

North east sawmill fined after employee has his leg amputated

A sawmill in north east England has been fined after a serious incident at its site resulted in an employee having his leg amputated above the knee.

Sunderland Magistrates' Court heard that, in July 2016, an employee of A & J Scott Limited attempted to clear a blockage on the conveyor feed and edger machine. As he climbed onto the machine he was caught by the moving parts, pushed forward and his trailing leg was amputated below the knee by the saw blade.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that the company had not ensured that measures were taken to prevent access to the dangerous moving parts of the sawmilling equipment. They also failed to safeguard employees who would be working at height whilst on the machine and take steps to prevent employees standing on the machinery whilst it was live, and in a state that it could be turned on at any time.

A & J Scott Limited of Station Sawmills, Wooperton, Alnwick pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and was fined £400,000 and ordered to pay costs of £3,392.

After the hearing, HSE inspector Paul Wilson said: "Those in control of work have a responsibility to devise safe methods of working and to provide the necessary information, instruction and training to their workers.

"Had this been done then this worker would not have received life changing injuries".

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>

Journalists should approach HSE press office with any queries on regional press releases.