

Building materials manufacturer fined over £600,000 after worker suffers life-changing injuries at Tarmac plant

- Worker's legs crushed between metal frames weighing over a tonne
- HSE investigation uncovers failure of firm to act after previous incidents
- Guidance states employers must ensure dangerous machinery is effectively guarded

A national manufacturer of building materials has been fined £633,300 after an employee's legs were crushed between one-tonne metal frames moving on a production line.

Richard Ogunleye, a father of three from South Woodham Ferrers in Essex, was working for Tarmac Building Products Limited at its manufacturing plant in Linford, Essex, on 22 July 2022 when he entered a fenced area to manually clean and inspect frames. The frames, which carry large blocks through the manufacturing process, move around the factory on a trackway.

Richard entered the fenced area through an interlocked gate which, when opened, was supposed to prevent frames from moving on that section of the track. As he was working on the stationary frame, another frame moved along the trackway into the section and struck him. Richard's legs were crushed and pinned between the two frames.

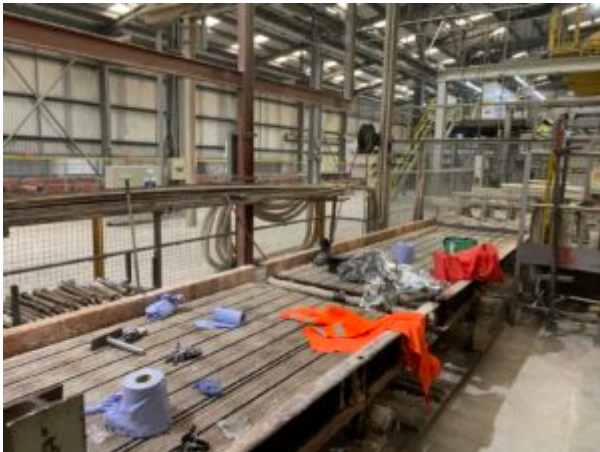
He was trapped as the frames continued to move along the track, pushing him towards machinery on the next section. Richard's right leg was broken and the other severely bruised as the frames moved over axles on the track. His colleague saw the incident from a distance and ran to help, pressing the emergency stop button in time to prevent further injury.

Richard spent two weeks in hospital, where a metal rod and screws were used to repair the injuries to his right leg. He was unable to return to work for over a year and underwent extensive physiotherapy.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that Tarmac Building Products Limited failed to prevent access to dangerous parts of machinery, namely the moving frames on the track, or prevent the frames from moving when employees entered the danger zone. The interlocked gate which employees used to enter the frame cleaning area did not stop the power on the preceding sections of track and would therefore not prevent a frame from moving into this area when employees were working.



Images from site



The HSE investigation also revealed that the company had failed to act following several near misses which had occurred on this section of the track in similar circumstances. The investigation also found that a risk assessment had been carried out by the company several years before the incident which identified “additional control measures required to reduce risk to an acceptable level”, but these were not put in place until after Richard was injured.

HSE guidance on [safe use of work equipment](#) states that employers must take effective measures to prevent access to dangerous parts of machinery.

Employers should also be [investigating accidents and incidents](#) of near misses as part of their monitoring process to identify why the existing risk control measures failed and what improvements or additional measures are needed.

Tarmac Building Products Limited, of Interchange 10 Railway Drive, Wolverhampton, WV1 1LH, pleaded guilty to failing to discharge their duty under Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. The company was fined £633,300, ordered to pay £5,583 in costs and a victim surcharge of £2,000 at Chelmsford Magistrates’ Court on 29 January 2026.

HSE Inspector Connor Stowers said:

“This was a serious and entirely avoidable incident, which has had profound consequences for Mr. Ogunleye, and were it not for the quick action of a fellow worker, the injuries he sustained could have been worse.

“Employers need to ensure that dangerous machinery is guarded effectively, and this goes beyond the initial installation. Employers should frequently monitor how effective their measures are and make changes as needed. Monitoring arrangements should include properly investigating near misses and previous incidents.

“In this case, had the previous near misses on the block production line at Tarmac Linford been fully investigated and sufficient action taken, this life-changing injury would never have occurred.”

This HSE prosecution was brought by HSE enforcement lawyer Julian White and paralegal officer Farhat Basir.

Further Information

1. [The Health and Safety Executive](#) (HSE) is Britain’s national regulator for workplace health and safety. We are dedicated to protecting people and places, and helping everyone lead safer and healthier lives.
2. More information about the [legislation](#) referred to in this case is available.
3. Further details on the latest [HSE news releases](#) is available.
4. Relevant guidance on machinery guarding can be found here <https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/l22.htm> (Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998: Approved Code of Practice and guidance). Further guidance on monitoring for safety and investigating workplace accidents can be found here: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/hsg65.htm> (Managing for health and safety); <https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/hsg245.htm> (Investigating accidents and incidents: A workbook for employers, unions, safety representatives and safety professionals).
5. HSE does not pass sentences, set guidelines or collect any fines imposed. Relevant sentencing guidelines must be followed unless the court is satisfied that it would be contrary to the interests of justice to do so. The sentencing guidelines for health and safety offences can be found [here](#)