

HSE releases annual agriculture fatality figures

The agricultural industry still has the highest rate of fatal injury in Great Britain according to the latest statistics released today by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). Released on the first day of Farm Safety Week, HSE's annual agricultural fatal injury statistics have revealed that a total of 33 deaths were recorded in the sector between March 2017 and April 2018.

29 agricultural workers were killed at work with an additional four members of the public – two of them children – also dying. While this is an increase of four deaths compared with 2016/17 and one more than the five-year average of 32, the number is broadly similar to that seen in recent years.

The average rate of fatal injury in agriculture is 8.44 deaths per 100,000 workers, the highest of any sector and 18 times higher than the all industry average. Rick Brunt, Head of Agriculture at HSE said: "While we are seeing signs of an industry eager to improve this record, the high death rate emphasises the need for determined action by all involved in the farming industry if we are to bring about a real change to these appalling figures."

In a breakdown of statistics released by the workplace regulator, being injured by an animal came out as the top cause of death on a farm, causing eight deaths last year. This was followed by being struck by a moving vehicle (6), being trapped by something collapsing (5), being struck by an object (4) and falling from height (3). Although the order of the top killers fluctuates each year, the overall top four or five causes of death in the farming industry have remained static for years. The statistics also revealed that nearly half of the agricultural workers killed last year were over 65. The youngest person killed was four-years-old and the oldest was 85.

Rick Brunt said: "The causes of death have remained the same for years and the ways to prevent them are well known and straightforward. Work in the Farm Safety Partnership and through industry leaders suggests the industry is on the brink of tackling their problems.

"I urge farmers, managers and workers to step up to this challenge and drive down the toll of death, injury and ill health on Britain's farms. Please don't step back and accept this as the norm for your industry."

Read the full HSE statistics at:

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/agriculture/resources/fatal.htm>

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>
4. The published fatal injury statistics also include a breakdown by country and region. Recent research suggests that variations in fatal injury rates between the countries and regions of Great Britain are largely explained by differences in the industry composition of the workforce between the countries and regions.
5. Britain has consistently had one of the lowest rates of fatal injuries to workers. In 2015 the standardised fatality rate for Britain was one of the lowest of all European countries and compared favourably with other large economies such as France, Germany, Italy, Spain and Poland: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/pdf/fatalinjuries.pdf>
6. The reporting of health and safety incidents at work is a statutory requirement, set out under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR). A reportable incident includes: a death or specified injury; any accident which does not result in a specified injury, but the injured person still has to take more than seven days off their normal work to recover; a work-related disease; a member of the public being injured as a result of work related activity and taken to hospital for treatment; or a dangerous occurrence, which does not result in a serious injury, but could have done.
7. Further information on these statistics can be found at: Fatal injuries: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/fatals.htm>
8. HSE agriculture statistics include fatal injuries in the farming, fishery and forestry sectors. One of the deaths of a child included in the statistics occurred in the forestry industry.