

Engineering company sentenced after apprentice narrowly escapes serious injury

A plant hire company has been fined after an apprentice avoided a potentially fatal crush injury from a mobile crane.

During proceedings at Knights Chamber, Nightingale Court, in Peterborough it was heard that on 3 August 2016, an apprentice at M&J Engineers Limited had climbed on to the roof of an accommodation cabin to attach a power float to the chains of a mobile crane. The crane operator, who had not been appropriately trained, began to extend the boom and move the crane into position. The crane had not been set up correctly and the boom of the crane toppled over toward the apprentice. The apprentice jumped out of the way of the boom avoiding a potentially fatal incident. However, his fall from height caused injuries to his leg and back.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found the company did not have a safe system of work in place and the crane operator had not been adequately trained. There was no clear instruction concerning the use of the crane or which areas the crane was prohibited from operating. They also had no way of ensuring that the apprentice was suitably managed.

M&J Engineers of Cashel Works, Cadwell Lane, Hitchin, Hertfordshire was found guilty of breaching Section 2(1) Health and safety at Work etc Act 1974. They were fined £220,000 and ordered to pay costs of £65,443.72.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Nigel Fitzhugh said: "Those in control of work have a responsibility to provide adequate training to their employees so that they can operate equipment safely and devise safe methods of working. This includes providing the appropriate information, instruction and training to their workers."

Further information about managing health and safety is available here:

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/managing/index.htm>

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>

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