

£1m fine for concrete firm after 'one in a million' son died at work

A concrete manufacturer has been fined £1m after a 24-year-old man died at a site in Nottingham.

Stewart Ramsay, from Mansfield, was working for Creagh Concrete Products Ltd (CCP) at its Thurgarton Lane site in Hoveringham when he suffered fatal head injuries on 15 March 2017.

Mr Ramsay, known as 'Stew', was trying to fix a problem that happened as he and colleagues were using a metal grab to unload Spantherm, a concrete building product, from some trailers. The metal grab [shouldn't have been in use.](#)

Mr Ramsay's head became trapped in the jaws of the grab after a rope connected to the locking lever snapped.



Twenty-four-year-old Stewart Ramsay died in the incident.

Even though the rope was tied in a double-knot, the locking mechanism released the jaws of the grab as Mr Ramsay pulled on it, causing fatal injuries.

Stew's mother Carol Hansford described him as a 'one in a million son'.

"I know a lot of people say that, but he really was out of this world," she said.

"He was an amazing brother, grandson, uncle and nephew.

"The hundreds of friends that came to the crematorium showed how well liked and appreciated he was – it was unbelievable.

"He was just loving, caring, thoughtful and very funny."

CCP were sentenced at Nottinghamshire Crown Court on 5 April, after they admitted failing to ensure its employees carried out lifting operations safely and without training and information being in place.

"He was such a hardworking person," Carol added.

"Not only did he work at Creagh, he also working as a doorman on weekends.

"I'll never forgot that day as long as I live.

"I got a knock at the door as his friends had come to tell me – I collapsed.

"It still doesn't seem real – it's like you're watching a film and not at the end.

"All he did was go to work.

"Things like this shouldn't happen – it destroys families forever,

"Nobody should have to go through what we have done these past six years."

An investigation by the Health and Safety executive (HSE) showed that CCP did not have a safe system of work for the use of the grab and had not carried out a risk assessment to identify risks for its use. Both the grab and a fork lift truck being used at the time were in poor condition. Neither should have been in service at the time of the incident. CCP had failed to ensure that these pieces of work equipment had been maintained in an efficient state, efficient working order or in good repair.

Creagh Concrete Products Limited of Hoveringham Nottinghamshire pleaded guilty of breaching Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 in that it failed to ensure, so far as was reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare at work of all its employees. The company was fined £1,000,000 and ordered to pay costs of £47,521.08.

Speaking after the hearing HSE Inspector Mr Amandip Dhanda said: "This tragic incident led to the avoidable death of a young man.

"Stewart's death could easily have been prevented if his employer had acted to identify and manage the risks involved, and to put a safe system of work in place.

"The work equipment being used at the time of the incident should not have been in use, and the employer would have known this had they effectively followed their own health and safety systems."

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.
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[Roofer jailed after worker fell more than 16-feet to his death](#)

A man has been jailed after a worker fell from the roof of a commercial property in North London and died a week later.

Patrick McCarthy (trading as All Care Home Improvements) was given a 14-month custodial sentence after the death of Mr Andrei-Ionel Hutanu in 2019. No scaffolding or other measures had been put in place to [prevent falls from the roof](#).

Harrow Crown Court heard how 33-year-old Mr Hutanu and another man were working at the rear of commercial premises in Neasden on 19 August 2019. While his co-worker had been instructed to remove building materials from a flat roof, Mr Hutanu had been instructed to carry out repair work on a tiled pitched roof. He was working on it from a roofing ladder when he fell approximately 16-feet onto a concrete alleyway below.

He fractured his neck and sustained other serious head injuries in the fall and despite being taken by air ambulance to St Marys Hospital in Paddington, he sadly died a week later, on 26 August 2019.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) into the incident found 37-year-old McCarthy had failed to take any steps to prevent falls from height by failing to install scaffolding around the perimeter of the building or flat roof where both men were working.

Mr Patrick McCarthy (trading as All Care Home Improvements) of Pasture Road, London pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 6(3) of the Work at Height Regulations 2005. He received a 14 -month custodial sentence at a hearing on 4 April 2023.

