

# Routine inspection lands metal recycling firm with £650,000 fine

A major metal recycling firm has been hit with a £650,000 fine following a routine inspection by Britain's workplace regulator.

ASM Metal Recycling, which operates four other metal recycling sites, including at locations in Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire, received enforcement action from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) for failing to implement effective control measures to protect workers.

HSE inspector, Emma Page, visited ASM Metal Recycling at its Griffin Lane premises in Aylesbury on 3 and 8 August 2023. While there, she observed dangerous working practices, including a failure to [segregate moving vehicles from pedestrians](#) as waste was being manually sorted.

During her inspection, HM Inspector Page was able to take videos evidencing these practices – the videos show three pedestrian workers wearing yellow hi-vis sleeveless jackets, sorting waste in the yard in close proximity to three 360 grab excavators operating behind them. As they continue to hand-sort the waste, a red HGV skip lorry pulls forwards and reverses towards and passed them. At this point, two of the workers have their backs towards the still reversing HGV. The footage clearly reveals there are no measures, such as barriers, to prevent the reversing vehicle coming into contact with, and causing injury, or worse, to the workers.

The subsequent HSE investigation further identified that ASM Metal Recycling Ltd had previously identified the risks of pedestrian-vehicle collision but had failed to implement effective control measures to prevent this. At these times, pedestrian workers were exposed to risks of being struck by a vehicle.

HSE had previously served enforcement notices on ASM Metal Recycling Ltd in 2010, 2014, 2016, 2018. HSE also wrote Notification of Contravention letters to the company in 2021 and 2023.

ASM Metal Recycling Ltd, of 55 Station Road Beaconsfield Buckinghamshire HP9 1QL, pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act. They were fined £650,000 and was ordered to pay £5,885 costs at a hearing at Oxford Magistrates Court on 22 October 2024.

After the hearing, HSE inspector Emma Page said: "The scrap and metal recycling industry has consistently had a poor fatal incident rate for many years.

"The most serious risk associated with manually sorting waste is a collision between a vehicle and a pedestrian. On average, there are around five fatalities each year in the waste industry, with nearly half of these relating to being struck by a moving vehicle.

"Incidents happen because working practices have failed to achieve effective

segregation of moving vehicles from pedestrians. During my inspection it was clear that this was the case at ASM Metal Recycling's Griffin Lane premises in Aylesbury, and the fact we had previously identified these areas of concern but they were not acted upon resulted in HSE's prosecution of the company. ."

**Notes to editors:**

1. [The Health and Safety Executive](#) (HSE) is Britain's national regulator for workplace health and safety. We are dedicated to protecting people and places, and helping everyone lead safer and healthier lives.
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 does not pass sentences, set guidelines or collect any fines imposed. Relevant sentencing guidelines must be followed unless the court is satisfied that it would be contrary to the interests of justice to do so. The sentencing guidelines for health and safety offences in England and Wales can be found [here](#) and for those in Scotland [here](#).
5. Further information and HSE endorsed guidance on [hand-sorting of waste in the industry](#) is also available.