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Amey challenges schoolgirls to consider alternatives

A team of school girls from Staffordshire, UK has won the first Amey regional Challenge Cup, a competition organised by the UK contractor aimed at inspiring young girls aged 13 to 15, to take a look at a STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths) career and show how many different roles are available within the technology and engineering sectors encouraging them to consider alternatives to the usual career offerings.

The cup involves teams of six girls completing tasks that included designing and building a scale model of a replacement bridge following a bridge collapse, while the final required the teams to design a section of smart motorway.

Challenge Cup creator Lisa Ingram said: "We have a social responsibility to build hopes and aspirations for the communities we work in, and Amey encourages its staff to get involved in enabling young people, especially girls, to take part in the cutting edge industries we work in."



The winning team from Clayton Hall Academy

Keltbray sets mental health first aiders target

UK contractor Keltbray's occupational health division - 'KML Occupational Health' - has set itself a target to train one in every 10 staff members as mental health first aiders. The company has been working with Mental Health First Aid England to provide training for its employees so they can be effective first respondents to an emergency, until professional help can be found.

KML health and wellbeing manager Mark Newns said: "We now have 19 qualified mental health first aiders, with more to come."



£65k fine for fall risk

UK construction company Awad has been fined £37,500 plus costs of £10,000, while director Andrzej Wilk was fined £7,500 plus costs of £10,000, for failing to comply with a prohibition and improvement notice. In March 2016, Awad was found to be putting employees and others at serious risk of falls and injuries from unprotected edges. It was issued with an improvement notice for this issue and the following month another for failing to provide suitable welfare facilities at the site.

An investigation found that Awad and Wilk had made no attempt to comply with the prohibition notice, which prevented any working near the open edges where there was a risk of falls. They had also ignored the second improvement notice.

ALS Safety simulator

Riwal UK's training division ALS Safety has taken delivery of a new virtual reality aerial lift training simulator.

Developed by Serious Labs of Canada, the simulator combines scissor and boom lift modules to provide operator skills training. The simulator has 18 scissor lift training modules and 16 boom lift modules with scenarios that include flat and rough terrain. Detailed feedback is provided on the operator's performance, highlighting their strengths and weaknesses.

ALS managing director Darren Verschuren said: "The quality of the VR simulations is impressive and the operational detail, in terms of how a platform moves and behaves, is very realistic. VR will add exciting new options to the training we can offer and is already generating a lot of interest from our clients. As such, we believe VR has a strong future in working at height training."



Training taking place on the simulator

Fines and community service for fall

UK double glazing company Brewsters (Poole) has been fined £2,700, plus costs of £1,000 and a victim surcharge of £125, and principal contractor Jeff Payne has been handed a 60 hour community service order and ordered to pay costs of £1,000 with a £125 victim surcharge after an employee fell from scaffolding whilst at work.

In September 2016, Jamie Butler, who was contracted by Brewsters, was refurbishing an apartment block when he fell more than two metres from unsecured scaffold boards onto a concrete floor. He suffered a broken wrist, collarbone and head injuries, and also lower back injuries that required an operation. An investigation found the work wasn't properly planned, nor appropriately supervised or carried out in a safe manner. Payne had a duty to control how the work was carried out and to ensure that the scaffolding would be correctly erected and maintained.

Who trained him then?

Spotted by a reader in the UK, a man using an excavator arm to work on a chimney. He has been lifted on the bucket and is now leaning on the wall for extra stability while he figures his order of work.