After the hearing, HSE Inspector Philip Jordan said: "This tragic incident could have been easily avoided. Assessing and planning work at height is essential to ensuring that suitable and sufficient measures are in place to prevent falls from height.

“The custodial sentence imposed on Mr McCarthy should underline to everyone in the construction industry that the courts, and HSE, take a failure to follow the regulations extremely seriously. HSE will not hesitate to take appropriate enforcement action against individuals or companies that fall below the required standards.”

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2. More information about the [legislation](#) referred to in this case is available.
3. Further details on the latest [HSE news releases](#) is available.
4. HSE guidance on carrying out [roof work](#) safely and [working at height](#) is available.

[Regulator’s report on “forever chemicals” published](#)

A report published on Tuesday 4 April has set out in detail the extent to which so-called “forever chemicals” are used in Great Britain.

It has analysed how “forever chemicals” or PFAS (Poly- and perfluoroalkyl substances) are used. The report has also included exposure from everyday items such as food wrappers, cleaning products, and furniture coatings.

PFAS are pollutants that are slow to degrade. They are often called “forever chemicals” because they do not naturally breakdown and can stay in the environment for decades.

In the most comprehensive British analysis of these chemicals ever, the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has identified the most common and most harmful uses of PFAS and what measures could be put in place to control and manage them.

The [HSE report](#) makes a number of recommendations including to limit the use of PFAS-containing foams used by firefighters to put out fires, as well as the use of PFAS in textiles, furniture, and cleaning products.

It has been published under UK REACH, the framework for managing the risks

from chemical substances in Great Britain. HSE, the regulator for UK REACH, has worked with the Environment Agency.

Dr Richard Daniels, director of HSE's chemicals regulation division, said: "PFAS are a global issue of concern. We have looked at responses around the world, but it was vital we gathered the right information and evidence on how PFAS are used in Britain specifically.

"This has helped us work out where the right action could be taken to limit the use of PFAS and control exposures to people and the environment in this country.

"The reality is that PFAS substances, due to their persistent properties, will continue to be detected for many years – despite measures being taken to limit restrict or ban their use.

"We will now look at the availability and risks posed by alternatives to ensure maximum long-term protections can be gained."

One of the key proposals is that, due to more comprehensive information being available, fire-fighting foams are prioritised for action. This will be founded on scoping work with stakeholders including industry, firefighters and those with expert knowledge of alternative foams. Similar exercises will take place for other commercial uses of PFAS substances.

Dr Daniels continued: "There is evidence of occupational exposure and environmental harm that can come from current fire-fighting foams, and we can understand the concerns among firefighters. We encourage all affected to work with us in the scoping exercise."

The analysis published today is a regulatory management options analysis (RMOA), a preliminary step used within the UK REACH framework. It collates, combines and analyses information to understand the nature and extent of exposure to chemical substances, in this case PFAS. The analysis considers existing laws and also how PFAS substances are being managed around the world, including Europe, Asia and the USA.

Environment Minister Rebecca Pow said: "By improving our understanding of the potential risks posed by PFAS, we will be better equipped to tackle them.

"The HSE's analysis is a key part of our efforts to protect us from these persistent chemicals – our Plan for Water recognises this and we will begin developing proposals to restrict PFAS in firefighting foams this year.

"This will build on our action to increase monitoring and support a ban or highly restrict specific PFAS both domestically and internationally, so that we can reduce the amount of PFAS entering our natural environment."

HSE, as the Agency for UK REACH, will work with the Environment Agency and the Appropriate Authorities (Defra, Scotland and Wales) to consider the recommendations and how action on these recommendations will be set out in the forthcoming UK REACH Work Programme for 2023-24.

Environment Agency executive director John Leyland said: “Today’s analysis is a significant milestone in the UK’s efforts to protect people and the environment from the potential impacts of PFAS.

“Building on actions taken since the 2000s, we are rapidly expanding our monitoring to build a clearer picture of PFAS chemicals and their potential risks.

“By working closely with our partners, we will broaden our understanding to better inform decision-making so that we can safeguard the public and our environment for future generations.”

