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**POWERED
ACCESS**

2013
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Maintenance matters p10

The big debate: who takes
responsibility for the
maintenance of MEWPs?

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Welcome

What do you do with a MEWP? You use it to temporarily lift a worker into position. Easy! But there are a host of things that need to be considered before that happens. MEWPs are probably the safest way of doing temporary work at height, but in the wrong hands they can be dangerous.

This magazine is dedicated to keeping MEWPs and their operators safe. To do that we look at some of the things that can go wrong, and give practical advice on how to prevent that from happening.

This year's Big Debate looks at the thorny subject of ensuring that MEWPs have their six-monthly thorough inspection and who is capable of doing appropriate maintenance. Our panel of experts, which included a representative from the Health & Safety Executive, did not shy away from the difficult questions and you will find practical advice in the report.

Elsewhere you will find one journalist's impressions of the successful MEWPs for Managers course and a topical article on how to minimise the risk of an operator being crushed against obstructions while working in a restricted overhead area.

For more information about the safe use of MEWPs, visit www.ipaf.org where you will find a host of practical videos, best practice guidance and other documents to download for free.

Best regards,

Tim Whiteman
 Managing Director & CEO
 International Powered Access Federation
www.ipaf.org

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RESULTS

Early accident reporting figures are in

IPAF'S ACCIDENT reporting project shows that there were 26 deaths resulting from 25 accidents worldwide involving mobile elevating work platforms (MEWPs) from January to September 2012.

Results for the third quarter reveal that there were seven fatalities from six accidents that were reported in the months of July, August and September. These accidents all involved booms (3b) and the main causes were:

electrocution (2), fall from platform (2), overturn (1) and entrapment (1).

Together with three updates on the provisional half-year results announced in July, this brings the reported number of fatal accidents worldwide involving MEWPs between January and September to 25.

"There are nearly 1.5 million MEWPs in use around

the world, and while every death is a tragedy, powered access is still a very safe way to work at height," said IPAF CEO Tim Whiteman. "The analysis of accident data will allow the industry to become even safer."

Do you know of an accident involving a MEWP? Report it at www.ipaf.org/accident

26
deaths involving
MEWPs

25
MEWP accidents
worldwide

2
MEWP accidents
in the UK

Safety on the record

Accident reporting to be mandatory for IPAF UK member rental companies

FROM 1 JANUARY 2013, IPAF rental company members in the UK must report any known MEWP accidents involving their staff at the IPAF accident database at www.ipaf.org/accident.

"The initial mandate is for UK rental companies to report all lost-time incidents for their employees," said IPAF UK Country Council chairman Peter Douglas, who has been leading the accident reporting campaign. "But all members are strongly encouraged to get on board and report all accidents, near misses and contractor incidents they are aware of. The more information we have, the better we will be armed to reduce accidents in our industry."

"Companies who commit to report accidents at the IPAF database will be able to confidentially record data and create their own register of accidents," said IPAF technical officer Chris Wraith. "The system requires companies to 'sign off



IPAF member rental companies will report accidents involving their employees

monthly on their accident records. In return, a dashboard feature analyses the company data in a graphical format, providing a management tool to monitor safety performance.

"Individual companies will be able to compare their safety performance against aggregated results from across all rental

company members and recognised industry benchmarks. IPAF's accident reporting system gives the industry the means to comprehensively collect and analyse accident data and at the same time provide a valuable management tool to improve safety in the workplace."

How to avoid trapping and crushing hazards

GUIDANCE IS available on how to prevent rare but dangerous trapping or crushing accidents when MEWPs are used in confined overhead spaces.

The Strategic Forum for Construction Plant Safety Group, of which IPAF is a part, has published best practice guidance that provides clarity about the safe use of MEWPs, including planning, equipment selection, training, provision of information, familiarisation, safe use, supervision and rescue procedures, together with monitoring and management of the work. Part 1 of this guidance is aimed at managers and Part 2 is a handy, seven-page document for operators.

In addition, IPAF has published guidance on the selection of anti-entrapment devices for MEWPs, where the risk of trapping or crushing has been identified.

Technical guidance is available free at the Publications section of www.ipaf.org

Ready reckoner for spreader plate sizes

OPERATORS AND managers can use IPAF's ready reckoner conversion tool to calculate appropriate spreader plate sizes for the safe use of powered access equipment. The tool builds on IPAF's Spread The Load campaign, which states that:

Spreader plates should always be used with boom-type MEWPs when fully supported on their outriggers. Spreader plates should be used with all other MEWPs that have outriggers unless a risk assessment indicates they are not necessary.

The ready reckoner conversion tool enables operators to quickly understand the weights and loadings that need to be considered when using spreader plates. By entering the weights of machines and identifying the different soil types, operators can then identify the suitable size and specification of spreader plates to be used. Spreader plates should have sufficient size, stiffness and strength to spread the load. www.ipaf.org/spreaders

Record numbers trained

Number of PAL Cards increases by 13.9 per cent

A RECORD NUMBER of 101,457 people completed an IPAF training course in 2011. Training available from IPAF-approved centres includes operator courses for which a PAL Card (Powered Access Licence) is issued, and management courses for which a certificate is issued.

IPAF issued a record 97,488 PAL Cards worldwide through its approved training centres in 2011, an increase of about 13.9 per cent over the 85,605 PAL Cards issued in 2010.



UKCG backs PAL+ for steel erectors and net riggers

THE UK CONTRACTORS Group (UKCG) is encouraging steel erectors and net riggers working on UKCG sites to hold an IPAF PAL+ qualification from 1 January 2013. It will also extend this to other trades for specific projects, on a risk-assessed basis.

“UKCG members will encourage their supply chains to adopt the PAL+ training for key trades such as steel erectors and net riggers, and on a risk basis for specific projects, from January next year,” said Mark Atkinson from Clugston. “PAL+ is a positive development. Candidates will need to be experienced operators and they will have over five hours of practical assessment on MEWPs.”

PAL+ is an optional, additional one day of category-specific training for MEWP operators working in higher risk or challenging environments. More information on PAL+ is at www.ipaf.org/palplus

UKCG members encourage the use of PAL+ training



Audit report praises IPAF for its “effectively run” ISO 9001 quality system

IPAF CONTINUES to comply with ISO 18878 *Mobile elevating work platforms - Operator (driver) training*.

IPAF fulfilled all requirements of the standard and no non-conformities were found. The audit was performed by TÜV in August 2012 at the IPAF head office in the UK.

A separate audit performed by ISOQAR in August confirmed that IPAF also continues to comply with ISO 9001 *Quality management systems*. No non-conformities were found.

“IPAF’s system continues to be very well upheld and monitored and effectively run,” noted lead auditor David Willcocks in the audit report.

Loading/unloading course gets a refresh

IPAF-APPROVED training centres offer a course that instructs operators in the correct safety procedures for the loading, unloading and securing of machinery prior to or following transportation by road.

The MEWP loading/unloading course has been revised and meets the training requirements under the Drivers’ Certificate of Professional Competence (CPC).

The Driver CPC implements the European Directive 2003/59/EC, which is designed to improve the knowledge and skills of professional LGV (large goods vehicle) drivers and PCV (bus or coach) drivers. It applies to all professional drivers of trucks over 3.5 tonnes, buses, coaches and minibuses, ie all category C and D licence holders. It does not apply to vehicles below 3.5 tonnes, but it potentially affects users of truck- and van-mounted MEWPs over 3.5 tonnes. In addition to a driving licence, professional LGV and PCV drivers will have to hold a Driver CPC which is renewable every five years.

Delivery drivers can take IPAF’s loading/unloading course to meet part of the training requirements. Check with your local IPAF training centre. Find your nearest training centre using the locator at www.ipaf.org

IPAF SUMMIT

Miami to host access awards

THE INTERNATIONAL Awards for Powered Access (IAPAs) and the IPAF Summit will be held on 26 March 2013 in Miami, Florida.

Ron DeFeo, chairman and chief executive officer of Terex, the parent company of Genie, will give the keynote address. Other confirmed speakers include Michael Kneeland, president & CEO of United Rentals, the largest rental company in the world, and Sérgio Kariya, managing director of the rental division of Mills Estruturas e Serviços de Engenharia SA in Brazil, one of the fastest growing markets for access.

The IPAF Summit is open to everyone active in the powered access sector. It provides attendees with valuable take-home messages that contribute toward a professional and safe industry.

The IAPAs and IPAF Summit 2014 will take place in the UK. Book now for the 2013 event at www.iapa-summit.info



Council formed to take on UK-specific powered access issues

IPAF UK Country Council aims to represent the industry by working with the HSE, government and contractors to improve safety in the workplace



AN IPAF UK Country Council has been created, which will focus on UK issues and be a force to move the UK powered access industry forward.

Nationwide Platforms executive director of operations Peter Douglas was elected chairman of the IPAF UK Country Council at its first meeting in Edinburgh. Horizon Platforms joint managing director Ben Hirst, representing the Access Alliance, was elected vice-chairman.

The IPAF UK Country Council has 22 members, with a range of industry experience and a wide representation of rental companies, manufacturers, training centres and suppliers. It aims to represent the industry and IPAF's UK members by working with the Health & Safety Executive, government and contractors, by driving operating standards, by improving safety in the industry and by ensuring that members are kept up to date with any legislative, technical or other changes that could affect them.

"There was a lot of positive energy at the first meeting," said Peter Douglas. "Vice-chairman Ben Hirst and I need to ensure that we retain this, that issues are kept relevant, and that we make some good decisions as a group."

Those who wish to raise issues for discussion should contact Peter Douglas, Ben Hirst, or IPAF directly on info@ipaf.org

22
UK Country
Council members



Ask for IPAF Rental+

IF YOU ARE looking for an access rental company that provides excellent service and goes above and beyond the call of duty, consider the list of IPAF Rental+ audited companies at www.ipaf.org

IPAF Rental+ is an independent quality mark that is awarded to IPAF member rental companies that have been audited to meet defined standards in customer service, safety, staff training, contract terms and machine inspection.

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IPAF and SAIA join forces to promote safe working

IPAF AND the US-based Scaffold & Access Industry Association (SAIA) have reaffirmed their alliance to work together in every way possible to promote safety in the use of powered access equipment throughout the USA and Canada.

The SAIA recognises the PAL Card as proof of appropriate operator training for users of aerial work platforms (AWPs) and mast climbing work platforms (MCWPs). SAIA Accredited Training Institutes (ATIs) can sign up to deliver PAL Card training at preferential rates.

Odebrecht site supervisors get trained

ODEBRECHT, ONE of the largest contractors in the world and the largest in Brazil, has for the first time had 26 of its job site supervisors complete the IPAF MEWPs for Managers course.

The course for Odebrecht supervisors from various job sites all over Brazil was conducted in Portuguese by IPAF senior instructor Rafael Bazzarella, Product Safety, Skyjack. The MEWPs for Managers course is also available in Spanish and Odebrecht has requested IPAF to organise a similar course for its job site managers in Caracas, Venezuela.

NES Rentals CEO calls for stringent safety culture

Andy Studdert says the access industry could learn from the airline sector

THE AERIAL platform industry should adopt a more stringent safety culture similar to that of aviation, said Andy Studdert, CEO of US-based NES Rentals, speaking at the IPAF Summit.

