

Contractor fined after employee falls from scaffolding

A shopfitting company has been fined after an employee suffered multiple fractures after falling fifteen feet from scaffolding.

Manchester Magistrates Court heard how on the 24 October 2019, an employee of TA Knox Shopfitters Ltd was working from a tower scaffold at the front of the Footasylum Store in the Trafford Centre, Manchester, when the scaffold moved throwing him off balance. He fell backwards against the safety rail of the scaffold, which gave way and he fell fifteen feet to the ground. The employee suffered ten fractured ribs, a fractured shoulder and a collapsed lung.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that the safety rail had not been fixed in place correctly, causing it to give way when the employee fell against it. It also found that the tower scaffold had not been erected by somebody with the appropriate skills, knowledge and training. If the edge protection been suitable and sufficient and the tower constructed by somebody competent to erect tower scaffolds, the incident could have been prevented.

TA Knox Shopfitters Ltd of Hollingworth Road, Bredbury, Stockport pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. The company was fined £18,000 and ordered to pay costs of £4,623.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Seve Gomez-Aspron said: "Falls from height remain one of the most common causes of work-related fatalities and severe injuries in this country. The risks associated with work at height are well known. This incident could so easily have been avoided by ensuring that suitable and sufficient edge protection had been used and qualified people had been on site to erect a tower scaffold."

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 about the legislation referred to in this case can be found at: [Construction – Scaffold tower – Scaffolding industry health & safety \(hse.gov.uk\)](http://www.hse.gov.uk/construction-scaffolding)
3. HSE news releases are available at <http://press.hse.gov.uk>