

Company prosecuted for failing to control risks to employees using vibrating tools

A company that manufactures and sells medical devices for the healthcare industry has been fined for failing to adequately control the risk to its employees from exposure to vibration when using vibrating tools. .

Newport Magistrates' Court heard that employees of Frontier Plastics Ltd worked at the company's Blackwood site in Gwent for long periods of time using vibrating tools including strimmers, hedge cutters, grinders, drills and linishers, without suitable controls to reduce the risks. As a result, two employees, the earliest of which had started at the company using vibrating tools in 1991, are suffering ill-health from hand arm vibration.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that before August 2019 the company, failed to; adequately assess the risks of using vibrating tools, put in place measures to control the risk, provide suitable information, instruction and training on the risks to employees and place the employees under suitable health surveillance to monitor their condition.

Frontier Plastics Limited, a subsidiary of Verna Group International Limited, of Western Avenue, Chorley pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and has been fined £246,000 and ordered to pay costs of £15,788.

Speaking after the hearing HSE inspector Sian Donne said: "This was a case of the company completely failing to grasp the importance of managing exposure to vibration. HAVS is a serious, disabling and permanent condition. If the company had put in place suitable controls to reduce exposure and health surveillance to monitor workers' health, then the employees' condition would not have developed to a severe and life altering stage."

Notes to Editors:

1. The [Health and Safety Executive \(HSE\)](#)^[1] 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.
2. More about the [legislation referred to in this case](#)^[2]
3. [Latest HSE press releases](#)^[3]
4. See more information about [Hand arm vibration at work \(hse.gov.uk\)](#)