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Moving up

The construction industry is picking up! And with it the use of MEWPs. This is great news for you and for the economy as a whole. What does it mean for safety? Does more usage mean more danger? Or does more money mean newer equipment which should be safer?

Neither. If you work with a responsible hire company and are a responsible contractor, there should be no change. MEWPs are safe if correctly maintained and operated by qualified operators under the supervision of trained managers. This triangle of responsibilities is vital to ensure the safe use of MEWPs. Any weakness in one of these three points can be catastrophic - MEWPs are used to lift people into the air, which means that any problem is dramatic and potentially dangerous.

But help is at hand. Responsible hire companies do maintain their equipment to a high level. Responsible contractors train site managers to manage MEWPs (see page 6), and there is no excuse for using an untrained operator. So, as the upturn comes, don't take your eye off the safety ball. As you get busier, remember that MEWPs are the safest way to do temporary work at height, but you need good kit, good operators and good management to stay safe.

Something that can help you is the new Smart PAL Card (see page 41). You can use this to make sure that the only people starting a MEWP are trained operators. Visit www.ipaf.org for videos, toolbox talks and other information.

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

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REPORTS

HSE incident analysis reports: entrapment risks being addressed

THE HEALTH and Safety Executive has published two reports focusing on MEWPs: RR961 *Mobile elevated work platform (MEWP) incident analysis* and RR960 *Mobile elevated work platforms – Phase 3*. The reports examine known fatal and serious accidents reported from across the globe, in an attempt to identify actions that need to be taken to address the potential for sustained involuntary operation of controls and entrapment or crushing.

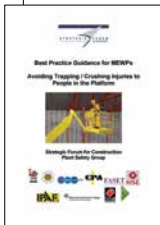
IPAF welcomes the reports and notes that industry is also examining causation factors. Following the Strategic Forum's *Best Practice Guidance for MEWPs: Avoiding Trapping/Crushing Injuries to People in the Platform*, IPAF has produced and distributed guidance on secondary guarding devices. IPAF's accident reporting database, updates to the IPAF MEWPs for Managers course, the

launch of the PAL+ advanced operator course for those working in challenging environments, and research being undertaken by the IPAF

Manufacturers' Technical Committee into the functionality of MEWP controls are all measures being taken to address the risk of entrapment. See the full news stories at

www.ipaf.org/news

Guidance on secondary guarding is available at the publications section of www.ipaf.org



MEWP safety confirmed

IPAF database reports 28 fatalities involving MEWPs worldwide

THERE WERE 28 fatalities worldwide involving mobile elevating work platforms in the first half of 2013, according to IPAF's accident database.

The main causes of these fatalities were: overturn (10), fall from height (9), entrapment (5), electrocution (3), and impact with MEWP (1).

Thirteen of the fatalities involved booms, 10 involved scissor lifts, and three involved vehicle mounts. In two cases, the machine type was unknown.

Of these fatalities, 13 occurred in the USA, two each in France, Germany, the Netherlands and the UK, and one each in Armenia, Canada, Ireland, Malaysia, Norway, Spain and the United Arab Emirates.

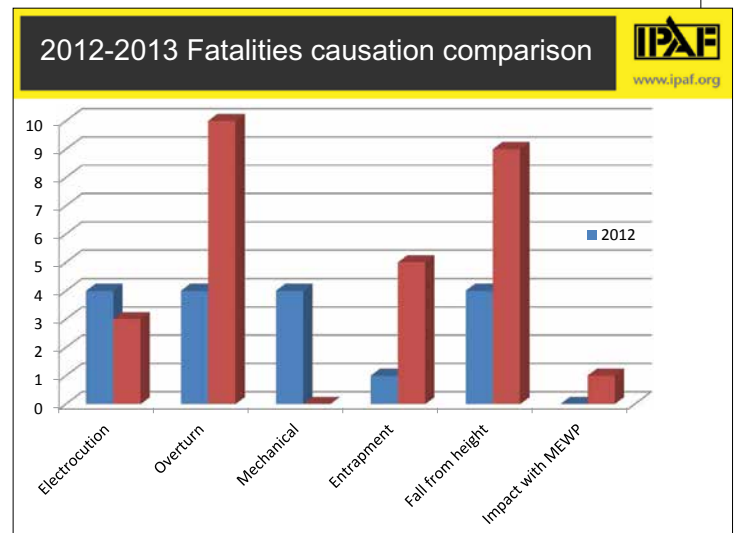
While releasing these findings, IPAF also updated the 2012 preliminary results following the reporting of a previously unrecorded fatal accident in Canada in October 2012. This brings the total fatalities in 2012 to 32, instead of the 31 that were initially reported.

Compared with the first half of 2012 which saw 17 fatalities reported to the federation, the number of fatalities reported for the first half of 2013 has increased by about 65 per cent.

IPAF believes the accident reporting project is capturing more data, not that there are more accidents.

While the main causes of fatalities were fairly evenly spread in the first half of 2012, the first half of 2013 saw a rise in the number of fatalities resulting from overturning equipment and workers falling from height. The fatalities in the first half of 2012 involved more booms and vehicle mounts. Those in the first half of 2013 involved more booms and scissor lifts.

"Findings from IPAF's rental market reports lead us to



estimate that there are more than one million MEWPs in the world," said IPAF CEO Tim Whiteman. "Every fatality is one too many, but these figures show that powered access equipment remains a safe way to carry out temporary work at height."

"The accuracy of the data relies upon those using MEWPs and other interested parties to report any known fatal accidents to IPAF at www.ipaf.org/accident or to an IPAF member of staff," said the federation's technical officer Chris Wraith. "The comprehensiveness of the data cannot be guaranteed, but where appropriate, action is taken to verify the facts. The data is updated should relevant information become available."

IPAF's accident data is based on information collected in a number of ways: directly reported to the IPAF accident database via its website; information obtained by IPAF staff worldwide; and information collated from press releases and news reports – and verified as appropriate.

IPAF rental company members in the UK are required to report any known MEWP accidents

involving their staff, as part of their membership. The federation also encourages all manufacturers, rental companies, contractors and users to report any known fatal or serious accidents involving MEWPs and mast climbing work platforms worldwide at the IPAF's online accident database.

The project is open to IPAF members and non-members, and includes an option for anonymous reporting.

All data collected is confidential and none of the detail of any accident is shared with third parties or disclosed to safety authorities unless required to by legal writ. The only exception to this is that manufacturers will be given basic data if a machine manufactured by their company is involved in a fatal accident.

To register and to report an accident involving a MEWP or MCWP, go to www.ipaf.org/accident

28
deaths involving MEWPs

13
MEWP fatalities using booms

2
MEWP accidents in the UK

Tower cranes 'are not for lifting people': IPAF welcomes CPA statement

IPAF WELCOMES the UK-based Construction Plant-hire Association's Tower Crane Interest Group statement that tower cranes are not suitable for lifting people for entertainment purposes.

The CPA letter said: "The use of tower cranes for lifting persons at work is permitted by the Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 only 'in exceptional circumstances, when it is not practicable to gain access by less hazardous means'. BS 7121-1:2006 gives detailed advice on planning and carrying out such operations."

IPAF CEO Tim Whiteman said: "Purpose-built powered access equipment is an infinitely safer and more precise method of providing access to carry out temporary work at height... cranes should be used for lifting loads, not people."

Read the full statement at www.ipaf.org/news

IPAF works with Strategic Forum to create MEWP safety sub-group

THE MEWP safety sub-group of the Strategic Forum for Construction's plant safety group has been re-established following consultation between IPAF, the Strategic Forum and the Construction Plant-hire Association (CPA).

The move reflects a desire to strengthen the contractor involvement in discussions about MEWP operational safety on site.

The CPA provides secretariat services to the Strategic Forum's sub-groups. IPAF funds the activities of the MEWP sub-group and provides the services of its technical officer Chris Wraith to act as technical author for the group.

The initiative received the full support of Simon Mantle, chair of the Strategic

Forum's health and safety committee, and Joy Jones from the Health and Safety Executive, who stressed the importance of providing continuity with projects launched by the IPAF MEWP Safety Forum.

"This truly inclusive group will address all aspects of safe MEWP operations and lead to implementation of agreed best practices," said IPAF CEO Tim Whiteman. "Around 40 per cent of MEWP use is now non-construction, but our experience of working on the previous sub-group... leads us to believe this group can be very inclusive and agree standards for the whole sector."

40%
MEWP use non-construction

News TRAINING

Compulsory training

UKCG mandates PAL+ training for net riggers and steel erectors

THE UK Contractors Group has made PAL+ advanced operator training compulsory for net riggers and steel erectors working on UKCG sites from 31 October 2013. The mandate is part of the UKCG's policy to address the risk of entrapment when mobile elevating work platforms are used.

The UKCG statement said: "From 31 October 2013, the UKCG standard for MEWP operations shall be that 'All net riggers and steel erectors, along with their associated trades, eg painters and welders, working as part of erection and netting activities, operating mobile or static boom and scissor lifts, shall hold IPAF PAL+ or CPCS Competent Operator certification.'"

The UKCG statement also pointed to available technical guidance to avoid

the risk of entrapment when using MEWPs on site.

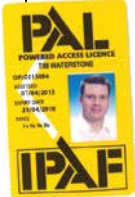
This includes the Strategic Forum for Construction plant safety group's *Best Practice Guidance for MEWPs: Avoiding Trapping/Crushing Injuries to People in the Platform*, and IPAF's *Guidance on Selection of Anti-Entrapment Devices for MEWPs*. Both documents are available for download at the publications section of www.ipaf.org

The UKCG is consulting with a view to extending the requirement for IPAF PAL+ progressively to other trades. PAL+ is an additional day of category-specific MEWP training for operators working in higher risk or challenging environments. More details on PAL+ are at www.ipaf.org/palplus



TRAINING

IPAF centres set record for training volume



A TOTAL of 112,887 people were trained by IPAF-approved training centres in 2012. This is an increase of 11.3 per cent over the 101,457 people trained 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 108,065 PAL Cards worldwide through its approved training centres in 2012, a 10.8 per cent increase over the 97,488 PAL Cards issued in 2011.



