

Employee crushed by bus suffers life-changing injuries

A bus company has been fined £380,000 after one of its employees was crushed between a reversing bus and a stationary vehicle.

The employee of Stagecoach Devon Limited was working at the company's Torquay depot on the morning of 3 October 2019.

Due to space limitations, buses often had to reverse to be able to leave the depot in readiness for the day's work.

The sole banksman, who would direct vehicles, was occupied at the top of the depot where most buses were parked.

As a result, it became custom and practice for the bus drivers at the front of the depot to reverse without a banksman, or to assist each other when reversing, despite not being trained as banksmen.

The injured employee, who was caught between a reversing bus and a stationary vehicle, suffered compound multiple fractures of his arm requiring six titanium plates and 65 metal staples between his wrist and elbow.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that Stagecoach Devon Limited failed to put a suitable and sufficient risk assessment in place.

This should have identified the risks inherent in the bus parking layout and action could have been taken to remove the need to reverse or mitigate the risks from reversing. For example, changing the parking layout, providing a sufficient number of trained banksmen for peak times, and improved segregation of vehicles and pedestrians.

At Plymouth Magistrates Court Stagecoach Devon Limited of One Stockport Exchange, 20 Railway Road, Stockport, pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. The company was fined £380,000 and ordered to pay costs of £18,000.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE Inspector James Collins 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 work.

"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."

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

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