



Occupational Health & Safety Authority

Media Release

Lm 1, 000 Fine for Workplace Accident

05.03.05

A 30-year old man from Rabat was fined Lm 1,000 by the Criminal Court of Malta in a case pertaining to an accident at the workplace which took place on 7 August 2003 when an 18 year old fell off a scaffold, sustained severe injuries and was in danger of dying.

The man, who assembled the scaffold himself, did so in a way that the structure was neither safe nor stable. Indeed, the scaffold did not have a complete and continuous base and was neither surrounded by toe-boards of at least 6 inches nor had any guard-rails to protect from possible falls. The planks which were in place were not tied to the metal structure while the scaffold itself was not secured to the façade where the work was being carried out.

He was found guilty of employing a person who had no experience in the field without providing him with the necessary training and adequate supervision. Moreover, he failed to provide the youth with the necessary personal protective equipment such as a safety harness, safety helmet and safety shoes.

To this end, he contravened the Occupational Health and Safety Act by failing to safeguard the health and safety of all persons who could be affected by the work being carried out because he did not take the necessary steps to prevent physical damages, accidents or fatalities. He also failed to adopt all the required measures to reduce risks as reasonably practicable.

Furthermore, he contravened the regulations pertaining to the minimum health and safety requirements at the workplace by failing to take measures (as reasonably practicable) to ensure that a worker is protected against slips, trips or falls from a height during the course of his work.

To this end, the employer was found guilty of all charges brought against him and was fined Lm 1,000.

The Court hearing was presided over by Magistrate A.J. Vella. The prosecution was led by Mr David Saliba on behalf of the Occupational Health and Safety Authority.