Access awards

Windsor, 3rd April 2014

THE NEXT IPAF Summit and International Awards for Powered Access will take place on 3 April 2014 at the historic and luxurious Beaumont Estate Hotel in Windsor, near London in the UK. Enter for an award, book gala dinner tickets, or register for the free IPAF Summit conference at www.iapa-summit.info

MEWPs for Managers training goes global

Besides the UK and US versions, IPAF's MEWPs for Managers training course is now available in German, French, Italian, Dutch, Spanish and Portuguese

THE EXPANDED reach of IPAF'S MEWPs for Managers course means that more managers worldwide can start learning about using MEWPs on site, from planning the job and completing a risk assessment, to selecting the right equipment and mitigating all possible risks.

The one-day course for managers includes topics such as health and safety regulations, accident prevention and control, personal protection equipment, and pre-use checks and maintenance.

The course is about planning, supervising and effectively managing the use of powered access, and not about operating equipment. It ends with a written test that candidates must pass in order to obtain a certificate.

The course is targeted at project managers, foremen and supervisors working in a broad range of industries such as construction, facilities management, retail, airports and arboriculture. Companies who have had employees complete the MEWPs for Managers course include Balfour Beatty in the UK, Monsanto in the US, and Odebrecht in Brazil and Venezuela.



"The safe and effective use of powered access equipment starts at management level," said IPAF CEO Tim Whiteman. "Quite often, the causes of MEWP accidents can be traced back to poor planning and management issues, rather than operator error or technical failure. MEWPs offer a very safe and efficient way to work at height, but managers need to be trained to plan the work and to select the right machine."

To find an IPAF-approved training centre that offers the MEWPs for Managers course in your country or region, use the locator at www.ipaf.org or visit www.ipaf.org/m4m

Scottish government recognises PAL Card

IPAF HAS received confirmation from the Scottish government's Procurement and Commercial Directorate that the PAL Card is recognised as fulfilling training requirements for public sector construction contracts.

In a letter to IPAF, government principal adviser for construction procurement Colin Judge wrote: "Given its worldwide standing we assume that public works

contractors will, where appropriate, continue to accept membership of IPAF as proof of the relevant skills, training and safety awareness necessary for on-site staff."

Mr Judge also quoted paragraph 7, Annex B of Policy Note 9/2012, which states: "Scottish government does not prescribe Construction Skills Certification Scheme as the

absolute or exclusive means for contractors to demonstrate compliance with the policy.

"Contractors performing a public contract can do so by reference to other means that they consider are equivalent to CSCS for assessing skills, training and safety in relation to the particular nature of the contract."

See the full statement at www.ipaf.org/news



GET THE “+” ON YOUR PAL

PAL + is an additional one day of category specific training aimed at Mobile Elevating Work Platform (MEWP) operators working in higher risk or challenging environments.

The PAL operator course meets all requirements for basic operator training but now there is an extra “+” for those wanting to go further.

For more information or
to book this course visit
www.ipaf.org/palplus



PAL+

Course content

- + Compact theory session
- + Emphasis on practical training
- + Categories:
 - Static Vertical (1a+)
 - Static Boom (1b+)
 - Mobile Vertical (3a+)
 - Mobile Boom (3b+)
- + Challenging practical exercises
- + Written and practical tests
- + Individual interviews

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



IPAF rental market reports point to US growth

IPAF'S ANNUAL rental market reports estimate the global rental fleet for aerial work platforms, or mobile elevating work platforms, to be around 950,000 units.

The US rental market grew by 6 per cent in 2012 to reach \$6.6bn. Fleets grew by 6 per cent, with more investment expected in 2013.

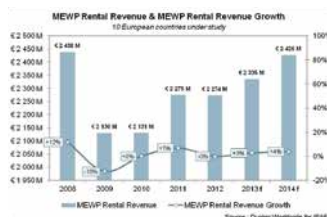
Brazil had a rental fleet of up to 19,500 units at the end of 2012, a growth of 30 per cent over 2011.

The European rental market in the 10 countries surveyed remained stable in 2012 and is valued at €2.3bn, which would



put the total European market at around €2.6bn. The UK rental fleet is estimated at close to 50,000 units. The mix remains identical to 2011, with scissors representing 60 per cent, booms 32 per cent and others 8 per cent of the total fleet mix.

The IPAF US and European powered access rental market reports for 2013 can be purchased at www.ipaf.org/reports



Training for vulnerable workers in spotlight

AWPT operator course and eLearning module available in Spanish

THE AERIAL work platform operator course and eLearning module managed in the US and Canada by IPAF's North American subsidiary American Work Platform Training is now available in Spanish, as part of IPAF's continuing commitment to provide training and safety material in other languages. IPAF has thus fulfilled the commitment it made to the US Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

At the IPAF Summit in Miami, Jordan Barab, US deputy assistant secretary of labour for occupational safety and health, highlighted the need to target "vulnerable workers" with limited English proficiency and commended IPAF's ongoing training and safety initiatives.

IPAF CEO Tim Whiteman committed to provide the AWPT operator course and eLearning module in Spanish, with the aim of providing training in a manner that employees can understand for safe AWP operations.



Spanish-speaking employees in the US will benefit from taking the AWPT operator course in a language that they are fluent in.

New representatives for Switzerland and the UAE

ROGER SCHAFFNER is IPAF's new auditor and member support representative for Switzerland. Schaffner is responsible for auditing IPAF-approved training centres throughout Switzerland and southern Germany, and for recruiting and supporting members and training centres. He works with the IPAF Swiss Country Council and Training Working Group to represent members' interests at national meetings and formulate IPAF policies in Switzerland.

Jason Woods is IPAF's new representative for the United Arab Emirates, reflecting the federation's steadily growing presence in the Middle East where IPAF currently has 15 members across Jordan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the UAE. Woods is based in Dubai and can be contacted on uae@ipaf.org

Jason Woods (centre) at a meeting with IPAF CEO Tim Whiteman (left) and Dr Ali Salem Al Qaiwani, director of occupational health and safety, UAE Ministry of Labour



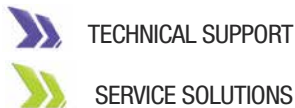
IPAF training meets Spanish national standard

IPAF'S TRAINING programmes in Spain are certified as conforming with UNE 58923, the Spanish national MEWP operator training standard. This was audited and certified by the international standards body Bureau Veritas.



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Big machines – a bigger challenge

As MEWPs get bigger and more complex, does the industry need new measures to ensure they are operated safely? Our Big Debate brought experts together to tackle the question head-on. Andrew Gaved takes the notes

Chris Wraith (CW) Let's open with the fundamental question: should bigger machines be treated differently to any other kind of powered access?

Tim White (TW) I did my IPAF PAL Card on a 26 ft scissor and a 45 ft articulated, but I have never driven a 125-footer, nor would I feel capable of doing so on the strength purely of my IPAF PAL Card. And I certainly wouldn't drive a 32 m diesel scissor on that basis. To me it is like the difference between a Ford Fiesta and a Formula One car.

Wayne Lawson (WL) On top of that, where you would have done your test would have been a controlled environment, like a slab. That is very different to working with a machine five

times as big, with machines moving about and overhead restrictions, rough terrain and inclines.

Matt Skipworth (MS) But the trouble is that many people still think "I've got my IPAF PAL Card, so I am trained on any machine or MEWP".

CW So do contractors on site just assume that once the operator has the ticket, they can drive anything? Is there enough training out there?

WL I think the IPAF PAL+ course is taking it a step forward for contractors. But Tim is right. I did my training on a mast-lift and a small scissor under controlled conditions. Should that license me to drive an ultra-boom? If I was to take a job now that required me

to work on one, I would want to take some extra training.

MS I think there is too much emphasis put on training, when the critical part is competency. You can leave a college having completed the IPAF training, get your card a week later and go on site, but it doesn't make you competent.

CW Is it just a boom problem or do the current concerns extend to more complex machines, like tracked spiders?

MS Some of the new scissors are equally potentially dangerous – some of the narrower ones, for instance.

WL Accidents on the bigger machines are actually fairly limited, although you'd expect more from the smaller machines as there are more of them.



nge

Maybe that's a respect thing. So perhaps you need better training on the smaller machines - it's pretty well known that you can kill yourself falling from over 6 ft.

CW The reason the 2005 Work at Height regulations abolished the 2 m rule was because of the number of accidents at low height. That's why low level access has grown so much; the thing about low heights is you are more likely to take risks than you would in the bigger booms.

Mark Atkinson (MA) I disagree with that, actually. I have investigated a couple of accidents where it was caused by overfamiliarity with the equipment - the operator had been



Debate participants, clockwise from left: Chris Wraith (technical officer, IPAF); Matt Skipworth (service solutions manager EAMER, Terex Genie); Tim White (UK manager, Riwal); Wayne Lawson (regional director, Riwal, and immediate past president, IPAF); Mark Atkinson (health and safety manager, Clugston Construction)

working with a 65-footer every day so he thought he could drive the 85- or the 125-footer.

TW But I think it is the very familiarity of the operators with the bigger booms that makes them safer with them - they use them regularly. The smaller machines, the 19-footers, are the ones that everyone will jump into, and so accidents can occur.

MA The smaller ones are just a wheelbarrow to some people. I agree with overfamiliarity as a factor.

An entrapment accident I investigated recently occurred because the operator was just not paying attention; he was in auto mode, because it is what he does every day.