Drawing on his extensive experience in the airline sector, Studdert said that one of the critical lessons that the access industry could take from aviation is the reliance on standard, repeatable processes. Just as any first officer doing a walk-round inspection of a plane before each flight follows a standard operating procedure, so should an aerial work platform operator have a repeatable process for pre-use inspections before using the equipment.

Asked if a safety culture can bring tangible benefits, Studdert said that NES has not had a major incident in seven-and-a-half years, and that its insurance premiums were down by 75 per cent.



Drawing on his experience in the airline sector, Andy Studdert urged the aerial platform industry to adopt a safety culture based on repeatable processes

Urban artists spray

MR. SHIZ and Foundry, two artists from Paris and Brighton, have created two pieces of urban art commissioned by IPAF celebrating aerial platform safety.

The artists sprayed two 7 m x 4 m canvases over six days at the Intermat construction show, working from a boom and a scissor lift. They were challenged by rain and strong winds during the show, which meant that the work had to be stopped at times and the machines "grounded" for safety reasons. But they both hold PAL Cards and were able to complete their works of art safely at height. The two pieces of urban art have since found permanent homes at JLG Italy and at Italian training centre Formamentis.



IPAF rental market reports show strong growth in the US

THE US MARKET experienced relatively strong growth in rental revenue to \$6.2 billion in 2011, mainly due to increased demand leading to higher rental rates, according to the IPAF Powered Access Rental Market Reports.

The European powered access rental market was worth approximately €2.3 billion in 2011. Germany is now the largest market in value, followed by France and the UK.

One of the highlights is the prediction of 40 per cent annual fleet growth over the next five years in Brazil.

The IPAF US and European Powered Access Rental Market Reports 2012 can be purchased at www.ipaf.org/reports

40%
Predicted fleet growth in Brazil

\$6.2
bn in US rental revenue

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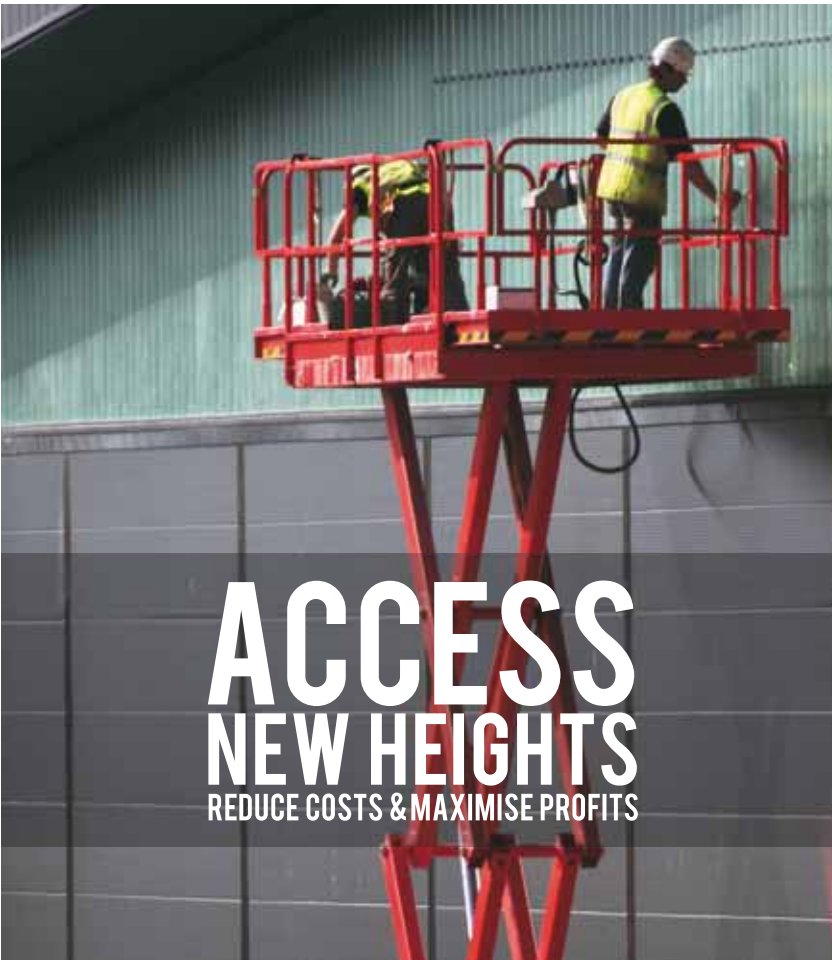
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Employers and users – know

The responsibility for maintenance is confusing for MEWP owners and users. So IPAF brought suppliers, customers and the HSE

Failure of mechanical and safety components on a mobile elevating work platform (MEWP) can lead to a major accident and a potential loss of life. Therefore it is not surprising that the safety and serviceability of MEWPs is covered by legislation. However, the legal framework is somewhat complex (see box on page 14) and many companies, employers and users do not fully understand their responsibilities.

The consensus is that most faults occur when the machines are in operation in the field. The experts shared some horror stories of use and abuse by operators.

Are mechanical defects a big problem in the MEWP industry and

when do they occur?

Joy Jones (JJ) We looked at reports from the UK, the US and New Zealand over a 10-year period and around 7 per cent of MEWP accidents were attributed to mechanical failure.

Jim Senior (JS) That figure is surprisingly high.

Chris Wraith (CW) I am not so surprised. IPAF has started compiling a database of fatal MEWP accidents worldwide. Initial results of this voluntary programme seem to support Joy's comment.

Mark Keily (MK) The UK actually has a lower than average rate of mechanical failures on MEWPs compared with other countries.

Peter Ashburner (PA) We've had

a machine returned from hire to a tree surgeon where the basket's aluminium handrail was severed in two places – cut through by the chainsaw. The customer tried to repair it using aluminium foil in the hope that we wouldn't notice.

MK We've had machines returned with damaged steps and even missing sliding mid-rails on the gate. We've also seen overload and tilt sensors circumnavigated and speed limiters which have been tampered with so the machine can be driven faster with the platform raised.

CW There are some customers out there who misuse and abuse machines in an effort to make them work faster, without understanding



your responsibilities

together to provide some answers. Andrew Gaved reports

the danger they are creating for themselves and others.

So who is responsible for the condition of a MEWP in the workplace?

JJ There is no doubt in the law. The employer holds responsibility. The supplier or hire company is responsible for ensuring the machine is fully functional and in safe condition when they deliver it to site. But from that point on, it becomes the responsibility of the operator's employer to ensure the equipment remains safe and serviceable.

JS Many employers, especially new users, don't seem to understand this point.

PA This is my major concern. We've picked up equipment with a number of faults caused by abuse, but there is a misunderstanding about where the customer thinks their responsibility lies in looking after that equipment and for keeping users safe.

CW From past experience, some customers think it's the hire company's responsibility even to do things like check the battery levels.

JJ I've had my eyes opened to the condition of some machines when they are returned to the depot - it's scary. From an inspector's point of view, if I turn up at a workplace and find a defective piece of equipment, I am going to start asking questions. If there is evidence that the machine

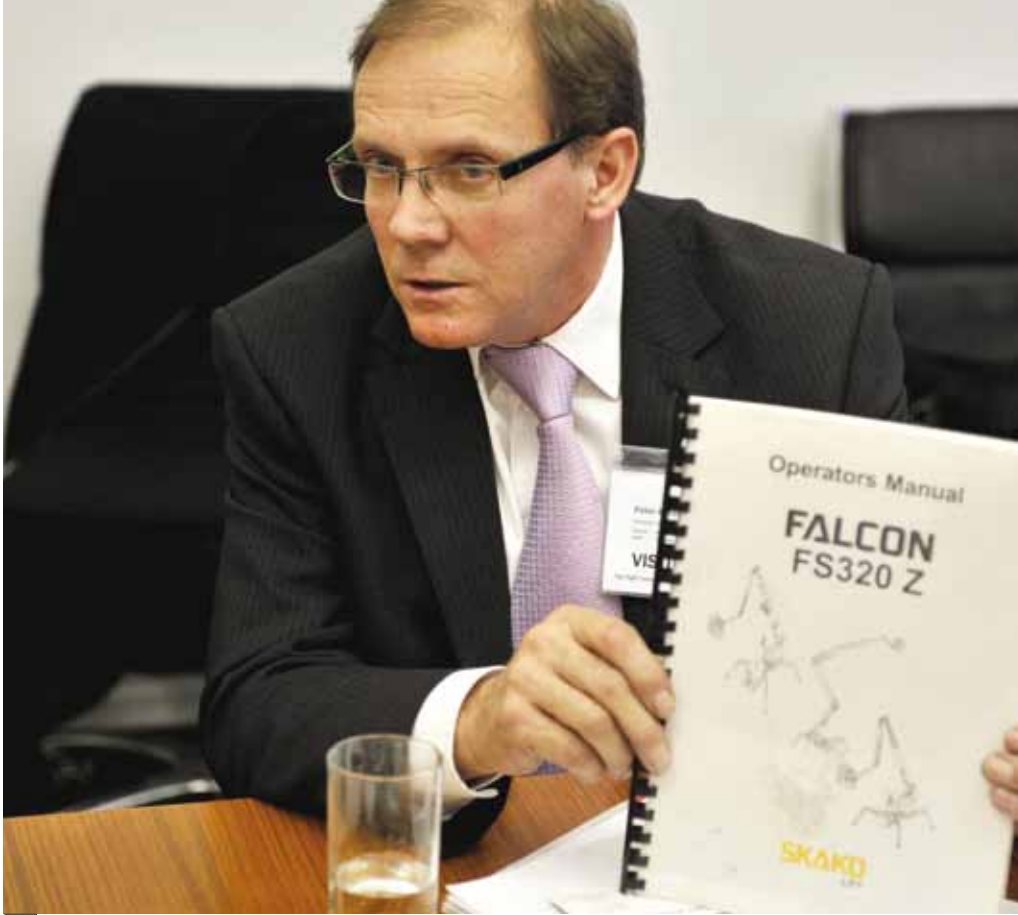
was delivered in good condition with records of thorough examination and pre-delivery inspection, I'm going to say "this has happened on site, you are abusing this equipment and you need to do something about that".

Employers have to make sure that equipment is maintained properly and to check that it is serviceable. Any machine with damage or faults that could pose an immediate threat to safety should be taken out of service and repaired, and where necessary subjected to a further thorough examination by a competent person under LOLER [the Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations].

Where any thorough examination identifies serious defects which could

Debate participants, l to r: HSE principal inspector, Construction Division, Joy Jones; Nationwide Platforms QSHE manager Mark Keily; IPAF technical officer Chris Wraith; Higher Access director Peter Ashburner; Brookfield Multiplex health and safety manager Jim Senior

The big debate



MK In addition to ensuring a thorough examination is in place, it's important that the rental company has robust systems in place to detect and rectify any faults before a machine is sent back out on hire.

JS Surely any responsible hire company should be doing these checks?

CW That's one reason why IPAF introduced the IPAF Rental+ scheme. We check that accredited hire companies do have these systems in place and follow the correct procedures to further increase customer confidence. And they are audited regularly too.

How and when are thorough examinations carried out?

