



KEEP IT SAFE

BFFF QUARTERLY HEALTH & SAFETY NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 2019



British Frozen Food Federation

Registered Office: Warwick House, Unit 7, Long Bennington Business Park, Main Road, Long Bennington, Newark, Nottinghamshire NG23 5JR
Tel: 01400 283090 Fax: 01400 283098 Websites: www.bfff.co.uk www.freshfromthefreezer.co.uk



Entries are now open!

Now in its third year, the People Awards are all about celebrating the unsung heroes of frozen, the brilliant and hard-working staff who make this essential part of the food industry the dynamic and innovative sector it is.

It is completely free of charge for all members and associate members of the BFFF to enter. So what do you have to lose!

Key dates for your diary:

Entries Live	30th September 2019
Entries Close	13th December 2019
Shortlist Announced	20th January 2020
Awards ceremony at BFFF Annual Business Conference Dinner	5th March 2020

Categories:

- ★ Rising Star
- ★ Supply Chain/Logistics Team of the Year
- ★ Business Transformation of the Year
- ★ Unsung Hero
- ★ Product Developer of the Year
- ★ Marketing Campaign of the Year
- ★ Sustainability Champion
- ★ Commercial Team of the Year
- ★ Technical Champion / Team
- ★ Health and Safety Champion / Team
- ★ Lifetime Achievement Award

Enter now!

<http://www.bfffpeopleawards.co.uk>

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FOREWORD FROM SIMON

Welcome to the October Edition of Keep It Safe

Since the last edition we are pleased to update you on our RIDDOR determination guidance. This is one step closer to being assured by primary authority and is now undergoing peer review. In this edition we look at a case study from Greenyard Frozen. Greenyard have shared with us an insight on their strategy for tackling modern slavery. Our safety focus section looks at the UK's enforcement gap with substantial cuts such as those to the HSE, with funding falling by 53% and staff by 32% for the period 2009/10 to 2016/17.

The BFFF Health & Safety Expert group met on the 11th September. Topic discussed were:

- Update from the food and drink manufacturers forum
- Future Challenges of the Health & Safety Practitioner
- Cryogenic technology
- Virtual Reality in Training
- Future Seminars with ideas on road risk and workplace transport
- Collated membership accident statistics
- The phenomena of 'water hammer'

The meeting also included a presentation and demonstration by Adam Pomeroy from Luminous on Virtual Reality (VR) technology, this now being used for training with simulated workplaces and activities. Workplace environments can be replicated with realistic machinery, doors and staircases. Many companies have embraced this technology with companies such as PepsiCo using this training medium. The scope of this training extends to operating mobile elevated work platforms, forklifts, driving and the operation of machinery in your very own environment but without the risk. In addition, Luminous showed us a system for identifying pathogens using a hollow lens. Following this we also had a presentation from Cedric Hanson of BOC who spoke about their 'Frostcruise' prototype cryogenic vehicle refrigeration system. Cedric stated that the advancement of this technology would be led by the price of diesel increasing and the increase in emission zones.

In September, BFFF hosted a specialist training course on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). This was delivered to our members by Collins McHugh and NFU Mutual. On the day this turned out to be a full house and delegate feedback has been very good.

We are now accepting entries for our People Awards and we urge all members to nominate their health and safety champions / teams. See the advert on the inside front cover for more information.

Please feel free to contact Simon for more information on our expert group's work or indeed any of our fire safety work, or if you wish to get involved in the benchmarking statistics or primary authority schemes.

Also, don't forget that all of BFFF's guidance is available on our website here: <http://bfff.co.uk/health-safety/guidance/> along with cases studies here: <http://bfff.co.uk/health-safety/hs-case-studies/>

In the meantime, we hope that you enjoy this edition.



Simon Brentnall
Head of Health & Safety
simonbrentnall@bfff.co.uk



Carla Brown
Health & Safety Assistant
carlabrown@bfff.co.uk

Travel Distances – By Matt Peace, Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue

Building large covered spaces to store or create products is often a consideration when town planners identify sites for development. If no immediate organisation has been identified before construction begins then these projects usually remain a large open space for the first occupant to manage that space as they wish.

Without designing an interior these shells need to conform to Approved Document B which states that the travel distance to a place of safety is 25 metres where a single direction of travel is available and 45 metres where there is an alternative. The government statutory guidance that supports the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 has exactly the same consideration as shown in the table below (from the factories and warehouses guide).

Escape Routes	Suggested range of travel distance
Where more than one escape route is provided	25m in higher fire-risk area ^{1,2} 45m in normal fire-risk area 60m in lower fire-risk area ³
Where only a single escape route is provided	12m in higher fire-risk area ^{1,2} 25m in normal fire-risk area 45m in lower fire-risk area ³

Note 1: Where there are small higher risk areas this travel distance should apply. Where the risk assessment indicates that the whole building is higher risk, seek advice from a competent person.

Note 2: Some rooms are considered as places of special fire hazard, e.g. rooms used for highly flammable paint spraying. Shorter travel distances are generally required for these areas, e.g. 18m where there is more than one escape route, and 9m with a single escape route.

Note 3: The travel distance for lower risk premises should only be applied in exceptional cases in the very lowest risk premises where densities are low, occupants are familiar with the premises, excellent visual awareness and very limited combustibles.

The rationale used for deciding on these distances is because of a generalised consideration that everyone within the premises are under the influence of the business. They can be trained, they will be familiar with the building and in all likelihood the building will have ceilings higher than 3m giving longer time before any smoke will reach head height.

Travel distances are always identified for the nearest exit only.

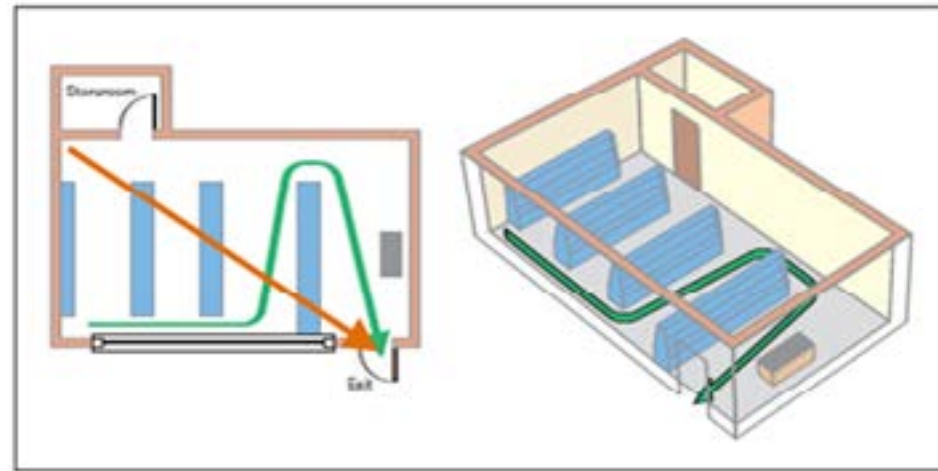
When a business decides to change the layout within the building shell to add some office space or separate a high and low risk processes (food standards not fire) for example. Considerations should include what effect that change will have on the travel distance to the nearest exit. Fire safety professionals talk about scary corner, it being the location within a building that is the furthest away from an exit.

