



Safety Bulletin 98

Construction firms warned to plan work and control risks

This week, the HSE urged construction firms to plan work carefully and take steps to control risk in what is one of the country's largest but most dangerous industries with 72 fatalities nationwide in 2007/08.

The warning follows a HSE prosecution after a fatal incident on 1 December 2003. Michael Broughton was working with a group of employees pouring concrete to form the floor of an office building. A truck-mounted concrete pump was being used to take fresh concrete from delivery lorries to the building floor. A suspended hose, used to pour the concrete, 'whipped' violently when the pump was restarted, throwing one man some distance and fatally injuring another

Mr. Broughton's employer, UCS Civils Ltd (formerly Universal Construction Services Ltd) was sentenced at Doncaster Crown Court yesterday after pleading guilty in an earlier hearing in the Magistrates' Court to a breach of Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. UCS Civils Ltd was fined £40,000 and ordered to pay costs of £31,600.

Pochin Concrete Pumping Ltd also pleaded guilty to a breach of Section 3 of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, and was fined £40,000 and ordered to pay costs of £45,000.

After the hearing, HSE Inspector, Rob Cooper, said:

"This case highlights the need to fully consider all the risks involved when planning work and putting in place measures to control the risk.

"The precautions that should have been adopted were as simple as to ensure that no one stood close to the end of the flexible delivery hose until concrete was flowing smoothly from it – something which would have not added any significant cost or time to the work."

The industry's representative body, Construction Plant-hire Association (CPA), has since published guidance, Code of Practice for the safe Use of Concrete Pumps. This Code lays out the simple steps to take to reduce the risk of injuries involving similar equipment that were in use at the time of the accident. All contractors and machine operators involved in this kind of work should now be familiar with the Code of Practice. This is available to download on:

<http://www.cpa.uk.net/pages.php3?pageid=39>

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

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