



Media Release - SafeWork SA

Tuesday 17 November 2009

FINES OVER DANGEROUS WORK PRACTICES

Two companies have been fined around \$30,000 each by an industrial magistrate over failures in their safety systems that resulted in serious injuries to workers.

Forbes (Australia) Pty Ltd was convicted and fined \$30,000 yesterday by Industrial Magistrate, Michael Ardlie, after the company pleaded guilty to failing to provide a safe working environment.

SafeWork SA prosecuted after investigating an incident in June 2007, at the company's West Croydon premises, where it manufactures pressure equipment products, such as boilers and air compressor units.

Three workers were painting the inside of a large pressure vessel: a task that involved pouring paint into the vessel and rotating it to ensure the inner surface was covered. This caused a build up of flammable vapours, which were released when a flange was later opened.

The fumes were ignited when one of the workers then lit a cigarette lighter. Two workers were injured; one suffering severe burns to 25 per cent of his body.

The magistrate noted the failure of the employer to have appropriate barriers and signage in place, or to warn, instruct or train employees about the dangers of working with hazardous substances.

In a separate matter, **Spectrum Transport Systems Pty Ltd**, was convicted and fined \$29,750 by Magistrate Ardlie yesterday, over an incident in January 2005 at the Dublin waste disposal facility, north of Adelaide, in which a truck driver suffered serious injuries.

The company pleaded guilty to breaching the *Occupational Health Safety and Welfare Act 1986*, in that it failed to provide information, instruction, training and supervision as was reasonably necessary.

The court heard that the man was standing inside a trailer to sweep out fallen waste during an unloading process, when he was struck by a bale of compressed waste weighing several hundred kilos, which had fallen from the stacked load still within the trailer.

He suffered fractures to his pelvis, knee and lower back, and Magistrate Ardlie said the employer should not have allowed its driver to be in the trailer whilst the bales were being unloaded.

In April, the joint operators of the facility, **Collex Pty Ltd** and **Acquista Investments Pty Ltd** were fined \$40,000 and \$37,500 respectively over the same incident.