



INTERNATIONAL POWERED ACCESS FEDERATION

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SAFETY ALERT

Use of MCWP Emergency Brakes

On 15 July 2009, at a site in Wolverhampton, UK, the brake of a CE-certified twin mast climbing work platform failed (on one of its drive units) due to excessive wear. This led to significant damage to one of the masts but fortunately sufficient wall ties held and there were no injuries or damage to any private or public property.

It appears that the incident followed use of the emergency manual descent mechanism.

It should be noted that if the manual descent mechanism on MCWPs is used excessively, there will be a substantial increase in the normal wear on the brake discs and pads.

It is recommended that:

- these systems are not to be used routinely, but **ONLY** in an emergency.
- the brakes should be physically inspected after any emergency descent and adjusted as required.
- brake disc thickness should be measured, recorded and accepted/rejected at the six-monthly thorough examinations required under the Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations (LOLER).
- regular brake inspection, in addition to the thorough examination, may be required if the climbers are undergoing heavy normal usage.
The fitting of hour meters to the climbers should be considered to help manage inspection schedules.

IPAF urges anyone who has MCWP equipment to take note of this safety alert and to contact the manufacturer for further information needed.

Should there be any questions on this safety alert, please forward, in writing, to Jean Harrison at the IPAF headquarters.