JJ LOLER states that the individual carrying out the thorough examination should be both competent enough to detect any defects in the machine and have enough independence to remove a defective machine from service. However, we have done quite a bit of field work around the area of competence, looking at the independence of the people undertaking thorough examinations and the quality of the examination itself.

We have found enough to concern us that we are now considering issuing a safety alert on these issues.

If major repairs are undertaken by the hire company or manufacturer, then those repairs must then be thoroughly examined by a competent independent person. And it shouldn't be the same individual that undertook the repair.

MK At Nationwide Platforms we prefer to have completely independent third-party examiners, although we also use our own CAP-assessed examiners (see box above) to supplement them on occasion, for instance where site access could be a problem.

PA We take the opposite view. We have our own staff carry out the thorough examinations because very few external people would have the necessary competence to properly examine the complicated machinery we supply.

JJ Third-party inspectors do guarantee independence but not necessarily competence.

JS We are very lucky in construction as CDM (Construction Design and

CAP PROGRAMME

IPAF's Competent Assessed Person (CAP) programme assesses and certifies the competence level of people conducting thorough examinations of access platforms.

CAP candidates are usually experienced service and maintenance engineers. A CAP assessment takes one day. The assessor covers all aspects of thorough examinations, including requirements and formulation, performance, records and defect reporting.

Candidates take two written tests and complete a practical exercise, concluding with an individual interview/assessment. If successful, they are awarded the CAP Card, valid for five years. This certifies that the holder has been independently assessed as a competent person with the knowledge and ability to plan, manage and carry out thorough examinations of access platforms.

More information on the CAP programme is available at www.ipaf.org/cap



affect the safety of the machine imminently, the examiner must by law report this to the user and also the enforcing authority. Recent field work indicates that examiners are not always reporting faults to the HSE, probably because they are repaired immediately.

Does a thorough examination certificate show a machine is safe to use?

JJ It is similar to when you have an MOT on a car. The certificate shows it met the standard on the day it was examined, but a fault can still develop the day after.

JS As a customer, what I want is confidence. When an item of plant arrives on our site, we want to be confident that it will operate correctly and not become faulty. When a MEWP arrives on site, the operator and site manager should see the thorough examination certificate for themselves and check that it relates to the machine they are receiving.



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THE LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

Legislation surrounding the design, safety and serviceability of powered access equipment falls into main three areas: the Machinery Directive, PUWER (the Provision and Use of Workplace Equipment Regulations) and LOLER (the Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations).

The Machinery Directive lays down minimum standards covering aspects such as stability, visibility, mechanical strength, safety components, noise and exhaust emissions that the equipment manufacturer must meet. To ensure machines remain in a safe condition throughout their working life, the manufacturer will specify maintenance checks and service requirements in an operators manual and also hold a full technical file for the machine design.

PUWER Stipulates that suppliers such as hire companies must ensure the machines they send out are safe and serviceable. Once on site, responsibility for ensuring the machine remains in a serviceable condition falls to the employer of the person operating the machine. The employer must also ensure the operator is properly trained and familiarised with the machine to operate it safely.

LOLER Imposes the requirement for a competent person to carry out thorough examinations of lifting equipment at regular intervals. If people are being lifted, as in the case of MEWPs, that interval is a maximum of six months.



IPAF technical officer Chris Wraith

Management regulations] sets out a framework for establishing competence. As around half of MEWP business now comes from outside construction, I think the principles CDM introduces could be adopted by other industries.

But the examiner should have access to the machine's operator/maintenance manual which details the checks that are required to be undertaken.

PA Our people do have the manuals, but if they are in any doubt over something, they contact the manufacturer.

JS Especially with complex pieces of equipment such as cranes and compact or atrium lifts, it is well worth having your people trained by the manufacturer.

CW I second that. The manufacturers

are usually very willing to help with training and other material as they want to prevent anything that would damage the reputation of their machinery. They will also provide a list of any service and safety bulletins they have issued which relate to that equipment. We are working with manufacturers to put web links on the IPAF website - at www.ipaf.org/ alerts - so the competent person can have easy access to this information.

I feel that there is too much dependence in some quarters on the fact that a piece of equipment has a thorough examination certificate. That is only one part of the picture - there needs to be focus on the inspection before a machine goes out on hire and then on daily pre-use inspections as well as regular maintenance.

Shouldn't the operator pick up any defects during pre-use checks?

PA A properly trained operator should carry out pre-use checks - it's all in the IPAF training. When I go to a site and ask somebody "when did you last inspect it?", often they will say "we had a look it when it arrived". So I say: "but you've had it for three weeks, don't you know it is your responsibility to inspect it every day?"

PA Some choose not to know their responsibilities to check equipment and to use trained operators. I question the attitude of hire companies that do not ask customers if the end user has been trained to operate the machine. I see this a lot with cross-hires.

JS I'm a realist about this. If somebody comes to you and you don't let them have the equipment, the customer will phone another supplier that will. Wouldn't it be fantastic if nobody hired out equipment until they had confirmation that the operator was trained?

MK It's a good idea, but in reality you would be shown one person's card, and 10 minutes later, three others would be using the equipment. It is important that hirers adequately familiarise operators with the machines when requested.

CW IPAF is introducing Smart PAL Cards which can help prevent unauthorised use. An optional interlock on the machine means it can't be used unless a card with the correct category is presented to the card reader. The technology is there, but it needs the industry to take it up.

What happens when a machine requiring a service or even a thorough examination is still on a customer's site?

MK We've seen many instances where machines out on hire for prolonged periods have serious defects which mean they should not be used - but the customer was still using them. Most of the defects were perfectly obvious and should have been picked up on a daily check, but users think, "if I stop using this machine I won't get the job done in time" and so they don't report it. And this doesn't necessarily relate to the length of hire, as some trades use the machines intensely while with others it may sit unused for prolonged periods.

JS If a machine on one of our smaller sites is coming up for a thorough examination, we may swap it for another or allow the rental company to carry out the work on site.

PA Unfortunately that is not the attitude from all customers. We've contacted a customer to say "the certificate runs out on Thursday and we need to come to examine the machine" and been told "we're only using it until Friday so you can have it when we've finished".

MK Nationwide Platforms has a very strict policy - if one of our machines goes beyond six months without a thorough examination because the customer won't release it or allow us access, we will issue a prohibition notice to the customer.

JJ Both PUWER [the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations] and LOLER take into account the extent to which individuals and companies have control of the situation. The responsibility to ensure that maintenance and examinations are done resides with the employer of the user of the MEWP. My real concerns are with less reputable suppliers and employers that don't fully understand these responsibilities. That is where I hope that debates like these can help to spread the message.

Guidance on the implementation of second party inspection is available at the Publications/Technical Guidance section of www.ipaf.org

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The right tool for the job

Selecting the most appropriate platform for a job will pay dividends in productivity and ease of use, not to mention health and safety. David Taylor gets the lowdown from those who know best



Retail spaces pose specific challenges

It always pays to choose the right tool for the job and MEWPs are no exception. Productivity is compromised if the machine you choose doesn't have the reach or height you need but, more importantly, use of the wrong machine can compromise health and safety – sometimes with disastrous consequences.

The task of choosing the right MEWP is made increasingly challenging by the fact that the market for MEWPs is constantly expanding and evolving. Although these remarkable machines have been available for many years, new applications are constantly being found, not just in construction but also in other industries where high-level access is required.

A major reason for this is the Work at Height Regulations 2005, which were introduced in April of that year. In many industries, access methods which had previously been considered custom and practice (in most cases, ladders) have since been deemed unacceptably risky and powered access has been adopted instead.

Taking stock

For new users, the type of machine best suited to the application is not always obvious. A self-propelled boom lift might seem just the ticket for fixing high-level lighting in a pedestrian mall shopping centre, but with its heavy counterweight, this machine might impose dangerously high point-loads which could damage a surface designed only for pedestrian traffic and result in dangerous instability.

“The list of potential uses is almost endless,” comments AJ Access Platforms managing director Tony

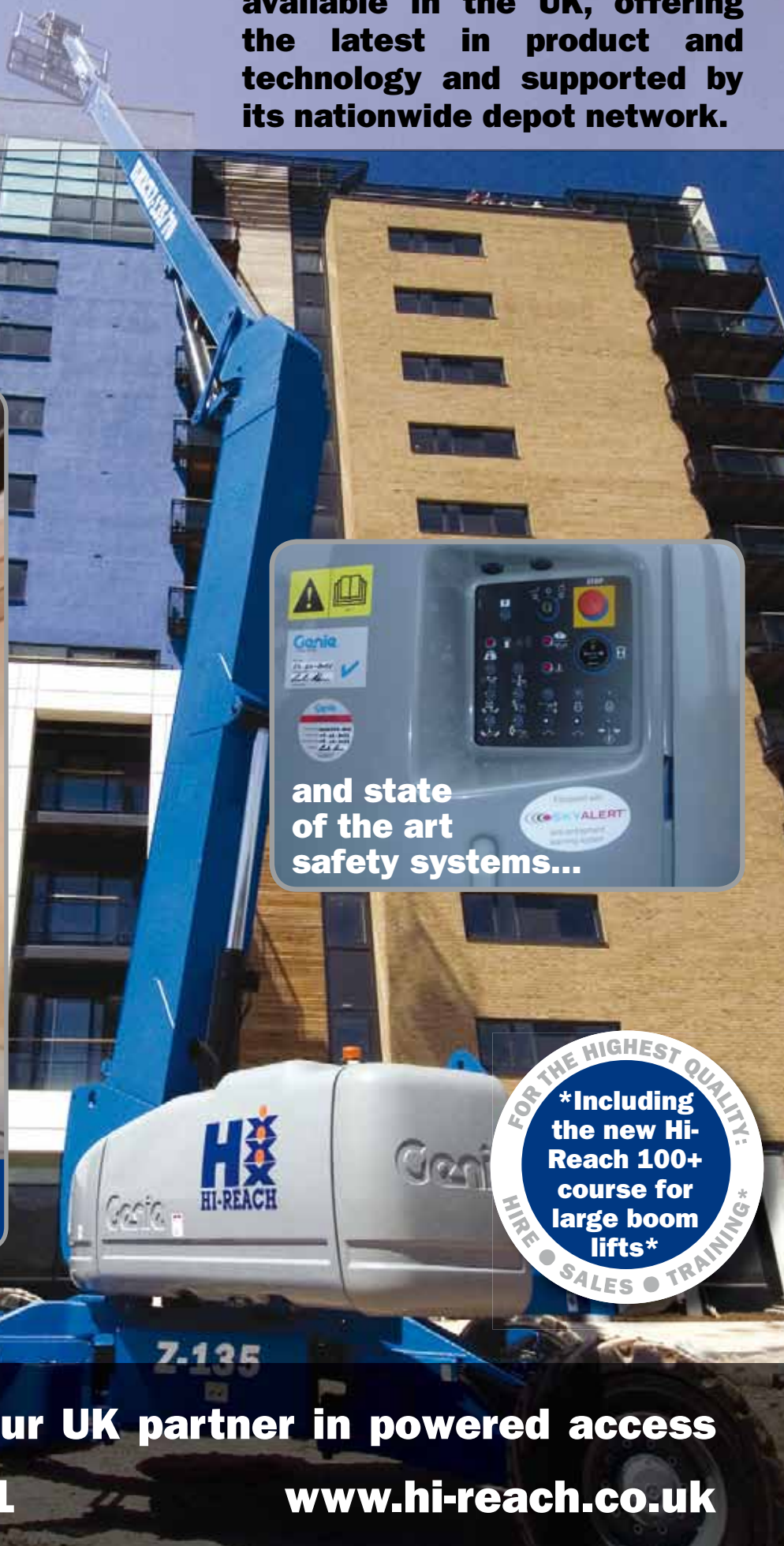


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BUYING USED EQUIPMENT

“Buying a used MEWP is no different from buying a second-hand car,” says Horizon director Ben Hirst; bargains are available and a well-maintained machine in good condition will give many years of safe and reliable service, he says. But, as always, the rule of caveat emptor – “let the buyer beware” – applies. The following five rules should help you avoid being sold the wrong machine:

- **Check ownership** It may seem blindingly obvious, especially if a machine is in the vendor’s livery, but always make sure the documentation proves that the MEWP is theirs to sell.
- **How hard has it worked?** Nearly every MEWP these days is fitted with an hour-meter, equivalent to a car’s odometer, which records how much use the machine has had. A machine that has done a lot of hours for its age isn’t necessarily worn out, but it won’t command as high a price as a similar machine with fewer hours on the clock.
- **Check the service history** Just as you would with a car, ask to see the ‘log-book’. Under LOLER, a MEWP should be given a thorough examination every six months. Are the documents there to back this up?
- **Kick the tyres** and then take a closer look for any signs of previous damage or wear. Are there any repairs or suspicious welds? Is anything bent or dented? Look out for leaks of oil, fuel or hydraulic fluid. For peace of mind, get the machine inspected by a competent person, ideally someone who carries the IPAF Competent Assessed Person (CAP) card.
- **Always negotiate a warranty** with the vendor. If the machine is safe and in good condition the vendor shouldn’t object to, say, a three-month parts and labour warranty.

Above Proper assessment is vital to prevent machine overturn or collapse

Right Horizon Platforms says that buying second-hand equipment is no different from buying a used car

Mort, “and platforms themselves are more diversified these days.” So while there is usually a machine for every application, there are numerous potential combinations and the task for the user is to find the best one.

Virtually everybody, rental firms and users alike, agree that in terms of safety, the first consideration is usually the prevailing ground conditions. “It starts with the ground,” says Mr Mort, and that usually means a good, consolidated flat surface. “You simply cannot deploy most types of MEWP on ground that is soft, very uneven or sloping,” he explains.

If the machine is required to operate on a construction site where mud, potholes and variable gradients may be encountered, then either the machine must be capable of levelling itself on external outriggers or the site must be suitably prepared beforehand.

Soft ground is always a danger and wherever there is a risk of subsidence, a suitable method of spreading the load below the outrigger or jack-leg must be provided. IPAF is currently running a campaign to raise awareness of the need to deploy spreader plates which are usually provided with the

machine and are capable of drastically reducing point-loads.

Ron Wilson is group safety, health and environment manager for Kier’s Construction Division. He says that Kier follows the best practice recommendations of the Strategic Forum for Construction Plant Safety Group with regard to MEWPs, though he stresses that it is most often specialist contractors further down the supply chain that hire and operate these machines.

Best practice

“The supply chain has a crucial role to play and we require everyone on our sites to follow best practice,” he says.

The effective and safe use of MEWPs is the joint responsibility of the operator and the employer. The operator must be trained and experienced in the use of the type of machine specified, but it is the employer’s responsibility to ensure that the operator is competent and that the machine is the right tool for the job [see p22 on MEWPs for managers].

Most major contractors are acutely aware of their responsibility for the safe use of MEWPs on their sites, not least because they are likely to be a



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WHAT OPERATORS NEED TO KNOW

Anybody required to operate a MEWP should hold the IPAF PAL Card endorsed to show that they have been trained to use the category of machine in question. Simply having the right ticket isn't enough to ensure safe use, however, and it is the employer's responsibility to ensure that all operators are familiar with the equipment they will be using.

Familiarisation should include:

- The manufacturer's instruction and warning.
- Features of the specific model.
- Control functions.
- Safety devices.
- Emergency lowering procedure.

The last point is especially important as emergency lowering procedures vary considerably from one make to the next, and even within the same product range.

Operators also need to know what they are expected to do and what hazards may exist. This means a thorough inspection of the worksite. Points to look out for include:

- Ground conditions.
- Gradients (if a mobile MEWP is being used).
- Barriers.
- Working envelope.
- Overhead hazards (eg power lines).
- Underground hazards (eg underground services, manhole covers).
- Use of stability systems (eg stabilisers/outriggers).
- Weather conditions (especially high winds).

When a mobile platform is used, the operator should know exactly where the machine will travel and then walk the route, checking for hazards and obstacles, paying particular attention to any other work being carried out onsite.



number of MEWPs operating on one or more of their sites at any given time. However, those less in regular contact with the machines, such as smaller contractors, might overlook some of the basic safety issues, Mr Wilson contends.

"You have to know exactly what you're using the machine for and don't use it for tasks it's not designed for," he cautions. MEWPs are generally not for handling materials, although some, such as the larger mobile scissor lifts used in the cladding industry, are exceptions to the rule. "If materials are to be lifted, use a hoist or a crane," says Mr Wilson. "Apart from people, the only items that should be carried in a MEWP are the tools required to do the job."

If a user is in doubt about the right machine for the job, help is always at hand, says Mr Mort: "Most, if not all, hirers offer a specification service and will send someone to the customer's site to assess their needs. It doesn't remove the employer's duty or care to the operator, but it does mean that the chances of using the wrong machine are very low."

Ben Hirst, joint managing director of rental firm Horizon Platforms, says that these days, it is less common to find a customer with no real idea of what type of machine they need. "When I was on the hire desk 10 years ago, I'd usually have to go through a whole lot of questions with the customer to find out what they wanted and which machine they needed," he says.

"Today the customer will probably specify the product type and model in about 75 per cent of cases," he adds. "People are more educated these days."

However, says Mr Hirst, IPAF encourages hirers to make every effort to ensure the customer is properly familiarised with the machine they are hiring.

"It's not our responsibility to check whether or not the customer's operator is qualified to use the machine - that's down to the employer.

"But our drivers will take a view on the safety or otherwise of the customer. They wouldn't be happy leaving a MEWP with a little old lady who wants to use it to trim her hedges!"

Know exactly what you are using the machine for and don't use it for tasks it's not designed for

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A responsible course of action

IPAF's MEWPs for Managers courses provide vital guidance for those whose sites involve platforms. David Taylor reports

Above IPAF's one-day course is aimed at those making executive decisions about the use of MEWPs

Only the most reckless manager would ask someone to operate a mobile elevating work platform (MEWP) without first ensuring they are qualified to do so.

But the manager's responsibility extends beyond simply checking that the operator has the necessary qualifications. It is the manager, not the operator, who decides that the machine is required and it is the manager who is ultimately responsible for its safe use.

IPAF has devised a one-day classroom-based training course aimed specifically at those making the executive decisions about the use of MEWPs. Now in its seventh year, the MEWPs for Managers course has

recently been updated to take into account minor regulatory changes, such as amendments to the CDM (Construction Design and Management) Regulations.

To find out what the course contains and how it can help managers understand the role they play in the safe use of MEWPs, reporter David Taylor visited the Bristol depot of Nationwide Platforms (part of the Lavendon Group) where the updated course was being trialed.

Besides our reporter there were three other trainees attending the course, all from the newly formed Technology team at Balfour Beatty Civil Engineering's highways maintenance division. These three: Paul, a senior

engineer, and lead engineers Adam and Martin, run a nine-strong team previously employed by Serco and which is responsible for signage and lighting maintenance for the Highways Agency on the M4/M5 corridor and surrounding Westcountry trunk routes.

"We routinely use van-mounted boom lifts on site and we're all trained operators," explains Paul. "But since we became part of Balfour Beatty we have become responsible for hiring in equipment as well as using it. That's why I thought we ought to come on this course."

Course tutor Andrew Woodrow – one of five senior instructors within Nationwide's team of 18 full-time

trainers – explained that managers, more so than operators, need a good working knowledge of several vital pieces of legislation; it is their responsibility to ensure that the job as a whole is planned and executed safely.

Code of conduct

The course covers all the relevant legislation for site operation and use of equipment, from work at height to LOLER (Lifting Operation and Lifting Equipment Regulations) – and of course, the code of conduct for the safe use of MEWPs, BS8460. Also covered are the CDM Regulations and more general health and safety legislation.

A phrase that crops up again and again in the legislation is “competent person” which has a specific meaning in this context. A competent person is defined as someone who possesses the appropriate theoretical knowledge, plus the relevant practical knowledge and personal experience for that specific task.

“And how do they demonstrate this?” asks Andrew. “Invariably with the relevant certification.”

Besides the legislation, managers must also have a good knowledge of the various terms and conditions that apply when hiring a MEWP. In the UK, most specialist access rental firms choose the IPAF terms and conditions but managers might also encounter the Construction Plant-hire Association (CPA) and Hire Association Europe (HAE) terms and conditions.

It is vital that the manager reads and understands all the small print, cautions Andrew: “Do you know what you and your staff are signing up to? Do your employees know what they are authorised to sign?”

Some terms and conditions pass responsibility for the equipment to the customer only when the machine is delivered to site. But others make the customer liable from the minute that machine is switched on and leaves the depot.

Similarly, customers are responsible for machine maintenance and repair while on hire, and must ensure they keep full machine records. Again, only a competent and authorised person should be permitted to carry out these tasks.

7
The course's
hours of CPD

Although successfully completing the MEWPs for Managers course does not qualify you to operate a MEWP, managers are expected to have a sound knowledge of the various types and the work for which they are designed.

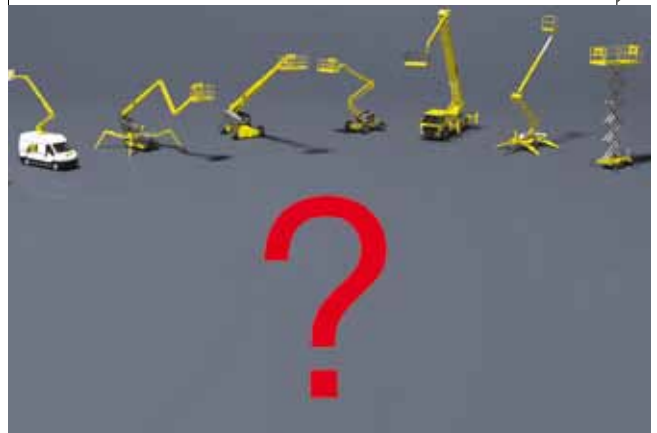
The course covers all types of MEWP and their specific characteristics. When specifying a MEWP the manager’s risk assessment must take into account a wide range of factors, starting with the type of work that is to be carried out and embracing such issues as ground conditions, number of people required in the platform and even the type of fuel used by the machine.

The role of the PAL Card and associated documentation such as the PAL log book, which records an operator’s actual experience with MEWPs, is covered in detail. “Don’t just accept the PAL Card – ask to see the operator’s log book too,” advises Andrew.