CW In the 1990s you did have to go through an extra level of training to go up to the big machines - but then IPAF realigned it to align with EN280, and that's how we got to 1a and 1b, and 3a and 3b. So the question is: should we introduce another level of training again to operate the big booms? And as IPAF now has the Smart PAL Card available, what do you think about using smart cards as a way of ensuring that the operator of the big boom is competent?

WL That's got to be part of it, yes.

TW The technology is there now, isn't it? Telematics, which was originally introduced for theft, is ideal as a method of access control. The key is that someone is responsible.

CW Maybe you can start introducing smart cards on the big booms and then introduce them on the rest of the fleet.

WL I think the theme is that it shouldn't just be about big machines - you don't want kids on 19 ft scissors on the weekend either - and the cost is

coming down all the time. However, it is not necessarily the MEWP manufacturers' role to do this - there aren't many companies that have only one manufacturer's equipment in their fleet, so you would want the equivalent of a TomTom or a Garmin to come in as a standard piece of kit across the range.

MS There are benefits for everybody: for the manufacturer, the rental company and the end user. For us, it allows us to enhance the customer experience and deliver service excellence through the additional tools that telematics has to offer.

CW That raises an issue: are these bigger machines too complicated now? Is that level of technology too much for a construction site?

MS The controls are becoming increasingly complex and we are seeing reduced levels of maintenance so perhaps more training is needed for the maintenance side at the rental level.

WL A customer told me recently that they believe the benefit of fitting telematics would be felt whatever sized machine, because the cost would easily be outweighed by avoiding having the engineer driving out each time to diagnose on site.

TW What about the other issues with the bigger machines - things like transportation? We've gone to site only to find we can't get the machine physically in - costing us, say, £1,000. The very big machines need different kinds of trucks. It tends to be: the bigger the machine, the bigger the complication with delivery.

MA There's often no discussion between the contractor and the principal contractor, for instance as to how they will get the machine on site. It just turns up. Often they think it's your problem once it gets to the gate.

So one thing at UKCG that we are working on is for it to be a requirement that both the UKCG member and the contractor have a MEWP manager, so the two people actually talk together. The subcontractor or contractor doesn't need to be on that project, but he has to be associated with it, so he can be on the other end of a phone and knows what is going on with that project.

Both parties will need to have taken the IPAF MEWPs for Managers course and safe delivery is part of it. So the aim is for it to be an end to the 'drop it off

The big debate

on the street outside' attitude.

TW Our operations guys believe it is important for people to have loading and unloading training – some of these booms are 15 m in length when stowed and the advice is to have twice the length of run-off. If we turn up and the loading area is not fit for purpose – and it is often the big booms this applies to – we just turn the lorry round and go back. But that is a cost that contractors are very unwilling to take on. Our biggest single cost on bigger machines beyond the asset value of the machinery is transport. Our hire desks now ask: “Are you sure that the loading area is this width?” or whatever.

CW One of the things IPAF is working on is guidance for unloading and loading, to ensure that it isn't just the hire company which has all the responsibility when taking delivery, but that the site shares it too. That applies to a boom of any size.

TW That can't come soon enough in my opinion.

CW The UKCG is doing a good job for improving working with MEWPs, but around 40 to 45 per cent of MEWP usage is outside construction. Do you think that the users in these sectors are up to speed with the risks and responsibilities for big booms? How do we get the message about something like PAL+ out to the smaller guys?

TW The onus tends to fall back to the rental company as supplier and we train our guys to do the best they can to ensure that the person taking delivery knows what they are doing. We can ask whether he is competent and has an IPAF PAL Card. But where does our responsibility stop? We have a moral responsibility to make sure everyone using it is safe, but there comes a point where the onus should go on the customer.

MA My point is that it won't be a small project you are putting a 100-ft machine on; it will be a major project like a wind turbine. So given that, if you are spending £1,000 a day hiring it, why isn't the first day with the trades, who will use it, an all-day familiarisation session?

TW I agree. You've spent the money to get the machine there, you've got it on site for three months – why not make it on day one that you do the PAL training with everyone who will be using it on site?

CW Is it a suitable place to do the training?

MA It's the ideal place to do the training. And everyone has meeting rooms on site these days. It is not that much of a cost – if you've paid for steel erectors, and they have to stand down for a day due to wind, no one talks about their additional cost, as it's been budgeted into the job. The cost of the training for the three guys is not an additional cost, it has already been costed into their wages.

WL I think the important thing is that the offer is given every time – let the guy on site say they won't pay for that extra day of training.

MS The one thing that doesn't get looked at in all the guidance is maintenance. We are getting incidents every week, particularly on big booms, that we have to respond to because of maintenance. The end users are not looking at it. It is a big concern to us – after familiarisation and competence, then risk assessment, should come maintenance of the machine.

We are putting guys higher and higher into the air. If the machine fails, all the rest goes out the window. A huge amount of downtime could be saved by better awareness.

MA In construction it tends to be people who need a machine for a specific type or height of job. Someone will decide what it is and then it is different people who have to go up in the MEWP to do the work. On UKCG sites often the project manager is assumed to have the responsibility, but it isn't him who brings the people in – it is the employer who puts them in and he is responsible for ensuring the guys are familiar and competent.

CW That is where the MEWPs for Managers course should come in, to ensure the planning is correct. There is a debate when it comes to things like machine weight, and ground conditions, as to who is responsible, is it the subcontractor using it, whose responsibility is it to ensure the ground conditions, for instance.

MA I believe it is both. The information coming to the subcontractor has got to be in clear English as to what the weight and ground conditions are, as that person might not be so familiar with all the 98 pages of the operators' manual. Then that needs to be passed



to the site manager or MEWP manager, as we often don't know what machine the subcontractor is bringing in until it arrives. On some sites we have 800-tonne cranes working, but I think the pressure on the ground of one of those big booms can be equivalent [to the cranes].

CW 80 per cent of the weight of the machine could be on one wheel in certain conditions.

MA And the other factor is the maximum incline on which they are working.

MS We have it on the decal and in the manual, as it does vary. We know when there's an issue as they will phone us, not the rental company, and ask for the point loadings. So we've now armed our guys with that information and there is a manual specifically for point loadings.

MA So back to responsibilities, I think it is a joint agreement between the hirer and the main contractor, responsible

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The big debate



for the temporary works on the project.

TW Absolutely, I agree. It is a commercial responsibility for us that it is right first time. It is how we introduce that extra level of communication –

we need to do what we can to let the contractor know about the training and competence aspects.

MA It should be an industry standard that the hire rep does a recce if it is a large boom.

TW But I think it needs to be a partnership, not just us paying for a site survey. It needs the contractor's input.

CW So we are saying that on bigger machines, planning is an issue and there should be more time allowed, and that the right people should be involved in that process – the people who will be using them.

MA I agree about planning – it can take

weeks to prepare the ground; it can't be done in the time it takes to get it to site.

MS That's where familiarisation is important, as the correct machine selection is important too.

TW The ops guys would say it needs more planning on the delivery, including the end users and site managers, so they appreciate what it is to have a big machine. A 29-tonner is like having a double decker bus that moves at 3 miles per hour.

CW IPAF has recommended identifying what is good practice with large and complex machines for rental companies and end users, and that includes the planning process. Perhaps it could include sending the contractor a checklist of good practice for machines over 80 ft, including planning.

TW But if we did that it would need every competitor to do it too.

MA That's where all the hirers should say: "This is what we are going to do." We have tried to get standards for all 29 members of UKCG, including things like having MEWPs for Managers. But in the recent survey, on asking everyone [if they knew] about the guidance on avoiding crushing injuries, it was the subcontractors who mostly didn't know.

CW So how do we get the hire industry to apply the standards?

MA The piling federation have done it – they won't start piling on site until they have a piling checklist signed by the piler and the principal contractor.

TW We do need credible self-accreditation.

CW Perhaps that could be part of the IPAF Rental+ accreditation – that the planning is included?

MS Let's not forget that planning, while improving safety, is actually going to help everyone's economics.

MS Can I ask what people consider to be a large machine? It was only 10 years ago that we would call an 85-footer a big boom. But now manufacturers are talking about bringing in a 180-footer. For me, it would be over 85 ft.

WL Yes I agree, but it is fairly arbitrary, because operating a 60-footer in rough terrain would be more dangerous than a much larger one on a slab, for instance.

TW To my mind a 50-ft diesel scissor is big; it depends where you draw the line.

WL Maybe it is immaterial where we draw the line, but instead we should insist that the PAL+ course is done on a sizeable machine, so the operator experiences all the complexities that brings.

TW If you are going to do an advanced course, I agree, it should be done on the most complicated machine you can get.

MS I would say the critical area is getting the message out to operators that it is more complex machines that need more attention. That means not only big booms but also the tall and narrow scissors and spiders.

TW It is easier to define complexity in some ways.

CW So this is where you are saying that IPAF, as the industry body, should be focusing on standards?

MA The complexity makes it everybody's problem, from the manufacturer to the operator. That is where we want the HSE to say: "This is the standard." But they will probably bring us back to planning. ■

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Let's take one step beyond safe

MEWPs are often used to quickly access temporary work areas, but leaving the platform and re-entering it at height are fraught with



Above How not to do it!
Right Safety harnesses have not been fixed to secure anchor points using double lanyards

Exiting and entering an elevated platform is at times necessary, even when existing safety guidance discourages it. Where this is the safest way to access temporary work at height, what can be done to keep workers from harm?

Ask yourself if this is a safe way to work at height – an operator positions the platform to gain access to a particular structure, then stands on the guardrails to exit the platform onto another surface. Is this safe? And has he thought about how to get back into the platform and return to ground level? Exiting a platform at height is a potentially dangerous manoeuvre that needs to be planned and managed carefully.

Mobile elevating work platforms are designed as a place from which to perform temporary work at height while standing in the basket. MEWPs lift people, but they are not designed as elevators for exiting and entering at different heights.

Yet, in the real world, people enter and exit the basket at height on job sites because, while it can be dangerous,

it is sometimes the safest way to carry out the work quickly.

