

Construction employee sustains multiple fractures after fall from height

Trevor Cook Construction Ltd has been fined after a roof worker fell six metres through a fragile roof sheet whilst working on a barn at a farm in Amesbury, Wiltshire.

Swindon Magistrates' Court heard how, on 22 May 2019, the employee was replacing broken roof sheets using a mobile elevating working platform (MEWP) to gain access to the roof of the barn and crawling boards to traverse the roof. The employee's foot slipped from one of the crawling boards and he subsequently fell through the fragile roof material, sustaining serious injuries including neck fractures, a collapsed lung, and a bleed on the brain.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that Trevor Cook Construction Limited failed to plan the work appropriately. The company was aware of the risks and often used netting when undertaking large re-roofing projects, but made a conscious decision not to install nets for smaller jobs, which involved the replacement of individual roof sheets. The chances of falling whilst working on fragile roofs are very high and the company should have had the appropriate safeguards in place.

Trevor Cook Construction Limited of Garlands, Cadley Road, Collingbourne Ducis, Marlborough, Wiltshire pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 4(1) of the Work at Height Regulations 2005. The company was fined £63,278 and ordered to pay costs of £6,721.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Stephan Axt-Simmonds said: "Falls from height remain one of the most common causes of work-related fatalities in this country and the risks associated with working at height are well known.

"Falls through fragile roof materials are not inevitable. They can be prevented by careful planning, using trained and experienced workers with suitable equipment, and employing a high level of supervision.

"This incident could so easily have been avoided by using established 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. www.hse.gov.uk
2. More information about working with fragile roofs and preventing falls can be found here:
[Fragile roofs: Safe working practices GEIS5 \(hse.gov.uk\)](#)
[Agriculture: Preventing falls \(hse.gov.uk\)](#)
 3. More about the legislation referred to in this case can be found at:
www.legislation.gov.uk/
 4. HSE news releases are available at <http://press.hse.gov.uk>