This is essential because similar machines from different manufacturers can vary significantly in layout and design. While the PAL Card may record that the holder is qualified to work with, say, a type 3b MEWP (a self-propelled boom-lift) it is for the manager to ensure that the cardholder is familiarised with the specific machine they will be required to use. The manufacturer or hirer will be able to provide suitable instruction, often prior to delivery.

Managers must also understand the operator’s crucial role in carrying out daily machine inspections. Here Andrew reminded us that the WAH regulations require that all work at height must be “planned, supervised and carried out safely”. That includes making sure the operator carries out a daily inspection of the machine and logs it. Should a defect be identified, the correct procedure is “isolate – tag – report”, and here again it is the manager’s responsibility to ensure that this is done correctly.

Also new is the inclusion of several computer-generated animations, some of which are used to good effect in graphically illustrating the consequences of bad practice.



The course concludes with a look at personal protective equipment and general hazard awareness on site, including the appropriate use of harnesses.

Attending the MEWPs for Managers course (which, incidentally, equates to 7 hours CPD) should be a prerequisite for anybody whose job entails managing work that is to be carried out at height. It doesn’t matter how experienced or qualified your operator is; a safe, productive worksite is the responsibility of the employer. And that means management.

See the Directory on page 46 for your nearest course provider or visit www.ipaf.org

Above With the wide range of machines available, managers need to be able to plan and select the right machine for the job at hand



Obstacles overhead

With increased use of MEWPs, crushing and trapping accidents have become a hot topic for the industry. Chris Wraith examines the issues at hand

Crushing or trapping is one type of hazard associated with the use of mobile elevating work platforms (MEWPs). It is vital that operators and managers are aware of the potential hazards they might encounter on jobsites, so that they are better prepared in the event of the unexpected.

Crushing and trapping accidents have come to the forefront of discussion in the industry recently due to the increased use of MEWPs and the applications they are being put to. MEWPs are commonly being used in all sectors of industry and in increasingly difficult circumstances.

The design of buildings is getting more and more challenging and MEWP operators are being required to go into more confined areas at greater heights. The risk is not only limited to larger boom-type machines. There is also increased use of small, electric MEWPs indoors where the risk of trappings may be just as high.

Crushing and trapping hazards exist wherever work is performed near overhead obstructions, such as working between building steel and/or piping. When this occurs particular attention must be given to the work process to minimise the hazard and protect against the risk. Some of the root causes contributing to crushing and trapping accidents are a lack of planning, a lack of supervision and poor preparation of ground conditions.

All overhead objects on a site present a potential crushing hazard. The risks must be addressed through site assessment and development of a practical method statement. This

should be supported by management and operator training, and supervision to ensure compliance with an agreed safe system of work.

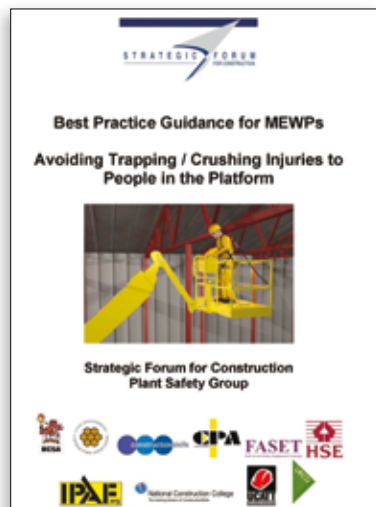
Driving through a door opening to get to the area of work is an overhead hazard. Rotating a boom into a wall can create a crushing hazard. Driving a lift in reverse can create a crushing hazard, even if there are no overhead objects, as you can drive into an object. Having your hand over the guardrail when the basket is moving with any control function can result in a crushing accident without overhead objects.

While machines are becoming more complex and buildings more intricate, the increased use of MEWPs does sometimes bring with it a degree of complacency that can lead to mistakes. As a result, operators and managers do not always take the time needed to plan for their use and to think through all the steps involved in a particular work task. This is one reason why these accidents can occur.

“We are aware of incidents where operators made contact with overhead obstacles while operating aerials,” says Scott Krieger, senior product manager, Genie Booms and Telehandlers. “Ultimately, the operator in conjunction with the worksite supervisor is responsible for identifying and avoiding overhead obstacles. But as a secondary measure, we are working both independently and with various partners to provide protective solutions for a variety of worksite conditions.”

“Secondary measures” to prevent entrapment currently fall into two distinct categories:

Right Guidance on selecting anti-entrapment devices for MEWPs is available at the Publications section of www.ipaf.org



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- 1 Protective structures offering the operator a safe envelope to work from, eg Sanctuary Zone, Operator Protective Structure etc.
- 2 Pressure sensing technology that isolates control functions, greatly reducing the potential for entrapment injury, and which sounds an alarm, eg SiOPs, SkySiren, SkyGuard.

Safety first

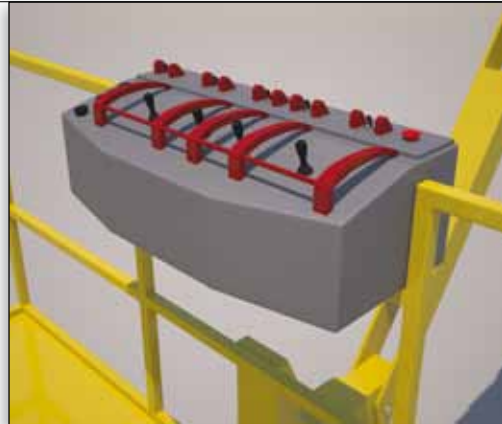
Developing an effective secondary protection product requires a great deal of research, development and testing (on average at least three years) to ensure the new device or structure reduces the risk of entrapment, while at the same time still allowing the MEWP to safely access those challenging work areas at height without proportionately increasing other risks for the operator.

The correct selection of MEWPs to carry out work at height is acknowledged as one of the key factors to ensure safe use. Managers now have the added task of determining which anti-entrapment device it might be appropriate to select in order to protect the operator where they are expected to work in areas of increased risk of entrapment.

It is management's responsibility to take a lead in identifying all situations where trapping risks are present in the work activities they control, and select the device that is most likely to eliminate or reduce those risks to an acceptable level.

IPAF has published guidance on the selection of anti-entrapment devices for MEWPs, where the risk of involuntary operation of controls and/or overhead entrapment is identified (June 2012). This short document should be read in conjunction with the *Best Practice Guidance for MEWPs: Avoiding Trapping/Crushing Injuries to People in the Platform*, which was prepared in co-operation with the Health & Safety Executive.

It provides illustrations to help differentiate between the possible options available when considering the selection of appropriate additional equipment where the increased risk of sustained involuntary operation of controls and/or potential overhead entrapment has been identified.



Anti-entrapment devices should remain an 'optional extra', requested as the result of a jobsite assessment that has identified an increased risk of overhead crushing and entrapment. It has been suggested that fitting them as standard may lead to an over-reliance by the operator on mechanical devices, creating a false feeling of security, which in turn may lead to increased risk.

Raising awareness

Either way, it is vital we do not lose sight of the fact any anti-entrapment device is neither a fail safe nor a substitute for appropriate operator training, good site management and machine familiarisation.

There is still an important role to be played by manufacturers, rental companies, site management, operators, enforcement bodies and industry federations to raise awareness of this important issue. In an attempt to reduce/eliminate trapping and crushing incidents, contractors and rental companies are now providing operators and managers with frequent toolbox talks and MEWP safety-related activities in order to increase awareness and drive

behavioural change. The best practice guidance mentioned above includes a short section, Part 2, designed specifically for use in toolbox talks. There is also an IPAF MEWPs for Managers course that trains managers to prepare and plan for the use of MEWPs on jobsites.

No one single device will prevent all overhead crushing and entrapment accidents. The basis of preventing trapping accidents must be task-, site- and equipment-specific risk-assessed. Managers must assess potential risks, recognise responsibility and take measures to minimise the risks. Confined spaces mean experienced operators are needed for the job and managers should consider whether it is appropriate to require additional training of the type found in IPAF's optional PAL+ course.

MEWPs are one of the safest and most efficient ways to work at height but the use of this equipment must go hand in hand with appropriate training, adequate familiarisation, risk assessment, proper planning and management of the work. See the Publications/Technical Guidance section at www.ipaf.org
By Chris Wraith, IPAF technical officer

Above Examples of platform devices and additional equipment currently available for a variety of boom type MEWPs, some of which may be capable of application to scissor lift



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Tim Whiteman is committed to conveying the safety message

Man on a mission

International Powered Access Federation chief executive Tim Whiteman is on a quest to ensure that mobile elevating work platforms are used safely – and he won't stop while serious accidents are still occurring, he tells Andrew Gaved

Anyone who has worked with Tim Whiteman, the chief executive of IPAF, will agree that he is not a man who gets worked up easily. In his everyday business dealings, his default mode is good-humoured, calm and laid-back. So when he describes something about his work that provokes him to anger, the effect is to make you sit up and take notice.

The subject in question is when a serious injury or even loss of life occurs from MEWPs not being used appropriately. Even as Mr Whiteman explains, his voice conveys the emotion behind it.

“What makes me so angry is that most of these accidents simply shouldn't have happened,” he says. “If a person has died or been seriously injured, then that means that the message of safe use hasn't reached that person.”

It is the fact that accidents do still happen with MEWPs that informs IPAF's drive to pass that message on to all users – an education process the federation has been working on consistently since its founding 30 years ago.

For his part, Mr Whiteman has committed to keep striving to convey the message of safe and effective use of platforms as long as he is in the chief executive's chair.

This message is driven by a particular characteristic of MEWPs that makes them distinct from many other items of plant – they are universally used by people to allow

them to perform their usual trade at height, such as steel erectors or electricians, rather than used by an 'operator' who works on machines all the time.

As such, the MEWPs are nearly always hired out without an operator, apart from the specialist big booms. So while there are many people who regularly operate work platforms, they are very few on site for whom it is their sole job.

There are also very many for whom it is only an occasional item they use. These two facts makes it of vital importance, therefore, to educate everyone that the MEWP is not just some kind of outdoor elevator or vertical bus that you can simply hop on or off without proper respect for the risks and responsibilities involved.

Remaining risk

There is a paradox at work, Mr Whiteman emphasises, that makes it even more important to drive home the safety message: work platforms appear to be much easier to operate and handle than ever before, but the particular work they do makes the fundamental risks the same as ever – falling from height.

“Due to the nature of what MEWPs do, which is lifting people to height – if something should ever go wrong, it can be catastrophic, and remember that falls from 2 m can be fatal.”

“Therefore we want to make sure that users are fully aware of what they should do to reduce the risks of



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as conforming to ISO 18878.



accidents and importantly, that they are aware of what they should do if something ever were to go wrong.”

With as much as 40 per cent of the UK population of MEWPs now going to applications outside of the construction sector, Mr Whiteman is keen for IPAF to embrace the broad church of warehouses to airports to film sets to window cleaning.

“We would encourage people to get involved with IPAF and to make use of its resources, perhaps attend one of our networking events or safety forums, especially if they are from smaller companies or from non-construction fields.”