“Industry looks at powered access equipment as one of the safest ways to provide access in many situations,” says IPAF CEO Tim Whiteman.

“But all too often there tends to be a can-do attitude. **People will find a way to get the job done quickly. They don’t always plan sufficiently for the use of platforms and sometimes end up ignoring accepted safety boundaries.**”

“Many users of MEWPs believe exiting and entering the platform at height is prohibited, but continue to turn a blind eye when it is done, instead of asking for practical guidance to do this safely.”

IPAF’s current guidance says MEWPs are specifically designed to lift people to a position where they can carry out work from the work platform and then return to ground level. They are not intended for the transfer of people from one level to another or exiting the work platform at height. Exiting the platform at height may only be undertaken after a rigorous

risk assessment has been carried out that justifies this practice as the safest way of carrying out the required work tasks.

Standard considerations

The British standard BS 8460:2005 *Safe Use of MEWPs: Code of Practice* gives guidance on what the risk assessment should take into account:

- Risk of falling during transfer from the work platform to the structure;
- Risk of tools and materials falling;
- Sudden movement of the platform;
- Loads being imposed that could affect platform’s stability or integrity;
- Dynamic and impact loads from personal fall protection equipment;
- Damage to the MEWP or structure by an unintentional movement;
- Stranding of people;
- Use of extending decks and gates, use of double lanyards, etc;
- Maintenance or replacement of fall protection measures for people while they are on the structure.

“Exiting and entering a platform at height is an inherently awkward and potentially dangerous manoeuvre,”

danger. IPAF believes that standard procedures should be made readily available, so the risk can be managed more effectively

says Chris Wraith, IPAF technical officer. “Exiting a platform at height raises many questions, some of which are: suitability and strength of surface the workers are getting out onto, fall protection while exiting the platform and once they have left the platform, movement (flex) of platform as people exit or enter the platform, possible consequences of leaving a raised platform unattended.

“Who is responsible if something went wrong – the operator or person exiting the basket? And of course there are the potential stability issues should the platform be overloaded while elevated. Exiting at height should only be considered where a rigorous risk assessment indicates that this is the safest and most effective means of accessing a particular location. MEWPs should never be used where dedicated and suitable access to the location (such as stairs) is already provided.”

The European design standard EN280:2013 states that MEWPs are designed “with the intention that persons are getting on and off the work platform only at access positions at ground level or on the chassis” and as such, this application is not approved. The American ANSI A92 design standards say: “If permitted by the manufacturer, personnel shall only vacate or enter raised platforms following the guidelines and instructions provided by the manufacturer.”

JLG senior product safety manager Brent Hoover says the company has a letter it sends out on a regular basis to customers who ask about transfer at height. “In the letter we send, we require 100 per cent tie-off using two lanyards, and the platform must be within 300 mm of a suitable structure to transfer to,” he says.

The problem is that many workers

don’t view the process of seeking permission and instructions from manufacturers as a practical and timely solution to the immediate challenges posed by their daily tasks.

Current guidance that puts the onus on the manufacturer is too limiting. It is unrealistic to expect workers to contact manufacturers for authorisation each time they want to leave a platform at height. Industry experts increasingly say that universal guidance is needed.

“The reality is that people do work outside the platform,” says Chris Wraith. “**Instead of just saying that you must have the approval of the manufacturer or employer, we should provide clear and positive guidance and identify what criteria must be followed.** It is always good to establish safety criteria and have a framework to support those requirements.”

Devising safe systems of work

Contractors can achieve safe work systems by drafting and documenting site-specific method statements that consider individual work locations and analyse tasks. BS 8460 highlights the following:

- The MEWP be strong enough to withstand the worst fall that could occur and be equipped with anchor points for a protection system necessary to mitigate such a fall;
- It should have a safe working load exceeding the planned load including persons, tool and equipment;
- It should be operated by an authorised, competent person who remains in the platform at all times;
- It should be dedicated to the job at hand and remain in place for the duration of the work activity;
- MEWPs with large stiff structures minimise the movement between work platform and landing area

TECHNICAL GUIDANCE

IPAF is drafting further technical guidance on exiting and entering the platform at height. References on this subject include:

- [IPAF technical guidance E2](#) on exiting the platform at height;
- [BS 8460:2005 Safe Use of MEWPs: Code of Practice](#) See 6.12 Exiting the work platform at height and Annex B Guidance on safe systems of work for exiting the work platform at height;
- [D-A-CH-S industry group on fall protection](#) document dated May 2012;
- [DGUV German authority for accident insurance](#) document dated 11 October 2011
- [Access onto a Roof Using Elevating Work Platforms](#) Australian Queensland Government Department of Industrial Relations, document dated July 2002

during exit from, and re-entry to, the work platform at height. The total movement should be proved at ground level, using an appropriate boom extension to replicate the work requirement. If movement is in excess of 300 mm, the MEWP should not be used in this application;

- MEWPs with rotating platforms allow the gate to be oriented inwards, away from the structure’s edge;
- The area should be free of traffic;
- The ground should be suitable for use of the MEWP;
- A competent person should be at ground level to lower the work platform in the event of malfunction;
- Effective communication should be provided, such as handheld radios. Hand signals should be devised as a backup should the radios fail;
- It is essential that a written rescue plan is in place for an emergency and everyone involved in the work activity should be briefed to ensure that they understand their role in the event the plan is invoked. ■

Comments on this subject may be sent to Chris Wraith, IPAF technical officer via chris.wraith@ipaf.org

Serious about sustainability

The word “sustainable” seems to be used liberally throughout construction, but what does it mean for the mobile elevating work platform sector? Austin Baker, director of hire company AFI-Uplift, shares his view of the concept



Over the past few years, the mobile elevating work platform rental business has been through exceptional circumstances that have forced us all to take a good hard look at who we are, where we are and where we are going. The economic downturn has given us all the opportunity, no matter how unwelcome, to reposition our objectives.

Once we had overcome the basic survival mode and started to look at where we needed to be, one of the major factors we had to concentrate upon was what our customers were demanding of us. At this stage, it did not matter whether we agreed with their requirements, the only thing that mattered was whether we could afford to ignore them.

Take the increasingly strong trend toward sustainability. For many years, we have heard government rumblings that we need to change to save our planet. The equipment we buy has had to meet stronger and tighter legislation, but in truth, this hasn't had the effects upon our businesses that we had maybe feared.

Compliance costs

So do we ignore it? Our customers, when tendering for works, have to ensure compliance with their customers, many of whom are offering government or government-related contracts. **The cost of compliance is always a sticking point, because not only do we have to agree to comply, but we also have to prove that we comply, and this often means achieving a standard** – and, of course, that means the fees and auditing costs soon mount up.

Many companies that went down this route with quality standards realised that operating their business

It's enough to make your eyes water..

If you fall from height while wearing a conventional safety harness, 100 per cent of the falling force will be directed to your groin area.

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ZT's designers have set out to create a fall arrest or fall restraint harness that is part of your workwear, so it is not only easy to use but also comfortable to wear.

"Very comfortable and easy to work with. If you are working all day with a harness on, I would recommend this piece of kit."

Matt Broughton: Chubb Electronic Security Systems

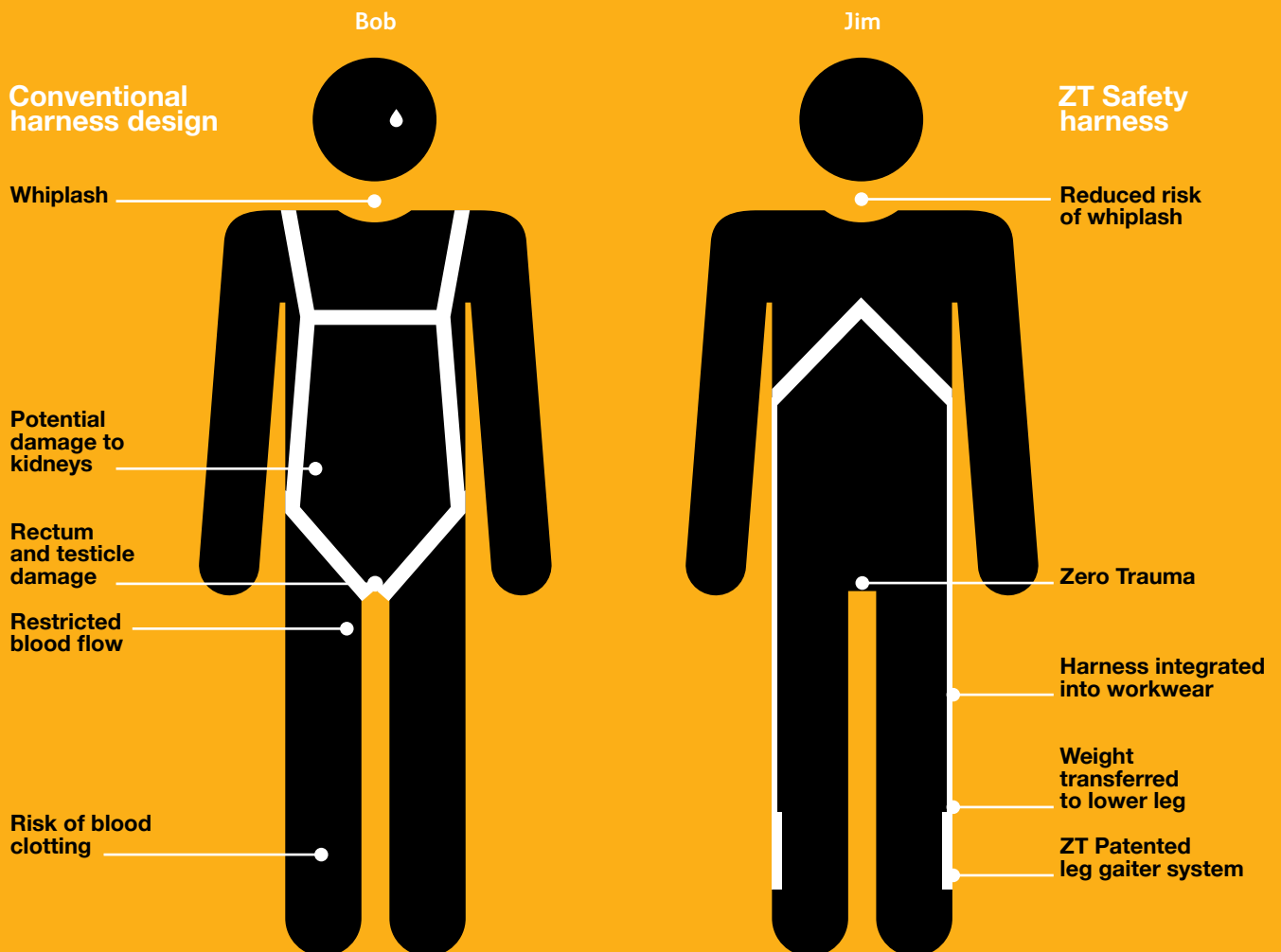
No-one should change their safety regime without good reason, so here are ten good reasons to choose ZT:

