

Construction company fined after worker injured in fall

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A Sydney construction company has been fined \$135,000 after a 49-year-old worker was injured in February 2015.

Karimbla Constructions Services (NSW) Pty Ltd was fined following an incident in which the man suffered head, spinal and chest injuries after falling three metres down a set of stairs at a construction site on Kent Road, Mascot.

SafeWork NSW charged Karimbla with a breach of section 32 of the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (NSW) in that it failed to comply with section 19(1) of the Act by failing to ensure the stairway was adequately guarded.

The incident occurred while the worker was walking down the stairs on his way to the staff room to collect his personal belongings at the end of the working day. He lost his footing on the stairs and fell under a temporary timber hand rail to a concrete floor three metres below.

SafeWork NSW's investigation identified that the stairway had no intermediate rail or protective meshing between the top rail and the surface of the stairway, and that the edge protection failed to meet Australian Standards.

Karimbla was found guilty in the NSW District Court and fined \$135,000.

Executive Director of SafeWork NSW, Peter Dunphy, welcomed the decision, particularly given the injury, loss and emotional harm suffered by the worker.

"The construction industry is one of the state's highest risk industries," Mr Dunphy said.

"Major incidents have the potential to cause not only serious injury but death.

"This industry has more than double the workers compensation claims for permanent disability than any other industry, and serious injuries and fatalities often result from a lack of planning or poor monitoring of work health and safety.

"Every worker has the right to a safe and healthy workplace and regardless of your industry, occupation or background, workplace safety is everyone's responsibility."

The SafeWork NSW investigation also led to a sub-contractor being charged. Proceedings against the sub-contractor are currently before the court and yet to be concluded.

For further information on construction safety, visit www.safework.nsw.gov.au or call 13 10 50.

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