

Construction companies fined after worker injured in fall from height

Three construction companies have been today fined after a subcontractor fell four meters through a fragile roof light into an office space below.

Portsmouth Crown Court heard how, on 17 December 2015, an employee of Wessex Insulation Limited was injured when he was installing insulation to new ventilation ductwork on the roof of the Mountbatten Leisure Centre in. The employee suffered six fractures to his back.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found three companies; Dantherm Limited (the principal contractor), Wessex Building Services Limited (the main contractor on site) and Wessex Insulation Ltd (the insulation sub-contractor), failed to plan and manage the risk of falling through rooflights sufficiently.

Dantherm Limited of Windmill Business Park, Clevedon, pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 13(1) of the Construction Design and Management Regulations 2015 and was fined £30,666 and ordered to pay costs of £6,646.16.

Wessex Building Services Limited of Wessex House, Shaftesbury, pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 4(1)(a) of the Work at Height Regulations 2005 and was fined £425,000 and ordered to pay costs of £6,646.16.

Wessex Insulation Limited of Albany Road, Weymouth, pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 9(2) of the Work at Height Regulations 2005 and was fined £70,833 and ordered to pay costs of £6,646.16.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE Inspector Jane Beckmann said: "Falls from height remain the most common cause of work-related fatalities and serious injuries in the construction industry and the risks associated with working at height are well-known".

"Working on or near fragile materials at height can be particularly dangerous and it is very important that those in control of the work identify the risk, plan to eliminate it if possible, or where it is not possible, take appropriate precautions to safeguard workers and others. Good management will also include regular monitoring that the controls in place are keeping people safe. It was fortunate that in this instance the worker involved made a full recovery, but it could have been a very different outcome."

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>

Journalists should approach HSE press office with any queries on regional press releases.