- 1) Less risk of injury - no pressure point load to sensitive places
- 2) Greatly reduced risk of whiplash compared to conventional harnesses
- 3) No D-rings, so you can even wear it while driving
- 4) Suits a bigger operator - certified safe to 150 kg
- 5) Easy to wear correctly - designed into your trousers or coveralls, so it can't be put on back-to-front
- 6) Flexible to work with, as it's part of the workwear
- 7) No need to tighten it again once it's on
- 8) No loose straps or lanyards, so nothing to catch on obstacles
- 9) Eliminates 'suspension trauma' - organ and tissue damage caused by being left dangling after a fall - because the ZT pulls the legs up into a safer position
- 10) Safety management: Operators don't have to be encouraged to wear the ZT, as it's already part of their everyday workwear

Still sounds too good to be true?

See the harnesses in action, and all the technical information you need at our website:

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Above Switching to more efficient vehicles reduced AFI-Uplift's fuel costs by 6.2 per cent on its truck fleet

to a carefully structured regime allows much tighter management control. Within any organisation the skills of the team are varied and, as such, the decisions that are made will vary. Sometimes the optimum decision will be reached, but the opposite can also occur.

I was intrigued recently to see that hospital accident and emergency departments are starting to use checklists in order to overcome basic errors when treating patients. It has been proven that under pressure, very often the most basic signs are not registered and that the patient can die because of this.

In my book, if these highly trained and dedicated professionals can make basic mistakes under pressure, then the same can be true of all of us when managing a business.

Once we find that a mistake has occurred, it usually has cost us money,

a customer or both. So quality systems in their most basic function are nothing more than a checklist to good health if used correctly.

What then of sustainability?

We will all have to comply either today or tomorrow if we intend to stay in business. Let's therefore make it work for us.

Here within the AFI group of companies we have to run trucks and vans. Our outlay on fuel is in the region of £1.65m per annum and rising. We chose to buy trucks and vans that burn less fuel, thereby making savings of 14.5 per cent per annum on vans and 6.2 per cent on trucks since January 2012. This helped reduce our carbon footprint annually, which was a by-product of the improved consumption.

The vehicles were also re-configured to be more aerodynamic and used smaller engines, but had much increased torque. The cost of the

vehicles was to an extent irrelevant, because we have to operate these for the business.

The lorry manufacturers also installed telematics in the vehicles. This wasn't for big brother reasons, however. Ensuring that a vehicle is driven at the correct pace is not only greatly beneficial to fuel consumption but also increases safety, reduces maintenance costs and improves our customer's perception of our business when they see carefully operated vehicles.

All trucks can have their locations instantly identified and their status known (such as travelling, loading and unloading etc). This real-time "track and trace" ability allows optimal route planning. Road traffic accidents and traffic congestion can often be avoided, as well as urgent changes to the route accommodated, all resulting in further cost savings and improvements to customer service, since the vehicles are not sitting stuck in traffic, wasting time and fuel.

Daily schedules

The telemetry system also provides the driver with his daily list of deliveries and collections. The office simply uploads the daily work schedule, which is received by a portable device in the vehicle. The office can add or remove jobs instantly, based on the driver's progress. No paperwork is required at all by any driver in any part of the UK as all information is stored electronically. There are clear benefits to the environment and, once again, cost savings for the business.

We have also started monitoring electricity usage at our depots with the aim of charging electric equipment off-peak and using lower tariffs, and replacing light bulbs and fittings to reduce energy consumption - again helping the planet as well as our business.

So, it is true that we can actually ensure that the latest requirements from the government and our customers can go some way to helping us reduce our reliance upon the planet's resources while at the same time improving our business and reducing costs.

I am sure we are all up for that. ■



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Remember to check this out

Andrew Gaved meets Gordon Leicester and finds out why you should make a routine out of your function checks

Gordon Leicester, Facelift Access chief executive and IPAF committee member, is on a mission to get MEWPS users to eliminate the potential risks that could arise from a malfunctioning machine, via the simple routine of daily function checks: “Before you get on a bike, you know you need to check the essentials to give yourself the best chance of a safe ride - from making sure the tyres are pumped up, to giving the brakes a good squeeze. And with platforms it should be the same. Routine function checks are utterly essential, but they are simply not being done by the majority of users.”

That isn't to say that machines malfunction a lot. In fact the reverse is true. The modern MEWP has a very small chance of going wrong, but it is the very rarity that blinds users to what they have to do to keep themselves safe, he contends.

“Because the incidents are so rare, the operator is innocent to the realities and real risks involved. A powered access platform is unbelievably safe. If you reckon that 35,000 machines are on hire every day in the UK, that's over 250,000 hours every single day - or about 5 million hours a month - and they are not exactly dropping out of the sky. But when accidents do occur, the nature of the work at height often means there can be fatalities.”

He points out that in terms of accidents per hour, powered access is actually more than two times safer than airline travel (approximately 1 fatality per 30 million rental hours, against 1 per 12.7 million hours flown for airlines, for fact fans), yet no one would dream of going up in a plane which hadn't had routine checks performed on it. And, he notes, the aviation industry also has a very thorough process for investigating any accidents that do occur, whereby a team of industry personnel - engineers



and pilots - closely examine the incident with the specific view of learning how it can be avoided in future.

This is something that Mr Leicester

is keen to see reproduced in the world of powered access. “We can learn from these other industries. Our current system depends on the HSE going in after an accident, but their aim is not to improve knowledge of the technical issues for the future, it is effectively to apportion blame.”

“Often airline accidents are caused by tiny little incidents, but thanks to their system, the Air Accident Investigation Board can immediately tell the world how to avoid it.”

Thus his other mission is to persuade the HSE to let the platform industry come in after an accident to investigate from a technical standpoint. “We need to get in quick to discover the root cause of any accidents.”

Practical measures

But back to those function checks. Mr Leicester's concern is that few operators are bothering to ensure that the failsafes put in place to protect



MEWP PRE-USE INSPECTION CHECKLIST

MACHINE: _____

WEEK COMMENCING: _____

All checks should be conducted in accordance with the manufacturer's manual

		MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY							
VISUAL CHECKS	Documentation	1 Current thorough examination certificate (within last six months)													
		2 Manufacturer's operator manual													
		3 Rescue plan													
	Wheels/tyres	4 Wheel security (nuts, retainers: loose, damaged, missing)													
		5 Tyre pressure (pneumatic, foam filled or solid)													
		6 Cuts, splits, exposed braiding, damaged rims													
	Engine/power source	7 Fluid levels (engine oil, coolant, fuel)													
		8 Fluid leakage on ground and around engine													
		9 Battery (electrolyte, security and charging plug condition)													
	Hydraulics	10 Hydraulic fluid level													
		11 Leaks (hoses, pipe connections, rams, cylinders)													
	Hoses and cables	12 Security and condition (cuts, chaffing, bulges)													
		13 Power track cable trays (free from damage and debris)													
	Outriggers, stabilisers	14 General condition, pins/retainers, footplate													
		15 Spreader plates (present, condition, secure for travel)													
		16 Interlocks (functioning, engaged)													
	Chassis, boom and scissor pack	17 General condition (damage, misalignment, corrosion)													
		18 Cracks in weld													
		19 Pins, retainers and chains (security, signs of wear)													
		20 Canopies, guards, engine covers (security and condition)													
	Platform or cage	21 Steps for access/egress (secure, undamaged, clear)													
		22 Entrance gate, guard rails and retaining pins													
		23 Harness anchor points													
		24 Clear of rubbish, debris and obstructions													
	Decals and signage	25 ID plate, safety, warning and information decals (legible)													
		26 Controls (identification decals, directional arrows)													
		27 Platform loads (SWL, max. wind speed, max. number of persons)													
		G	P	G	P	G	P	G	P	G	P	G	P		
FUNCTION CHECKS	Using Ground (G) and Platform(P) controls	28 Security device (power isolator, keypad, smart card)													
		29 Function enable (ignition key, foot switch, hold to run device)													
		30 Emergency stops and emergency lowering system													
		31 All switches, function controls (move freely, do not stick)													
		32 Lifting functions (raise, lower, slew, tele-out, tele-in)													
		33 Travel functions (forward, reverse, steer, brakes)													
		34 Elevated drive speed (reduced or prevented)													
		35 Lights, beacons, warning devices													
		36 Alarms (tilt, descent and travel)													
		37 Limit switches (e.g. descent, load, outreach, rotation)													
		38 Pothole protection device (fully deploys and retracts)													
		39 Oscillating axle locks, extending axles													
		40 Accessories, power to platform, extending decks													
		41 Jacks-legs, stabilisers, outriggers, levelling devices													
		ALL FAULTS AND DEFECTS TO BE REPORTED IMMEDIATELY TO YOUR SUPERVISOR		Initialled:	Initialled:	Initialled:	Initialled:	Initialled:	Initialled:	Initialled:					

Only persons who are trained and authorised by their employer should operate this equipment.

