

### What happened

A colleague employed by a construction partner was carrying out (horizontal) cutting operations in a squatting position, using a power cutter. As he got up he tripped whereby one of his hands shot off the power cutter's handle causing the power cutter to drop down. The rotating saw blade ended up behind the steel toe of his safety shoe causing the tendon in his foot to become damaged.

The colleague was operated in the hospital a few days later and it is expected that there will be no permanent damage to the tendon in his foot.

### Facts

- The colleague was experienced with this type of activity.
- The colleague assumed a different work posture with a rotating saw blade.
- The colleague tripped as he got up whereby one of his hands shot off the power cutter's handle causing the power cutter to drop down.
- The saw blade ended up behind the steel toe of his safety shoe causing the tendon in his left foot to become damaged.
- Working with the power cutter had not been recorded in the Project RIE.
- Working with the power cutter also was not assessed by means of a TRA.
- The colleague did not receive a 'working safely with a power cutter' instruction.
- The power cutter had not been (demonstrably) certified.
- The colleague had surgery with the expectation that there will be no permanent damage to the tendon in his foot.

### Points of attention

- Always switch off machines when changing your work posture or when you have finished your work.
- The use of a power cutter and other hazardous equipment – no matter how experienced you may be – requires your full concentration.
- Ensure that high-risk activities are included in the work plan, the risk identification and assessment (RIE), or in a TRA.
- Ensure that employees carrying out work with hazardous machines always receive a work instruction.
- If hazardous machines are used: work in accordance with the manufacturer's user manual/instructions.
- Check to ensure you are using the correct PPE and that it is suitable for the activities you are carrying out.
- Work with demonstrably certified equipment.



Figure 1: Power cutter and work posture



Figure 2: Employee trips as he gets up, whereby one of his hands shoots off the power cutter's handle causing the power cutter to drop down

### Live Saving Rules

- I have the right instructions and information available.
- I do not use non-certified, faulty or defective equipment.
- I wear the prescribed personal protective equipment.