NOTES TO EDITORS

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2. HSE is the Agency for UK REACH and therefore has responsibility for the majority of the regulatory functions under UK REACH. In the delivery of these functions, HSE is supported by and/or reportable to a number of other government organisations.
3. HSE news releases are available at: <http://press.hse.gov.uk>.
4. As part of the UK REACH Work Programme, it was agreed with the appropriate authorities for UK REACH (i.e. the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) and the Scottish and Welsh Governments) that HSE and the Environment Agency would prepare an RMOA for PFAS.
5. An RMOA is not a legislative or legally binding document. It typically provides an assessment of the likely health and environmental risks associated with the use of a substance or group of substances, alongside the existing regulatory framework and any specific controls relating to them. If there is evidence of significant risks, it concludes with preliminary recommendations for any additional measures within REACH to manage them. Should action be considered appropriate, a detailed risk assessment and legislative proposal for regulatory action will follow an RMOA.
6. For the PFAS substances considered in this RMOA, the available data do not indicate a clear association with any adverse health risks. However, the long-term effects of exposure to these persistent chemicals are not well understood, and toxicological data are limited. The underlying chemistry of PFAS (strong C-F bond) contributes to their persistent nature, which in turn leads to greater potential that they could cause serious and/or irreversible damage to the environment.

Company fined after worker's leg crushed by forklift truck

A manufacturing company has been fined £600,000 after a worker's leg was crushed by a forklift truck.

The man was working for AkzoNobel Packaging Coatings Limited when the incident occurred at the firm's Birmingham site on Bordesley Green Road on 8 May 2018.

He had been walking across a pedestrian crossing at the site when a forklift truck, being driven by another worker, collided with him, crushing his leg and ankle. The driver did not slow down while approaching the pedestrian crossing and his vision was restricted as the forklift truck was carrying multiple intermediate bulk containers (IBCs).

The injured worker required surgery and skin grafts following the incident.

A Health and Safety Executive (HSE) investigation into the incident found AkzoNobel Packaging Coatings Limited failed to provide an adequate risk assessment nor a safe system of work. There was also a lack of appropriate supervision. This led to the adoption and development of an unsafe custom and practice on site.

AkzoNobel Packaging Coatings Limited, of Wexham Road, Slough, Berkshire, pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2 (1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. The company was fined £600,000 and ordered to pay costs of £3,188.60 at Birmingham Magistrates' Court on 3 April 2023.

HSE inspector Marie Wheeler said: "This incident could so easily have been avoided by the employer adequately assessing the risks and ensuring a suitable workplace transport system was implemented with correct management and supervision in place.

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

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[HSE's Working Minds campaign supports Stress Awareness Month 2023](#)

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE), through its Working Minds campaign which aims to prevent work-related stress and promote good mental health in the workplace, has compiled a list of resources to assist employers and workers during stress awareness month this April.

HSE and its twenty-two partner organisations across Great Britain have come together to urge workplaces to take action on work-related stress and mental health.

Launched in November 2021, Working Minds has grown from nine to 22 partners, with the next two members the Scottish Association for Mental Health (SAMH), and See Me – Scotland's national programme to end mental health stigma, both joining this month.

The campaign is reminding businesses the law requires all employers to assess the risk of work-related stress, and to assist employers to prevent or tackle any work-related stress to support good mental health in their workers. To assist them and workers achieve this and access support they may require, HSE has collated multiple resources into one simple document which is accessible [here](#).

Liz Goodwill, Head of the Work-Related Stress and Mental Health Policy Team at HSE, said: "Stress Awareness Month is an opportunity for employers to check in and support their staff's mental health. Working Minds helps employers to follow five simple steps based on risk assessment. They are to **Reach out** and have conversations, **Recognise** the signs and causes of stress, **Respond** to any risks you've identified, **Reflect** on actions you've agreed and taken, and make it **Routine**. It needs to become the norm to talk about stress and how people are feeling and coping at work.

"There are six main areas that can lead to work-related stress if they are not managed properly. These are: demands, control, support, relationships, role and change. Factors like skills and experience, age, or disability may all affect someone's ability to cope."

