
H Weston & Sons Limited Fined Â£1.4 Million for Health and Safety Breaches

Description

On November 30, 2023, H Weston & Sons Limited, a renowned cider manufacturer, was fined Â£1.4 million for breaching the Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999 and the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. The case, heard at Kidderminster Magistrates' Court, highlighted significant lapses in safety protocols that led to the tragic death of an employee, Thomas Manns.

Background of the Incident

Thomas Manns, affectionately known as Tommy, was a 65-year-old farm manager at H Weston & Sons Limited. On September 28, 2020, his 65th birthday, Tommy was driving a van out of the company's site at Bounds Farm, Much Marcle, Ledbury. Tragically, the end of a recently installed security barrier speared through the van's windshield, fatally crushing him.

Details of the Case

- **Date of Incident:** September 28, 2020
- **Location:** Bounds Farm, Much Marcle, Ledbury
- **Victim:** Thomas Manns, 65 years old
- **Company:** H Weston & Sons Limited

Investigation Findings

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) conducted a thorough investigation into the incident. Key findings included:

- **Lack of Risk Assessment:** The company had installed the security barrier just a month before the incident but failed to conduct a suitable and sufficient risk assessment.
- **Inadequate Safety Measures:** There was no safe system of work in place to ensure the barrier could be secured safely when open and closed.

Court Proceedings and Verdict

During the court proceedings, H Weston & Sons Limited pleaded guilty to breaching:

- **Regulation 3 (1) of the Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999**
- **Section 2 (1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974**

The court imposed a fine of Â£1.4 million on the company and ordered them to pay Â£26,756.50 in costs.

Impact on the Family

Tommy Manns's death had a profound impact on his family. His wife, Rose Manns, expressed her ongoing shock and emotional turmoil following the accident. She shared how the incident had affected her confidence and daily life, making it difficult for her to drive or interact with people. Tommy's stepson, Oliver Hunter, also spoke about the challenges of explaining the tragedy to his young children and the lasting impact on their behaviour and emotional well-being.

Conclusion

The case of H Weston & Sons Limited serves as a stark reminder of the critical importance of rigorous health and safety protocols in the workplace. The substantial fine underscores the legal and moral responsibility companies have to ensure the safety and well-being of their employees. The tragic loss of Thomas Manns highlights the devastating consequences of neglecting these responsibilities.

CATEGORY

1. Herefordshire

POST TAG

1. Accident
2. Agriculture Sector
3. H Weston & Sons
4. Health and Safety Executive (HSE)
5. Risk Assessment
6. Thomas Manns

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