

Boat builder fined after labourer suffers injuries

A yacht manufacturer has been sentenced after an employee was injured when his forklift truck overturned.

Plymouth Magistrates' Court heard how on 3 August 2018, a 57-year-old employee of Princess Yachts Limited was injured whilst assisting the unloading of a delivery at the company's Langage site. The victim was using a forklift truck in tandem with another driver to lift a large load from a flatbed lorry. Part of the load was lifted to allow the lorry to move forward, but in doing so another part of the load struck the mast of his forklift causing it to overturn. He sustained ligament and muscle damage to his ankle as a result of the incident and was off work for five months. An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that the lifting work had not been properly planned or risk assessed. The employees were not aware of relevant procedures and there were safer alternate methods available which had not been considered.

Princess Yachts Limited of Bush Park, Plymouth pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2 (1) of the Health & Safety at Work etc. Act. The company was fined £200,000.00 and ordered to pay costs of £7,138.20.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Hatti Shipp said: "The risks associated with unloading vehicles should be recognised and controlled. Complex lifts including handling heavy or unusual loads require careful planning and additional considerations.

"This incident could have been avoided if appropriate safeguards had been put in place. Companies should be aware that HSE will not hesitate to take appropriate enforcement action against those that fall below the required standards."

Notes to Editors:

1. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is Britain's national regulator for workplace health and safety. We prevent work-related death, injury and ill health through regulatory actions that range from influencing behaviours across whole industry sectors through to targeted interventions on individual businesses. These activities are supported by globally recognised scientific expertise. hse.gov.uk
2. More about the legislation referred to in this case can be found at: legislation.gov.uk/
3. HSE news releases are available at <http://press.hse.gov.uk>