

Freight forwarding company fined after warehouse operative suffers crush injuries

Airworld Airlines Ltd has been fined £82,000 after a freight container weighing nearly 700kg fell on a worker at a warehouse in Hounslow

Westminster Magistrates' Court heard how, on 26 January 2018, a warehouse cargo agent was using a forklift truck to offload a freight container from a heavy goods vehicle at the site on the Hatton Cross Centre. The container became unstable and fell on him. As a result, he was pinned between the container and a concrete pedestrian barrier, sustaining serious injuries including multiple fractures and internal injuries.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found the company had no safe system of work in place to identify the risk of freight containers falling from forklift truck blades. The company had also made alterations to the fork lift blades to enable employees to lift aircraft containers from the floor without any stabilisation mechanism.

District Judge Baraitser described Airworld Airlines Ltd's lifting operation as a "dangerous practice [which] presented a significant risk not only to the operator of the forklift but to any member of staff who happened to be in the vicinity of the operation as it was being carried out."

Airworld Airlines Ltd of Ascot, Berkshire pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. The company was fined £82,000 and ordered to pay £6575.60 costs and £170.00 victim surcharge.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Sarah Pearce said: "Employers have a responsibility to devise safe methods of carrying out lifting operations and should ensure that every lifting operation is properly planned, appropriately supervised and carried out in a safe manner.

"Companies should be aware that HSE will not hesitate to take appropriate enforcement action against those that fall below the required standards."

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. Further information is available about the [legislation referred to in this case](#).
3. [Latest HSE press releases](#).

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