SAFETY ALERT

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Die Cutting Machine - Fatal Accident at Terry Smith Group

It has been reported that on April 17 an employee of Terry Smith Group, a printing company, died of multiple injuries, after an accident involving a die cutting machine.

The exact circumstances into the fatality are still under investigation by the HSE, however the HSE does appreciate that other companies who have similar machinery may be concerned to hear about the fatality, and may wish to review safety arrangements for their own machines. To assist in this process, they have put together some bullet points that companies might like to consider when undertaking a review/risk assessment on their own hand fed platen machines:

1 Hand Fed Platens (New Machines)

For new machines purchased after May 2005, they should comply with the requirements in the attached document: European Standard EN 10-10 Part 5 (section 5.5).

The standard is not yet available as a British Standard but is in the process of becoming one. The standards cover both the physical (mechanical) standards and the electrical/magnetic/pneumatic control system standards required.

(See attached file: 1010-5 ratified text May 2005 64_e_stf.pdf)

2 Hand Fed Platens (General)

2.1 Physical (Mechanical) Safeguards

A summary of the mechanical safeguards required for hand fed platens is covered on page 126 of 'The Printers Guide To Health and Safety 2nd Edition 2002'. This includes;

- ✓ A 'U' shaped trip guard which closely surrounds the platen to within 12mm on 3 sides;
- ✓ A 'trip bar' or 'pressure sensitive edge' on the front edge of the moving platen;
- ✓ Additional side guarding in the form of a 1m wide 'pressure-sensitive mats' extending 250mm beyond the back edge of the fixed platen.

Alternatively, 'fixed or interlocked side tables' may be used.

2.2 Maintenance of Safeguards

It is essential that all the physical (mechanical) safeguards are properly maintained so that they work as intended. The safeguards on all hand fed platens need to be checked and tested on a daily or a shift basis.

2.3 Safe Systems of Work and Operator Training

Even with all the physical safeguards in place, and working correctly, these machines can still pose a significant risk if the operators/users of these machines are not properly trained in a suitable and sufficient safe system(s) of work. The Machinery Supplier's operational manual may provide useful guidance and advice on how the machine should be used and operated safely.

The safe system(s) of work should cover both:

i) Normal operations, and;

ii) Other operations [For example where an operator/user might need to climb onto the platen (or reach/stretch into the platen), to set up or make adjustments).

2.4 Risk Assessments

As part of the drive to ensure that these machines are used as safely as possible, we would advise all companies with Hand Fed Platens to review their risk assessments - and as part of that process ensure that they have considered/included the issues raised above.