

## CASE STUDY: COMPANY FINED AFTER WORKER'S HAND PULLED INTO MACHINERY



Food manufacturer Baxters has been fined in Elgin Sheriff Court for serious safety failings after a worker suffered hand injuries at its Riverside Factory in Fochabers in March 2013.

The worker, of Lossiemouth, was working on a newly-installed line when his hand was drawn into the gap between the moving conveyor and a newly-installed roller; however he was unable to remove his hand or activate the conveyor's emergency stop.

A passing colleague came to his assistance but he had already suffered lacerations and open wounds to three fingers on his hand. He was off work for a month and still suffers pain in his hand and no longer has full movement.

The HSE investigation found that while the company had assessed some of the risks of the new line, it had failed to identify the need for further assessments once it had been fully installed.

The court was told that although the worker was given a basic induction and health and safety briefing when he started work he had not been instructed on the specific machinery he was operating. The task of picking up cases meant staff got closer to dangerous parts of the machine – where the conveyor and roller came together. The risk was increased by the fact that the danger area could be obscured by the item being lifted.

Following the incident a tunnel guard was fitted along with pop-up rollers, and a full assessment of risks of the line was carried out, which identified other potential nip points where additional guarding was required.

The company was fined a total of £6000 after pleading guilty to an offence of breaching Regulations 11(1) and 11(2) of the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998.