work after an employee was critically injured in Poole, Dorset on 18th April 2017.

Poole Magistrates heard that the employee had been employed for a “few weeks” when he became trapped between a telehandler and a gate post at premises where builders waste is recycled and processed.

#### Serious faults found including braking system

HSE investigators found that the driver was being trained to drive a telehandler by the director. There were several serious long-term faults with the telehandler including some relating to braking.

The director was given a 120 hours unpaid work community order and ordered to contribute to costs of £1500.

HSE inspector Ian Smart said:



*"The director was aware of the unsafe condition of the telehandler yet allowed it to be used by an inexperienced employee. HSE promotes safe-stop procedures where drivers should apply the parking brake and turn off the ignition before exiting any mobile machinery. This could not be done as the telehandler was in such poor mechanical condition. Maintenance is not optional. This accident could easily have been prevented."*

### COUNCIL FINED £100k OVER VIBRATION FAILINGS

#### Excessive use of power tools uncontrolled and without health surveillance

A local authority has been fined £100,000 after seven ground maintenance workers were exposed to the risk of harm from vibration caused by “excessive use of power tools”.

Luton Magistrates heard how the council reported seven cases of Hand-Arm Vibration Syndrome (HAVS) between May 2015 and June 2016. The affected employees were all part of its ground maintenance and street care team, looking after the public spaces in Hertfordshire.

#### Risk unidentified and not assessed

HSE investigators found that the council had neither adequately planned its working methods nor trained or informed employees on the risks to their health.

The authority failed to limit the duration or magnitude of exposure to vibration and did not put in place suitable health surveillance to identify problems at any early stage.

The council was fined £100,000 and ordered to pay costs of £28,672.62. Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Rubeena Surnam said



*"This was a case of the council failing to identify the risk from hand arm vibration which is a recognised health risk with potentially disabling consequences.*

*Unless vibration is identified and properly assessed, an employer won't know the level of risk and whether action is needed to protect workers."*

## CUSTODIAL SENTENCES AFTER CAPTURE ON CAMERA

### **Roofing business partner failed to properly plan and supervise roofwork**

Partners of a roofing company have been sentenced following unsafe work carried out on a Salisbury Bowls Club in 2018.

Swindon Magistrates heard how workers were seen working on the roof with unsafe access, no edge protection and nothing to prevent falls through the fragile roof material.

#### **Risks well known**

HSE investigators found the partners failed to ensure that the work at height was properly planned, appropriately supervised and carried out safely.

Both partners pleaded guilty to breaching the Work at Height Regulations 2005 and received a six-month custodial sentence, suspended for 12 months, during which time they must both undertake 250 hours unpaid work. Each was also ordered to pay costs of £1836.31.

Speaking after the hearing HSE inspector Sue Adsett said:



*"Falls from height remain one of the most common causes of work-related injuries in this country and the risks associated with working at height are well known.*

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

## FIRMS FAILED TO MONITOR SAFE SYSTEM OF WORK

### Principal Contractor and specialist fined over fall through roof mesh

A project appointed CDM Principal Contractor and a specialist contractor have been fined after a worker fell through a fragile mesh roof whilst carrying out work at height on a Newham, Teesside project in July 2016.

Teesside Crown Court heard how the injured person was installing the roof on a new fast food drive through establishment when, whilst moving materials, he stepped back onto an adjacent fragile mesh roof.

The mesh was not load-bearing and he fell some 3m suffering multiple fractures of his lower left back.

### Planning, managing and monitoring essential

HSE investigators found that in failing to prevent access to the fragile roof area the contractor failed to plan and carry out the work at height in a safe manner.

In addition, the Principal Contractor (PC) failed to plan, manage or monitor an aspect of the construction phase without risk to safety. The PC was fined £225,000 with £8,000 costs and the roofing contractor was fined £2,000.

After the hearing, HSE inspector John Heslop said:



*"This incident highlights the importance of thorough risk assessment, appropriate planning and adhering to a safe system of work that is regularly monitored and managed by those in control of that work."*

## JAIL TERM FOR DIRECTOR OVER LORRY CRANE DEFECTS

### Operator impaled on dangerous and uninspected lifting appliance

The former director of a now-dissolved landscaping company has been sentenced for safety breaches after a worker suffered life changing injuries on a project in Leeds on 25th August 2016.

