

Manufacturing company fined after workers exposed to risk

Metals fabrication company MTL Advanced Limited have been sentenced for health breaches after several workers were diagnosed with hand arm vibration syndrome (HAVS) or carpal tunnel syndrome.

Sheffield Magistrates' Court heard that the company was visited by the Health & Safety Executive in March 2018 following a concern received from an employee. During that visit it was found that there were multiple health and safety breaches, resulting in the company being issued with Improvement Notices.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that there were systemic failings to recognise the risk of hand arm vibration syndrome (HAVS) or to take appropriate action to control exposure. Of particular concern were accounts from employees of pain and tingling in their fingers, hands and arms and that there were no limits on their use of vibrating tools such as angle grinders.

MTL Advanced Limited of Grange Lane, Rotherham, South Yorkshire pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2 (1) of the Health & Safety at Work etc Act 1974. The company has been fined £90,000 and ordered to pay £14,061 in costs.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Laura Hunter said: "Work activities involving vibrating tools should be properly assessed so that appropriate controls can be implemented to avoid exposing employees to harm.

"Employees suffering from HAVS can experience difficulty in carrying out tasks in the workplace involving fine or manipulative work and are less able to work in cold conditions. Sadly, these effects can be permanent and life changing."

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>[3]
4. Please see the link below to the page on HSE's website that is the best guide to doing it the right way: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/vibration>