At the same time, he stresses, some of these ‘newer’ sectors are less aware of MEWP-related issues, so it is important to ensure the message of safe and effective use is broadcast as far and wide as possible.

“Because they are deceptively simple to use, the tendency among those who don’t appreciate the risks is all too often to ‘borrow the platform,’” says Mr Whiteman. “This is why we need to drum home the message that managers on the site should make sure that MEWPs are only used by authorised personnel – at least that they have a PAL Card.”

Card success

The PAL Card is now the universal means of demonstrating the understanding of such risks, with courses provided up and down the country by IPAF-accredited firms.

The very ubiquity of the PAL Card on sites now is a sign of the success of the scheme. Mr Whiteman points out that the programme was led by the powered access industry and that close working with their customers on site has driven its take-up and enforcement.

“There is no law to say you should have a PAL Card,” says Mr Whiteman, “so it is testament to the importance of the message and the pressure from IPAF members that it is a requisite on sites.”

Indeed, so satisfied is the major construction contractors’ body, the UKCG, that it recently proposed an advanced operators course that could be taken by those who work with MEWPs in more testing conditions

such as at higher heights and in and around steel structures. The result is PAL+, a practically based course with hands-on training in demanding situations. It has been endorsed for all steel erectors on UKCG sites and many expect the endorsement to be upgraded to a requirement before too long.

“Our advice to managers is to see whether their current PAL-qualified operators are up for the challenges of the advanced course, says Mr Whiteman.”

Training centres that offer both PAL and PAL+ courses can be found in the Directory on p46 onwards.

Harnessing safety

Nowhere has site-led pressure been more successful than IPAF’s Clunk Click campaign to encourage harness use in booms.

Eight years after its inception, following several incidents where operators were literally thrown from their booms after the wheel hit an obstacle, clipping on the harness has grown from a rarity to having the same ‘do it without thinking about it’ process as putting on the hard hat or the hi-vis.

Mr Whiteman is happy that hearts and minds have been won thanks to the tireless campaigning of IPAF members. “If people see a boom on site now, they will say, ‘have you got your harness?’”

Lest all this mention of risks should spook anyone, he is keen to leave readers dwelling on the innate safety of the technology.

“MEWPs are far and away the safest way to do temporary work at height,” says Mr Whiteman. “But it is essential to take on board the need to always assess the job at hand, always check the machine. There is no such thing as a routine operation.”

And as far as Mr Whiteman is concerned, there are no illusions as to the task ahead. “The job of education is not finished because sadly people are still being killed. There is a lot better understanding out on sites and yes, the machines are getting simpler to use, but people still need to use the equipment safely and correctly.”

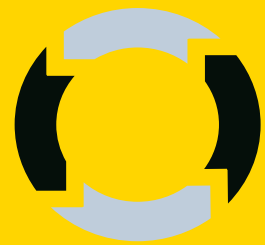
For details on IPAF regional networking and groups see www.ipaf.org.



Top “There is no such thing as a routine operation,” says Mr Whiteman

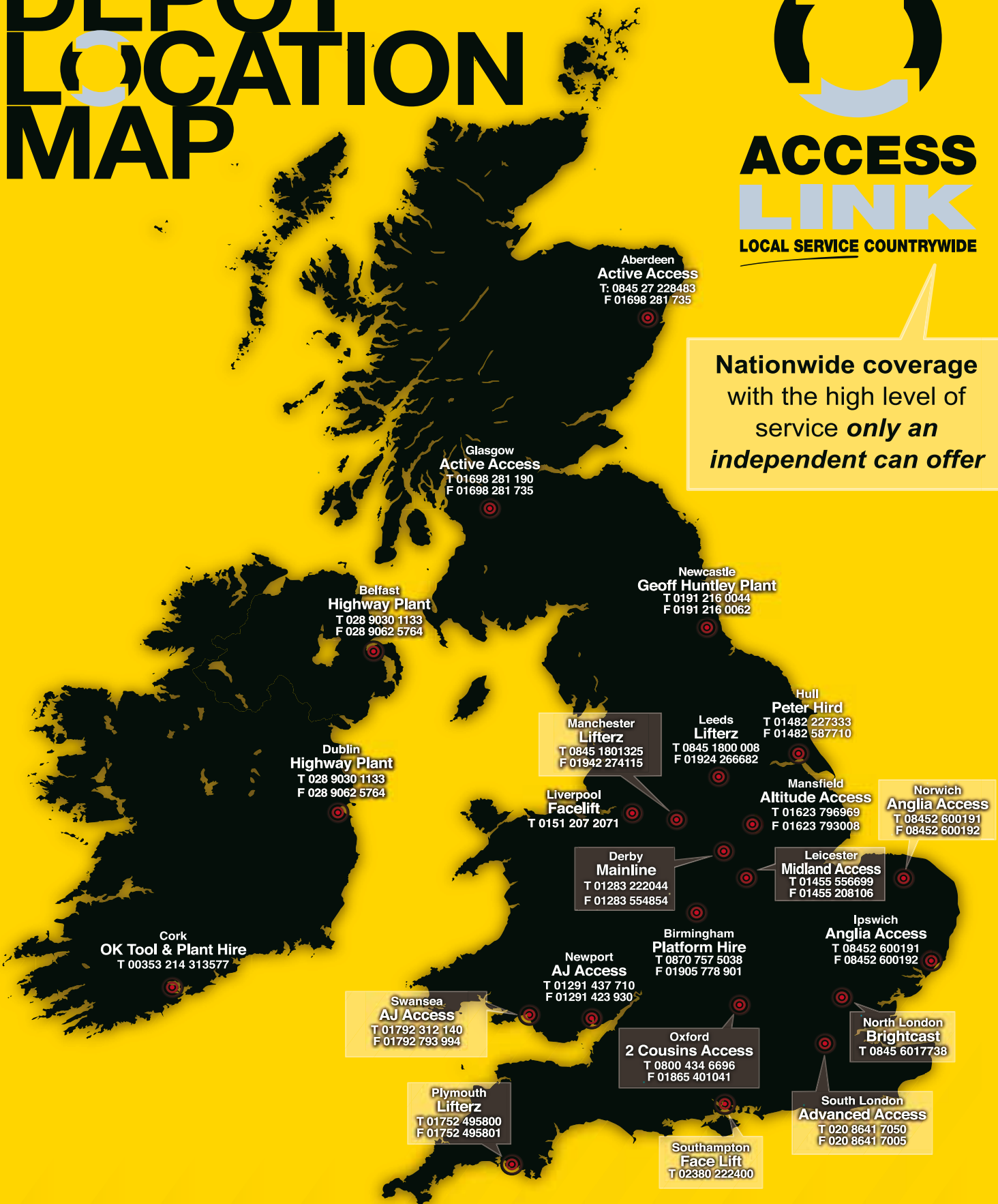
Above IPAF membership is encouraged, especially from smaller companies or non-construction sectors

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The main selling point of MCWPs is that they are a quicker, more cost-effective alternative to scaffolding

On the up and up

The mastclimbing work platform is one of the most compelling alternatives to scaffolding, reports David Taylor

Mastclimbers, or mastclimbing work platforms (MCWPs) as they are properly known, are among the more specialised methods of powered access.

Significantly perhaps more than any other platform, they are most dependent on construction – especially the high-rise sector.

The MCWP hire industry is small, with just a handful of players in the UK market – virtually all of them specialists.

“Very few do both mastclimbers and other stuff,” says Adrian Bolton, UK construction manager with manufacturer Alimek Hek. “You won’t find them offering boom lifts or scissor lifts alongside the masts.”

With arguably only one string to their bow, MCWP hire companies have prospered by finding new outlets for their specialist services.

The principal selling point of MCWPs is that they are a quicker, more efficient and cost-effective alternative to traditional scaffolding and since the scaffolding industry continues to meet the requirements of most building façade access contracts, this remains a major opportunity to use MCWPs.

For many years the refurbishment of high-rise buildings and, in particular, social housing developments, has provided the MCWP hire industry with the bulk of its workload.

With the Decent Homes Standard, introduced by the last Labour government, public housing in the UK underwent a radical upgrade and many under-performing tower blocks were given a complete makeover, which invariably included new windows and over-cladding

with external insulation.

“For almost 20 years, high-rise refurb has been the main market for this equipment,” says Cameron Reid, operations director for mechanical access with the UK’s largest hirer of MCWPs, Harsco Infrastructure. “Social housing refurbishment was about 60 per cent of our market, but in the past few years it’s taken a beating,” he adds.

Cost considerations

Elsewhere in the building industry, mastclimbing platforms are still widely ignored in favour of traditional scaffolding, says Mr Reid. This represents a great opportunity, say the MCWP experts, but they often hit the hurdle of cost.

“As a business, we are lobbying planners, developers, designers and contractors all the time. But it always comes down to cost; contractors don’t want to pay any more than they would for scaffolding.”

In the current economic climate, they admit that convincing a customer to use MCWPs instead of scaffolding is a challenge. “Those people who have used masts and understand their benefits will use them again. There is no risk in their minds,” observes Adrian Bolton.

“But someone who doesn’t know the technology will think ‘I’ve got to finish this contract, I’ve got eight months and a tight budget – I’m not going to risk something new’”

Mr Reid says that the end user needs to be aware of all the hidden costs of scaffolding, which include productivity and, notably, the time it takes to erect the scaffold in the first place: “A contractor using mastclimbing

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platforms will get a more efficient access solution and it'll be on and off the job quicker than scaffolding." MCWPs can deliver as much as a two-thirds reduction in set-up times, adds Mr Reid.

Add to this the obvious reduction in labour required to install a MCWP compared with erecting scaffolding, and the consequential improvement in health and safety – for both installers and the trades using them – makes the MCWP really begin to look like the smarter option.

For some jobs, MCWPs have already become the natural choice – curtain walling being the prime example. With their ability to carry large cladding panels into position, MCWPs have become an integral part of the cladding industry. "It's virtually impossible to install curtain walling without it," says Mr Reid.

Another trade which has more recently started to embrace MCWPs more widely is bricklaying. As any bricklayer will tell you, there is an optimum height for a course of bricks to be laid comfortably and efficiently; but on a scaffold, the bricklayer will always have to start at floor level and work right up to the bottom of the next lift.

"With a mastclimbing platform, you simply raise the platform as you go so there's no bending or stretching. It makes everything quicker and it improves health and safety," says Mr Reid.

New applications

Adrian Bolton says that there are also new opportunities outside the construction industry – you just need to find them. Alimak Hek has itself been exploring new applications and finding new clients, one of which is a major energy company that is now using Alimak platforms for replacing heavy, high-level pipe runs at a large industrial site.

These efforts to extend the use of MCWPs are helping to maximise utilisation of machines but there is no sign of actual growth yet, says Mr Bolton:

"Our market is very quiet; but we're a big manufacturer with other products and we've been relying on other sectors to keep us going."



Having said that, Mr Bolton points out that Alimak Hek has recently launched a new MCWP, the TPM range which is fully modular and can double as a goods hoist.

The relative lack of activity in the market hasn't deterred newcomers to the industry either. Six years ago, a scaffolding contractor from Leighton Buzzard, BFT Scaffolding, found itself on site with a MCWP hirer which – according to director Jason Harris – was doing a "rotten" job.

