

Company and director sentenced after two workers injured in falls from height

A facilities and construction management company, along with the director, have been fined after unsuitable scaffolding partially collapsed, injuring two workers.

Newport Magistrates' Court heard that on 8 March 2018, workers on a six-metre high scaffolding tower were carrying out demolition activities at the Citizens Advice Bureau in Church Place, Bargoed when the platform of the tower partially collapsed. One man suffered broken ribs, tendon damage and since the incident depression and short-term memory loss. The other man suffered three broken vertebrae and has since been diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that the tower scaffolding was not suitable for the type of work being undertaken. It was not erected by a person trained and competent to do so, had been erected to a height above recommendation and was loaded with a weight greater than the safe working load stated by the manufacturer.

Invictus Facilities and Construction Management Limited of Pontprennau, Cardiff pleaded guilty to breaching Section 3(1) of The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. They were fined £106,000 and ordered to pay costs of £8,501.

Director of the company Simon Paul Wright of Tredegar pleaded guilty to Section 33 (1a) by virtue of Section 37(1) of The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and was ordered to undertake 150 hours of unpaid work.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Gemma Pavey said: "Failure to select suitable and sufficient scaffolding towers and the failure to have them erected and dismantled by a competent person creates risk to workers who could be injured by a fall or collapse.

"Companies should be aware that HSE will not hesitate to take appropriate enforcement action against those that fall below the required standards."

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>

For more information and guidance on the use of tower scaffolds please see:

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/construction/safetytopics/scaffold.htm>

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