

Company fined after worker loses thumb

A poultry processing company was fined for safety breaches after an agency worker had her thumb severed on a moving part of a processing line.

Sheffield Magistrate's Court heard that, on 24 April 2017, the Chesterfield Poultry Ltd worker was rehanging chickens on a hook coming from an overhead conveyor at a site on Coulman Street, Coulman Road Industrial Estate, when one of the chicken's feet came out of the shackle. As she went to insert the foot back into the hook, her thumb got stuck, and she was pulled around with the conveyor. Further around the line there was a fixed upright post attached to a drip tray and as she got to this point her thumb met the post and her thumb was traumatically severed.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found there was no emergency stop for the worker to stop the conveyor from her working position when she became caught in it.

Chesterfield Poultry Ltd (CPL) trading as Iqbal Poultry (IQP) of Coulman Street, Thorne, Doncaster pleaded guilty to breaching Section 3(1) of the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974. The company has been fined £300,000 and ordered to pay £5,046.29 in costs.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Eddy Tarn commented: "The moving shackles passing the fixed pole – that supported the drip tray – created the danger zone that the worker was drawn into.

"Companies must ensure that measures are in place to prevent access to dangerous parts of machinery and provide a means to stop machinery should an emergency happen."

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. www.hse.gov.uk^[1]
2. More about the legislation referred to in this case can be found at: www.legislation.gov.uk/^[2]
3. HSE news releases are available at <http://press.hse.gov.uk>^[3]

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