

Company fined after apprentice suffers fractured skull at commercial vehicle maintenance company

A Birmingham based motor vehicle company has been fined after an apprentice suffered head injuries whilst undertaking maintenance work on a commercial vehicle.

Birmingham Magistrates' Court heard how the Central England Municipals Limited (CEML) apprentice employee was working alongside an experienced mechanic replacing air suspension bags beneath a 39,000kg trailer. The air suspension bag was still under pressure and ejected sideways striking the injured person.

The employee suffered a fractured skull and was placed in an induced coma as a result of this incident.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) into the incident, which occurred on 5 June 2017, found there was a failure to assess risk, a failure to implement a safe system of work and a failure to ensure that employees were appropriately trained and monitored to ensure the task could be carried out safely.

Central England Municipals Limited (trading as M6 Commercials) of Nechells, Birmingham pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and has been fined £20,000 and ordered to pay costs of £921.40.

Speaking after the case HSE inspector Christopher Maher said: "If a suitable safe system of work has been in place prior to the incident, the life changing injuries sustained by the employee could have been prevented."

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

Journalists should approach HSE press office with any queries on regional press releases.

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[Linguistics at the Library – Episode 5](#)

PhD placement students, Andrew Booth and Rowan Campbell write: This week is a bumper episode because Andrew and Rowan are joined by Rosy Hall, who completed her PhD placement at the British Library in 2017! We discuss island communities and why these are linguistically interesting, before hearing about Rosy's own...

[EU trade policy needs to consider regional and local impact of trade liberalisation](#)

How to mitigate the negative effects of globalisation on Europe's economy is at the heart of the [opinion](#) on the EU trade package drawn up by Micaela Fanelli (IT/PES), mayor of Riccia in the province of Campobasso. Local and regional representatives adopted the opinion during the plenary session of the European Committee of the Regions (CoR) on 23 March in Brussels.

International trade has fostered growth and promoted competitiveness both within and outside the EU. However, not everyone benefits to the same extent, putting some severe strain on some local economies and communities. To have local and regional authorities on board they must be included from the

beginning. Territorial impact assessments can be a powerful tool in identifying and quantifying the possible impact of a given trade deal on European regions before the start of negotiations.

" The problems encountered with the CETA negotiations, where the Wallonian parliament raised severe concerns about the agreement, shows that more has to be done to ensure an adequate and timely involvement of regional and local authorities in the assessment of EU international trade deals, so that critical situations can be prevented and responsibilities shared better ", said CoR president **Karl-Heinz Lambertz**.

" EU Trade policy has to ensure that globalisation has positive economic, social, territorial and environmental effects for people and businesses in Europe and beyond. To reach this goal any further step in trade liberation should imply territorial impact assessments, which will facilitate more sound, informed, transparent and evidence-based decisions regarding the content of the deal. It will also enable a more tailor-made support for the concerned regions to anticipate and manage the impact ", said **Micaela Fanelli** (IT/PES), mayor of Riccia in the province of Campobasso.

The rapporteur underlines the key role of the [European Globalisation Adjustment Fund](#) (EGF) to support those bearing negative consequences of the opening to a global market but also reiterates the CoR's call to improve the way it operates. *" We need complement the EGF with a preventive arm, increase its budget to at least EUR 500 million per year, integrate it into the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) and allow more flexibility in order to respond to the specific needs of regions and territories. We also need to improve synergies with the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) "*, said **Ms Fanelli**.

The rapporteur further welcomes the principle of EU-wide [screening for Foreign Direct Investment](#) (FDI) for reasons of security and public order, but calls for clearer criteria and more legal certainty when such screening is necessary at EU level. She also stresses that the planned [multilateral investment court](#) (MIC) – to overcome the problems encountered with the current investor-to-state dispute settlement – should not bypass domestic legal systems or local government decisions defending the rights of private investors.

Related opinions:

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Boosting regions as centres of innovation for a competitive industrial sector in Europe

Local and regional politicians adopted recommendations for European industry adapting to a new age at the plenary session of the European Committee of the Regions (CoR) on 23 March in Brussels. The [opinion](#) drawn up by Heinz Lehmann (DE/EPP) highlights the potential of cities and regions to serve as hubs for innovation and so support Europe's global industrial competitiveness.

In a rapidly changing world, the aim of an EU industrial policy strategy at European level is to respond to current and future challenges and opportunities in order to enhance the competitiveness of European industry. Cities and regions have an important part to play in supporting industry's capacity for change and innovation to make it fit for the digital age.

" The EU provides ways of maintaining and expanding a globally competitive industry. Innovation, investment in key enabling technologies, digitalisation, leadership in a low-carbon and circular economy, and a focus on important projects of common European interest are important pillars in making Europe's industry future-proof . Local and regional authorities need to be on board, as they have important powers and competences in critical areas such as research and innovation, education and skills, export support, infrastructure, SMEs and regulation ", notes **Heinz Lehmann** (DE/EPP), member of Saxony regional parliament.

Given the centrality of regions and regional ecosystems to industrial modernisation and innovation, the rapporteur calls for the EU's strategy to have a strong regional dimension. He also recommends more investment in the infrastructure necessary for advancing digitalisation, and urges better support for start-ups, scale-ups and cluster initiatives.

" Regional clusters like the Silicon Saxony Cluster are good examples of regional ecosystems: they offer jobs and vocational training at local level, they are unique in and for Europe, and they are anchored in global value chains . Together with other regional and interregional networks such as the MERGE lightweight construction cluster, the European Network of Chemical Regions ECRN or the Vanguard Initiative they can boost a region's image as a centre for innovation and prevent emigration, shortages of skilled labour, and a small-scale economy ", **Mr Lehmann** adds.

The rapporteur also points out that a well-functioning single market that provides free and fair access to the European market will help to better integrate local and regional companies in global value chains. All regions – including rural areas – should be able to participate in value creation and should have the opportunity to create and retain skilled local jobs. He stresses that competitive business services are increasingly important for the productivity and cost competitiveness of industry and essential to its

success.

More information:

CoR opinion: [A European strategy for industry: the role and perspective of regional and local authorities](#)

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