OPERATOR NAME(S) AND PAL CARD NUMBER(S): _____

them are working properly. **“Most people’s primary concern is that the machine works, not that the safety systems work. It is not enough just to switch it on and pull the lever.”**

The first practical measure is to do a simple visual check, walking around the machine. Among the things to keep an eye out for are: loose pins, which could come out mid-air; obvious cracks in the structure, which might develop with further use; illegible or torn safety decals, since their whole point is to be read properly; and site debris entangled in the machine, which can impede the proper functioning.

Among the fundamentals to check – for the full lists, see the boxes to the right – Mr Leicester cites: making sure the operating manual is on-board, so problems can be avoided when in the air; ensuring the cage door functions properly; checking that the emergency stop function is working; checking that

any switches are toggling freely; and that things like outreach limiters and slope sensors are working properly.

“It’s no good having a limiter if it doesn’t stop where it is supposed to. You should operate it while on the ground – all of these things can be safely checked without having to go up to full height.”

Fundamental checks

If the machine is battery-powered, a fundamental function check should also be to ensure that has been fully charged overnight – and equally for diesel-driven models, that the fuel level is OK – not so much a safety issue as a productivity one.

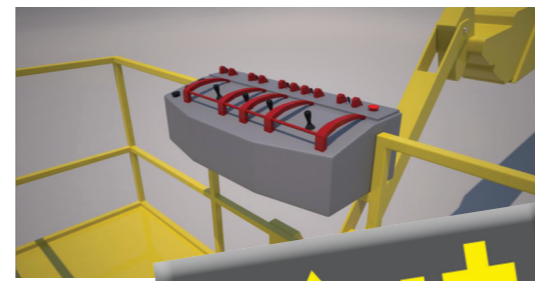
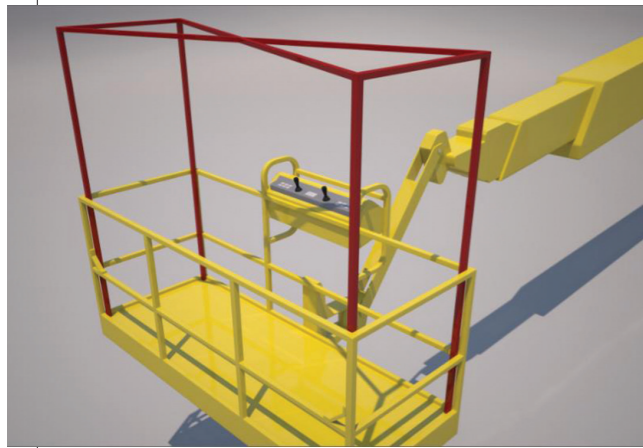
Another one that is as much productivity as it is safety is that the machine has been appropriately selected for the ground conditions, for the height and reach, and for the weight in the basket. “Two heavy blokes in the basket and a bucket of

cement, and you could be surprised by the jerking motion.”

To illustrate the general laissez faire attitude of too many operators, Mr Leicester concludes with another analogy – hiring a car abroad.

“When I get into an unfamiliar car abroad, I will generally take a few minutes to acquaint myself with the functions and switches before starting off. And I will probably do a test emergency stop after a short distance to check the brakes are working.”

This analogy does throw the issue into sharp focus, for I find myself mentally making a note to do an emergency stop shortly after I get into a hire car. I can suddenly see how the average operator could be blasé when it comes to platforms. You just take the fact everything is going to be working properly for granted, don’t you? And of course that’s exactly Mr Leicester’s point – for your own safety, you shouldn’t. ■



Safety through strategy

IPAF technical officer Chris Wraith examines the challenges of using secondary guarding solutions

Principal contractors are demanding that their suppliers use some form of secondary guarding solution when deploying MEWPs on site. Is such a mandate practicable? What are the implications for subcontractors and rental companies?

IPAF world accident statistics show the three major causes of fatal injury involving MEWPs are falls from height, MEWP overturn and electrocution. With recent UK accident data supporting this trend, many in the industry believe priority should be given to eliminating these three major causes of fatality before concentrating on the fourth major cause – entrapment.

But one thing everyone does agree is:

each fatality in the industry is one too many. A view, which over the past 18 months, has led to many principal contractors mandating that specific devices be fitted to MEWPs on major sites in an attempt to reduce or eliminate the risk of entrapment.

This policy has led to frustration and confusion in the industry, with many unanswered questions such as:

- What devices are readily available to the supply chain?
- Are they all approved by all manufacturers?
- Is there sufficient supply to meet potential demand or will the mandate limit machine selection?
- Do the possible options really prevent entrapment or just increase

complacency and a false sense of security in operators?

- Why is there no device for scissor lifts when some of the fatal incidents in recent years have involved them?

Over the past three years, the Health & Safety Executive has repeatedly stated that there are key measures senior management should be implementing before any consideration of extra attachments or accessories to address entrapment risk.

These requirements are outlined in *Best Practice Guidance for MEWPs: Avoiding Trapping/Crushing Injuries to People in the Platform* (download from the Publications section of www.ipaf.org). Produced by the Strategic Forum for Construction Plant Safety

Group for MEWP Safety, the guidance includes detailed information on:

Planning

- Method of work;
- Risk assessment;
- MEWP selection ;
- Safe system of work;
- Emergency plan and drills;
- Coordination with other activities and preparation of work areas;
- Supervision and monitoring;
- Competency and training;
- Competency;
- Training;
- Records.

Even though this excellent guidance has been available since July 2010, it is not being adopted by the majority of site managers. Analysis of reports from recent visits by HSE inspectors to construction sites where substantial use of MEWPs was taking place has identified that:

- A limited number of contractors are following the guidance in full to address the potential for trapping accidents and implement rescue procedures;
- Many of the problems arising from poor practice and accidents can be resolved early in the planning phase, before there is even the need to consider the use of secondary guarding devices.

In an attempt to eliminate poor practice and support those who plan, supervise or manage the use of MEWPs on site, IPAF developed the MEWPs for Managers course. This course guides management through the pitfalls of managing/using MEWPs and reinforces best practice. It has been well received by contractors, with more than 5,000 people completing the one-day course since its introduction in 2006.

Also in the past two years, at the request of the UK Contractors Group, IPAF has consulted with manufacturers, rental companies, training centres, enforcement agencies and contractors to develop and introduce the PAL+ course. This advanced operator training programme is for selected trades operating in more challenging environments, specifically where there is a high risk of entrapment.

The MEWP design standard EN 280 has always required manufacturers to consider the risk to the operator when using MEWPs. It is for this reason that machines are now required to be fitted with sunken controls to minimise the

risk of being caught accidentally.

Furthermore the operator must actuate a function enable device by depressing a button, a foot pedal or squeezing a trigger. This built-in “primary guarding” system is designed to prevent inadvertent operation and ensure that the operator controls every movement of the platform.

It is essential that the operator checks that this device is functioning correctly before using the MEWP in order to ensure safe operation. Sadly there are some operators who fail to check the primary guarding system is functioning correctly, or worse still, they disable the “primary guarding” system in the misguided belief that they can get a job done quicker.

Despite training and design developments, there is a growing expectation that manufacturers should do more to “design out” the risk of entrapment. Hence the call for extra devices to be fitted to existing machines, even though it is agreed that there is no one measure that will prevent entrapment in all situations. It is essential that the operator has primarily responsibility for safe operation at all times. Many existing devices only stop platform movement once entrapment has occurred, yet they are incorrectly referred to as anti-entrapment devices, thus lulling the operator into a false sense of security in the belief that if an anti-entrapment device is fitted it will automatically protect him/her from any crushing injury. For this reason IPAF is calling for these additional devices to be referred to as “secondary guarding” devices.

A site manager should ensure that:

- He is complying with the SFCPSG *Best Practice Guidance for MEWPs Avoiding Trapping/Crushing Injuries to People in the Platform*;
- His operators are PAL+ qualified, experienced and competent;
- His site managers and supervisors have attended the MEWPs for Managers course.

Secondary guarding choices

The choices are limited. Secondary guarding devices are only currently available for 3b (mobile boom type machines) and in two basic formats:

- Those that offer a physical barrier to protect the operator;
- Those that provide a pressure sensing

device that activates an alarm and warning light, sometimes allowing the last platform movement to be reversed.

Some manufacturers such as Niftylift, JLG, Genie and Haulotte have developed their own devices, while these and other manufacturers may have approved other devices brought to market by individual rental companies. (Note: Not all secondary guarding devices are approved by all manufacturers.)

It is essential that contractors considering the use of any such device should firstly select the most appropriate machine for the task and then determine by risk assessment the most appropriate secondary guarding device for the high-risk task. In some cases selection may be difficult as there may not be an appropriate device available. This could be possible because:

- There is not a manufacturer-approved secondary guarding device that will fit particular machines. Rental companies and contractors should always ensure that any secondary guarding device is approved by the relevant machine manufacturer before fitting;
- No secondary guarding device is available for the chosen MEWP.

A recent poll of regional rental companies suggested that there were only enough secondary guarding devices available to fit approximately 10 per cent of the current 3b (mobile boom) fleet.

A recently published statement from the UKCG states: “3b MEWPs operated on UKCG sites shall be fitted with a manufacturer-approved anti-entrapment device/system (eg secondary protection device) where a device is available to the industry for the selected MEWP. The contractor will select the most appropriate device/system for the risks associated with the tasks to be undertaken supported by a suitable risk assessment.”