"We thought we could do better so we started researching the market," says Mr Harris.

On the strength of a major social housing refurbishment contract for Luton Borough Council, BFT bought its first 60 drive units and promptly sold its scaffolding inventory, relaunching itself as BFT Mastclimbers.

Now, with a fleet of 240 drive units, the company is working flat out, according to Mr Harris. "We're busy all year round and are now looking for another 60 drive units," he says.

Mr Harris, in common with Cameron Reid at Harsco, says that there are more and more brickwork contractors among the customer base: "They find they can lay 30 per cent more bricks a day with a mastclimbing platform. We also do a lot of rendering contracts and again, the workers find it quicker and more comfortable working off a platform."

Although the scaffolding industry has reacted to the current economic climate by slashing their own rates, the use of MCWPs makes as much sense in a downturn as it does during a boom, says Mr Reid.

"The health and safety benefits are an important consideration and there's no doubt that in terms of working at height, mastclimbing platforms are better than scaffolding. If you consider your access requirements right at the planning stage, it's much easier to see the cost benefits too," he says.

Health and safety and cost benefits – two concepts that are always going to appeal to the construction industry.

The health and safety benefits of MCWPs is an important factor



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A smart way to safety

The smart PAL Card can stop untrained workers using MEWPs

For operators tired of having their MEWP “borrowed” in their absence and used by fellow workers on site, and for contractors wary of other suppliers using and damaging machines that they are responsible for under the rental contract, IPAF’s Smart PAL Card (Powered Access Licence) opens up possibilities to control machine access and improve site safety.

A MEWP can be set to only start if a trained operator is at the controls. Site managers can designate authorised operators to use specific MEWPs. They can also track who has used which machine for how long, and prevent fraudulent use.

There are two parts to the system: the card and the reader. The Smart PAL Card’s unique identifier allows equipment hirers and users to access operator training details held on the card and at a remote and secure database. The card works with IT systems that meet the security requirements defined by IPAF. Card readers are used to read the Smart PAL Card. **Readers are mounted on MEWPs and can be programmed to prevent unauthorised use according to individual site requirements.**

Those concerned about additional costs for smartcards and card readers can rest assured – it will not be compulsory to use these. The yellow PAL Card as the industry knows it will continue to have the relevant data printed on it and it already contains several in-built security features.



IPAF's PAL Card is getting Smarter!...

...it could make the industry safer by controlling access to machines

IPAF's Smart PAL Card (Powered Access Licence) will enable managers to prevent untrained workers from using machines on site.

- The MEWP will only start if the operator has a valid PAL Card, proving they are trained for the appropriate machine category.
- The smart PAL Card can be set to only allow certain operators from your company to use specific machines.
- An electronic logbook can be created for each operator – showing which machines they have operated, for how long and where – and what familiarisations they have received.
- Smartcard systems can be integrated for industry-wide coverage.

The Smart PAL Card is optional and an additional service
The well established PAL Card will continue to show the relevant data. The PAL Card will continue to have security features such as the cardholder's photo and signature, and an IPAF logo printed as a hologram. PAL Cards can be verified online at www.ipaf.org

www.ipaf.org **info@ipaf.org**



The front side shows the cardholder's name and photograph. It also shows the expiry date and the machine categories that the cardholder has been trained to operate. The reverse side shows the cardholder's signature and an IPAF logo that is printed as a hologram. In addition, site and safety managers can check if a PAL Card is valid

PAL Cards can be verified online at www.ipaf.org

by using the verification tool at www.ipaf.org.

“How the smartcard technology is used will depend on specific requirements of contractors and rental companies,” says IPAF director of operations Giles Council. “It will not be mandatory to use Smart PAL Cards, but the technology is there for those who wish to use it, and smartcard technology has the potential to improve site safety and security.”

Those who wish to have Smart PAL Cards issued to trained operators can request these from IPAF, at a small additional fee, through the online system that is provided for IPAF-approved training centres.

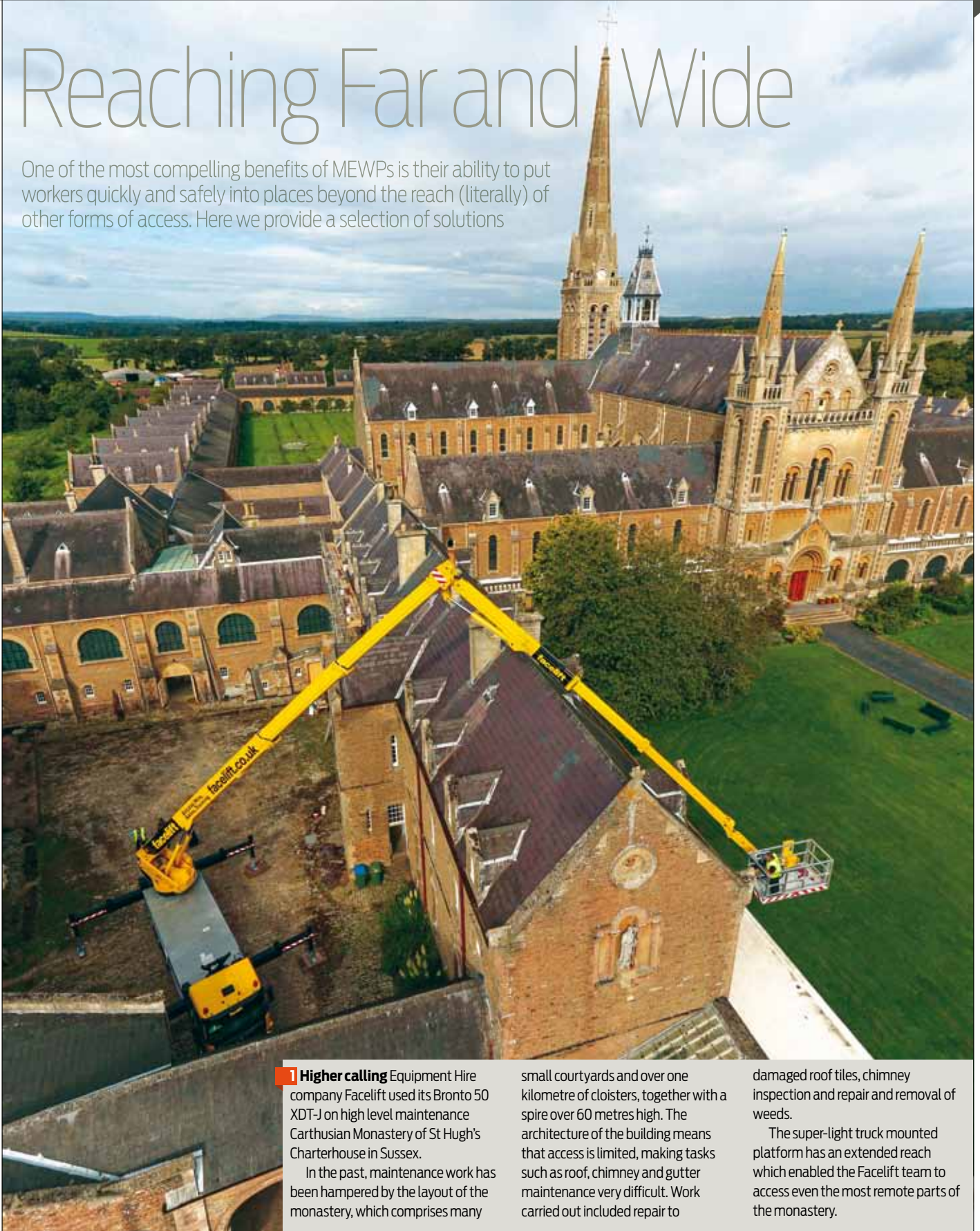
In the future, the Smart PAL Card could also be used, in conjunction with the IPAF training database, to track machine familiarisation and to act as an electronic logbook of operator experience.

If a MEWP operator moves from one site to another, his employer could use the system to check with the database that he has had the training and familiarisation for the MEWPs he would be operating on the next site. The employer can also keep a log of all the work and familiarisation the operator has completed on a site.

“There's lots of potential and the system will become what users want to make of it,” says Mr Council. “IPAF has always put safety as its top priority and the Smart PAL Card is another step in that direction.”

Reaching Far and Wide

One of the most compelling benefits of MEWPs is their ability to put workers quickly and safely into places beyond the reach (literally) of other forms of access. Here we provide a selection of solutions



Higher calling Equipment Hire company Facelift used its Bronto 50 XDT-J on high level maintenance Carthusian Monastery of St Hugh's Charterhouse in Sussex.

In the past, maintenance work has been hampered by the layout of the monastery, which comprises many

small courtyards and over one kilometre of cloisters, together with a spire over 60 metres high. The architecture of the building means that access is limited, making tasks such as roof, chimney and gutter maintenance very difficult. Work carried out included repair to

damaged roof tiles, chimney inspection and repair and removal of weeds.

The super-light truck mounted platform has an extended reach which enabled the Facelift team to access even the most remote parts of the monastery.



2



3



4

2 Climbing towards the sun: In Ljubljana, Slovenia, a Maber MCWP has been used to fix sunscreens and glass balconies to a high rise hotel. The square-masted MBP 02/150 with a deck length of 28 m and height of 75 m offers a capacity of 1.5 tonnes. Mast height on the machine can reach up to 150 m.

3 High hopes: A 70 m Bronto Skylift S 70 XDT, belonging to Swiss company Maltech, gets to the top of the challenge in Zurich.

4 An ideal pick me up: Specialist hire firm Higher Access was asked to supply two CS170s with operators to work at Tameside General Hospital.

The Children's Unit's imaginative waiting room featured tight spaces, combined with underfloor heating, meaning a specialist machine such as the CS170 was required to work on the high-level panelling in the atrium.

Higher Access was able to provide two operators to work out of hours, allowing the client

to concentrate on their work without worrying about the equipment.

5 Tall order: Two GEDA 500 Z/ZP transport platforms have been used at Schloss Neuschwanstein in Bavaria, Germany. The façade had to be covered in scaffolding so that the natural stone walls could be refurbished.

The installation of the scaffolding was a challenge in itself, because there is only a steep mountain slope at the foot of the building.

Contractor BSB Franke & Wagner had the scaffold materials delivered in phases and then transported using a GEDA 500 Z/ZP to a first assembly platform

at a height of 10 m, fixed into the rock itself by the scaffolding installation company.

Without the transport platform the delivery of the scaffolding material would quite simply have been impossible, GEDA says.

The GEDA 500 Z/ZP is being used by stonemasons and



restorers during the repair works, with the workers and their tools and materials lifted to their workplace.

A second GEDA 500 Z/ZP with a construction height of 38 m has been installed on the highest tower of the castle.

The platform can be used both as a transport platform, for

a maximum of five people and loads of up to 500 kg, and also as a construction hoist with rated load of 850 kg.

6 Raising the roof: A Palazzini Palift Ragno XTJ 42 crawler platform has been used in the hallowed environs of Westminster Cathedral for roof maintenance. The Ragno can work

at heights from 4 m to 42 m.

7 A platform to go into Orbit: A Niftylift HR21 4x4 hired from Hi-reach was an essential element in the assembly of the Mittal Orbit in the Olympic village in London earlier in the year. The machine was craned into the structure in order to

allow the steel erectors to perform their task from the inside.

