Recycling Company fined £200,000 for Skid-Steer Loader Fatality

WHAT HAPPENED

The Health & Safety Executive (HSE) prosecuted the firm after Mark Bate, of Tipton, West Midlands, was killed instantly when the arm of a JCB skid steer loader crushed his head on 12 June 2008.

Wolverhampton Crown Court heard that Mr Bate had been driving the vehicle at Sita's premises on the Coneygre Industrial Estate for three months without being properly trained.

On the day of the incident, he had been working on his own to load scrap paper onto a conveyor. After finishing the job, he stopped the loader and raised the safety bar from across his lap to isolate the machine, before leaning out of the front of the vehicle.

However, the machine failed to isolate, the loader's arm dropped and crushed his head against the machine, killing him immediately.

LEARNING POINTS / ACTIONS TAKEN

HSE's investigation found that Mr Bate had not been formally trained, assessed or supervised in

the use of the vehicle. A self-employed maintenance engineer had also used it over several months with no training.

The court also heard that the loader had not been maintained in the eight months before the incident. It should have been serviced at least twice during this time.

HSE inspector David Evans said after the hearing: "Mark Bate was a young man who should have had a long life ahead of him. Instead, he was killed in an entirely avoidable tragedy.

"Despite knowing his lack of experience, Sita left him unsupervised to operate the loader. Furthermore, the vehicle was dangerous because it had not been properly maintained. The company's risk assessment should have identified these issues but did not cover the use of this machine.

"Transport at work is one of the biggest causes of deaths in the workplace, often through insufficient training or poorly maintained vehicles. There is no excuse for such basic failings, especially as free advice is available from HSE."

Sita UK Ltd, of Grenfell Road, Maidenhead, Berkshire, pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2(1)

Berkshire, pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2(1) and Section 3(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974. The company was fined £200,000 and ordered to pay £77,402 costs. It was also ordered to reimburse Mr Bate's mother £4,450 in funeral expenses.

LOCATION:	**MOBILE PLANT**	**ALERT STATUS:**	**Normal**
ACTIVITY:	**MAINTENANCE & HOUSEKEEPING**	**DATE ISSUED:**	**27/06/2012**
SUB ACTIVITY:	**N/A**	**INCIDENT No:**	**00333**