

Trucking company fined after Darlington man killed unloading a wagon

The sister of a man killed while unloading a lorry trailer has spoken of the devastating impact her brother's death has had on their family.

Anthony Clark, 51, from Darlington worked for GCS Johnson Limited, a trucking company based in North Yorkshire.

On 17 August 2018 the father-of-two was helping move a large piece of machinery from one trailer to another at the GCS Johnson depot at Barton Quarry industrial estate in Richmond.

As a team of workers were moving the piece of machinery, it fell from the bed of the vehicle trailer and hit Anthony killing him instantly.



Anthony Clark
with his
grandson Jake

Anthony, a grandfather of two and an avid Sunderland fan, had recently got engaged to his fiancé Marie. On the day of his funeral, he was due to leave on a cruise with Marie.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that when the workers were transferring the load for shipment, the machinery was in two parts and the smaller section fell free during the lifting operation. This caused the part of machinery to strike Anthony resulting in immediate fatal injuries.

HSE has detailed guidance on the [provision and use of work equipment](#).

Today (May 3) at Leeds Magistrates' Court, GCS Johnson Limited of Barton Park, Barton, Richmond, North Yorkshire pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2 (1) of the Health & Safety at Work etc Act 1974. The company was fined £140,000 and ordered to pay £18,355.07 in costs.

Anthony had an older brother, Graham, and sister Elaine.

Elaine Clark said: "Today's verdict will not bring our Anthony back. He absolutely should not have died at work that day.

"He should still be here but he's not. And that leaves a huge void in all our lives that nothing will ever replace.



Anthony Clark (left) with his brother Graham

"Mum has lost her son. Marie has lost her fiancé. Graham and I don't have our baby brother anymore. His daughters don't have their dad. His grandchildren will never get to know their Grandad.

"None of us get to see his smile. None of us get to hear him laugh. He doesn't get to ride his scooter with his mates. Or go to watch Sunderland every week. He will never get old like the rest of us.

"Nearly five years on, family events that should be joyous occasions are tainted by our Anthony not being there. And that will never change.

"I can only repeat, he absolutely should not have died at work that day."

After the hearing, HSE inspector Julian Franklin said: "You can tell from the moving tribute from Anthony's sister, Elaine, how popular he was and the severe impact his death has had on the family.

"If the load had been examined carefully prior to the lift being carried out, the team would have identified that it was in two pieces. As it was, the lifting method used was not suitable for a load of that size and shape, and a lifting plan should have been prepared.

“This terrible incident could so easily have been avoided by simply implementing the correct control measures and safe working practices.”

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.
2. More information about the [legislation](#) referred to in this case is available.
3. Further details on the latest [HSE news releases](#) is available.