Measuring the travel distance from scary corner can be done on a plan directly across a room, but it could give you impractical distances. In reality an individual would have to walk around any fixtures or fittings within that space. With that in mind the most accurate measurement of travel distance would be done by the actual route a person would take. There is a good example within the government guide. The travel distance should be measured along the green line in his picture. Where the layout of fixtures and fittings cannot be determined before the design stage, then we would use the $\frac{2}{3}$ rule. The direct distance measured is $\frac{2}{3}$ of the actual travel distance,

therefore if you measured 10 metres across the orange arrow the actual travel distance would be recorded as 15m (the length of the orange arrow being $\frac{2}{3}$ rds of 15metres).

There are also cases where travel distances may not necessarily need to be measured all the way to a final exit. These places are often called places of reasonable safety, an example of which would be a protected staircase enclosure and will normally have a minimum of 30 minutes fire resistance including any fire doors with intumescent and cold smoke seals.

Measuring travel distances



In larger or more complex buildings places of relative safety become very important. Another place of relative safety would be a separation wall of at least 30minutes fire resisting construction where on either side of it there is a final exit within the maximum travel distance allowable in the table mentioned earlier. The level of fire resistance required for that compartment would be determined by the height of the top floor of the building.

Hopefully the above article has helped with understanding what is considered an acceptable travel distance in factories and warehouses. If you require further advice on the content of this article then contact BFFF who can approach Lincolnshire Fire & Rescue for clarification, as our Primary Authority they can give advice based on the requirements of all members or a specific group of members with similar characteristics.

BFFF HEALTH AND SAFETY INITIATIVES

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY SEMINAR

The business benefits of adopting a comprehensive approach to corporate social responsibility (CSR) were highlighted at a recent training workshop.

Organised by the BFFF health and safety team, the one-day event took place in Stratford-Upon-Avon at the head office in NFU Mutual and was attended by a cross section of BFFF members.

The course was run by Collins McHugh, a specialist CSR consultancy with over 15 years' experience in the field. NFUM complimented this by covering the topic of Modern Slavery.



CSR benefits explained at BFFF workshop

Businesses adopting the principles of CSR work to balance the needs of the environment and communities in which they operate whilst maintaining commercial success.

"CSR is no longer a 'nice to have' for any company wanting to maintain and exceed customer requirements, attract the best people, or simply meet environmental and social impact legislation. Excellence in CSR is also increasingly providing a competitive edge when it comes to winning work," said Simon Brentnall, BFFF head of health & safety.

He added: "We wanted to give members a real understanding of the principles of CSR, as well as practical insights into how they can take the first steps to develop a CSR programme, or make further improvements to existing CSR effort."

The workshop provided a full explanation of CSR principles, examples of good and less impressive approaches to CSR and looked at how to link CSR to core business activities.

Other presentations included: what to measure and how to measure it, how to engage people across a business in a CSR programme and best practice in reporting on CSR performance.

BFFF members also discussed aspects of their own CSR programmes such as fighting modern slavery, packaging reduction initiatives and cross community skills development.

Barry Collins, managing director of Collins McHugh said: "CSR still remains one of the most underutilised business tools for reducing a company's costs. A good CSR programme allows a business to build partnerships with customers and suppliers, engage employees and responsibly manage environmental and social effects.

"Cost reductions through effective carbon management, or increased tender success because of a better understanding of the concept of sustainable growth and development are not just reflections of the responsible nature of your company, they are powerful commercial tools. And this is just the tip of the iceberg. Well managed corporate social responsibility can bring improved performance across the whole of an organisation."

SAFETY FOCUS – MIND THE GAP

THE UK'S ENFORCEMENT GAP



Unchecked is a new campaign which investigates the UK's shrinking enforcement capacity and exposes the real-world costs of the failure to properly enforce the rules. It is backed by 20 non-governmental organisations including the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH) and RoSPA.

Unchecked has published a Briefing outlining some of its findings. It says that from 2009/10 to 2016/17, real terms funding for the environmental and social protection work of ten key national regulators fell on average by 50%, and

that the total number of full-time staff working at these regulators fell by 30% in this period. From 2009/10 to 2016/17, spending by Local Authorities and fire authorities in England on key services which protect the health and wellbeing of citizens and the environment fell on average by 35%.

In terms of health and safety, the report says that for the HSE, funding fell by 53% and staff by 32% for the period 2009/10 to 2016/17. The number of HSE frontline inspectors fell by 27%, while the number of HSE construction inspectors fell by 40%. In terms of local authorities, the campaign says that spend on health and safety by English LAs fell by 41%, with the number of LA health and safety inspectors falling by some 48%.

Over the same period, the Briefing also highlights that funding for fire authorities in England fell by around 30% and that fire and rescue staff numbers in English authorities fell by 21%.

In terms of enforcement activity for the sector, findings include:

- from 2009/10 to 2014/15 routine air pollution inspections by Local Authorities in England and Wales fell by 37%
- proactive health and safety inspections by Local Authorities in England, Scotland and Wales fell by 94%
- prosecutions by the Health and Safety Executive in England and Wales fell by 25%
- total health and safety enforcement notices issued by the Health and Safety Executive and Local Authorities in England, Scotland and Wales fell by 25%
- fire safety audits in England fell by 30%
- from 2010/11 to 2016/17, unannounced inspections by the Health and Safety Executive fell by 40%
- the number of health and safety Improvement Notices served by Local Authorities in England, Scotland and Wales fell by 70%.

WORKER PROTECTION

Unchecked has also looked at those agencies charged with protecting workers and stopping illegal activity - such as the Gangmaster and Labour Abuse Authority and the Employment Agency Standards Inspectorate. Amongst its findings:

- the Gangmaster and Labour Abuse Authority's funding fell by 15%
- employment Agency Standards Inspectorate staff numbers fell by 63%
- national Minimum Wage investigations completed by HMRC fell by 27%
- the number of infringements found by the Employment Agency Standards Inspectorate fell by 65%
- from 2009/10 to 2015/16 the number of legal cases taken on by the Equality and Human Rights Commission fell by 76%.

Over the coming months, Unchecked says that it plans to carry out in-depth investigations into the real-world impacts of weak enforcement in important areas of public protection.

The campaign, which has been co-ordinated by the Ecology Trust, looks at the UK's enforcement record in six areas of public protection: food, environmental protection, worker's rights, consumer safety, local spaces, and health and safety.

Source - Unchecked.uk

MEET THE HEALTH & SAFETY EXPERT GROUP

The H&S Expert group consists of safety professionals representing all sectors of the frozen food supply chain and BFFF membership. The group meets three times per year and provides a confidential health & Safety and fire safety forum to focus on issues relevant to the industry, enabling the dissemination of pertinent H&S information to members. The Expert group informs and advises the BFFF board to assist with determining Federation policy in health & safety and fire safety legislative areas.

