

Oil and gas operator following incident on North Sea platform

- Water rose to workers' knees before emergency stop
- Incident was "terrifying", says HSE inspector

An oil and gas operator has been fined £300,000 after three crew members descended into a water filled lift shaft on a floating platform in the North Sea causing them to become partially submerged.

The workers had been descending in a lift located in one of the platform legs on the FPF-1 facility during a night shift on 10 December 2020 when the water started to flood into the lift before they reached the bottom of the shaft. The trio were knee-deep in water by the time the lift was able to be stopped by the workers via the emergency button.



Figure 7 – Location of Column D4 on FPF-1.

The FPF-1 Platform

Ithaca Energy (UK) Limited, the owner of FPF-1, pleaded guilty to safety failings at a hearing at Aberdeen Sheriff Court on Thursday, 12 June 2025.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found the three men had been tasked with carrying out inspection work at the base of one of the facility's sub-sea columns. During preparations to clear the inspection site of standing water beforehand, failings of hardware and incorrect operating procedures caused the bottom of the lift shaft to commence filling with water. Due to a lack of water alarms in the bottom of the lift shaft the control room was unaware that water was filling the shaft.



The lift shaft had filled with sea water and no alarm system was in place

As the three men descended in the lift, they experienced a 'rush of air'

before their fears of something being wrong were confirmed when the base of the lift made contact with the water. The three men were able to press an emergency stop button and returned safely to the main deck, with none of them sustaining any injuries.

The HSE investigation found that water marks on the lift door revealed it had reached a level of just under 1.5 metres before the lift was stopped and returned to surface. Ithaca's own investigation determined that the water level could have actually reached more than three metres, meaning the men would have found it difficult to escape through the top hatch of the lift if the workers had used the lift later and/or had not been successful in bringing the lift to a halt immediately.

HSE issued Ithaca with an improvement notice and work in confined spaces was stopped by the company until February 2021 to allow a full review to take place.



Figure 11 – Lift Entrance and Water-tight Door in P-M-12

Water marks on the lift door indicated it had reached a height of nearly 1.5 metres

Ithaca Energy (UK) Limited of Queens Road, Aberdeen pleaded guilty to breaching The Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998, 30 Regulation 4(1) and the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, Section 33(1)(a). The company was fined £300,000.

HSE inspector Ian Chilley said: "This was a terrifying incident for the workers involved, we are just thankful that no physical harm came to them.

"This fine should send a message and reminder to those operating offshore facilities for them to be extra vigilant.

"It was only a matter of good fortune that this incident didn't result in serious injury, or worse."

When passing sentence, the sheriff observed the case marked 'another reminder of the need for rigorous adherence to health and safety in the oil and gas industry'.

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.
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Director spared jail as two companies fined following roofer death

- Young roofer was on just his second day on the job.
- Falls from height remain one of the leading causes of workplace death and HSE guidance is available.

A director has been given a suspended jail sentence and two companies fined after a young man on just his second day on the job fell to his death at a premises in Walsall.

Adam Brunskill, 22, had been part of a team of four men working on the roof of Bestway Wholesale in Bloxwich Lane, near Reedswood. On 14 July 2020, he fell through an unprotected glass-wire skylight to the concrete floor approximately 23-feet below. He sustained a severe brain injury and died in hospital the following day.



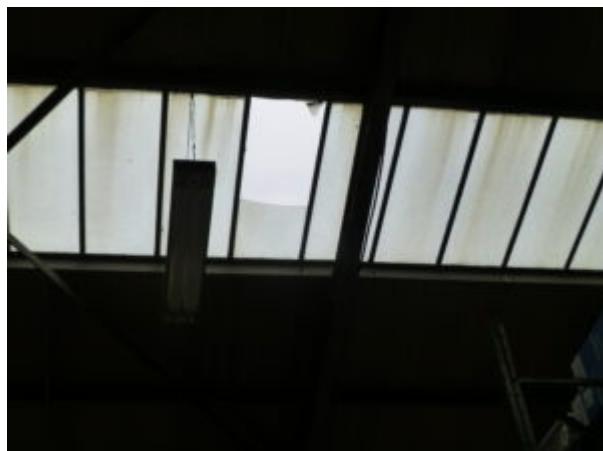
The work was being carried out at Bestway Wholesale in Bloxwich Lane in Walsall

It had only been Adam's second day working as a roofer on the project to install over-cladding to the large industrial unit.

Wayne Clarey, the director of Wayne Clarey Roofing & Cladding Limited, was given a six-month custodial sentence, suspended for 18 months. His company was fined £45,000, while principal contractor Proclad Developments Limited

was fined £400,000.

Working at height remains one of the leading causes of workplace injury and death and HSE has detailed guidance on [working safely at height](#).



