

Company fined after workers suffer serious burns

A Nottinghamshire foundry has been sentenced after two employees suffered serious burns from an electrical flashover.

Southern Derbyshire Magistrates' Court heard how, on 2 September 2016, at BAS Castings Ltd two employees were working to reinstate the power supply to one of the furnaces after repair work had been completed by contractors. After replacing the fuses, they shut the door to the fuse panel which engaged the interlock and tried to close the main switch. As this would not operate they opened the panel door and decided to bypass the interlock using a screwdriver in order to try the main switch again. At this point an electrical flashover occurred. Both employees suffered serious skin burns requiring surgery followed by a two week stay in hospital to recover.

An investigation carried out by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that at the time of the incident, BAS Castings Ltd did not have any electrical safety rules, safe systems of work or a permit system in place, and there were no recorded systems or rules for working with electricity. There was no assessment of risk and the injured employees were not provided with any specific instructions on how to undertake the work safely. The company also allowed employees to work on live conductors without consideration of the conditions which are stipulated in law.

BAS Castings Limited of Wharf Road Industrial Estate, Pinxton, Nottinghamshire, pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 4 (3) and Regulation 14 of the Electricity at Work Regulations 1989. It was fined a total of £60,000 and ordered to pay costs of £1353.90

HSE inspector Leigh Stanley speaking after the case said: "Those in control of work have a responsibility to devise safe methods of working and to provide the necessary information, instruction and training to their workers in the safe system of working. If a suitable safe system of work had been in place prior to the incident, the injuries sustained by the employees 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. 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>