If you are interested in becoming more involved, or would like to confidentially raise an issue for discussion at the meetings please contact Simon Brentnall on 01400 283096 or simonbrentnall@bfff.co.uk

Members of the Group

Peter MacDiarmid, Safety and Training Manager, ABP UK Health
Jemma Wiles, Health and Safety Support Officer, ABP UK
Mark Lovett - Group Health, Safety & Environment Manager, Apetito Ltd.
David Morgan - Health, Safety & Environment Manager, Asda Stores Ltd.
Crescent Moore and Clare Flanagan - Health & Safety Managers, Bidfood
Paul Duncalf - Head of Risk and Compliance, Brakes
Bryan Atkinson - Safety Co-ordinator, Cargill Meats Europe
Aaron Scandrett - UK Group Health, Safety and Environment Manager, Froneri UK Ltd.
Julie Howlett - HR, Health & Safety And Environmental Director, Greenyard Frozen UK Ltd.
Katherine Yates -Health and Safety Manager, Greggs Plc
Paul Rhodes - Group SHE Manager, Greggs Plc
Neil Walker - Health, Safety & Quality Manager, Heron Foods Ltd.
Ian Merrilees, Group Technical Director, Hopwells
Graham Jeffrey, Health and Safety Manager, Kent Frozen Foods
Stephen Dean - Health & Safety Manager, Iceland Foods Ltd.
Ann McKenna - Divisional Health & Safety Officer, Kerry Foods
Simon Aldous - Health & Safety Manager, Moy Park Ltd.
Adrian Cooper - Quality, Health, Safety & Environment Manager, XPO Logistics
Dave Penson - Safety, Health, Environment & Energy Manager, Young's Seafood Ltd.

CASE STUDY – MODERN SLAVERY

BFFF CASE STUDY ARTICLE - OCTOBER 2019



GREENYARD 

In this edition, Julie Howlett (Head of Health & Safety) for Greenyard Frozen UK Ltd talks about their strategy in tackling modern slavery.

Modern Slavery deprives an individual of their liberty, individuals are forced to work through mental or physical threat, they can be dehumanised and treated as a commodity or bought and sold as 'property'. Modern slavery particularly relevant for the Food sector – forced labour, migrant workers, seasonal work etc. Farms and producers are vulnerable and therefore need to be more vigilant. In context modern slavery is the second largest form of organised crime with 40.3m people trapped globally 136,000* victims estimated in the UK in 2018.

This can sometimes come about when migrants give up their life savings to gangs and cartels who organise their passage to the UK and are sold the dream of a better future for their families. This often goes wrong when their passports are taken, the gangs then have full control over them. In turn they become trapped and end up working for very little or no financial gain.

At Greenyard we have a robust auditing system to ensure no worker, whether permanent or temporary, is being trafficked – we check workers documentation (passport, ID card) and speak to them directly, using questions supplied by Stronger Together which are designed so as not to frighten or cause alarm. We ensure wages are paid into bank accounts in their own name and HR do periodic checks to ensure workers have access to their accounts (i.e. asking to see their bank card; asking if they have direct access to their money). All of the HR team have been on Modern Slavery training and all of our staff have been trained to spot the signs that someone may be being trafficked. Our growers have received Modern Slavery training and they have regular reminders from Greenyard about the risks they face; to ensure they know who is working for them; that their workers are safe from harm; and where to get help if they suspect anyone on their farm is being trafficked. New starters, both permanent and temporary labour via the recruitment agency are given leaflets on Modern Slavery, which explains where they can get help if they, or someone they know is being trafficked.

For more information on this subject please contact
simonbrentnall@bfff.co.uk or carlabrown@bfff.co.uk

GUIDANCE

CONVICTIONS IN LARGEST MODERN SLAVERY PROSECUTION



A POLISH human-trafficking ring have been jailed after the CPS concluded the UK's largest ever modern slavery prosecution and what is believed to be the largest prosecution of its type in Europe.

Three people have been sentenced at Birmingham Crown Court, following the imprisonment of five others earlier this year.

Many hundreds of vulnerable victims - often homeless and suffering from addictions - were lured from Poland to Birmingham with the promise of free accommodation and well-paid employment.

When they arrived by coach the reality was starkly different. The traffickers housed their victims in cramped, substandard accommodation and gave them so little food that many were forced to attend soup kitchens. The workers were paid as little as £10 a week for jobs including picking onions, making fencing and sorting parcels.

Mark Paul, head of complex casework unit, CPS West Midlands, said, "This is the largest modern slavery prosecution of its kind in the UK and perhaps in Europe.

"The scale of the operation was truly staggering, with millions of pounds netted by the crime group as a result of their callous and systematic exploitation of vulnerable members of the Polish community.

"88 victims came forward but the investigation revealed in excess of 300 other probable victims. Vulnerable men and women were recruited off the streets in Poland with the promise of a better life, only to be cruelly exploited and trapped into a desperate cycle of dependency with nowhere else to go."

On 22 February 2019, Marek Chowaniec, 30, Marek Brezinski, 29, and Natalia Zmuda, 29 were each found guilty of people trafficking and forced labour offences. On 26 June 2019, Ignacy Brzezinski and Wojciech Nowakowski were convicted for their involvement, Jan Sadowski pleaded guilty at the beginning of trial 2 on 23 April 2019.

In total, eight defendants have been convicted for their role in the conspiracy across two trials at Birmingham Crown Court.

The traffickers also made their victims claim benefits, then kept the money. If challenged about where the rest of their money was going, the criminals claimed it was owed for travel, food and

accommodation costs. Those who tried to leave were assaulted or threatened. Many victims would find themselves being moved for no reason and their property stolen.

Meanwhile their abusers used the fruits of forced labour to purchase high-end cars and other items. They are estimated to have made around £2.46m, from wages and benefits not passed onto the victims.

Mark Paul continued: “The gang not only stole the victims’ money but took away their freedom, using threats and violence to bully them and control their lives.

“That this should be happening in Britain today is shocking and we hope these convictions will help to highlight that it can happen in plain sight, and stand as another landmark in the fight against modern slavery.”

Case study

Peter and Martha (not their real names) were recruited from Poland with the promise of jobs earning £130 a week plus free food and accommodation. They were told they had only an hour to make up their minds before a bus left for Britain.

They were made to sleep with nine others in a four-bedroom house in the UK with no heating or hot water. They were paid just £20-40 for a week made up of 12-hour days in food processing and recycling plants. They were forced to ask the traffickers for loans.

Martha was told her bones would be broken if she did not work. West Midlands Police began its investigation after a tip-off from the charity Hope for Justice, which noticed an increasing number of Polish people attending one of its soup kitchens.

Such was the scale of the conspiracy, 61 victims gave evidence against a large number of defendants and the case was split into two trials.

Evidence from addresses used by the gang, particularly Beechwood Road in West Bromwich, were key to securing the convictions. Searchers uncovered vast numbers of bank cards in the names of victims and thousands of pounds in cash.

OCADO FIRE: ‘SLOW RESPONSE AND SPRINKLERS SWITCHED OFF BY STAFF’

The provisional report of the chief fire officer at Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service (HFRS) into the fire at Ocado’s Andover warehouse, concluded that a fire detection system did not work, and that Ocado staff were slow to call the fire service and turned off sprinklers for a time.



HFRS concluded: “System failure and human factors are important in understanding the outcome of the incident and the ineffectiveness of the sprinkler installation.”

The report is a defence of the tactics and strategy of the fire service and a full report is expected in September.

First, HFRS say they could have done nothing more to combat the blaze.

The report reads: “The fire was deep seated and located in a fuel dense area,

impossible to access. Despite the collective efforts of HFRS and six supporting Fire and Rescue Services over four days the building was a total loss. All tactical options available to HFRS including ultra-high-pressure lance, compressed air foam and traditional hose lines were tried with no success. A major incident was declared during this period with residents requiring evacuation to local rest centres.”

