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## **Wall collapse sentence a reminder to keep public safe**

The decision today by the County Court to convict and fine a Melbourne sign writing company \$250,000 over its role in the collapse of a wall in Swanston St in 2013 that killed three pedestrians reflects the serious nature of the charge.

Aussie Signs Pty Ltd pleaded guilty to one charge of breaching Section 23 of the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 in that it failed to ensure, as far as was reasonably practicable, people other than its employees were not exposed to risks to their health and safety as a result of its work.

The company pleaded guilty on the basis of its involvement in the attachment of the timber hoarding to the wall which increased the risk of the wall collapsing.

Aussie Signs is the second company to be convicted over the incident. In November, 2014, Grocon (Victoria Street) was convicted and fined \$250,000 in the Melbourne Magistrates' Court after pleading guilty to one charge of breaching Section 26 of the OHS Act 2004, in that it failed to ensure that a workplace it managed or controlled was, so far as was reasonably practicable, safe and without risks to health.

WorkSafe's Executive Director of Health and Safety, Marnie Williams, said today's outcome was a warning to all employers that they had clear responsibilities to the public as well as their employees.

"Today's judgment is a reminder to anyone who manages or controls a workplace that they are responsible not just for the health and safety of employees and others at the work site, but also anyone else who may be affected by their conduct," Ms Williams said.

"Every employer has to assume their responsibility for safety at a workplace. As we now know, a disregard for safety can lead to devastating and far-reaching consequences."

WorkSafe will continue to assist the Coroner in her inquiry into the Swanston St wall collapse.