8 Working with the Boss: Somerset MEWPs hirer Prolift Access has used its fleet of Youngman BOSS platforms for a range of customers including heating and ventilation specialists and electrical contractors who

appreciate the machines' compact size, manoeuvrability and light weight which allows them to be used on suspended flooring.

The top-of-the-range X3X-SP model weighs in at only 495 kg and has a maximum working height of 5.14 m, along with a safe working load of 150 kg. Thanks to an overall width

of just 0.76 m, it can pass easily through a standard doorway.

9 Towering ambition: Maintenance on the Italia Telecom tower is made straightforward, thanks to the use of a blift 162 van-mounted platform from CTE. It offers a vertical reach of up to 16.5 m and outreach of up to 11.2 m.

Join the safety movement

Being a member of IPAF is about being part of the movement that keeps the powered access industry safe. IPAF is a not-for-profit association owned by its members to serve its members. IPAF membership keeps you up to date with the latest technical and safety advice. Members also have access to many services that save time and money.

What IPAF does for its members

- Lobbying and representation
- Monitoring regulations and developments
- IPAF experts
- Technical hotline
- Business information
- Business-related training
- Annual publications and events
- Hire terms and conditions

Range of services including:

Insure your equipment rentals
JCB Insurance Hiremax is an insurance scheme for IPAF members, specifically designed for rental companies. It enables rental companies to rent out equipment and waive the requirement of the customer to insure it, as would normally be required in the rental contract, in return for a fee in the rental rate.

Discounted courier deliveries
Do you struggle to find a cost-effective courier service for your parcels or documents around the UK and internationally? IPAF members in the UK can tie in to the 50 per cent discount rate offered to IPAF by courier company TNT.

Tax refunds for PAL Card holders
Rift, which specialises in tax refunds for UK construction workers, can bring financial benefits to PAL Card holders and IPAF-approved training centres.

IPAF The world authority in powered access

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JCB Insurance Hiremax scheme is an insurance offer for IPAF members, specifically designed for rental companies. The insurance scheme enables rental companies to rent out equipment and waive the requirement of the customer to insure it, as would normally be required in the rental contract, in return for a fee in the rental rate.

BENEFITS FOR RENTAL COMPANIES

- Rent out equipment without requiring your customers to insure under the rental contract.
- This ring fenced insurance product is separate from your main insurance package allowing you to hire out with a greatly reduced risk.
- You only insure and pay the premium for the equipment you need and premiums are payable monthly in arrears.
- Win new business; you can tender for contracts which stipulate that insurance must be included.
- Added flexibility; by offering your customers the option to rent with insurance and reduce their risk, you could win new contracts.
- The policy offers reinstatement as new or 'new for old' cover on equipment up to 2 years old.

Business information for IPAF members

In today's tough business environment you need to have access to reliable, up-to-date information in order to survive and stay one step ahead of your competitors.

Whether you are looking to target new customers, wanting to obtain company information or market research data, the Business Information Service, from the Institute of Directors in London, can help.

As an IPAF member, you can take advantage of this service free of charge as part of your membership benefits. A team of experienced researchers will spend up to 30 minutes answering your enquiry and provide tailored information within 24 hours.

Details on IPAF member benefits and how to join are at the Services section of www.ipaf.org.

Website

Your first stop for powered access resources is www.ipaf.org.

Whether you are a seasoned operator, an engineer or someone looking to buy your first piece of powered access kit, the IPAF website www.ipaf.org has something for you.

There is useful and practical technical guidance on topics ranging from using harnesses and conducting familiarisation, to assessing ground conditions and how to prevent rare but dangerous trapping or crushing accidents that could happen when platforms are used in confined overhead spaces.

Support IPAF's safety campaigns. You can report any fatal or serious accident worldwide involving aerial work platforms. Get involved in the Spread The Load campaign, which calls for the proper assessment of ground conditions and correct use of outriggers and spreader plates.

The ready reckoner conversion tool helps you calculate the correct size of spreader plates to be used.

Visit the Films section to view the award-winning *Spot the Mistake* video. The 20-minute video features six separate scenarios and each scene contains one deliberate mistake, which the audience has the chance to identify before the correct procedure is shown.

Don't miss the dramatic video *Only Dummies Don't Wear Harnesses on Booms*. This is a vivid illustration of the catapult effect and the dangers of not wearing full-body harnesses on boom-type platforms.

If you are looking for training, the locator will help find your nearest training centre. Site and safety managers can check the validity of PAL (Powered Access Licences) Cards using the online verification tool at www.ipaf.org.

HOW IT WORKS
Record each rental on the spreadsheet provided and pay the premium at the end of the month. Depending on the rental software that you use, the premium can also be calculated directly from there.

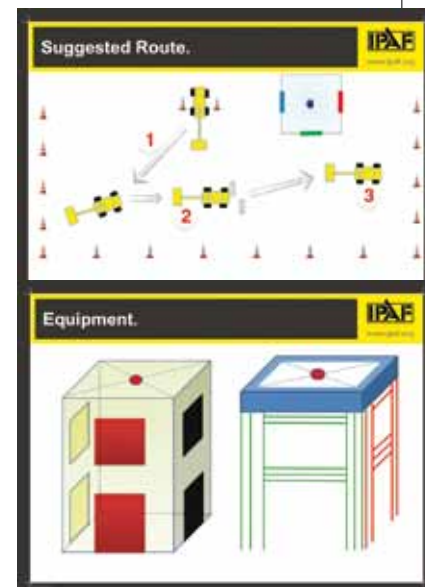
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Equipment is covered on a full 'all risks' basis. Equipment under two years old that is lost or stolen will usually be replaced 'new for old'. In addition to powered access equipment, the insurance package can also be used for mobile and self-propelled electrical/mechanical equipment such as shovels, excavators, telehandlers, rollers, etc. Check with your insurance representative.

COSTS
Premiums are based on the excess level selected and the features of the equipment. It can be as low as 14.25% of the rental charge. The rate for standard equipment with no security fitted is 14.25% of the rental charge.

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PAL+ training meets worksite challenges

The PAL+ course better prepares MEWP operators for challenging environments

Operators of mobile elevating work platforms (MEWPs) who work in higher risk or challenging environments can now get advanced training from IPAF's PAL+ course.

PAL+ is an optional, additional one day of category-specific MEWP training that was developed in response to demand from UK contractors. It builds on and complements the PAL operator course by providing further training that better prepares MEWP operators for work in higher risk or challenging environments.

PAL+ focuses on practical training and includes a short, compact theory session. While the PAL operator course meets all requirements for basic operator training, PAL+ is intended to be more advanced, challenging and extensive.

The PAL+ course is available for the categories Static Vertical (1a+), Static Boom (1b+), Mobile Vertical (3a+) and

Mobile Boom (3b+). Candidates are required to hold an existing operator PAL Card (Powered Access Licence) in the relevant category. They need to successfully complete a theory test, a practical test and an interview. PAL+, like the PAL operator qualification, is valid for five years and must be renewed after that.

"Operators on the course, and instructors, have found the PAL+ course useful and beneficial for the improvement of knowledge and operating skills," says Eddie Reast, a certified senior instructor at IPAF-approved training centre Facelift. "The emphasis on practical training is excellent and the practical test is challenging, even for experienced operators."

The emphasis on practical training is designed to make experienced operators capable of taking on tougher tasks as demanded at their worksite. One practical exercise, for example, focuses on work in confined overhead



Left PAL+ gives experienced operators additional practical training for work in challenging environments

Right Practical exercises from IPAF's PAL+ training programme

spaces. Another involves driving the MEWP on challenging terrain.

PAL+ has won the support of the UK Contractors Group (UKCG), which is encouraging steel erectors and net riggers working on UKCG sites to hold an IPAF PAL+ qualification from 1 January 2013. The UKCG also plans to extend this requirement to other trades for specific projects, based on the outcomes of jobsite risk assessments.

"PAL+ is a positive development," says Mark Atkinson from Clugston. "Candidates will need to be experienced operators and they will have over five hours of practical assessment on MEWPs."

The course was developed by a task force consisting of representatives from contractors and the Health & Safety Executive (HSE), and members of the IPAF Council and IPAF Training Committee. This was done to ensure that PAL+ is market-driven and relevant to the needs of end-users and safety authorities.

"Demand for PAL+ is picking up," says IPAF CEO Tim Whiteman. "It is an extremely good course created by experts who have extensive experience operating equipment in the field. Operators will benefit from taking this course."

The PAL+ course is currently provided by selected IPAF-approved training centres in the UK.

For more information, visit www.ipaf.org/palplus

IPAF Training Centres

IPAF training is provided by a network of approved training centres that operate independently. This directory helps you find your nearest training centre in the UK and around the world. All active IPAF training centres are subject to audits and expected to meet stringent quality procedures. New centres are being added every month. To see the most up-to-date list, visit www.ipaf.org

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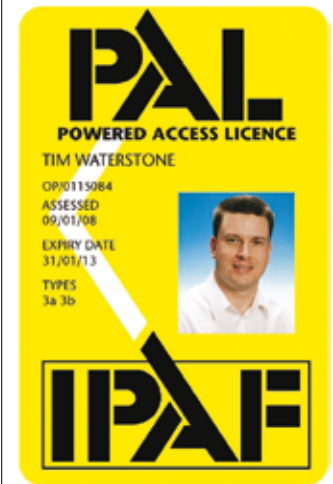
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www.accessplatforms.com

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www.altitudeaccess.co.uk

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www.astleyhire.co.uk

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www.rapidplatforms.co.uk

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What is IPAF?

The International Powered Access Federation (IPAF) promotes the safe and effective use of powered access equipment worldwide. It provides technical advice and information, influences and interprets legislation and standards, and runs safety initiatives and training programmes.

It is a not-for-profit organisation owned by its members, who include manufacturers, rental companies, distributors, contractors and users. Members operate about 90 per cent of the MEWP rental fleet in the UK and manufacture about 85 per cent of platforms on the market.

IPAF's training programme for platform operators is certified by the international certification organisation TÜV as conforming to ISO 18878. More than 90,000 operators are trained each year through a worldwide network of over 500 IPAF-approved training centres. Successful trainees gain the PAL Card (Powered Access Licence), the most widely held and recognised proof of training for platform operators.

IPAF membership is open to users of platforms, manufacturers, distributors, rental and training companies. Members can access practical information and a growing portfolio of member services.

More information is available from:

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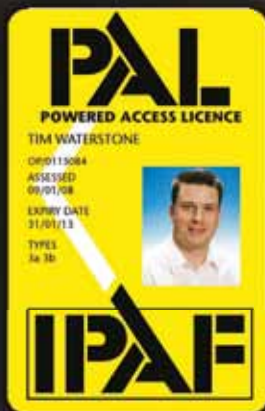


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IPAF Approved Training Centres train more than 100,000 operators every year in the safe and effective use of powered access platforms.

The IPAF PAL Card is recognised worldwide across industries as proof that your operators have been trained to the highest safety standards and meet all legal requirements.

Find an IPAF approved training centre at www.ipaf.org

The IPAF operator training programme is certified by TÜV as conforming to ISO 18878.

