

Construction firm fined after worker was seriously injured

A construction company has been fined after an employee was struck by the placing boom of a concrete pump, causing serious injuries.

Brighton Magistrates Court heard how on the 5 March 2019, concrete footings were being poured at a site at Ditchling Common, East Sussex . Due to the soft ground, vehicles could not get close to the work, so a concrete pump with a 52-metre boom was used.

During the pour, the ground beneath one of the pump outriggers collapsed, causing the concrete pipe and boom to strike the employee, dislocating and fracturing his hip, fracturing his spine and tearing ligaments and muscles. He was also later diagnosed with a brain injury. He is still undergoing regular physiotherapy, and suffering from post-traumatic stress, but does not know the long-term effects of the brain and nerve damage.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive, it was found that the work had not been properly planned, managed or monitored. Although some work had been done to stabilise the ground in the area where the pump was set up, no checks had been made as to the load that the ground could sustain, and no consideration had been given to the size or type of spreader plates that would be required to support the vehicle outriggers.

Axio (Special Works) Limited of Portslade, Brighton pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 13 (1) of the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 and were fined £20,000, plus a victim surcharge of £170 and costs of £5,285.70.

Speaking after the hearing HSE Inspector Stephen Green said “The employees injuries are life changing and he could have easily been killed. This serious incident and devastation could have been avoided if basic safe guards had been put in place.”

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>

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