



## **NEWS RELEASE**

### **HSE Issues Warning To Those Hiring Out Inflatable Leisure Devices (Bouncy Castles etc)**

The Health and Safety Executive have issued the following statement after the successful prosecution of a bouncy castle operator.

"The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is warning people who hire out inflatable leisure devices that they must ensure all operators are fully trained and that the equipment is properly anchored to the ground at all times.

This follows the successful prosecution of a Shrewsbury operator, Robert Andrew Phinn, who was today (26 August) given a 12 month conditional discharge and ordered to pay £500 costs by Oswestry Magistrates' Court.

Mr Phinn from Albert Square in Harlescote pleaded guilty to breaching section 3(2) of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974. The court heard how the former partner in the inflatable equipment hire firm Fun-4-All had hired out an inflatable bungee run to the Connexions and Youth Services division of Shropshire County Council for the West Midlands Show in Shrewsbury last year.

On the 22nd of June last year, the bungee run lifted from the ground in windy conditions and moved about 15 feet, knocking into several bystanders, some of whom may have suffered injuries as a result.

HSE investigating inspector Hilary Lidbury said:

**"Employers and those who are self-employed have a responsibility to ensure the safety of people who are not working for them.**

**"Robert Phinn failed to warn the Connexions and Youth Services team, whom he had trained, that the inflatable should not be operated in windy conditions.**

**"He also failed to provide sufficient anchorage or ballast to keep the inflatable anchored to the ground.**

**"Inflatable play equipment which is not properly anchored is liable to lift from the ground even in relatively light winds, potentially endangering members of the public in its vicinity as well as youngsters playing on it.**

**"While Robert Phinn had no intention of harming anyone, his ignorance of the appropriate standards put people's lives at risk on what should have been a happy family occasion."**



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Note:

Section 3(2) of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 states: "It shall be the duty of every self-employed person to conduct his undertaking in such a way as to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that he and other persons (not being his employees) who may be affected thereby are not thereby exposed to risks to their health or safety".

All bouncy castle hire companies need to ensure that they provide full operating instructions on any equipment hired out.

In this particular case the unit was being used on a tarmac surface with sand bags. Each anchor point had a 25 kg sand bag attached but it was determined using BS EN 14960:2006 that the actual weight required at each anchor point should have been 160 kgs per anchor.

This is the second case where BS EN 14960:2006 has been used to back up a successful prosecution.

Source: INPA / Health & Safety Executive

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