Helpful resources

- Visit [the Working Minds campaign website](#)
- Visit the HSE's work-related stress webpages
- [Listen to our podcast with Professor Cary Cooper, one of the world's foremost experts on wellbeing](#)
- Watch our [stress and mental health at work video](#)
- See [HSE's Stress Management Standards](#)
- Download a [Talking Toolkit](#)
- Download our [prevent stress at work poster](#)
- Download a [risk assessment template](#)
- Download the [mobile app](#)
- [Stress Indicator Tool](#)
- [NEBOSH stress training qualification & training course](#)
- Mind helpline (open 9am-6pm weekdays) – 0300 123 3393

Andrew Berrie, Head of Workplace Wellbeing at Mind, says: "Paying attention to workplace mental health has never been more important. Whoever you are and whatever you do for work, Mental Health at Work has plenty of tools, resources, and stories to support you and your teams."

Francoise Woolley, Head of Mental Health and Wellbeing at Acas, said: "This month is an opportunity to reflect on how organisations are supporting the wellbeing of their employees and addressing the causes of stress at work. Leaders and managers play a huge role in recognising and responding to signs that someone might be struggling, and creating an environment where employees feel safe to speak up about their concerns."

Carole Spiers, Chair of ISMA UK, said: "We are pleased to support Stress Awareness Month, increasing public awareness about the causes of stress and how to help combat it. Prolonged and intense stress in the workplace can result in burnout, negatively impacting employees' mental and physical health.

To prevent this, it's essential for employers to engage in open discussions with their employees about stress."

Emma Mamo, Assistant Director of Workplace and Business Development at SAMH, said: "Regardless of the size of your organisation, promoting mental health should be a key priority. We know that a mentally healthy workplace is more productive, has lower staff turnover and fewer absences, with added benefits including higher staff morale and improved working relationships.

"Through our partnership with Working Minds, we aim to raise awareness and help empower people in workplaces across the country. This is also a key component of SAMH Workplace training, which develops the confidence and capabilities of participants, equipping learners with the tools and resources they need to improve the mental health and wellbeing of themselves and others."

Wendy Halliday, Director of See Me, said: "HSE's Working Minds campaign is an important partnership for us at See Me.

"The last few years have been tough for workers across the country, and we

know that more needs to be done to enable people to feel comfortable speaking about their mental health.

“Mental health stigma continues to be a major barrier for people in the workplace, with nearly 40 per cent of Scottish workers telling us that they think colleagues are unlikely to speak about a mental health problem at work for fear of losing their job. This means that people aren’t asking for help when they need it, which can lead to bigger issues for employers.

“By encouraging staff to speak more openly about mental health, and providing employers with the tools and resources they require to support their employees, we can create more mentally healthy workplaces, free from stigma and discrimination.”

Whether it’s a small business or a large corporation, the law requires all employers to prevent work related stress to support good mental health in the workplace. They have a legal duty to protect workers from stress at work by doing a risk assessment and acting on it.

If employers don’t do anything about it, it will cost. That cost might be productivity, sickness absence, losing a valued member of the team if they’re not able to stay in work or from litigation costs such as an Employment Tribunal.

The Working Minds resource list is available [here](#).

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2. To read more about HSE’s Working Minds campaign click here: <https://workright.campaign.gov.uk/campaigns/working-minds/>
3. HSE launched a major campaign, Working Minds, in November 2021 to remind employers of their legal responsibilities to assess and tackle risks at work and provide practical tools to support their employees’ mental health.
4. Working Minds campaign partners include Mind charity, Acas, International Stress Management Association, Mental Health Productivity Pilot, Institution of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH), Farm Safety Foundation, Composites UK, British Plastics Federation, Make UK, Lifelines Scotland, The Civil Engineering Contractors Association, Mates in Mind, The Lighthouse Construction Industry Charity, Nation Body Repair Association, Commercial Vehicle Body Repair, Independent Garage Association (IGA), Ben automotive charity, The Burnt Chef and British Aggregates Association.
5. Since 2019, The total annual cost of poor mental health to employers has increased by 25%, costing UK employers up to £56 billion a year –

according to a [report by Deloitte](#). Figures show employers can see a return of £5.30 on average for every £1 invested in mental health.

6. For press and media enquiries please contact media.enquiries@hse.gov.uk