



Safety Bulletin 107

Companies 'liable' for failing to implement 999 systems

Businesses could face legal action under health and safety laws if they don't implement systems which detail the exact location of a 999 call, a legal expert has warned.

The warning comes as a Scottish company has launched the Enhanced 999 calling solution, which can give the precise location of an emergency call. Under the current system, when an emergency call is made from an extension, paramedics are not automatically provided with information on the exact location of the caller – they are often provided with only a generic number. This can pose a problem in the case large and multi-site organisations, and also has implications for lone workers.

A legal expert has now warned that companies failing to introduce the available measures could be sued in the event that emergency services failed to reach an injured caller because they couldn't locate them. Claire Anderson, a specialist health and safety lawyer, said it was an employers' responsibility to provide adequate access to emergency services for their staff.

She told The Scotsman:

"Once the product is widely available, companies that don't have this technology could fall down on enforcement rules," she said.

"The Health and Safety Executive may take the view that the company has not taken reasonable steps to protect their employees. They can serve notices and prosecute."

Similar systems are widely used by American companies to protect staff and prevent legal action in the event of a serious workplace accident. Many states have made it a legal requirement for businesses to be able to provide accurate information about the location of staff to the emergency services, and in some states businesses who fail to do so can be closed down.

If you require any further information, clarification or assistance with the above, then please do not hesitate to contact us;

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