Adam Brunskill fell through an unprotected glass-wire skylight

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that this was a very preventable incident. The skylights could have been covered or safety netting installed below.

- Proclad (Developments) Limited of Snail Hill, Rotherham pleaded guilty to breaching Section 3 (1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and Regulation 9 (2) of the Work at Height Regulations 2005 and have been fined £400,000 and ordered to pay costs of £9,089.
- Wayne Clarey Roofing & Cladding Limited of High Escombe, Bishop Auckland pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2 (1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and Regulation 9 (2) of the Work at Height Regulations 2005 and have been fined £45,000 and ordered to pay costs of £5,000.
- Director Wayne Clarey of High Escombe, Bishop Auckland pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2 (1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and Regulation 9 (2) of the Work at Height Regulations 2005 and was sentenced to 26 weeks imprisonment suspended for 18 months.

HSE inspector Gareth Langston said: "The collective failures of those responsible for site safety in this case has cost a young man his life.

"Adam Brunskill was at the very beginning of his career but was not kept safe.

"When working on fragile roofing, or where skylights are in place on a metal roof, safety netting is essential.

"Had these measures been put in place Adam would still be alive."

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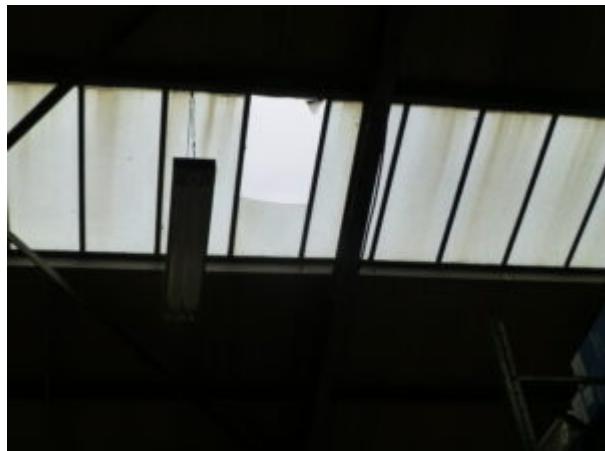


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Site supervisor fined after exposing school pupils to asbestos

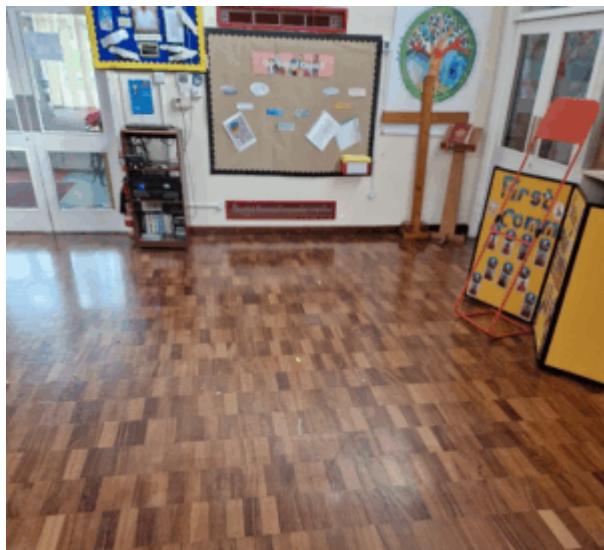
A construction site supervisor has been fined after he exposed primary school pupils and staff to asbestos during renovation work.

Adrian Barraclough was working as a site supervisor during the refurbishment of kitchen facilities at Holy Family Catholic Primary School in Bristol.



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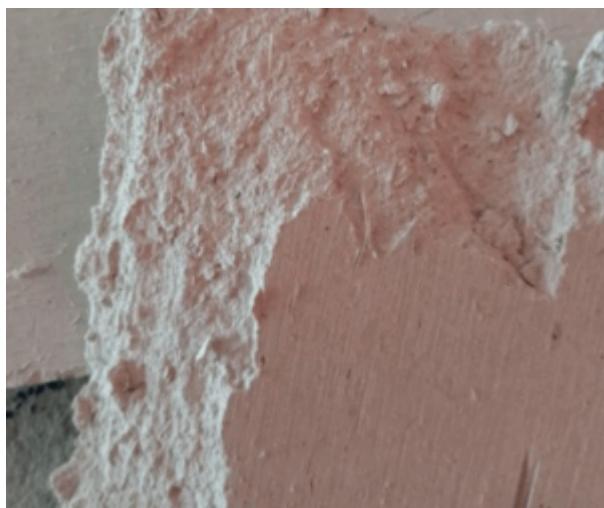
During the works on 13 May 2023, the 54-year-old cut through asbestos insulating board using a circular saw. His actions resulted in asbestos fibres spreading throughout the school hall, which was subsequently used for two days by pupils and staff.



