

# Top HSE scientist honoured by the King

A leading scientist at Britain's workplace regulator has been recognised in the King's New Year Honours List 2023.

Professor Andrew Curran, Director of Science and Chief Scientific Adviser at the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has been awarded a CBE – a Commander of the Order of the British Empire – for his significant contribution to public service.

With a career spanning more than three decades, Professor Curran – who is also the Deputy Head of the Government Science & Engineering Profession – has led crucial research into protecting people's health and safety at work – from occupational diseases, to reducing carbon emissions and exposure to harmful substances.

He also led the largest study in the world to better understand the transmission of Covid-19, which helped support the UK's response to the pandemic.

Reacting to his award, Professor Curran said: "I am absolutely delighted, honoured and extremely proud.

"I see it as recognition of the contribution HSE's scientists, engineers and analysts make to providing a strong evidence base for our policy and regulatory activity.

"I joined the Health and Safety Executive in 1991, where I began researching the causes of occupational lung disease including exotic materials such as shellfish, insects (used as food for pet reptiles) and henna (used for hair dyes). I then moved into different management and leadership roles which have all led to me being recently appointed as the HSE's Director of Science, where I am also Chief Scientific Adviser – a role I have held since 2015.

"My thirty-year career has been focused on understanding how exposure to nasty materials in workplaces can cause harm and how to effectively manage those risks in large-scale hazardous facilities – protecting people in work or affected by work.

"Given the HSE's wide remit, the variety of my job is incredible. It varies from large-scale, explosive tests using hydrogen to see how we can use it to help reduce our carbon emissions, deliberately damaging batteries to see how they behave under these conditions, to being an active SAGE participant and leading the largest study in the world into understanding the transmission of the Covid virus.

"All of this work has been delivered by scientists, engineers and analysis in both HSE and beyond, and I see this honour as recognising their efforts and the impact it has had on keeping Great Britain as one of the safest places to work in the world.

“I love my job because I genuinely learn something new every day. I believe I have one of the best jobs in science in the country. Our science really makes a difference. I can think of no greater motivator in what I do.”



Professor Andrew Curran, Director of Science and Chief Scientific Adviser at the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has been awarded a CBE

As the HSE’s Director of Science and Chief Scientific Adviser, Professor Curran is constantly monitoring where more evidence is needed to understand new risks in the workplace. The major focus areas were recently published in [the HSE’s new strategy](#).

Looking to the HSE’s future, Professor Curran said: “I would highlight mental ill health in the workplace and the transition to a net-zero economy as being particularly important to understand.

“Through high quality research, and learning where things go wrong, we can hopefully help to enable the innovation required to deliver these challenging goals.”

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**[HSE warns residents in Hampshire to check gas work is carried out by Gas](#)**

# Safe registered engineers

Health and safety inspectors believe illegal gas fitters are operating in Hampshire.

Great Britain's workplace regulator, the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), is investigating several reports of unsafe gas work carried out in Portsmouth and Havant.

Investigations are ongoing after several houses needed gas servicing work to be redone by competent Gas Safe registered engineers.

Anyone who has had gas work recently carried out in their home should check that the work has been undertaken by a competent Gas Safe registered engineer. This is easily checked on the [Gas Safe website](#).

The Gas Safe Register is the official list of gas businesses registered to work on gas appliances and fittings. By law, anyone working with gas must be listed on the register.

Where residents in Hampshire think that gas work may have been carried out by an unregistered gas fitter, the gas work should be checked by a Gas Safe registered engineer. Concerns should also be reported to [Gas Safe](#).

HSE inspector Nicola Pinckney said: "While gas is an incredibly safe way of fuelling your home, any work carried out should be done by an engineer who is on the Gas Safe register.

"HSE will investigate any rogue fitters operating in the area."

HSE recommends homeowners get gas appliances, flues, and pipework regularly maintained and serviced every year by a suitably qualified engineer listed on the Gas Safe Register.

If you smell gas call 0800 111 999. More information on what to do if you smell gas can be found at: [What To Do in a Gas Emergency – Gas Safe Register](#)

For more information on gas health and safety visit HSE's [website](#).

## **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. Further details on the latest [HSE news releases](#) is available.