Chronology of the fire

- 0141hrs - Ignition occurred due to electrical arcing in the charging process of a robot.
- 0215hrs - The fire was detected visually by an engineer. The air sampling fire detection system did not detect the fire as designed.
- 0226hrs - The sprinkler system was operated (but turned off by Ocado staff for 5 minutes during this period of activity).
- 0241hrs (approx.) - Ocado calls the emergency services.

Secondly, HFRS contends its strategic approach of favouring sprinklers as fire protection for large, industrial buildings is sound. This is important because although Ocado’s Andover warehouse burned to the ground, it did have a sprinkler system installed.

So why did it not help here?

According to this report, Ocado staff turned off the sprinkler system at a crucial point in the development of the fire.

The Report reads: “The sprinkler system was turned off for a period of five minutes. Fire growth during this period is significant. The deactivation of the sprinkler system can be considered a significant factor in its failure to effectively perform as designed.”

HFRS also said the slow response was crucial, as detection systems did not work, and Ocado tried and failed for a time to put the fire out themselves.

The report reads: “Early intervention at this incident by HFRS was not achievable due to the time delay of 60 minutes between ignition, discovery and first call. The absence of effective automatic fire detection allowed the fire to develop before discovery. This was then compounded by the subsequent unsuccessful attempts to tackle the fire before calling HFRS.”

Ocado said the fire cost the company £110m. The cost of the fire drove it to a £142.8m half-year loss and knocked 2% off its sales.

In its Q1 trading update, Ocado said: “The initial assessment of the reasons for the fire gives the Board confidence that, going forward, there are no significant implications for the risk profile of the Group’s assets or the viability of the Group’s model.

“The company has taken a number of remedial actions intended to eliminate the risk of such an event occurring again which have included the introduction of additional localised smoke detectors and the removal of the plastic lid on its robots. This lid serves no practical purpose and its removal has not impacted the efficiency of the robots in any way. The Company also intends to add heat sensors in the ambient product storage grid which are in addition to the existing sensors in the chilled storage grid. In addition, the first generation battery charging units were used only at CFC 3 and not in any other CFC.”

MENTAL HEALTH AT WORK

MENTAL HEALTH costs employers in the UK nearly £35 billion a year* and yet there are relatively simple and cost-effective solutions to start tackling it, already available at HR professionals' fingertips.

The Heath Insurance Group highlights five key areas to help HR get on top of the mental health agenda in the workplace.

Dust off exit interviews

Despite being conducted with the best of intentions, exit interviews can sometimes merely act as an opportunity for employees to vent frustrations before leaving an organisation. Data and insights aren't always properly gleaned, so lessons aren't always learnt. If it's not in place already, set up a robust way of capturing exit-interview information – to begin to establish where and how a talent-leak is happening. It could be that a demanding role, working for a difficult manager or operating in a bullying culture, could all be stressful scenarios that take their toll on mental health and make talent leave an organisation. By measuring and monitoring data, combining it with other information, such as from sickness and absence rates, the mental health landscape in an organisation can be better understood; then it can be tackled.

Don't make assumptions about generational differences

It may be easy to assume that an older employee, who is going through a divorce whilst juggling child and eldercare for example, may be at risk of struggling with mental health. But research finds that younger people are more likely to be formally diagnosed with a mental health condition (37% of 18 to 29 year olds compared to 29% of people in their 50s).** Just because an employee may appear to be the 'life and soul of the party', doesn't mean they actually feel this way. Mental health doesn't discriminate, it can affect anyone at any time. So it's important to make access to support widely available across staff demographics, and this can mean the difference between an employee getting valuable support or continuing to struggle and fly under the radar.

Provide training

While providing mental health training comes at a cost, the returns often outweigh the initial investment with an estimated ROI of 6:1.*** Having managers that are equipped to spot signs of mental ill-health, means they can provide support – helping employees to reach their full potential and stop talent from unnecessarily exiting a company. When considering that 51% of employees said they would not be comfortable talking to their manager about a mental health issue, ** it's clearly an area that HR could benefit from addressing - a little training can go a long way.

Mental health training also contributes to personal development, empowering managers with the skills and knowledge needed to support employees struggling, helping to identify and tackle concerns. It allows managers to create a resilient workforce too, that can better withstand the undulating pressures and strains of working for an organisation. For businesses, mental health training can have a knock-on effect of potentially addressing associated issues of lost productivity and sickness absence as a result of mental ill-health.

Maximise benefits

There are multiple benefits available that have stand-alone or added-value features that can support mental health in the workplace. For example, some employers offer mental health support through employee assistance programmes (EAPs), which can help employees in times of need. These can provide confidential telephone or face-to-face counselling for a range of stress-inducing issues, from debt support to relationship problems with colleagues.

Whether highlighting an existing benefit or announcing new initiatives to support mental health, effective communication is crucial in ensuring uptake. Using a combination of methods, such as emails, posters or intranet, can all help to raise awareness of the benefits on offer that support mental health and it lets employees know they work in a supportive culture.

Focus on prevention

As the proverb goes, 'prevention is better than cure'. There are excellent tools available on the market to help employees manage mental health daily, as opposed to seeking help once an issue has escalated. Company-sponsored mental health apps can engage employees in gamified activities, that are underpinned by established techniques such as cognitive behavioural therapy and endorsed by the NHS, to help users navigate daily pressures. When considering that British men are 300% more likely to confide in AI than another person about life, love and their mental wellbeing**** – apps could play an integral role in managing mental health in the workplace.

Managing director at The Health Insurance Group Brett Hill comments, "With a sixth of the working age population having a mental health condition at any one time,***** tackling mental health in the workplace is at the forefront of many business agendas. However, these needn't be costly exercises. HR may already be sitting on a wealth of data that can be analysed to reveal the true mental health landscape in their organisation. Reviewing existing benefits that support mental health can also aid engagement. With so many interventions available, from impactful managerial training to apps that support employees daily, there are plenty of options available to help organisations best support the mental wellbeing of their staff. We would urge employers to regularly review the effectiveness of any mental health support, and, most importantly, to communicate the support to their staff."

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**** <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/health-fitness/mind/ai-new-frontier-battle-treat-male-mental-health-crisis/>

***** <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-41125009>

SUICIDE AND DRUG-RELATED MORTALITY FOLLOWING OCCUPATIONAL INJURY

Workplace injuries severe enough to require more than a week off work may impair workers' long-term health and well-being. That is according to a study published in the American Journal of Industrial Medicine.

Studies suggest that injured workers have elevated rates of depression and opioid use, but no studies have measured excess mortality related to these risks, according to the researchers.

Researchers at Boston University's School of Public Health studied data relating to more than 100,000 workers in New Mexico who had been injured between 1994 and 2000, including social security payments, compensation data and cause of death.

Among the 36,000 whose injuries were serious enough to require more than a week off work, researchers found an almost three-fold increase in combined drug-related and suicide mortality hazard among women, and a "substantial increase" among men.

Men who had sustained a lost-time injury were 72% more likely to die as a result of suicide and 29% more likely to die from drug-related causes. Women, meanwhile, were 92% more likely to die from suicide and almost 200% more likely to die a drug-related death.

The study suggests that drug-related deaths and suicides may be important contributors to the long-term excess mortality of injured workers. Improved workplace conditions, improved pain treatment, better treatment of substance use disorders, and treatment of post-injury depression may substantially reduce mortality consequent to workplace injuries, it says.

