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 European directives require that all staff are fully and adequately trained in the safe use of the equipment they operate.

£20,000 fine for collision

Steel fabrication company BHC Ltd (Brian Hewitt Construction) of Carnwath, South Lanarkshire, Scotland was fined £20,000 in January, after pleading guilty to breaking the Work at Height Regulations, resulting in an accident in 2008. A worker was left with multiple broken bones when the scissor lift he was working in was struck by an overhead crane which knocked the basket to the ground.



Steel erector Alexander Struthers, 36, was working from the platform drilling holes in the roof of a paint shop when an overhead crane behind him crashed into the scissor lift knocking it over. He had his back to the crane and did not hear it moving towards him.

He fell almost six metres to the ground, breaking his hip, pelvis, thigh bone, knee, ankle and nose. He was in hospital for six days and endured a nine-hour operation to set various bones. A subsequent operation has left him with an 18-inch pin in his thigh bone as well as various pins, metal plates and

screws in his hip, pelvis and ankle. He is in constant pain, still attends physiotherapy and can only walk with the aid of sticks.

Health & Safety Executive inspector Eve Maccready said: "If BHC had properly planned or supervised the work they would have recognised that the overhead crane was a hazard and stopped it being used while Mr Struthers and his colleagues were working on the roof. Duty holders have an obligation to ensure all work at height is properly planned and a proper risk assessment has taken place."

Ladder fall costs £9,300

Cambridge, UK-based Ridgeons, has been fined £5,000 with costs of £4,344.70 following an accident in 2008. Mechanical fitter, David Minor, 63, of Graham Parish Engineering was contracted to fix an overhead crane at Ridgeons timber engineering workshop in Sudbury, Suffolk. He was climbing a ladder to reach the crane when he touched a live conductor and fell five metres, landing on the concrete floor. He sustained a fractured vertebra, a broken ankle, smashed heel, and burns to his hands.

Minor had touched the main power 415v three phase power line to the overhead crane which was not marked and had not been isolated prior to work commencing.

HSE inspector Jonathan Elven said: "It is essential for companies to ensure that work undertaken on their behalf by subcontractors is properly managed and safe systems of work agreed prior to work commencing. Ridgeons has admitted that the task was handed over to Mr Minor without discussion as to the way it was to be undertaken or any precautions that may be needed prior to it being started."



Who trained him then?

Sent in from a reader in Salies de Bearn, South West France: a man using everything he has to work at a platform height or around six metres.

Wind blade company fined \$92,000 for crane/scissor fatality

The U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has cited wind turbine blade manufacturer LM Wind Power Blades Inc, with five safety violations for exposing workers to fall and crushing hazards that ultimately resulted in a fatality. An investigation began last July following the death of an employee working from a scissor lift who was crushed by a nearby crane. The citations which carry a \$92,000 fine, include one willful, three serious and one other-than-serious.

The willful citation is for failing to ensure employees were adequately protected against collision of crushing hazards from a nearby crane. OSHA defines a willful violation as one committed with intentional knowing or voluntary disregard for the law's requirements, or plain indifference to worker safety and health.

The three serious violations involve failing to use a harness while in a boom lift, climbing the guardrails of a scissor lift without fall protection and failing to safely position cranes for maintenance operations. A serious citation is issued when there is substantial probability that death or serious physical harm could result from a hazard about which the employer knew or should have known. The other-than-serious violation is for failing to provide adequate warning or "out-of-order" signs. An 'other-than-serious' violation is one that has a relationship to job safety and health but would not directly cause death or serious physical harm.

Tom Deutscher, OSHA's area office director said: "A worker's life was needlessly lost because the employer failed to identify and eliminate the hazards prior to allowing this employee to perform the work. It is critical for employers to assess conditions before letting work begin."