

Defective forklift truck causes death

A 34 year-old forklift truck caused the death of the 61 year old manager and co-director of Chard Truck Services, three months after being crushed by the “prehistoric” forklift.

The accident occurred when a vehicle toppled over after a wheel went into an open gully.

When tested by the HSE, the following defects were found:

- The handbrake could not be locked in position
- The foot brake was not working properly
- The reverse pedal did not work properly
- There was no seat belt

Firefighters had to cut the roll cage and steering column to free the driver. He was taken to Musgrove Park Hospital, Taunton where he suffered a cardiac arrest the next day and then never regained consciousness. He died from pneumonia with brain infarction and hypoxia due to the crush injury.

In returning a verdict of accidental death with a narrative the jury added that: “significant factors” were the defective vehicle and poor health and safety practices. Specific contributors included those listed above and the lack of a general risk assessment.

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