SLIPS AND TRIPS COSTING £73M ON ANNUAL LEAVE



EMPLOYERS SPEND over £73million annually on employee leave due to slips, trips and falls in the workplace, according to new research by Safety Services Direct.

During 2017/2018, 31% of all non-fatal workplace injuries were caused by slips, trips and falls; with an estimated 172,050 cases self-reported by employees.

The Health & Safety Executive also reports that 75% of all self-reported incidents result in up to seven days of absence, meaning that employees are on leave for almost 130,000 days annually: a wasted cost to any employer.

The irony is that slip, trip and fall injuries are some of the easiest to prevent in the workplace. There are measures that can be put into place to significantly reduce these risks such as:

1. Keep walking surfaces clean and avoid cluttering

When walkways are clear, the risk of injury greatly reduces. With a path that is unobstructed, the chance of a person falling over an object reduces, as does the potential of a spill that could create a dangerous slipping hazard.

2. Lighting

A workplace with effective lighting inside and outside of the building helps reduce the chances of an accident. By illuminating areas that are commonplace for trips and falls to happen, you can shine a light on hidden dangers. This will reduce any chance of an accident.

3. Signage

Using health and safety signs that are clear and well placed helps identify areas with potential problems. Placing a sign that indicates a step, gap or an uneven ground brings attention to hazards and increases their awareness and attentiveness. Reflective tape can also highlight issues.

4. Stairs/Handrails

Do your stairs have handrails? Is reflective tape used to mark the top and bottom of the stairs? Are there any unsecured carpets or rugs that you have had to remove from the stairs? Stairs are one of the most common areas for falls to happen in the workplace. Additional care is required here to prevent injuries. Keep all stairwells well lit and clear of obstacles.

5. Footwear

Do your employees know which safety footwear is appropriate for the conditions they are working in? Make sure your workforce know clearly what attire is needed.

6. Step Ladders

Providing accessible equipment such as ladders and step ladders helps employees reach heights safely. By ensuring options are available, this reduces the possibility of an employee being hurt by climbing on chairs or tables.

7. Manage Wires

Wires that are out in the open can create obstacles for employees and the public which could cause injury. Cables should be put behind walls or under carpets so they remain hidden. Install all power sources, servers, internet connections in places that can be easily accessed, to avoid cables appearing along walkways.

8. Check Condition of the Floor

Cracks and holes in the pavement on the outside should be filled in. Repairing them immediately will reduce the risk of any injury happening. When an area is waiting to be fixed, warning signs should be placed to highlight the danger.

9. Keep Filing Cabinets and Drawers Closed

Everybody must open a filing cabinet or a drawer during the day but leaving them open can lead to injury. Staff should be encouraged to ensure all drawers and cabinets are closed when not used to avoid potential dangers.

10. Clean Up Spills Immediately

If a spill happens in a workplace, it should be cleaned up immediately. If certain liquids penetrate the surface, it can actually cause a surface to be more slippery than before after it has been cleaned up. When a spill takes place, warning signs should be placed around the hazard immediately, and whilst the clean-up of the wet floor takes place. If a floor is known to be slippery anyway, this needs to be highlighted with an appropriate sign.

EMPLOYEES THAT ARE CARERS AT BREAKING POINT

‘SANDWICH CARERS’ – those who look after children and their relatives, are struggling to cope with the burden of juggling caring responsibilities alongside their job.

1.3 million people in the UK now fall into this category¹ and new research* from health and wellbeing provider - BHSF, reveals that many are at breaking point. 44% said they often find managing their responsibilities hard – with 16% admitting that it’s always too much to cope with.



Despite the growing changes in gender roles, it’s female workers who are feeling the strain more than their male counterparts. 19% of women said they always struggle to cope, compared to just 11% of men.

But it’s younger employees who are feeling the strain the most. A staggering 26% of those aged 25 to 34 said that the demand of juggling their caring responsibilities and their job is always too much to cope with. As younger employees often have more junior roles, the lack of flexibility to work from home or change their hours could make it more difficult to balance their responsibilities. Although startling, these figures show that the issue can affect employees of all ages – not just those in their 40s and 50s.

The research also highlighted the dramatic impact these caring responsibilities are having on the health of sandwich carers. 52% said it has affected their physical health, and 47% revealed it’s had an impact on their mental health. These employees are in desperate need of support from their employers to manage their situation and still be productive in work.

Chief commercial officer at BHSF Brian Hall said, “As people put off having children until their 30s (or even 40s) and life expectancy continues to increase, more and more employees will become ‘sandwich carers’.

“Our research shows just how difficult it is to manage the demands of caring for children and elderly relatives while holding down a job.

“The number of employees on the brink is startling, and employers need to take note. Employees are in desperate need of support that extends beyond the workplace and can be accessed as and when they need it – which is often outside of working hours. Because the needs of the workforce are so varied, employers should consider wellbeing benefits that bring together multiple resources and access to specialists.”

*Survey of 1,000 employees who work at least 16 hours per week, carried out by OnePoll on behalf of BHSF, July 2019.

¹ Figures from Office of National Statistics, January 2019 <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-46866341>

HSE’S NEW CEO TAKES CHARGE

Sarah Albon, the new chief executive of Britain’s workplace health and safety regulator took up her post on 2 September.

Ms Albon has vacated her post as inspector general and CEO of the Insolvency Service, where she has been since 2015 to take charge of the HSE. She replaces acting chief executive David Snowball who has held the post since June 2018 and will be retiring from HSE at the end of the year.

Ms Albon’s past roles includes roles as director of Strategy and Change at Her Majesty’s Courts and Tribunal Service, director of Civil Family and Legal Aid Policy and deputy director of Criminal Legal Aid Strategy at the Ministry of Justice. She has also served as principal private secretary to two Lord Chancellors.

Martin Temple, HSE’s Chair has welcomed the appointment: “I am looking forward enormously to working with our new chief executive.

“Sarah’s CV speaks for itself and her valuable experience in leading organisations through change and planning for the future will stand her in good stead leading this world-class regulator of workplace health and safety.”

Sarah said: “I’ve been looking forward to getting started in my new role and meeting colleagues and partners who all are committed to advancing HSE’s mission to save lives by reducing risk, protecting people and the environment.

“I am honoured to have the opportunity to lead this important and hugely respected regulator. Working together with my new colleagues across HSE, my focus will be on continuing to deliver improvements in health and safety performance as our workplaces move into a future with new challenges, new technologies and new opportunities.”

MENTAL HEALTH DAYS AREN’T GENUINE

Workers are taking an average of four ‘mental health days’ a year but lying about it to their boss for fear of being judged, demoted or sacked, according to research.

The research by commissioned by law firm Slater and Gordon shows that more than half of employees who took mental health days faked a physical illness to explain their absence, despite stress from work souring relationships and sleep patterns for many.

The research polled 2,000 people of working age from around the UK.

A mental health day is a sick-day taken to look after psychological wellbeing; this could include seeing a counsellor or taking time to reduce stress and anxiety before it becomes overwhelming.

In the past five years, a quarter of the sample polled admit leaving at least one job owing to pressure and the negative impact it was having on their mental health. One in six is still in a role causing them burnout, stress and anxiety.

The research shows the balance between how mental health is treated compared with physical health remains skewed. Peter Lyons, employment liability lawyer, at Slater and Gordon said: “We speak to a lot of people who are feeling so stressed and anxious with work they are forced into taking mental health days.

