

Construction Newsletter December 2015 Issue 2

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Judith Hackitt's 'Risk Assessment' Resolve to Help Britain Work Well in 2016

I know we've still got several days to go to Christmas but I want everyone who reads my blog to start giving some thought to a resolution we're going to be asking you to make early in the New Year.

We know that Britain has a health and safety record we can all be very proud of – it's one of the best in the world. But we also know that we can be even better. It is a challenge but one we should all be up for because it's about helping our country – every nation and region – to work well and prosper. There are lots of things we do well, that's why we are already world class, but to be even better we need to examine what we all do – hold on to what's good and resolve to change what gets in the way of us improving.

Good risk management is fundamental because it helps lead to improved productivity, higher levels of innovation and it delivers economic growth. I've said many times in this blog that it is integral to business success, as well as being about ensuring that everyone goes home safe and well after a day's work. It's about focusing on the important stuff and putting measures in place which are proportionate and sensible.

You've read these words before but now it's time for action from all of us. We're getting ready for the launch of the new strategy for GB's health and safety system which will take us through to 2020.

The strategy has six key themes. But this is a strategy for the system not for HSE alone. We need to act together to gain much broader ownership and commitment and that means we need to talk, share ideas and find the courage to take some new directions. We will be holding a series of conversations around the country early in the New Year before we formally launch the strategy – we're looking for real commitment to make a difference and take us even further on that journey of delivering the very best health and safety performance combined with economic success.

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We need to identify where the well-meaning efforts of others over-complicate things rather than simplify and to understand how we can change this.

Most of us take time to reflect over the Christmas and New Year period whether it's at work, at home, in the pub or in the bath. Here are some of the questions I'd like you to think about:

- Does your personal contribution to health and safety really help others - or hinder?
- Is ownership and responsibility for health and safety in the right place in your organisation?
- Is it on the right things?
- What could you personally do differently in 2016 that will really help us to create an even better health and safety system in GB?
- Are you prepared to make a resolution to do something different in 2016?

If you are, join the conversation on social media, using the hashtag #HelpGBWorkWell. We will then look forward to talking with you in January/February and to working with you to build your commitments into creating an even better health and safety system for Great Britain and for everyone.



Company Fined and Two Directors Get Suspended Prison Sentence after 27 Year Old Killed by Telehandler

A landscaping company and its two directors were sentenced after Russell Meech, a 27 year old landscape gardener was killed when he fell under the wheels of a telehandler.

St Albans Crown Court heard how on 18 June 2013 Russell Meech was working for Wooburn Landscapes Limited of High Wycombe at a construction site at "High Trees", Leggetts Park, Potters Bar. The company was contracted to unload and plant trees on the site. This included moving trees from an arctic trailer one hundred yards to the required area of the site.

The trees were moved across the site using a telehandler and strap. This method resulted in the trees being unstable and Mr Meech walked in front of the telehandler holding the tree at the stem to stabilise it.

It was during this operation that Russell Meech tripped and fell under the wheel of the telehandler suffering fatal injuries. He died at the scene. An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) into the incident, found that the company was not following a safe system of work. The operation to move the trees had not been planned in sufficient detail to ensure that it could be carried out safely.

Wooburn Landscapes Limited, of Whitepit Lane, Flackwell Heath, High Wycombe, was fined a total of £50,000 with full costs of £9,680 after pleading guilty to an offence under Section 2 of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974.

Andrew Schofield of Gerrals Road, High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire pled guilty to an offence under section 37 of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and was given a four and a half months prison sentence, suspended for eighteen months and 250 hours of unpaid community service.

Mark Schofield of Thornaby Place, Wooburn Green, Buckinghamshire pled guilty to an offence under section 37 of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and was given a four and a half months prison sentence, suspended for eighteen months and 250 hours of unpaid community service.

Speaking after the hearing HSE inspector Gavin Bull said: "Hazards associated with workplace transport safety are well known and easily managed by careful planning, training, supervision and execution."



Corporate Manslaughter Firm Ordered to Publicise Conviction

A building firm which was fined £200,000 following the death of a 28-year-old worker who was fatally crushed when a 2.9 metre retaining wall collapsed onto him, has been ordered to take out an advert on the Construction Enquirer detailing its prosecution.

This is the first time a publicity order has resulted in an advert being taken out in the trade press. Previously notices have appeared in local papers or on a company's own website.

Linley Developments' ad will appear throughout December on the Construction Enquirer website. The site's pages are viewed around 60,000 times a day, though the advert does not appear on every page.

The firm was fined £200,000 after pleading guilty to corporate manslaughter and the company's managing director and project manager were both also given suspended prison sentences after pleading guilty to breaching CDM Regulations.

The publicity order states: "Linley Developments Ltd was convicted on 7 September 2015 of corporate manslaughter arising out of the death of Gareth Jones, a subcontracted employee, at a development in St Albans on 30 January 2013.

"Linley Developments Ltd admitted acting in a gross breach of their duty by failing to take sufficient care for his safety. Failings included failing to prepare a risk assessment for the excavation works, failing to assess and monitor the stability of the wall and failing to ensure that the wall did not become unstable as a result of the excavation work."



RoSPA Workplace Accident Prevention Guide

The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) has produced a comprehensive and downloadable resource that highlights some of the challenges people face when investigating workplace accidents.

Learning how to learn from accidents encourages employers to think about how well their organisation copes with unplanned accidents and incidents, and its ability to stop them happening again and to learn lessons.

The report, which has been produced by RoSPA's National Occupational Safety & Health Committee (NOSHC), focuses on how to respond to accidents effectively and has been designed to support accident investigation training. It covers important areas such as behavioural safety, getting clarity about objectives and thinking harder about accidents.

Karen McDonnell, RoSPA's occupational safety and health policy adviser, said: "This resource is extremely useful in helping organisations to cope with unplanned and adverse events that can cause unnecessary harm and loss. It is packed full of guidance on what to do in the hours following an accident.

"Accidents and incidents are damaging to people and organisations – but they also present important opportunities for everyone to learn lessons, which, if acted on, will not only help prevent recurrence of similar events but will also help to improve the way risks are managed generally."

To download the report, visit: www.rospace.com/occupational-safety/affiliated-groups/noshc/#learning

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

UP ON THE ROOFTOP... *IT'S SAFETY SANTA!*



Have a great a Christmas and remember even in the festive period safety comes first!!!!

From everyone at

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