

# Dockside company sentenced after worker seriously injured on trawler

A dockside warehousing company has been fined £127,500 after a worker fell 25ft through an open hatch on a trawler which had no edge protection.

David Eggins, a father-of-two, was working aboard a fishing vessel docked at the quayside at Cattedown Road, Plymouth on 16 December 2019.

While acting as a banksman for a crane lifting pallets of frozen fish from the vessel's hold, Mr Eggins was knocked through an unguarded hatch by an unsecured wheeled bin, as the vessel moved on the water. He fell between 25/30ft onto the floor below suffering multiple fractures to his head, neck, back, pelvis and ribs. He also sustained internal bleeding and spent over three months in hospital.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that Cattedown Wharves Limited had failed to take appropriate precautions to ensure the safety of workers during the operation. They were in charge of the unloading operation and should have taken adequate measures to ensure the safety of their employees.

HSE has guidance available for [safety on fishing vessels](#).

Cattedown Wharves Limited, of Fisher House, Barrow-in-Furness, pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act.

The company was fined £127,500 and was ordered to pay £13,767 costs at a hearing at Plymouth Magistrates' Court on 29 September 2023.

After the hearing, HSE inspector Emma O'Hara said: "David Eggins was seriously injured in a fall which should not have been able to happen.

"The fine imposed on Cattedown Wharves Limited should underline to companies that the courts, and HSE, take a failure to follow the regulations extremely seriously. We will not hesitate to take action against companies which do not do all that they should to keep people safe."

This HSE prosecution was supported by HSE enforcement lawyer Alan Hughes.

## **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.

2. More information about the [legislation](#) referred to in this case is available.
3. Further details on the latest [HSE news releases](#) is available.