

Cement company fined £1 million after father crushed by 1.6 tonne concrete weight

- Worker killed after being crushed by a 1.6 tonne concrete weight at a cement bagging plant.
- A section of perimeter fencing had been routinely removed, exposing dangerous moving parts of machinery.
- Employers must take effective measures to prevent access to dangerous parts of machinery.

A cement company in Sharpness has been fined £1,000,000 after an employee was killed when he was crushed by machinery in a cement bagging plant.

Martin Bennett, 35 was working for Dragon Alfa Cement Limited at its facility in Gloucestershire, on 4 August 2021 when he was found crushed to death by a 1.6 tonne concrete weight, which was used to raise pallets full of 25 kg bags of cement.

In a victim personal statement, Martin's wife, Layla, paid tribute to his kindness and generosity:

"He was kind, I mean right down to the very bones of him kind, he would always put himself last even if you didn't want him to. He would give you the shirt off his back, last pound in his pocket, whatever you needed it was yours."

One of Martin's daughters said that answering the door to police officers bringing the news of her father's death had such a profound impact on her that she is still unable to answer the door without feeling anxious.



“He lived for family life, [his] three girls were his number one priority.”

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that a large section of the equipment’s perimeter fencing had routinely been removed over a prolonged period. This allowed full access into the dangerous parts of the machinery, including moving parts that presented a risk of serious injury or death.

HSE found that Dragon Alfa Cement Limited failed to ensure the health, safety and welfare of its employees, including Martin Bennett, by failing to prevent access to dangerous parts of the machinery.



The unguarded concrete weight.

HSE guidance states employers must take effective measures to prevent access to dangerous parts of machinery. Wherever possible this should be through fixed guards. Further guidance can be found [here](#).

Dragon Alfa Cement Limited pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. The company was fined £1,000,000 and ordered to pay £9621 in costs at Bristol Magistrates’ Court on 21 July 2026.

HSE inspector Oliver Guiver said:

“Martin Bennett lost his life in an incident that should never have happened.

“The company repeatedly failed to ensure dangerous parts of this machinery were properly guarded, despite suitable safeguards being available. Had those measures been in place, Martin would not have died.

“Our thoughts remain with Martin’s family. He went to work expecting to return home at the end of the day, but because of the devastating consequences of these failings, he never did.”

This HSE prosecution was brought by HSE enforcement lawyer Alan Hughes, supported by paralegal officer Lynne Thomas and external Barrister Jemima Lovatt, of Cornerstone Barristers.

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. Guidance on the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (PUWER) can be found [here](#).
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 in England can be found [here](#); and those for Scotland [here](#).