



PRESS RELEASE

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BEGINS

Make sure all your staff understand your Health & Safety rules

Local solicitor Robert Hill, partner of Wycombe law firm Reynolds Parry Jones is warning local employers of the need to ensure all their employees are aware of their health and safety systems.

He cited a recent case where a company had been fined £35,000 following an accident involving one of their employees. The man in question lost a leg after being struck by a loading shovel after entering an area of the employer's premises where he was not authorised to be. He claimed that, because of the language barrier (he was an immigrant) he had not understood the company's health and safety systems.

"It is not sufficient to publish health and safety rules and then assume that all employees have read and understood them" said Mr Hill. "Workers with limited command of English may, following an accident, claim they did not understand the systems and try to lay the blame on the employer."

"To minimise the chances of this happening all staff should be asked to sign a formal document stating they have been fully briefed on the safety rules and that they fully understand them" he continued. "If necessary you may need to engage the services of a translator – perhaps a fellow worker who is bilingual."

"Additional, and perhaps better options, could include physical barriers (even something as simple as a rope and some cones) or pictorial 'No Entry' signs to prevent people walking into potentially dangerous areas" Mr Hill concluded.

ENDS

Note for editors

Robert Hill is an employment law specialist and runs the Reynolds Parry Jones Employment Club, open to all local employers, which meets quarterly to provide updates on employment law. Anyone interested in joining is welcome to contact him on 01494 525941.