

£535,000 fine for oil and gas firm after man injured on North Sea platform

An oil and gas company has been fined £535,000 after a worker sustained life changing injuries following the uncontrolled collapse of a crane.

Greig Philip Harwood and John Divers, employees of Enermech Limited, were injured while working on the Fulmer Alpha North Sea oil platform on 11 September 2017. Aberdeen Sheriff Court heard that the 13 tonne, 45 metre long crane boom fell to the deck without warning, with flying parts hitting both men.

Mr Harwood suffered a fractured jaw and lacerations to his chest. He had his jaw wired together and three titanium plates fitted. He could not eat solid food for around four months. He also suffered psychological damage and was diagnosed with anxiety, trauma and depression as a result of this trauma and has stopped working in the offshore industry. He continues to have physical symptoms where he cannot open his mouth fully and has no feeling in his lower jaw due to nerve damage.

John Divers also suffered physiologically and required counselling sessions. He could not face working offshore for 12 months.

By less than half a metre, the crane boom missed a high pressure flare line, a fuel gas line and the main oil line. If any of these had been hit it could have resulted in a serious hydrocarbon release.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that the company had failed to carry out a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks of the work and had failed to maintain the crane braking systems and equipment in a safe condition before work commenced.

Repsol Sinopec Resources UK Limited of Holburn Street, Aberdeen pleaded guilty to breaching Section 3(1) and Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and were subsequently fined £535,000.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE principal inspector Dr Stephen Hargreaves said:

“Greig Harwood and John Divers are lucky to be alive. This incident could so easily have been avoided by simply carrying out suitable control measures and safe working practices.

“A North Sea Oil Platform is a hazardous environment, and it was again pure luck that the crane boom, which crashed to the deck, narrowly missed high pressure gas and oil processing equipment.. This incident could have been avoided had the company properly planned and risk assessed the work and adequately maintained their cranes.”

“It is very disappointing that we are seeing failings of this nature bringing those working on North Sea Installations perilously close to disaster.”

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.