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HISTORIC CASE FILE - CLAPHAM RAIL CRASH[REMEMBERING THE CLAPHAM JUNCTION RAIL CRASH 30 YEARS ON](#)

On the morning of 12 December 1988, a crowded passenger train crashed into the rear of another train that had stopped at a signal just south of Clapham Junction railway station in London, and subsequently sideswiped an empty train travelling in the opposite direction. A total of 35 people were killed in the collision, while 484 were injured.

The collision was the result of a signal failure caused by a wiring fault. New wiring had been installed, but the old wiring had been left in place and not adequately secured. An independent inquiry chaired by Anthony Hidden, QC found that the signalling technician responsible had not been told that his working practices were wrong, and his work had not been inspected by an independent person. He had also performed the work during his 13th consecutive seven-day workweek. Hidden was critical of the health and safety culture within British Rail at the time, and his recommendations included ensuring that work was independently inspected and that a senior project manager be made responsible for all aspects of any major, safety-critical project such as re-signalling work.

British Rail was fined £250,000 for violations of health and safety law in connection with the accident.

HEALTH & SAFETY FINES

GAS LEAK FIRE

WORKERS INJURED BY GAS LEAK FIRE

A major UK gas distribution company and a Kent based construction company have been fined after a gas main ignited whilst it was being repaired, injuring two workers.

Folkestone Magistrates Court heard how on 27 May 2016, Southern Gas Network Plc (SGN) employees were called to a gas escape at Thanet Way in Whitstable, Kent. The gas escape had been caused by employees of Cliffe Contractors Ltd damaging a medium pressure polyethylene gas main during construction work. During the repair by Southern Gas Networks the gas ignited causing the injuries to two SGN employees. One worker suffered severe burns while the other sustained cuts and bruises.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found Cliffe Contractors Ltd had not followed safe digging techniques when excavating around the pipeline resulting in the gas main being damaged by a mechanical excavator. This led to a significant amount of gas being released. Subsequently, SGN did not follow their own procedures or recognised safe systems of work when repairing the main.

Southern Gas Networks Plc of Station Approach in Horley who had pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 at an earlier hearing was fined £1.2million and ordered to pay costs of £18,975.43.

Cliffe Contractors Ltd of Anthony's Way in Rochester who had pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2(1) and 3(1) of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 at an earlier hearing was fined £60,000 and ordered to pay costs of £12,689.13.

Speaking after the hearing HSE Principal Specialist Inspector Martin Wayland said "This incident, in which a worker could have easily been killed, could have been avoided if safe excavation by Cliffe Contractors had been carried out and safe mains repair policies had been followed by SGN. Both companies were aware of the precautions that were required to be taken.

Companies should be aware that HSE will not hesitate to take appropriate enforcement action against those that fall below the required standards"



WORKING AT HEIGHT

LONDON CONSTRUCTION COMPANY FINED FOR HEALTH AND SAFETY FAILINGS

A construction company has been fined after failing to manage health and safety on-site.

Chelmsford Magistrates' Court heard how, on 19 October 2017, MG Corporation Ltd received three prohibition notices after serious breaches of legislation were found on-site during construction work carried out at Barn Hall, Station Road in Wickford. The company was found in contravention of Work at Height Regulations 2005 and The Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015.

A follow-up inspection on 13 November 2017 found further working at height breaches. Another prohibition notice was served, although some of the work at height issues on site demonstrated a breach of the original notice. An additional inspection carried out on 5 January 2018 found further work at height breaches.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found MG Corporation Ltd had not taken steps to comply with the original prohibition notice and had failed to plan, manage and monitor construction work under their control.

MG Corporation Ltd of Sydney Road, London was found guilty of breaching Regulation 15(2) of The Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 and 33(1)(g) of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. The company has been fined £250,000 and ordered to pay costs of £4,790.40.

After the hearing, HSE inspector David King said: "Companies should be aware that HSE will not hesitate to take appropriate enforcement action against those that fall below the required standards, and especially when enforcement notices are breached."



LONE WORKING RISKS HIGHLIGHTED

THE POLICE HAVE REOPENED THE TRAGIC SUZY LAMPLUGH CASE RAISING AWARENESS OF THE DANGERS OF LONE WORKING

Suzy Lamplugh was a 25-year-old estate agent who went missing when attending a scheduled house viewing on her own in 1986. Suzy was “presumed dead” in 1994 although her body has never been found. Several months after her disappearance her parents set up the “Suzy Lamplugh Trust” which began campaigning for personal safety whilst lone working.

Technology has drastically improved since the 1980s with lone worker devices and mobile phones now commonplace. However, whilst such equipment does provide suitable means of tracking Lone Workers and for the lone worker to raise an alarm, the risks associated with working alone remain. Lone working is a daily occurrence for nearly six million people in the UK. The national crime survey has estimated that 150 lone workers are attacked every day and are also at risk from sudden illness, injury and road traffic accidents.

It is vitally important that lone workers do not become complacent about their personal safety and wellbeing and receive adequate training and support from their employer to be as safe as possible whilst at work. However, it is not just the risk of physical injury that needs to be considered but also the mental wellbeing of lone and mobile workers. The latest HSE statistics show that anxiety and depression caused by or through work is increasing. Therefore, it is essential that support networks are in place and that employers are fully committed to ensuring their employees who are lone workers are receiving human interaction and the support they need.