Leeds Crown Court heard that an employee was using a lorry loader crane to deliver a load of soil to a new house on Otley Road, in Leeds.

During operation of the crane the operator lowered the crane arm down and his arm became "impaled on a spike" protruding from the control system. The impact caused several bones in his arm to be shattered.

## **Examination would have found disabled safety system**

HSE investigators found “severe defects” in the crane, including a disabled safety system, and part of the safety guard around the controls had been cut off, leaving the spike on which his arm was impaled.

The operator had not received appropriate training to operate the lorry loader crane.

The director was given a 12-month prison sentence suspended for two years and ordered to complete 200 hours of community service. After the hearing, HSE inspector Yolande Burns-Sleightholme commented:



*“The lorry loader crane should have been properly maintained, regular inspections carried out, and a thorough examination taken place every twelve months.”*

*“The disabled safety system would have been found during the examination, ensuring that this incident could not have occurred.”*

## **ASSISTANCE FROM THIRD PARTY PROVES COSTLY**

### **Contractor fined after non-employee loses fingers crushed by dozer**

A groundworks company has been fined after an employee of another company suffered serious hand injuries in November 2017 in Avonmouth.

Bristol Magistrates heard how a plant driver requested the assistance of a security guard working for the separate company to remove a trailer from a bulldozer whilst the machine was operated by the driver.

During this work his hand was trapped between a metal post and the bulldozer resulting in the amputation of his middle and ring fingers, and loss of movement in his index finger of his right hand.

### **Safe system of not followed**

HSE investigators found that the contractor failed to conduct its undertaking in such a way that people not in its employment were exposed to risks to their safety.

The contractor from Oxfordshire was fined £10,000 and ordered to pay costs of £1297.00. Speaking after the hearing HSE inspector Berenice Ray said:



*"This injury could have been easily prevented if a safe system of work had been followed, with the bulldozer ignition turned off before anyone was allowed close to remove the trailer."*

*"Employers should make sure they properly assess risks and apply effective control measures to minimise the risk from their machinery operations."*

## FIRM FINED OVER FALL FROM LORRY BED

### Serious injury after failure to provide suitable and clear instructions

A manufacturer of steel water storage tanks and supporting towers has been fined after a worker suffered multiple fractures following a fall from height in October 2017.

Cwmbran Magistrates heard how the employee was injured when he fell from a lorry bed whilst unloading the lorry at their site resulting in multiple fractures of his head, ribs, shoulder blade and fingers, causing him to be unable to work for five months.

### Simple measures would have prevented accident

HSE investigators found company failed to provide employees with suitable and clear instructions and training so that employees did not access lorry beds in an unsafe manner.

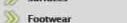
The company pleaded guilty of breaching Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974. The company was fined £9,400 and ordered to pay costs of £1,680.75. Speaking after the case HSE inspector Will Powell said:

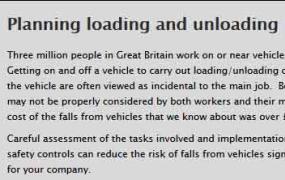
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[Planning loading and unloading](#)

Three million people in Great Britain work on or near vehicles as part of their regular job. Getting on and off a vehicle to carry out loading/unloading operations and working at height on the vehicle are often viewed as incidental to the main job. Because of this, the risks involved may not be properly considered by both workers and their managers. The economic and human cost of the falls from vehicles that we know about was over £36 million in 2004/05.

Careful assessment of the tasks involved and implementation of simple and cost-effective safety controls can reduce the risk of falls from vehicles significantly and avoid potential losses for your company.

Get help from the workers who use the vehicle - they know how the job is really done and normally have good ideas about how to make it safer and more efficient.

You must think in terms of a hierarchy of controls:

-  plan to avoid work at height where you can;
-  where you can't, make sure you use work equipment to prevent falls:
  -  first choice - vehicle-based systems;
  -  second choice - on-site systems;
-  where the risk of a fall can't be eliminated, use work equipment to minimise the distance and consequences of a fall.

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*"Falls from vehicles can be overlooked by employers when considering risks from work at height. Simple measures would have prevented this accident."*