“Many isolate themselves, trying to work harder, which causes their personal lives to suffer and mental health to deteriorate further. The biggest thing we would say is, don’t fight stress alone at work.

“Keep detailed notes of what is causing stress and anxiety, then speak to a trusted colleague or manager to create a plan to tackle the issues. Union representatives or legal advisers specialising in this area can also provide guidance.”

He added: “If staff do not even feel supported enough to seek help without fear of prejudice that’s a huge concern. When workers are honest with their boss, 14 per cent said they are told to ‘man up’ and 13 per cent are fired, forced to leave or demoted from their roles.

Many recognised that their mental health wasn’t as good as it should be, nor was their workplace’s attitude towards it, with 65 per cent calling for more support to be provided.

Poor mental health formed at work was following people home, with two in five workers admitting that stress from their jobs has a negative impact on their mental health.

Over a third of people (37 per cent) struggled to switch off at night or over the weekend, and 60 per cent suffered with ‘Sunday dread’.

The most common contributors to this are pressure from above (53 per cent) and unrealistic deadlines (42 per cent). The average person also spent an additional 27 unpaid minutes each day working, adding up to two-and-a-half extra weeks of work a year.

The combination of these factors led to 40 per cent arguing with their partners, 40 per cent missing personal events, and 33 per cent arguing with other family members.

EPEE LAUNCHES A NEW LEAFLET ON ILLEGAL REFRIGERANTS

The EPEE has recently produced a leaflet giving an overview of the key criteria to distinguish safe refrigerants from illegal ones. With the EU F-Gas Regulation and HFC phase-down, the pressure on HFCs, particularly when they have a high GWP, has considerably increased. Risks of buying illegal refrigerants are high and range from hefty fines to risks for health and safety for installers and users. You can download the leaflet from the [ACRIB website](#)



LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

OXYGEN REDUCTION SYSTEMS: STANDARD PUBLISHED

An International Standard for oxygen reduction systems has been published. If fires can only survive when there is oxygen to fuel them, removing it from the air is an effective way to ensure that the environment remains fire-free. Oxygen reduction systems (ORS) do that by creating atmospheres where there is not enough oxygen for a fire to break out, but enough for humans to breathe easily.

However, installing such systems can be a complex business, and requires in-depth knowledge of the space being protected, how it is used and by whom.

Currently, there are various national standards and technical guidelines in place, mainly in Europe, but what has been missing is an internationally agreed set of requirements for quality, safety and performance that everyone can use.

ISO 20338, Oxygen reduction systems for fire prevention - Design, installation, planning and maintenance, specifies minimum requirements and defines the specifications for the design, installation and maintenance of fixed oxygen reduction systems. It applies to those systems that use nitrogen-enriched air used for fire prevention in buildings and industrial production plants, and can be used for new systems as well as for the extension and modification of existing systems.

Alan Elder, chair of the ISO technical subcommittee that developed the standard, said it will be useful to users of ORS, such as facilities owners, as well as for meeting regulatory requirements.

“Insurance companies, manufacturers, installers and users will all benefit from ISO 20338, particularly from regions outside Europe, because it will enable them to improve the performance and safety of ORS, as well as provide a way for governments to set regulatory requirements, and for users to meet them.”

PALLET TRUCKS AND THE LIFTING OPERATIONS AND LIFTING OPERATIONS AND LIFTING EQUIPMENT REGULATIONS (LOLER)

There has been much confusion in the industry as to whether low-lift equipment such as a hand pallet truck – which only raises the load sufficiently clear of the floor to enable horizontal movement – is subject to LOLER examination. BITA guidance has always been that this equipment is not carrying out a lifting operation, and is not, therefore, subject to LOLER.

The HSE confirms this view and has recently updated its Approved Code of Practice to clarify that LOLER applies to “high-lift pallet trucks, both manual and powered, that have the ability to raise the forks above 300mm”. The approved code of practice can be downloaded free of charge from www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/l113.htm.



TRANSPORT & ROAD RISK

LORRY DRIVERS MUST NOT BE DRIVEN TO EXHAUSTION BY NO DEAL BREXIT, WARNS UNITE



Long distance lorry drivers are expected to bear the brunt of any disruption that a no deal Brexit could create, which according to Unite's warning, could lead to exhausted drivers which pose a threat to other road users.

Trade union Unite is calling on the government to act to stop long-distance lorry drivers being overworked to cope with any potential disruption caused by a no-deal Brexit.

The Union, which Unite which represents over 50,000 lorry drivers, says it has yet to be contacted by the government about post-Brexit plans. Unite's National Officer for Road Transport, Adrian Jones, has subsequently written to the new Transport Secretary Grant Shapps and the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Michael Gove, to request an urgent meeting.

The major concern for Unite, is that the government could temporarily relax or suspend the regulations which govern driving time for lorry drivers. The current restrictions say that drivers cannot be at the wheel for more than nine hours a day (extended to 10 hours twice a week) and a total of 56 hours driving a week. There are also strict rules on rest periods between shifts.

Last year, Unite conducted a survey of over 4,000 and discovered that fatigue and tiredness were already huge issues for drivers. It found that an alarming 29% of drivers admitted to falling asleep at the wheel. In most cases, that meant just momentarily closing their eyes, but some admitted that they could not remember passing junctions or their head had hit the steering wheel.

Exhausted drivers are a danger to themselves and other road users. In 2017 (the latest available figures) there were a total of 267 deaths involving HGV including 21 drivers.

As well as the potential relaxation of driving hours, Unite is also requesting that proper welfare facilities will be provided in places such as Kent and other areas which are expected to suffer from widespread disruption in the event of a no deal Brexit and enquiring whether provision will be made for drivers to take rest breaks away from their lorries, during major delays.

Unite National Officer for road transport Adrian Jones said: "We are just weeks away from a no deal Brexit and yet the government has not thought it necessary to speak to the key group of workers who will keep the UK running.

"The problems associated with a no deal Brexit will not just be confined to Kent, it will create delays throughout the entire lorry and logistics network in the UK.

"Unite will totally oppose any relaxation in driving regulations. This would result in exhausted drivers, with potentially lethal consequences for road users.

"Workers have a legal right to not work if they believe they would be placed in danger. The government must remember that when planning for a no deal."

SAFETY ON SMART MOTORWAYS



Highways England has released the following statement in relation to recent commentary about the safety performance of smart motorways:

Chief Highway Engineer Mike Wilson said: "Motorways in this country are among the very safest roads in the world. Highways England would never carry out a major improvement scheme without being confident that we would maintain or enhance this position.

"Evidence indicates that smart motorways are helping to improve safety. The first nine of the latest generation of smart motorways have reduced casualty rates by more than 25%.

Smart motorways are good for drivers, adding vital extra lanes to some of our busiest motorways and making journeys safer and more reliable. As with other roads, we monitor the safety performance of smart motorways and are rolling out enhancements to improve the road user experience."

Background

Driving on a smart motorway is simple and intuitive, says Highways England, and is no different from other roads. The main things to remember are:

- keep left unless overtaking
- do not drive under a Red X
- stick within the speed limit
- know what to do if you break down. Smart motorways are designed with safety in mind, to be at least as safe as the conventional motorways they replace. Our evidence shows that they are reducing casualty rates:
- a risk assessment of the design for the latest generation of smart motorways estimated an overall 18% reduction in risk compared to a conventional motorway
- the evidence indicates that, since opening, across nine 'all lane running' schemes the casualty rate has reduced by 28%
- this figure is based on three years' data from two smart motorway schemes on the M25 and one year of data from seven other schemes across the country.

