



## About us

### “Don’t repeat your mistakes...”

13 December 2017

Two similar accidents involving the same plant at AFFCO’s Rangiora meat processing plant two years apart are a prime example of a company not learning from its mistakes.

Today in the Tauranga District Court, AFFCO New Zealand Limited was sentenced over an incident in which a worker was caught by a spreader hook and dragged along the mutton chain in January 2016 – an incident that WorkSafe’s Acting Deputy General Manager Investigations and Specialist Services Simon Humphries describes as “concerningly similar” to one two years earlier when a worker was impaled through the head by a spreader hook.

“After the first incident, the company failed to identify as a risk the particular piece of equipment that injured the worker in the second incident - a point particularly noted by Judge Mabey QC when he convicted the company earlier this year on the 2016 incident,” Mr Humphries said.

“The Judge said for the company to rely on the fact that the equipment concerned had not caused previous incidents and it was not considered a hazard was to ‘substitute their subjective views for the objective test which must be applied’,” he said.

“In this case, the victim’s injuries were not life-threatening, but that is not the point. The company knew the mutton chain had significant risks when it was operating, and appropriate risk identification and the implementation of controls would have saved him from those injuries.

“A man was unnecessarily injured because of AFFCO’s failures,” Mr Humphries said.

“Learning from failings is critical – AFFCO must now focus hard on identifying and controlling risks in all its operations.”

#### Notes:

- › The final fine imposed was \$70,400.
- › The court ordered reparation of \$10,000 to the victim.
- › AFFCO was charged under sections 6 and 13(b) of the Health and Safety in Employment Act 1992:
  - › 6: failing to take all practicable steps to ensure the safety of its employee while at work was not exposed to hazards arising out of work from the mutton chain at the Rangiora plant.
  - › 13(b): failed to take all practicable steps to ensure that its employee was adequately training in the safe use of plant and objects the employee was required to use or handle.

## Media contact details

For more information you can contact our Media Team [using our media request form](#) [/about-us/contact-us/media-enquiries/]. Alternatively, you can:

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