

Printing company sentenced after employee suffers finger amputations

Harrier LLC, a photo processing, printing and gift manufacturing business based in Newton Abbot has been sentenced after a worker suffered serious injuries when his hand was caught in machinery.

Exeter Magistrates' Court heard that on 19 January 2017, 44-year-old agency worker Neil Williams was working on a corner rounding machine at a site in Newton Abbot. The machine is hand operated with top and bottom blades and can also be activated by a foot pedal. While adjusting the settings of the cutter, Mr Williams put his fingers between the blades to ensure a flush fit. While he tightened them in place, his foot slipped and hit the foot pedal even though it was of a protected or "shrouded" design. The blade came down and severed his ring finger, middle finger and most of his index finger.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found Mr Williams was not suitably trained and the safe system of work for the corner cutter failed to set out a safe way to change the template size.

Harrier LLC of Brunel Road, Newton Abbot pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 3(1) of the Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999. The company has been fined £98,000 and ordered to pay costs of £6,756.50 plus a victim surcharge of £170.

Speaking after the hearing HSE inspector Melissa Lai-Hung said: "The company fell significantly below the expected standard. Mr Williams' injuries have been life changing. This incident was foreseeable and preventable.

"Employers should make sure they properly assess and apply effective control measures to minimise the risk from dangerous parts of machinery."

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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