It is noted that the hard shoulder is not a safe place - more than a hundred people are killed or injured on the hard shoulder every year, and people stopping on them unnecessarily is an issue. Smart motorways effectively eliminate this risk.

Smart motorways have emergency areas a maximum of 1.5 miles apart - around 75 seconds of driving. They have emergency telephones and are wider than hard shoulders to enable drivers to get further away from traffic.

Feedback from road users show a clear majority feel confident driving on a smart motorway, and that they are safer and improve journey times. The watchdog, Transport Focus, recently published the Strategic Roads User Survey for 2018/19 and reported that 94% of people feel safe on motorways.

NEW ESSENTIAL INFORMATION FOR UK HAULIERS DRIVING TO THE EU AFTER 31 OCTOBER FROM THE DRIVING STANDARDS AGENCY



UK hauliers and commercial drivers who operate in the EU will need new documents if the UK leaves the EU without a deal.

Driver documents you'll need include:

- International Driving Permit(s) in some countries (France, Italy and Cyprus)
- a passport. You should have at least 6 months left on an adult or child passport to travel to most countries in Europe (not including Ireland). If you renewed your current passport before the previous one expired, extra months may have been added to its expiry date. Any extra months on your passport over 10 years may not count towards the 6 months needed. [Check your passport](#)
- an ECMT permit for some journeys (99% of journeys between the UK and the EU will continue as they are now, and will not need a permit, until at least 31 December 2019.) [Check if you need an ECMT permit.](#)
- a Driver Certificate of Professional Competence
- a tachograph driver card

Vehicle documents you'll need include:

- motor insurance green card(s) for the vehicle and/or trailer and for separate policies e.g. insurance renewal
- a GB Sticker on the vehicle
- a vehicle log book

Act now, check [our EU exit haulier guidance](#) and [download our reference guide for the most up to date list of documents.](#)

Documents from your shipping provider

In addition to your driver and vehicle documents, you will also need to request separate cargo and customs documents from your shipping agent.

You will need more documents if you are transporting high risk goods or animal/plant/other controlled products.

It is the responsibility of the Exporter to provide these documents, but they will be needed to take goods across the border.

Check [our EU exit haulier guidance](#) for a complete list and [download our reference guide for the most up to date list of information.](#)

Documentation for importing and exporting goods

EU countries may impose different requirements on their side of the border. Carrying goods that do not comply with EU requirements could result in delays or penalties.

You should familiarise yourself with these new processes.

[Import and export guidance for France](#)

[Import and export guidance for the Netherlands](#)

[Import and export guidance for Spain](#)

Operation Brock – Traffic management system

In a no deal Brexit scenario Operation Brock will play a vital role in ensuring that goods continue to flow in and out of the UK and disruption is kept to a minimum.

Operation Brock, is designed to tackle disruption at the border by queuing lorries bound for Europe on the M20, while keeping all other traffic moving on both directions on the other side of the motorway. If the M20 capacity was not sufficient, Manston airport and, if necessary, the M26 could also be used to queue lorries.

To help prepare for Brexit, before setting off drivers should familiarise themselves with how Brock could impact on their journeys.

Information on [whether Brock has been activated and what it means](#) can be found on Highways England's website.

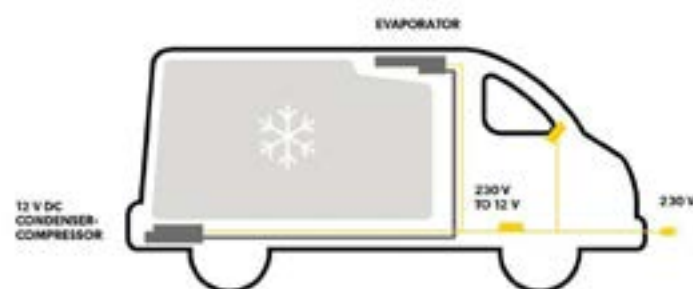
Need to know more?

Keep track of [the UK government's latest Brexit information and advice.](#)

FIRM LAUNCHES 'GAME-CHANGING' REFRIGERATION FOR LAST-MILE

The compact refrigeration units are said to suit storing refrigerated products in small vehicles without the need for a roof mounted cooling unit.

FRIGO DC INSTALLATION CONCEPT



The Frigo DC by Domestic leverages the company's cooling technology for a 'totally electronic' cooling system for temperature-controlled transportation.

The solution is said to be less energy intensive than competing technology.

The Frigo DC has a powerful electric compressor without mechanical construction. This technology is said to offer the only way to install cooling systems in electric cars.

It also features a design to combine compressor and condenser into a single unit. It is compact, lightweight and does not require a roof-mounted structure.

Domestic Frigo DC is designed for the refrigeration of smaller commercial vehicles with tight engine compartments.

When the supply voltage is low, the performance of the compressor is automatically reduced to keep the cooling system going without exhausting the vehicle's battery. It both saves energy and prolongs service life.

ENFORCEMENT

FIRMS REMINDED TO REMEMBER FALL RISK FROM VEHICLES

A manufacturer of steel water storage tanks and supporting towers has been fined after a worker suffered multiple fractures falling from height.

On 25 October 2017, a Braithwaite Engineers Limited employee was injured when he fell from a lorry bed whilst unloading the lorry at their site in Risca. The fall resulted in multiple fractures of his head, ribs, shoulder blade and fingers, causing him to miss over five months of work.

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

Braithwaite Engineers Limited, of Units A and B Leeway House, Leeway Industrial Estate, Newport 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: "Falls from vehicles can be overlooked by employers when considering risks from work at height. Simple measures would have prevented this accident."

VEHICLE SERVICING COMPANY FINED AFTER TRUCK ROLLED AND CRUSHED EMPLOYEE

Volvo Group UK Limited has been fined after an employee at the Cardonald Depot was crushed by a truck, leading to serious injury.

Glasgow Sheriff Court heard that on 7 June 2016 an employee of Volvo Group UK Limited was testing the brakes of a low-loader truck unit and trailer at the Cardonald depot, Glasgow. He had raised the trailer off the ground using a pit jack. He did not apply the truck handbrake or use any wheel chocks to prevent the vehicle rolling. Whilst adjusting the brakes at the first axle, the truck unit rolled forward causing the jack to slip off the axle of the trailer, roll towards him and strike him on the body, crushing him against a set of steps in the pit and fracturing his spine.



An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that Volvo Group UK Limited had failed to provide a sufficient number of wheel chocks for use by its employees and failed to provide information, instruction, supervision and training of its employees in their use. Volvo Group also failed to provide a suitable induction of the employee in safe working practices.

Volvo Group UK Limited, of Wedgnoek Lane, Warwick pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2 and Section 33(1)(a) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, and was fined £13,333.33.

Speaking after the hearing HSE Inspector Jennie Stafford said: “Those in control of work have a responsibility to devise safe methods of working and to provide the necessary information, instruction and training to their workers in the safe system of working.”

“If a suitable safe system of work had been in place prior to the incident, the life changing injuries sustained by the employee could have been prevented.”

DESSERT COMPANY FINED AFTER EMPLOYEE STRUCK BY MACHINERY

A DESSERT company has been fined after employee was struck by machinery while relocating it on site.

