

Huge fines for contractors after fatal platform failure

Rydon Construction and Oliver Connell & Son have been fined hundreds of thousands of pounds after a worker fell to his death when a temporary platform collapsed.

Southwark Crown Court heard how, on 24th July 2015, Vasile Nichitut was working on the fifth floor of the construction site at the Green Man Lane Estate in Ealing, when he walked onto a temporary platform covering a vertical shaft. The platform collapsed beneath him and he fell approximately 14 metres. He died as a result of his injuries.

An investigation by the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) found that Oliver Connell & Son had failed to ensure that work at height was properly planned, appropriately supervised and carried out in a safe and practicable manner. Specifically, there was no temporary works design for the platform and the company's system for installing and inspecting it was inadequate.

Rydon Construction failed to plan, manage and monitor the work involving the temporary platform to ensure that, construction work is carried out without risks to health or safety. They failed to identify the lack of design drawings and carry out suitable checks on the platform.

Oliver Connell & Son Ltd pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 4(1) of the Work at Height Regulations 2005. It was fined £360,000 and ordered to pay costs of £4,834.08.

Rydon Construction Ltd pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 13(1) of the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015. It was fined £500,000 and ordered to pay costs of £40,740.88.

HSE inspector Owen Rowley said after the hearing: *"The consequences of temporary works failing can be dire. All contractors involved must ensure that an effective system for managing the temporary works on site is established and adhered to. Crucially, all temporary works require a design to ensure that they are suitable for purpose.*

"In this case the failure to manage the risks associated with temporary works and work at height led to the entirely preventable death of Mr Nichitut."

The redevelopment of the Green Man Lane Estate is a nine-year project, involving substantial demolition and reconstruction, ultimately completing in 2022. Rydon has a £155m contract with Ealing Borough Council.



MSP business services
management | safety | personnel 