

Construction company fined after worker suffered multiple fractures

Britcon (UK) Ltd have been sentenced for safety breaches after a worker was struck by a falling load from a mechanical excavator.

Leeds Magistrates' Court heard that Britcon (UK) Ltd were appointed as a contractor to construct a surge pit as part of a renewal and refurbishment project at the McCain's Foods (GB) Limited site at Havers Hill in Scarborough. Part of the process involved removing sheet piles from the ground.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that on 21 March 2018, 66-year-old Stephen Gouldthorpe was assisting with cleaning sheet piles as they were removed from the surge pit by a Doosan DX 225 LC3, 360-degree excavator. The excavator had an attachment known as an EMV 300 pile attachment fitted to remove the sheet piles from the ground. The mechanical excavator was removing a seven-metre sheet pile weighing approximately 190 kg to a lay down area when a safety chain slipped causing the pile to fall and strike Mr Gouldthorpe.

He suffered a fractured left tibia and fibula and ankle, a fractured right clavicle, seven fractured ribs, pulmonary contusion and fractured vertebrae.

Britcon (UK) Ltd of Midland Road, Scunthorpe, North Lincolnshire, DN16 1DQ pleaded guilty to breaching Section 3 (1) of the Health & Safety at Work etc Act 1974. The company has been fined £570,000 and ordered to pay £40,054.68 in costs.

After the hearing, HSE inspector Paul Thompson commented: "There was insufficient supervision and communication during the lifting operations. There was no specific exclusion zone in place and workers had to approach the sheet pile to clean it.

"This incident could so easily have been avoided by simply carrying out the correct control measures and safe working practices"

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>

4. Please see the link below to the page on HSE's website that is the best guide to doing it the right way: [Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 \(LOLER\) – Work equipment and machinery \(hse.gov.uk\)](https://www.hse.gov.uk/lifting-operations-and-lifting-equipment-regulations-1998-loler-work-equipment-and-machinery)