In 2010, Mental Health Matters was fined £50,000 for a breach of Section 2(1) of the Health & Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, for failing to do all that was reasonably practicable to ensure the safety of a lone worker. Ashley Ewing was killed by a service user who had a history of violence and was known to be unwell. As a lone worker, Ashley visited the service user at home, but the charity had failed to carry out a suitable risk assessment for the visit.



PECOLIFT SAFER THAN LADDERS

Working at height, and especially with ladders, has always been a concern. We all recognise the potential hazards of using ladders such as stability issues, overloading or overreaching and slips. The Pecolift offers an alternative for working at height safely and is easy to use, easy to maneuver, more efficient and operated without any power needed.

All a worker needs to do is to push the Pecolift into position and elevate the platform to the desired height. Thanks to a patented lifting technology, the Pecolift can be elevated with minimal effort. In line with local regulations you always need to maintain three points of contact while working on a ladder. The Pecolift allows you to do more, as it is equipped with a fully guarded platform and an anti-slip platform floor. With both hands free, workers have a 360-degree free range of working while being comfortable and productive, as well as fatigue reducing significantly.

The Pecolift has been introduced to various manufacturing companies by health and safety officers across Europe who are looking to reduce their use of ladders and improve safety and efficiency. Think ahead about your workforce safety and encourage your team to choose the safe side.

HACKITT REVIEW IMPLEMENTED

THE GOVERNMENT WILL IMPLEMENT ALL OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS FROM DAME JUDITH HACKITT'S REVIEW OF BUILDING REGULATIONS AND FIRE SAFETY FOLLOWING THE GRENFELL DISASTER

Housing and Communities secretary James Brokenshire has pledged to introduce a tougher and more effective regulatory framework to improve building safety standards across the country. He said there would be no hiding place for those who break safety rules.

The government has established a Joint Regulators' Group to trial elements of a new regulatory system ahead of any new legislation.

The group will link together existing regulatory bodies – Local Authority Building Control, The National Fire Chiefs Council, the Health & Safety Executive and Local Government Association – to work with developers, building owners and tenants, to develop and test fresh approaches.

Further details about planned changes to regulatory systems will be announced in the Spring.

He also confirmed the Government's earlier commitment to a full-scale review of the guidelines, known as 'Approved Document B' and issued a call for evidence. Brokenshire said: "There is nothing more important than being safe in your own home and I am determined to improve building safety. "My plan for stronger, tougher rules will make sure there is no hiding place for those who flout building safety rules. By making people responsible and more accountable for safety, we will create a more rigorous system so residents will always have peace of mind that they are safe in their own homes."

He added: "This implementation plan sets out how we will be working with industry to help them lead the required culture change and prioritise public safety. In doing so, we will champion those who are doing the right thing, challenge those who have further to go – including by supporting local authorities to take enforcement action – and consider whether legislation is needed to assure the competence of those carrying out building work."

STRUCTURAL STABILITY DURING ALTERATION, DEMOLITION AND DISMANTLING WORKS

THE LAW SAYS THAT ALL ALTERATION, DEMOLITION AND DISMANTLING WORK SHOULD BE CAREFULLY PLANNED AND CARRIED OUT BY COMPETENT PERSONS TO AVOID UNPLANNED STRUCTURAL COLLAPSE.

The law requires commercial clients to provide contractors with relevant information about a building's structure, including stability and structural form and any significant design assumptions, suggested work methods and sequences. The contractor must then use that information to plan and carry out the work safely.

Key requirements are:

Survey and assessment

A competent person should do a thorough structural survey and assessment before any potentially load-bearing parts of a structure are altered. This information should be used to determine the steps required to prevent any collapse.

The structural survey should consider:

- The age of the structure;
- Previous use;
- Type of construction;
- Any nearby buildings or structures.

Preventing structural collapse

A competent person should decide the method and design of temporary supports. Temporary support provided must be designed, installed and maintained to withstand foreseeable loads and structures should never be overloaded.

Arrangements for demolition

Demolition or dismantling arrangements should be written down before the work begins. This safe system of work may be in the form of a safety method statement identifying the sequence required to prevent accidental collapse of the structure.

In addition to the design and method of temporary supports a safe system of work may include:

- Establishing exclusion zones and hard-hat areas, clearly marked and with barriers or hoardings;
- covered walkways;
- using high-reach machines;
- reinforcing machine cabs so that drivers are not injured; and
- training and supervising site workers.

Consulting building control departments

You should consult the building control department of the local authority in the area where a building is located before any structural alterations are made to a building. The local authority is the enforcing body for building regulations.

What you need to know

Workers and passers-by can be injured by premature and uncontrolled collapse of structures, and by flying debris.



CHRISTMAS PARTY SHENANIGANS

AGA HEADED TO WINDSOR TO CELEBRATE ANOTHER FANTASTIC YEAR

After another successful year for Andrew Goddard Associates Ltd we celebrated in style with a night out at Windsor Racecourse.

We also participated in Save the Children Christmas Jumper Day raising vital funds for children around the world.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all our Clients for their support this year. We very much look forward to working together in 2019.

FREE CDM ADVICE

CONTINUED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR ALL

Do you need help understanding the CDM Regulations 2015? Not sure if you are complying with your duties correctly?

We offer a free CPD consultation to keep you up to date. One of our experienced CDM Consultants will attend your offices or a location of your choosing and provide up to the minute, competent advice. We cover everything from Duty Holders to Design Risk Management and welcome any questions or scenarios you need help with.

Please get in touch if this would be of interest to you.



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