

Engineering firm sentenced after employee suffers permanent nerve damage

An engineering company has been fined after a worker was diagnosed with hand-arm vibration syndrome (HAVS).

Manchester Magistrates' Court heard that prior to 22 October 2018, an overall lack of management relating to the use of vibrating tools at AIM Engineering Ltd led to an employee being diagnosed with HAVS. Regular use of vibrating tools causes the painful and disabling disorder which, in this case, has left the employee with irreparable nerve damage to the hands and arms.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that AIM Engineering Ltd of Wythenshaw, Manchester did not monitor how much work the employees were doing with vibrating tools. In addition, the company did not have any health surveillance in place, which would have picked up early signs of the disease. In 2017 an external company made recommendations to reduce employees' exposure to vibration when working with vibrating tools, and to implement health surveillance. This resulted in an employee being diagnosed with HAVS.

AIM Engineering Ltd of Southmoor Industrial Estate, Southmoor Road, Manchester pleaded guilty to breaching of Regulation 2 (1) of the Health and Safety at Work Act etc. 1974 and was fined £300,000 with costs of £7,831.90.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Jennifer French said: "This was a case of the company completely failing to grasp the importance of controlling employees' exposure to vibration. Had appropriate controls been in place to reduce the amount of vibration workers were exposed to, and appropriate health surveillance put in place, the employee's condition would not have been allowed to develop to a severe and life altering stage."

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: www.legislation.gov.uk/

3. HSE news releases are available at <http://press.hse.gov.uk>

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