

Transport company fined after employee fatally crushed

A transport company has been fined after a worker was fatally injured when the pallet of stone tiles he was attempting to deliver fell onto him.

High Wycombe Magistrates' Court heard how, on 23 November 2016, an agency driver was carrying out a delivery for Reason Transport UK Limited at Fraser Road, High Wycombe. The driver was delivering a pallet of stone tiles using a tail-lift and a manual pallet truck. He spent several minutes struggling to lift and manoeuvre the pallet onto the truck's tail-lift. When he eventually succeeded in doing so, he lost control of the pallet, which fell onto him, causing him to suffer fatal crush injuries.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that the weight of the pallet was recorded as 1,200 kg but the actual weight of the pallet was in excess of 1,400 kg. The pallet was therefore in excess of the 1,000 kg weight limit set by the pallet network for tail-lift deliveries. The investigation also found that the driver had worked for the company for two weeks and had not received any training for the safe delivery of pallets using a tail-lift.

Reason Transport UK Limited, now in liquidation, pleaded guilty to breaching Section 3(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and have been fined £5,000.

After the hearing HSE inspector Stephen Faulkner said: "This was a tragic and wholly avoidable incident, caused by the failure of the host company to provide training to this agency worker on the safe delivery of pallets from a vehicle with a tail-lift.

"Transport companies should be aware of the importance of identifying and managing the risks involved with delivering heavy loads and the need to adequately train new staff before undertaking such deliveries."

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^[1]
2. More about the legislation referred to in this case can be found at: www.legislation.gov.uk^[2]
3. HSE news releases are available at <http://press.hse.gov.uk>

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