

UK HSE: Worker loses fingers in crush injury during lifting operations

Safety Flash Published on 20 October 2017 Generated on 18 February 2026 IMCA SF 26/17

The UK HSE reports that a company has been sentenced after a worker lost his middle two fingers at work

What happened?

The incident occurred whilst the man was trying to repair a main entrance gate. A guide roller on the underside of the gate had collapsed and two employees were tasked by their line manager to make the repair.

What went wrong? What were the causes?

The two workers attached a four-leg lifting chain to a forklift truck to lift the gate, which weighed in excess of 400 kg. However, the chains were too long, so they were adjusted using a shortening hook.

One of the men used the forklift to lift the gate approximately 45 cm above the ground so that his colleague could access the guide roller on the underside. As he reached under to do so, the chains slipped and the gate fell onto his hand. He lost the ring finger and his middle finger up to the first knuckle on his right hand.

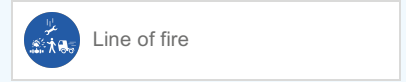
What lessons were learnt? What actions were taken?

The Health & Safety Executive inspector commented that this kind of injury was easily prevented:

"The risks should have been identified. Those in control of work have a responsibility to devise safe methods of working and to provide the necessary information, instruction and training to their workers in those safe methods along with effective supervision and monitoring."

Members may wish to watch IMCA's short video [Be prepared to work safely – watch your hands](#)

IOGP Life Saving Rules:



All information is anonymised or sanitised, as appropriate, and warnings for graphic content included where possible.

IMCA makes every effort to ensure both the accuracy and reliability of the information shared, but is not be liable for any guidance and/or recommendation and/or statement herein contained.

The information contained in this document does not fulfil or replace any individual's or Member's legal, regulatory or other duties or obligations in respect of their operations. Individuals and Members remain solely responsible for the safe, lawful and proper conduct of their operations.

Share your safety incidents with [IMCA online](#). Sign-up to receive Safety Flashes [straight to your email](#).