Northampton Magistrates Court heard how on 11 April 2018, an employee of Mademoiselle Desserts Corby Limited received injuries whilst moving a large mixer across the yard in Corby. The mixer was on a pallet truck but was not secured to it. Another worker was pulling the pallet truck whilst the injured person was walking alongside and supporting the load. As they approached a container in the yard they turned the pallet truck when both the pallet and mixer tipped onto him resulting in five broken bones in his foot.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that there was no risk assessment for this operation. The mixer was on an unsecured damaged plastic pallet, which was resting on the forks of the pallet truck. The forks were not inserted into the pockets of the pallet.

Mademoiselle Desserts Corby Limited of Earlstrees Industrial Estate, Corby has pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. He has been fined £36,000 and ordered to pay costs of £1371.80 and ordered to pay a victim surcharge of £170.

After the hearing HSE inspector Michelle Morrison said “This incident could so easily have been avoided had the operation been properly risk assessed and simple control measures and safe working practices put in place.

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

CONSTRUCTION COMPANY SENTENCED FOR CARBON MONOXIDE POISONING IN ENCLOSED SPACE

Construction 360 Ltd was sentenced for safety breaches after a worker collapsed and lost consciousness while working at the site of King Asia Foods Ltd, Middle Bank, Doncaster.

Sheffield Magistrates Court heard how, on 11 January 2018, the worker was cutting a drain into the factory floor as part of the construction of a new processing room within the packaging area of the factory. He was using a petrol driven floor saw within an enclosed space (the open side had been covered by a tarpaulin). After a period of cutting, he felt unwell and subsequently collapsed losing consciousness. He was taken to hospital and was diagnosed with carbon monoxide poisoning. He also sustained bruising to his head, elbow and knees, and a cut to his elbow.



An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that Construction 360 Ltd had failed to appropriately plan the work in the confined space of the processing room. Additionally, at the request of the director of Construction 360 Ltd, unsafe work at height had also taken place beforehand as the worker had accessed the roof of the processing room without suitable edge protection, or means of access, without checking the stability of the structure.

Construction 360 Ltd of Eastoft Road, Cowle, Scunthorpe, North Lincolnshire pleaded guilty to breaching section 2(1) of the Health & Safety at Work etc Act 1974. The company has been fined £15,000 and ordered to pay £1805 in costs.

After the hearing, HSE inspector Sarah Robinson commented: “This incident could so easily have been avoided by simply carrying out correct control measures and safe working practices.

“The company failed to appropriately plan a safe system of work for the task being carried out.”

FIRE RISK ASSESSOR PROSECUTED

South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue has welcomed the prosecution of a fire risk assessor, saying it proves that there are consequences for failing to comply with safety laws.

David Thompson of Toftwood Health and Safety Solutions was fined £750 and ordered to pay a £170 surcharge and £1,000 costs at Sheffield Magistrates Court for failing to provide a suitable and sufficient fire risk assessment.

Thompson pleaded guilty to the offence under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. The offence related to a risk assessment carried out at Hexagon student accommodation on Rockingham Lane, Sheffield.

Ashgate Property Developments Ltd had already been fined £36,000 at an earlier hearing for three separate offences relating to the same premises.



In summing up this case, the judge said that competence is knowing when you yourself aren’t able to do something - and that risk assessors should recognise the limits of their experience and expertise.

Area manager Steve Helps, said: “This verdict should serve as a stark warning to building owners that people carrying out fire risk assessments should be competent and able to properly consider all of the risks within buildings, particular where people’s lives could be placed at risk.

“The sentence in this case proves that people will rightly be held to account if risk assessments are found to be insufficient.”

ISL WASTE MANAGEMENT, MALLUSK, FINED AFTER EMPLOYEE INJURED IN CRUSH

(Northern Ireland)

A waste management company has been fined £25,000 after an employee was injured in a crush between a bin lorry and the arm of a digger.

Belfast Crown Court heard how Grzegorz Mucha, a Polish national, almost lost his life as a result of the incident which occurred on 3 October 2017. The digger was being driven by an untrained member of staff.

ISL Waste Management based in Mallusk was fined after admitting the health and safety breach.

The accident happened in the company's unloading area, which has since undergone major refurbishments. All staff are now shown videos on how to operate machinery correctly and extra staff now supervise the supervisors on each shift.

In October 2017, Mr Mucha had worked at the company for seven years, and on the evening in question he was working the night shift.

'Standing at rear of lorry'

The court heard that Mr Mucha was in the waste lorry unloading area, where waste was emptied then placed onto a sunken conveyor belt.

Mr Mucha was standing at the rear of the bin lorry and was using a stick to remove residue from the flaps at the back of the vehicle when the incident happened.

The digger was being driven by a shift supervisor, who was neither trained nor authorised to drive it.

When the supervisor realised he had crushed Mr Mucha, an ambulance was called and he was taken to the Royal Victoria Hospital in Belfast, the court heard.

Mr Mucha sustained serious injuries including fractured ribs, a punctured lung and a laceration to his liver.

He also had his spleen removed and underwent renal replacement therapy.

'Not adequately supervised'

A Crown lawyer confirmed that since the incident Mr Mucha had returned to Poland, did not take part in the prosecution process and did not provide a victim impact statement.

He said the employee who drove the digger was not trained to do so, adding that on the night of the incident "this was not adequately supervised".

A defence barrister said the management at ISL thought Mr Mucha was going to die, spent 48 hours at the hospital at his bedside, and also paid him his full wage - as opposed to statutory sick pay - "until he stopped submitting his medical certificates".

He added that the employee who drove the digger that night was not trained and "should never have been in the JCB".

The barrister also revealed the steps the company has taken since the incident which have included considerable changes to the production line, significant re-training for staff and a production manager on every shift.

The judge noted the potential dangers at busy recycling plants such as the premises at Mallusk and spoke of the importance of following risk assessments, and of supervision on shifts.

The judge also noted that while ISL had admitted the breach, it is "a firm that does take health and safety seriously, and that can be seen in their actions since this accident occurred".

FROZEN FOOD AWARDS



Awards Now Launched!

If you have an exciting, new or innovative product, don't miss out.

The BFFF Frozen Food Awards provides members with an opportunity to showcase product excellence on the biggest stage in the industry.

RETAIL

Best New Christmas /
Special Occasion /
Party Product

Best New Side of Plate /
Ingredient Product

Best New Centre Plate /
Main Course - Meat

Best New Centre Plate /
Main Course - Fish & Seafood

Best New Pizza /
Savoury Bread Product

Best New Vegetarian /
Vegan / Meat Free Product

Best New Dessert / Ice Cream
/ Confectionery Product

FOODSERVICE

Best New Christmas /
Seasonal Product

Best New Starter / Appetiser /
Buffet Product

Best New Side of Plate /
Ingredient Product

Best New Centre Plate /
Main Course - Meat

Best New Centre Plate /
Main Course - Fish & Seafood

Best New Bakery Product

Best New Vegetarian /
Vegan / Meat Free Product

Best New Dessert / Ice Cream
/ Confectionery Product

Key Dates

Entries Open	Entries Close	Awards Evening
30th Sept 2019	13th Dec 2019	11th June 2020

Enter Now

www.frozenfoodawards.co.uk

For more information please contact Alex Gipps on Tel: 01400 283090 or Email alexgipps@bfff.co.uk

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