

HS2 contractor fined £400,000 after tipper truck driver injured

- 20-tonne tipper truck fell off edge of excavation ramp
- The driver of the truck suffered multiple injuries
- The joint HS2 venture set up by Skanska Construction UK Limited, Costain Limited and Strabag AG

A joint venture working on the HS2 rail project has been fined after the driver of a 20-tonne tipper truck was injured when his vehicle fell off the edge of an excavation ramp.

The incident happened on 27 July 2021, at a site in Copthall North near Uxbridge, West London. The site was being run by SCS Railways, a venture set up by three major construction companies – Skanska Construction UK Limited, Costain Limited and Strabag AG.

The tipper truck fell approximately two metres and landed on the driver's side. The man behind the wheel suffered a broken nose, cut hand, and a shoulder injury.



The 20-tonne truck ended up on its side after falling off excavation edge

Inspectors from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) visited the site after the incident and found that there were no signs on the haulage routes being used. They also identified that there was no edge protection in place to prevent vehicles going over the edge of the ramp, and that excavations adjacent to some of the vehicle routes had unsupported, vertical faces which were at risk of collapse.

The incident occurred in an area where SCS Railways was building a 'cut and cover tunnel'. These are shallow tunnels built on the surface before being buried, with trees, plants, and shrubs planted on top. Material from the excavation was to be reused, removing the need for it to be taken off site.

SCS Railways had contracted another company – ACE Grab Hire and Haulage Limited (ACE) – to transport excavation material via 20-tonne tipper trucks to an area under the control of another joint venture working on HS2, Align JV. ACE drivers had been operating at the site for about two weeks by the time the incident occurred.

The subsequent HSE investigation found that on the morning of the incident, the SCS earthworks team changed their working area after an Align JV representative found the original material could not be used. This meant moving the excavator's loading position and creating a new traffic route – but the change inadvertently left an unprotected edge on the bank above.



The suffered several injuries in the incident

When the first ACE tipper truck driver used the higher-level bank instead of the intended new route, his vehicle slipped on the ramp. The next ACE driver followed the same path – and his vehicle veered off the edge of the bank.

HSE guidance on the management of vehicle movements on construction sites can be found in the HSE publication HSG 144, [The safe use of vehicles on construction sites](#). This states that physical barriers, such as safety banks, should be provided at the edges of excavations. Guidance on excavations can also be found at [Excavations – HSE](#). Haul roads on construction sites are also classed as temporary works and guidance can be found at [Temporary Works – HSE](#).

SCS Railways, of 1 Hercules Way, Leavesden, Watford, pleaded guilty to contravening section 3(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974. It was fined £400,000 and ordered to pay costs of £8,974 at Uxbridge Magistrates' Court on 16 June 2026.

HSE Inspector Gordon Carson said:

“SCS had detailed procedures in place for much of the work at the site, including temporary works schemes for excavations.

“However, its failure to properly plan and promptly communicate changes in

vehicle routes created unsafe conditions for the drivers of tipper trucks.

“The consequences of this could have been even more serious than they were for the driver involved in this incident.”

The investigation was carried out by HM inspectors Saif Deen and Gordon Carson, and the prosecution brought by HSE lawyer Andrew Siddall and paralegal Benjamin Stobbart.

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 management of vehicle movements on construction sites can be found in the HSE publication HSG 144, [The safe use of vehicles on construction sites](#). Guidance on excavations can be found at [Excavations – HSE](#)
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 and Wales can be found [here](#) and for those in Scotland [here](#).