

Llanelli company fined £400,000 after employee dies at work

Date:

18 March 2011

A Llanelli-based automotive manufacturer has been fined £400,000 after an employee died on the day he was to take voluntary redundancy.



Darren Small

Father-of-two, Darren Small, 35, from Loughor was employed by Calsonic Kansei UK Limited, of Llethri Road in the town when he was struck by a forklift truck on 17 March 2008.

A Health and Safety Executive (HSE) investigation found Mr Small had gone onto the factory floor to issue instruction to a forklift truck operator. As Mr Small finished speaking the forklift truck reversed into him, knocking him to the ground. He sustained fatal head injuries, and died in Morriston Hospital three days later.

Calsonic Kansei UK Limited, pleaded guilty to a charges under Section 2(1) and Section 3(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974, and at Swansea Crown Court, the company were fined £400,000 and ordered to pay £44,790.14 costs.

HSE inspector Stephen Jones said:

"It's fairly routine for forklift trucks to operate within the same area as pedestrians in this industry. However, working procedures and systems need to be in place to prevent vehicles colliding with people.

"This tragic incident could have been avoided had all contractors and employees been aware of the risks, and had the safety procedures been taken to avoid such risks."

Mr Small's family issued the following statement:

"Darren was such a fabulous, lovely and kind-hearted person and a really devoted father. To die on the day he was due to have taken voluntary redundancy is even more tragic.

"Time does not heal. We all miss him so very much and his children are still finding it extremely hard to cope with losing their loving father.

"We hope employers hearing this case will have more regard for health and safety in future as no other family should go through what we have had to endure - losing such a wonderful person from our lives."