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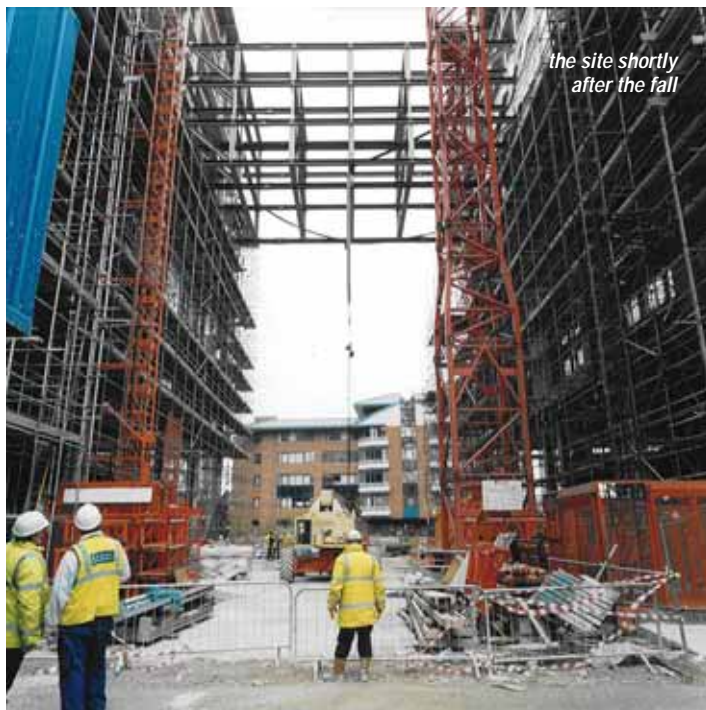
Incorrect access equipment costs £3,500

Isidor Cata, 48, trading as Doru Construction, of Edgware, Middlesex, was fined £2,000 plus costs of £1,500 for allowing contractors to work at a height of three metres with no measures to prevent them from falling.

HSE inspectors paid a routine visit to the site in Waltham Abbey and issued a Prohibition Notice preventing further work at height until adequate safeguards were in place. In a follow-up inspection later the same day, inspectors found men still working at height with no measures taken to comply with the notice and therefore prosecuted him.

Amec hit for £633,000

UK contractor Amec was fined £300,000 plus costs of £330,000 following a fatal incident in Manchester in 2004. Christopher Heaton, 25, a steel erector, was working on a new apartment complex in the city.



He was standing on scaffolding and using a set of chain blocks to move a steel beam into place above him, when bolts holding the blocks in place gave way, causing them to fall on him. His hands became entangled in the chains which dragged him over the guardrail and 25 metres to his death.

The Health and Safety Executive prosecuted both Amec, the site's principal contractor and steel-erector Shawton Engineering, after the investigation found that the wrong studs had been used to secure the chain blocks and that the work had not been properly planned or monitored. Shawton of Newton le Willows, has since gone into administration and only received a nominal fine of £1,000 with no costs.

Heaton's father, Len, said: "The loss of our son has completely devastated our lives. Nobody can imagine the impact his death has had. Chris was a good lad, with a happy go lucky outlook. He loved his job and was looking forward to a career in engineering. I used to worry about him all the time, especially when he was out at night. Ironically, I didn't worry too much when he was at work. I thought he was safe."

Neil Jamieson, HSE principal inspector for construction, added: "This was a major construction site and the work taking place there should have been properly planned and managed. If either Chris's employer - Shawton Engineering - or the principal contractor had acted differently his life could have been saved."



The new HWS training centre is opened

HWS opens all-indoor IPAF training centre

Dutch access rental company HWS Verhuur has opened a new, all-indoor IPAF training centre in Noordwijk, the Netherlands.

The company joined IPAF in 2010 and has been offering IPAF training for around 18 months and has already trained several hundred individuals. With increased demand for good quality operator training in Holland, it decided that the

investment in an all-weather practical training area would help ensure future growth and avoid disruption due to bad weather – particularly in the winter months.



Makeshift platform costs £44,000

Derbyshire manufacturing company Storetec and one of its directors - Brian Crossan - have been hit with fines totalling over £44,000 after two employees fell from a makeshift platform in 2009 and were severely injured. Leon Payne, 18, broke his back in the incident, while his un-named co-worker, 18, broke both of his heels and needed pins and a metal plate in his feet.

The teenagers were helping put scrapped trolleys into a skip using the makeshift lifting platform - designed by Crossan - fitted to a fork truck. As the platform descended it caught up and came off the forks, causing the two to fall to the ground. The investigation revealed that Crossan had not followed guidelines and standards in the design of the platform, the fork extensions did not fit properly into the platform, there were no means to secure it in place and it had an open edge.

HSE inspector Fiona Coffey said: "These two teenagers, just embarking on their working lives narrowly escaped death and have been left with life-changing physical and psychological injuries. The company should have considered if it was necessary to use a platform like this in the first place and if it was, used something that was legal and safe. This arrangement clearly was not."

Storetec was fined £22,000 plus costs of £12,134, while Crossan was fined £3,500 plus costs of £7,866.

Who trained him then?

A home owner somewhere in the UK combines his gate and a ladder to reach a window above his porch - ingenious but hardly safe.

