

Company fined after fatality at quarry

A company has been fined after an employee was struck by an excavator and fatally crushed.

Inverness Sheriff Court heard that in May 2017 a crusher was being prepared for use following transportation from another quarry to Leiths (Scotland) Ltd, Kishorn Quarry, Nr Strathcarron, Wester-Ross, Scotland. Paweł Kocik was struck by a quick hitch on the dipper arm of an excavator and crushed between the quick hitch and side of the feed hopper of a mobile crusher.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks to employees had not been made and that a safe system of work was not in place for erecting the hinged crusher feed hooper side plates, which required being lifted into position and secured with wedges and pins, along with the fitting of a cross brace beam in the feeder. Work at height in the feeder had not been properly assessed and insufficient information, instruction and training for the tasks had been provided.

Leiths Scotland Ltd of Cove, Aberdeen pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974. The company was fined £130,000.

The Crown accepted that the failings detailed in the charge did not cause the death of the employee and the plea came before the court on a non-causal basis.

Mike Tetley, HM Specialist Inspector of Quarries said: "This case should serve as a reminder of the need for employers and quarry operators, as duty holders, to review their activities to ensure that a suitable and sufficient assessment of risk has been made and recorded, that the necessary equipment and controls are in place and sufficient information, instruction and training has been provided, especially when excavators are being used as lifting equipment."

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