

Inspection of guards and protection devices

Technical Bulletin

Allianz Engineering Inspection Services Ltd



The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 (HSWA)

Section 2 places specific responsibilities on an employer for the Health, Safety and Welfare at work for all his employees.

The Management of Health and Safety at Work

Regulations 1999 details the requirements of an employer to assess the risks to workers and any others who may be affected by their work. The purpose of the risk assessment is to identify if any hazards are present, then assess the level of risk to a person's safety and implement any control measures required.

The Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations

1998 (PUWER) gives specific detail of an employers responsibilities and applies to all work places and work situations where the HSWA applies.

PUWER Regulation 11: Dangerous parts of machinery:

Requires employers to take effective measures to prevent access to dangerous parts of machinery or to stop their movement before any part of a person enters a danger zone. These measures may include the provision of suitable guards and/or protective devices.

Allianz Engineering Inspection Services Limited can offer an independent inspection service by a competent person to establish that any item of work equipment is:

- Suitably guarded
- That any protective device fitted is functionally tested
- That the equipment is safe to operate

For further information please contact our Engineering Standards department on 01428 726216.

Case Studies:

The details below are extracts from court cases heard during 2005 and are examples of where a company had not ensured their compliance with these requirements.

Case 1.

Company A has been fined £5,000, with costs of £4,727, by a Magistrates court after a 16-year-old trainee lost part of his right index finger in an industrial accident in July 2004. The company admitted breaching S.2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974, in that it failed to ensure the health and safety of all its employees. He was working on a metal slitting line with de and re- coilers and was trying to adjust moving parts of the machinery, the young worker trapped the tip of his index finger. Examination of the equipment found no safety devices or guards to prevent access to dangerous parts of machinery. He now no longer has part of his finger just below the first joint.

Comment by HSE Inspector:

'This case highlights the need for safety devices or guards to be in place to prevent access to dangerous parts of machinery and adequate training, supervision, information and instruction be provided'.

Case 2.

Company B was fined £15,000 with costs of £6,653 after pleading guilty to breaching S.3(1) HSWA when a temporary worker severed part of his thumb.

Comment by HSE Inspector:

'After the company had previously been warned by the HSE about the unsafe practice of working on moving machinery with guards open it failed to ensure the practice was stopped'.