

Manufacturer fined after worker suffers life-changing injuries in conveyor incident

- Maintenance engineer suffered catastrophic, life-changing injuries after his arm was pulled into an unguarded conveyor
- Working alone, he waved at a CCTV camera for help after becoming trapped in the machinery
- Factory Services UK Limited fined £160,000 after pleading guilty to health and safety breaches

A Merseyside animal-feed manufacturer has been sentenced after a maintenance engineer suffered severe, life-changing injuries when his arm was drawn into an unguarded conveyor.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that Factory Services UK Limited allowed workers access to dangerous parts of machinery for many years at its site on Moorgate Road, Deacon Park, Knowsley Industrial Park, L33 7RX.

On 18 March 2025, maintenance engineer Daniel Slinger was working a nightshift when he was asked to look at an issue on a conveyor. While the conveyor was still running, Mr Slinger reached through a hole in the side of the conveyor casing to clear away some material. His arm was pulled into the moving machinery. There was no guard in place and no emergency stop button in the area.

Working alone at the time, there was nobody nearby to see or hear what had happened. In an effort to raise the alarm, he repeatedly waved at a CCTV camera in the hope that someone monitoring the system would spot him and come to his aid, nobody did. Eventually, after 40 seconds, he was able to free his arm. This was despite the company's own safe systems of work requiring machinery to be guarded and isolated before any maintenance or cleaning activity was carried out.

Mr Slinger suffered catastrophic injuries to his forearm and hand, including a fracture and extensive degloving. He required multiple operations, blood transfusions and continues to receive ongoing specialist treatment. He remains unable to return to work.

HSE's investigation established that the hole had been cut into the conveyor years earlier to allow workers to clear blockages while the machine remained in operation. A second conveyor on site was also found to have a similar unauthorised access point. Despite routine inspections, management walkarounds and audits, the dangerous modifications had not been identified or rectified.

Following the incident, the company fitted a fixed mesh guard and installed

an emergency stop button at the location.

Factory Services UK Limited pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 at Warrington Magistrates' Court on 8 September 2026. They were fined £160,000 and ordered to pay costs of £4728.

Following the hearing, HSE Inspector, Ian Betley, said:

“Mr Slinger suffered devastating and life-altering injuries as a result of this preventable incident. Had the correct protections been in place he would not have been exposed to the dangerous parts of a running conveyor through a hole cut into the machine.

“Factory Services UK Limited had risk assessments and safe systems of work, but they were not followed or enforced. Employers must ensure guarding is properly maintained, safe systems are implemented, and workers are protected from foreseeable risks.”

This prosecution was brought by HSE enforcement lawyer Alan Hughes and paralegal officer Henrietta Ruthven.

Further Information

1. Guidance on the safe use of work equipment, including guarding requirements, can be found here:
<https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/l22.htm>
2. Further details on the latest HSE news releases are available at:
<https://press.hse.gov.uk/>
3. HSE does not pass sentences, set guidelines or collect fines. Sentencing guidelines for health and safety offences can be found at:
<https://www.sentencingcouncil.org.uk/sentencing-and-the-council/about-sentencing-guidelines/about-published-guidelines/health-and-safety-offences-corporate-manslaughter-and-food-safety-and-hygiene-offences/>