Holy Family Catholic Primary School in Bristol

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that Barracough failed to follow his asbestos awareness training, including clear instructions not to disturb the wall. Following an asbestos survey, the wall was due to be checked by a licensed asbestos contractor prior to removal to clarify if asbestos was present.

HSE's has two campaigns "[Asbestos and You](#)" and "[Asbestos Your Duty](#)" reminding tradespeople about the dangers of asbestos and the importance of working safely with it, also to reach those responsible for the maintenance and repair of non-domestic buildings.



Close up image of the asbestos containing material

The regulator also provides comprehensive guidance for workers and employers about working safely with [asbestos on its website](#). This includes information on how to identify asbestos, what to do if you find it, and the appropriate safety measures needed when working with or around asbestos-containing materials. Workers in trades such as construction, maintenance, demolition and installation are particularly at risk and should ensure they have appropriate training before starting work that might disturb asbestos.

Adrian Barracough, of Green Lane, Frome, pleaded guilty to breaching Section 7(a) of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974. He was fined £1,800 and

ordered to pay a £720 victim surcharge and £4,000 in costs at Bristol Magistrates' Court on 12 June 2025 – a total financial penalty of £6,520.

HSE inspector Ian Whittles said: "Every year around 5,000 people die from asbestos-related diseases, often taking decades to develop symptoms. In this case, wholly unacceptable exposure to asbestos fibres occurred as a result of an individual employee not following instructions and procedures designed to prevent such occurrences."

This HSE prosecution was brought by HSE enforcement lawyer Karen Park and paralegal Imogen Issac.

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4. Relevant guidance can be found here: Introduction to asbestos safety: [Overview – HSE](#).
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Demolition firm fined after worker seriously injured in fall from height

A demolition company has been fined after a worker fell six metres through a roof opening during a demolition project, suffering serious injuries.

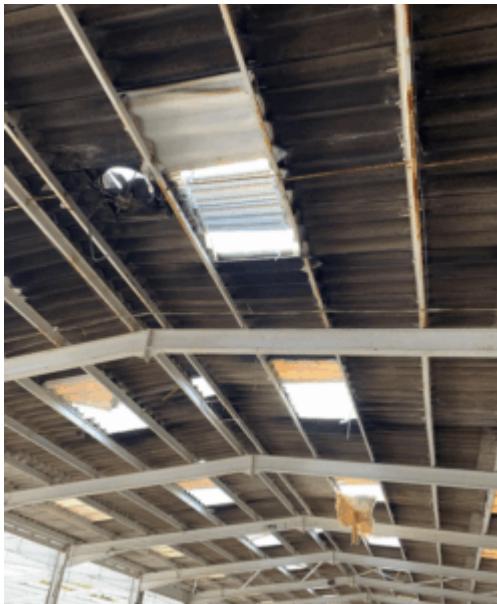
Lawrie (Demolition) Limited had been appointed as the principal contractor to carry out the demolition of a vacant warehouse in Aberdeen.



Warehouse in question

On 25 May 2023, 42-year-old Sylwester Zdunczyk was working with a team on the warehouse roof, removing aluminium over-sheeting. The sheets were being carried to pre-cut holes in the roof from where they were dropped to the ground floor. These holes were guarded by steel crowd control barriers secured together with plastic tie wraps – but they were not attached to the roof surface. No other fall prevention measures were in place.

While helping to carry a sheet backwards near one of the holes, Mr Zdunczyk lost his footing. The weight of the sheet and his own bodyweight caused the unattached barriers to shift, exposing the edge of the opening and creating a gap. He fell approximately six metres to the concrete floor below.



the worker fell from this roof

Mr Zdunczyk sustained a fractured pelvis and two broken ribs. He was unable to work for six months after being discharged from hospital and has not fully recovered. Previously fit and active, he can no longer run, cycle or play football and now requires pain medication.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that Lawrie (Demolition) Limited failed to properly plan, supervise, and carry out the work at height safely. Workers were sent onto the roof without sufficient instruction, training or supervision. The company also failed to put adequate fall protection measures in place.

Working at height remains one of the leading causes of workplace injury and death and HSE has detailed guidance on [working safely at height](#).



the warehouse

Lawrie (Demolition) Limited, of Rigifa, Cove, Aberdeen, pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 4 of the Work at Height Regulations 2005 and Section 33(1)(c) of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974. The company was fined £40,562.50 at Aberdeen Sheriff Court on 12 June 2025.

HSE inspector Muhammad Umair Tanvir said:

“This incident could have been avoided by simply implementing appropriate control measures and safe working practices.

“Falls from height remain the leading cause of fatalities and serious injuries in UK workplaces. In 2023/24, 50 workers died following a fall from height – the highest cause of workplace fatalities. This trend has remained consistent over recent years.”

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