

# Bakery chain Laurent fined \$60,000 after employee's arm was severed in unguarded machine

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**Nick Toscano**

Popular bakery chain Laurent has been convicted and fined \$60,000 after an employee's arm was cut off in a grisly workplace accident.

The employee's arm was trapped for 40 minutes in an unguarded dough-processing machine while working at the French-style bakery in Melbourne's south-east in December 2013.

His arm was severed and could not be reattached.

WorkSafe Victoria alleged the Braeside bakery deliberately decided to leave the guarding off the dough-processing machine at the time of the injury because repairs had recently been conducted and the machine was due for further maintenance the next morning.

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The worker's arm was caught and amputated that night as he was attempting to clean the conveyor belt's rollers when a wet dough mixture began clogging the machine.

Laurent Boulangerie Pty Ltd pleaded guilty in Moorabin Magistrates Court on Thursday to the criminal charge of failing to provide a safe working environment and maintain a safe plant. It was ordered to pay more than \$4470 in costs.

WorkSafe health and safety executive director Len Neist said poorly guarded machines were a major source of serious workplace injuries.

He said the decision to leave the guarding off the processing machine was "disastrous".

"Convenience was given a higher priority than employee safety and the repercussions of that decision will affect the injured worker, and haunt the colleagues who came to his aid, for the rest of their lives," he said.

Mr Neist said guarding was one of the most fundamental ways of protecting employees.

"Time and again, a company tells a court they have taken steps to improve safety after someone has been injured. By then it's too late," he said.

"If guarding is removed for cleaning or maintenance, it must be replaced."