The statement acknowledges that secondary guarding may not be the most appropriate solution and offers an alternative solution: “Where the contractor is able to demonstrate to the UKCG MEWP manager by risk assessment that the risks associated with entrapment are most appropriately controlled by means other than anti-entrapment devices/systems, this shall be agreed between both parties.”

For further advice on this complex topic, contact your local rental company or contact IPAF via info@ipaf.org



Group for MEWP Safety, the guidance includes detailed information on:

Planning

- Method of work;
- Risk assessment;
- MEWP selection;
- Safe system of work;
- Emergency plan and drills;
- Coordination with other activities and preparation of work areas;
- Supervision and monitoring;
- Competency and training;
- Competency;
- Training;
- Records.

Even though this excellent guidance has been available since July 2010, it is not being adopted by the majority of site managers. Analysis of reports from recent visits by HSE inspectors to construction sites where substantial use of MEWPs was taking place has identified that:

- A limited number of contractors are following the guidance in full to address the potential for trapping accidents and implement rescue procedures;
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Rising standards

Experienced operators who are working in complex and high-risk applications now have the opportunity to obtain the PAL+ qualification. David Taylor attends a PAL+ course to find out why the new card is so important

For operators of most common types of mobile elevating work platform, the IPAF PAL Card (Powered Access Licence) is the gold standard, recognised by employers and clients throughout the world. More than 100,000 PAL Cards are issued each year through over 550 IPAF-approved training centres worldwide. If an operator produces a valid PAL Card, the employer can rest assured they have been trained to use powered access equipment safely and correctly.

However, an enhanced level of knowledge and expertise is occasionally required in higher risk or challenging environments. For this reason, IPAF has introduced the PAL+ qualification, an optional one-day, category-specific training course designed for operators working in difficult or high-risk environments.

In the UK, most IPAF-accredited training organisations now offer the PAL+ course. Uptake so far has been patchy - most employers are satisfied with the PAL Card which, after all, has been deemed adequate for all applications to date.

This is true: the PAL Card applies to all operators required to undertake complex or hazardous work with MEWPs. Hitherto it has been up to the operator and their employer to decide whether they have the skills to do so safely. What PAL+ does is crystallise this judgement and provide evidence that this skill and knowledge has been demonstrated and proven.

Darren Verschuren, director of training company ALS Safety, has been offering the PAL+ course for the past year alongside the basic course

at the company's locations in Wembley, Leeds and Bracknell. To see what's involved in the PAL+ course and what is required of the trainees, *Construction News* joined Mr Verschuren at the Bracknell facility - which ALS Safety shares with access hire specialist Riwal.

Mr Verschuren was taking two delegates through their paces on this occasion. One, Ian Moorhouse, was a new recruit to ALS Safety and a trained access operator. The other, Chris Copper, is a British Airways maintenance engineer who manages a team of workers and a fleet of access machines based at nearby Heathrow Airport.

Both delegates already carry PAL Cards and Mr Moorhouse is in the final mentoring phase of his training to become a full-time instructor with ALS Safety.

Improving skills

Mr Verschuren is keen to stress that PAL+ is more than just "PAL with knobs on". **"This is a specialist course designed for competent operators who need to improve their skills to carry out complex and difficult work,"** he says. "It doesn't replace the PAL course; that has to remain the essential requirement for any operator."

It might come as a surprise to some delegates to discover that, as an advanced course, the PAL+ syllabus contains a lot less theory work - not more - than the basic PAL course.

"The PAL course is divided roughly 50:50 theory to practical, whereas the PAL+ course is probably only 30 per cent classroom work - all the rest is



practical,” says Mr Verschuren.

On the day *Construction News* observed the course, classroom instruction was all finished by mid-morning when Mr Moorhouse and Mr Copper ventured outside to familiarise themselves with the equipment they would be operating.

The PAL+ course is machine-specific and currently applies to static vertical (1a+), static boom (1b+), mobile vertical (3a+), and mobile boom (3b+) machine categories. On this occasion, the operators were being trained on three machines: an articulating mobile boom lift, an electric scissor lift and a diesel-powered rough terrain scissor lift.

After letting the two delegates familiarise themselves with the machines, Mr Verschuren put them both in the basket of the boom lift and started putting them through their paces. The practical element of the course involves tackling a series of complicated and potentially problematic manoeuvres using a three-dimensional obstacle course.

“The syllabus gives you a sort of shopping list of obstacles and operations that you can apply, but it’s up to the trainer to decide how to present them,” explains Mr Verschuren. For this session, the obstacles were represented by a virtual building façade assembled using lightweight drainage pipes and red-and-white plastic chain to represent the edges and surfaces.

One manoeuvre required the operators to enter the building at height using the boom-lift, then pivot the basket through 90 degrees, so as to exit through the side. The course was assembled so that there was no more than 100 mm clearance on either side of the basket.

Another manoeuvre, conducted in a two-storey workshop using the electric scissor-lift, required the operators to navigate a narrow route, marked out with traffic cones, then raise the machine to ceiling height, track along to a predetermined point before lowering again, and finally returning to the starting point and parking the machine tight against a “wall” outlined by traffic cones.

At the end of the course, the delegates must perform these and the other operations under test conditions.

Knocking over a cone or touching a chain or pipe results in automatic failure. Delegates are assessed not just on their ability to complete these tasks, but also on how well they do it. For example, with the articulating boom, it is good practice to keep the basket higher than the top joint of the boom – that is, with the top section at an upward angle – so the centre of gravity is kept low and manual lowering, should it be required in an emergency, is assisted rather than hindered by the weight of the basket.

As well as practising precision positioning, operators also develop skills such as working safely in confined areas and travelling safely across uneven terrain.

At the end of the one-day course, delegates sit a short written exam (unlike the PAL test, this is not a multiple choice paper) before undergoing a series of practical tests followed by a one-to-one interview with the instructor.

The right attitude

“There’s a strong emphasis on behaviour and attitude in PAL+,” says Mr Verschuren. “Throughout the day we’re watching and assessing the delegates and we score them on their attitude. The interview at the end of the day is designed to look at behaviour.”

Because it’s an advanced course, PAL+ will inevitably be less common than the basic PAL qualification. However, trainees can take their PAL course and go straight on to PAL+ if required, although Mr Verschuren believes practical experience in the workplace is essential. IPAF says that PAL+ is not advisable for inexperienced operators.

Whatever the pros and cons, demand for PAL+ is likely to increase in the near future. Client groups and other interested parties including the UKCG, HSE, platform manufacturers, hirers and plant training specialists are all behind it, having contributed to developing the course. And since October 2013 UKCG has made it a requirement for net riggers and steel erectors.

As for today, the delegates have now joined the elite band of operators to hold the PAL+ Card. “They passed with flying colours!” says Mr Verschuren. ■

PAL+ FACTS

- PAL+ is aimed at trained operators working in high risk environments such as steelwork and confined spaces.
- From 31 October 2013, net riggers and steel erectors working on UK Contractors Group (UKCG) sites must hold the PAL+ Card
- PAL+ complements the PAL qualification, it does not replace it. You must hold a PAL Card before entering for PAL+
- Those passing the PAL+ course are issued with a card showing the relevant categories for which PAL+ was been achieved.
- Training centres who wish to offer PAL+ are first assessed by an IPAF Training Operations Co-ordinator. Instructors who intend to deliver the course must first pass PAL+ themselves.
- Like the PAL course, PAL+ training can be supported through the CITB grant scheme.
- More details at www.ipaf.org/palplus. Find your nearest training centre at www.ipaf.org.



Above, left to right Darren Verschuren, Chris Copper and Ian Moorhouse
Main Electric scissor lift demonstration

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A straightforward issue

The president of IPAF has clear views on platform safety, gleaned from his 20 years working in the powered access sector. Andrew Gaved met him to get the lowdown

The current president of IPAF, Steve Couling, is well-placed to offer an insight into the way that attitudes to platform safety have changed for the better, since in 2013 he celebrated his 20th year in MEWPs.

Now the managing director of vehicle-mount specialist Versalift, Mr Couling's early working years also give him a distinctive perspective on the importance of best practice at height, since he started out in the fire service.

One thing that he has noticed has changed since those early days is the attitude of the MEWP user to personal safety.

"Twenty years ago, no one was wearing a harness in the basket. In many ways it was a more gung-ho sector then - a macho culture where safety equipment was perhaps seen as a little bit weak.

"I am pleased to say that has changed. It is a bit like when seatbelts were first brought in for cars, there was always someone who had an opinion on why you shouldn't wear one. But that isn't to say that we have converted everyone - I think seatbelt wearing in cars is about 98 per cent, but it is nowhere near that for access harnesses."

Focusing minds

For Mr Couling, one of the key advances from IPAF in the past year has been the introduction of a central accident reporting database in the UK. The voluntary reporting scheme is intended to focus people's minds not just on accidents that cause injury but on any accident, however "trivial" it might seem, in a bid to avoid it in future.

"The results so far have been interesting, because it has thrown us a couple of curve balls - for instance, there has been a clear trend for certain

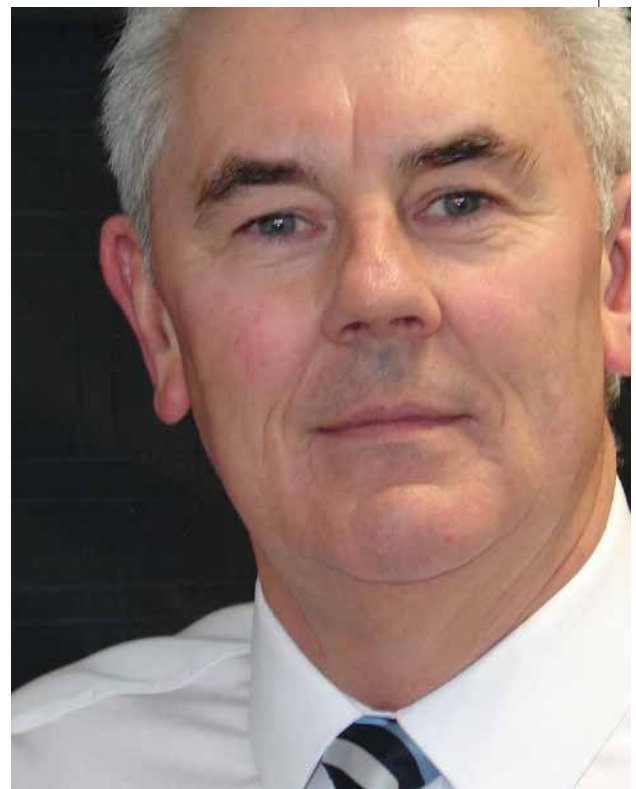
accidents among delivery drivers, and a number of minor accidents caused by slipping on decks, or cuts from harnesses. The key is most of this stuff wasn't reported or put in the accident book, and it certainly wasn't collated centrally."