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# Company fined £200,000 after employee badly injured in fall

A property management company has been fined £200,000 after an employee was left in a wheelchair after falling eight metres through a rooflight.

Robin Williamson, an asbestos surveyor employed by City Property (Glasgow) LLP, suffered severe injuries after he fell while carrying out a survey on the roof of Netherton Community Centre, Glasgow on 5 April 2018.

Mr Williamson suffered multiple skull fractures as well as a bleed to the brain and multiple spine and rib fractures. He now uses a wheelchair.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) concluded that City Property (Glasgow) LLP did not provide a safe system for working at height on the external roof areas of the community centre in that it did not plan, organise and supervise the work, to ensure that the risks were identified and adequate precautions were in place.

City Property (Glasgow) LLP of Exchange House, George Street, Glasgow pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2(1), 2(2)(a) and (c) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, and were fined £200,000 at Glasgow Sheriff Court on 21 December 2022.

Guidance on [working at height](#) can be found on the HSE website.

HSE principal inspector Cameron Adam said: "Falls from a height remain one of the most common causes of work-related fatalities and significant injuries in this country and the risks associated with working at height are well known.

"Falls from height are avoidable and Mr Williamson's accident would have been prevented had the risks been properly assessed and the appropriate control measures implemented.

"Employers 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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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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## [Building firm fined after worker hurt falling through collapsed floor](#)

A building company has been fined £66,667 after a worker was injured when a floor that was under construction collapsed.

The Lusson Ltd worker was one of three people who were on the incomplete first floor of a building that was being constructed in Croham Valley Road, Croydon on 23 June 2021.

Several pallets of blocks were lifted on to the incomplete concrete beam and block floor using a loader crane, eventually causing the floor to collapse.

One of the three workers fell to the ground and suffered an open fracture to his left leg as well as a broken wrist.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that Lusson Ltd did not take any steps to prevent falls from height and they failed to establish a safe system of work for this task.

Lusson Ltd, of Barking Road, London, pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 13(1) of the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 and was fined £66,667 and ordered to pay costs of £1,907 at Westminster Magistrates Court on 21 December 2022.

HSE Inspector Owen Rowley said: "This incident could so easily have been avoided by simply carrying out correct control measures and safe working practices.

"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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## [Food company fined £858,000 after worker loses arm](#)

A food production company has been fined £858,000 after an employee had his arm amputated after becoming entangled in an industrial food mixer.

Lee Simpson was removing filling ingredients from a paddle mixer, from which the contents could be removed at the front, at David Wood Baking Limited's premises in Sheerness, Kent when his right hand and arm were drawn in.

Lee, from Sheerness, who was 26 years old at the time, had to have his arm surgically removed.

He said he has now lost much of his independence. He said: "Life has changed so much since the accident and I am doing everything I can to improve, but it will never be the same.

"Since my accident I have become dependent on others, primarily my family and fiancée, to complete daily activities for me, such as cooking and domestic tasks such as doing the laundry."

The incident happened on September 27, 2021 at the Mill House, Dorset Road, Sheerness, where David Wood Baking Limited makes sausage rolls, quiches and other food products.

An investigation by the health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that the control measures in place to prevent contact with moving parts were ineffective as the guarding of the mixer was routinely not replaced after cleaning.

The 'interlocking' system was also defeated which meant the mixer would still operate without the front guard in place, putting employees, including Mr Simpson, at risk when operating it.

David Wood Bakery Limited pleaded guilty to breaches under the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998, Regulation 11(1)(b) and was fined £858,000 and ordered to pay £8,000 costs at Folkestone Magistrates Court on December 21, 2022.

Guidance on working with [bakery products](#) can be found on the HSE web site.

HSE Inspector Joanne Williams said: "A wide variety of work equipment and

machinery is used across food production.

“Every year, a significant proportion of accidents, many of them serious and sometimes fatal, occur as a result of poorly guarded work equipment. To prevent and reduce the risk of serious or fatal injury adequate arrangements and systems of work are required.

“In the food and drink industries machinery and plant causes over 30% of fatal injuries and over 10% of major injuries.

“In this case this was a wholly avoidable incident, caused by the failure of the company to implement safe systems of work and a failure to identify the risks.

“Had the company ensured the interlocks were maintained and remained in working order, the machine could not have been used without the guard in place and this life changing injury could not have occurred.”

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