

Company fined after forklift truck fatality

A pallet transport company has been fined after a forklift driver was killed when his forklift overturned.

Mr Reginald Bacon was working as a forklift driver at Fortec Distribution Network Limited's pallet hub at Watling Park, Watford Village, Northamptonshire.

Northampton Magistrates' Court heard how on 13 October 2016, Mr Bacon was unloading goods from the trailer of a large goods vehicle (LGV) and whilst his forks were inside the trailer to remove a pallet, the LGV drove forward; this caused the forklift to tip over on its side. Mr Bacon was not wearing his seatbelt correctly and tried to jump clear from his truck but sustained fatal head injuries.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that the company's risk assessment failed to identify the risk of an LGV driving away whilst being loaded or unloaded. The company also failed to recognise that the system of work being followed was different from its documented systems of work, including the monitoring and supervision of wearing seatbelts correctly when operating forklift trucks. The system being used for moving LGV's through their warehouse was unsafe.

Fortec Distribution Network Limited of Coronation Road, High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire, pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2(1) of Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and was fined £107,000 and ordered to pay costs of £17,436.97.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE Principal Inspector Samantha Wells said "Dutyholders have a responsibility to devise safe methods of work, effectively risk assess and then provide this information, instruction and training to their workers.

"The safe methods of work should be monitored and supervised by those in control, to ensure those safe methods have been implemented and are being adhered to."

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](https://www.hse.gov.uk)
2. More about the legislation referred to in this case can be found at: [legislation.gov.uk/](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/)

3. Specifically:-

a) HSE's webpages on workplace transport

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/workplacetransport/index.htm>

4. b) HSE publication L117 "Rider operated lift trucks, operator training and safe, Approved Code of Practice and guidance"

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/priced/l117.pdf>

5. c) HSE leaflet INDG457 "Use lift trucks safely, Advice for operators"

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg457.pdf>

6. HSE news releases are available at <http://press.hse.gov.uk>

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