The data being gathered is still in its early stages, but Mr Couling is convinced it will yield useful information. "No manufacturer makes a machine that isn't safe, and we have made them to be safer than they have ever been before, but they are only really safe in the hands of a properly trained operator who is correctly managed and who is sensible about the risks of what he is doing."

The fundamentals behind IPAF are as true today as they were when the Federation was founded, he says. "IPAF wants the powered access industry to be safe. Things like tampering with controls, blocking off the overrides, still go on - it is only by training that we can educate that tendency out of people. That applies not just to operators but to their managers too, which is why there is now an IPAF MEWPs for Managers course."

He believes that while some of the problems occur because the operator or contractor feels he is under time pressure, some people are just determined to cut corners. "It seems to be ingrained with some people - a bit like people who are persistently late I suppose - but our job is to show people it is more productive not to cut corners."

He recounts a tale of a vehicle-mount being returned recently with the override alarms somehow disabled so that it could operate without all the outriggers extended. "I have been in the industry for 20 years and I couldn't work out how to do that - the ingenuity shown is quite staggering."



IPAF president Steve Couling

That, he adds, is why it is so important to train the managers. "It opens up the mind to planning and to understanding what the safety implications of the particular job are. It would be wonderful to engender a no-accident culture."

One of the characteristics of the MEWP operator, Mr Couling believes, is what he calls the "superman effect". "I think because the machines are so well equipped these days, people feel they are a bit indestructible."

He says that the increasing availability of safety devices from platform manufacturers, such as secondary guarding systems, shouldn't lull the operator into a false sense of security. "In fact the devices should be

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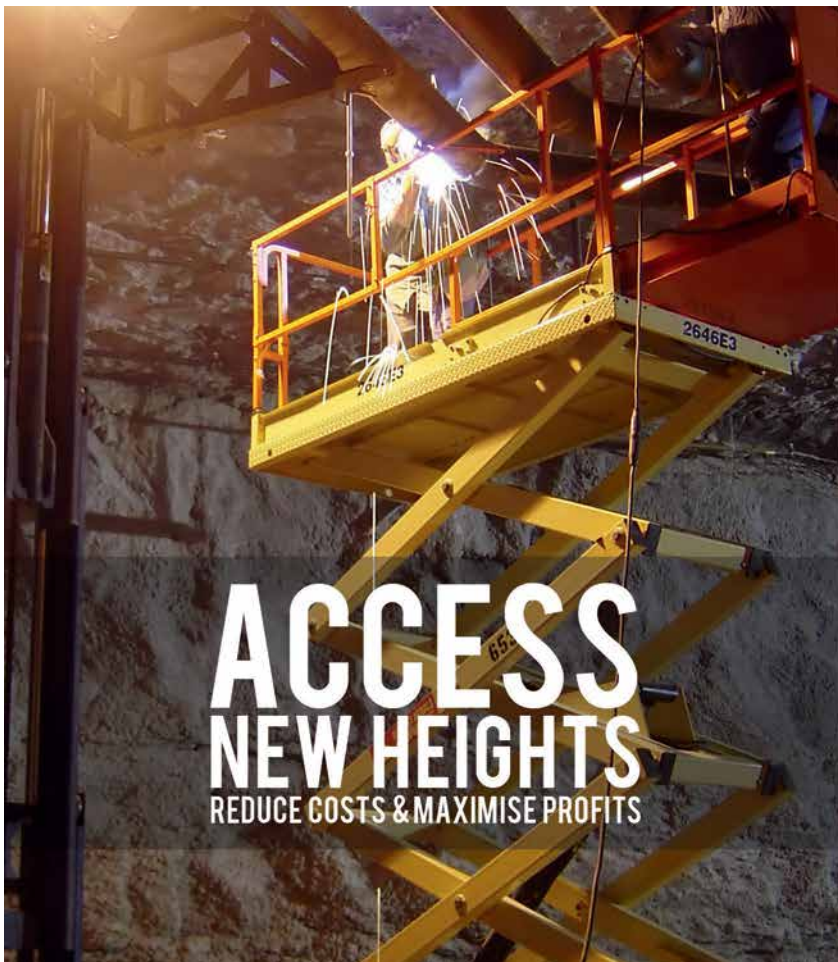
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way down the hierarchy – first and foremost the operator should be properly trained.”

In fact, he adds, if you over-design the machine for safety, it might not be able to do the job it was designed to do. The danger of that is that it could cause the operator to get frustrated and to do something he shouldn't – the law of unintended consequences.

“That is why we need training”, says Mr Couling.

Importance of training

The industry needs to work hard on the training front so that the increasing professionalism puts the bad guys out of business, Mr Couling believes.

He thinks that a key way to achieve this will be to increase the availability of eLearning as a route to achieving the PAL Card – popular in the US, but yet to be launched over here. “It would make it so much easier to achieve, as you wouldn't have to take the time out to attend the course at a training centre which might not be nearby.”

Mr Couling is adamant that there is a straightforward way to prove the operator is competent and that is holding the PAL Card. For the customer or contractor, this would cut through any ambiguity as to whether the person in question has the appropriate training, knowledge and experience, he believes.

Currently there is no legal responsibility to have the card, he

notes, but in the case of an accident, an operator would have to prove his competence to the judge. “But it could be more straightforward, a case of: ‘Do you have a licence to operate this or not?’ Like a car.”

So Mr Couling is on a mission to make the Powered Access Licence mandatory – simply put, operating a platform without one would be against the law. **“It is a personal ambition to make it a legal requirement to have a PAL Card, and thus a criminal offence to operate without one. It may take me three to five years, or even more, but it is something that I am very passionate about.”**

Tying this legal requirement in with the new Smart PAL Cards could theoretically make it impossible to operate a platform without proof of the correct training – the machine wouldn't start without swiping the smart card, loaded with the operator's PAL credentials. But, he concedes, that is an ideal future, which is still some way off.

This competence should not stop at the basic PAL, either. Not surprisingly as a manufacturer of 200-foot vehicle-mounts, Mr Couling is very much in favour of additional training for the specialist operators who work on the complex jobs and the bigger machines:

“The equipment can be heavier and yet there is more to think about. It is not just that the booms can go higher, but that they are able to do more complex things in terms of reach and

accessibility. The PAL should be the basis but then you need to go on. I remember my driving instructor said to me, ‘You've passed your test, now it's time to really learn to drive.’”

He advocates more sector-specific training at this advanced level so that, for instance, spider-lifts have their own specific guidelines. “Anything we can do to save a life has to be a good thing. I believe the training shouldn't be too generic.”

“Access equipment is an important sector and supervisors and managers should plan accordingly. Machine selection has to have a part to play in all this. A zero-harm policy or whatever the contractor chooses to call it can only bring benefits – they will be the ones who win the contracts.”

Mr Couling says he is amazed when he looks back over his 20 years in the powered access sector to see how things have changed – of course there wasn't really much of a ‘sector’ to speak of in the early 1990s: “Who would have thought 20 years ago that we would be providing equipment for assembling wind farms in the UK for instance? There are continually new applications to challenge us.”

On that note, he says, the vehicle-mount is an as-yet untapped resource in the refurbishing and maintenance environment. “People still see them as industrial machines, but they are much more reliable and useable these days, and mounted on a small van or a Land Rover they can even be used for DIY.”

At the other end of the scale, the rise of the insulated boom and the increased ability to work with higher voltages is another aspect of how the MEWP industry is widening to meet demand and in the process to create entirely new working practices. “For some of the high power lines in the past they had to helicopter workers onto the pylons but now it can be achieved with a vehicle-mounted boom.”

As architects now feel free to design the elements of a building that they want, confident that the equipment can be found to allow people to install or maintain them, the future looks assured. “The limits to access platforms are more and more the human imagination,” he says. ■

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When to wear a harness

Whether or not to wear a safety harness while on a MCWP is a cloudy issue. Employers tend to err on the side of caution and insist on fall protection being worn at all times, while some workers regard it as overkill and a hindrance to productivity. IPAF says that protection is usually unnecessary for personnel working on a MCWP with handrails and suitably guarded edges. Journalist Ian Vallyly outlines the things to consider when assessing your own construction site



Confusion and uncertainty surround the use of fall protection and harnesses on mast climbing work platforms. Should they be deployed and, if so, in what circumstances and how?

In fact, IPAF's recommendation is emphatic - there is no requirement for fall protection or harnesses to be worn while working on a MCWP.

Cameron Reid, former chairman of the MCWP committee of IPAF and ex-managing director of Harsco Infrastructure, explains: "The working platform of a MCWP is considered within the access industry as a working scaffold. So, if you are working within the confines of a platform, when it is suitably guarded and handrailed, there is no requirement to wear a harness."

He says the only time it would be appropriate to wear a harness is if the perimeter has been removed or damaged and/or a work specific risk assessment recommends it.

Brogan Group health and safety manager James Lewis agrees: "From our point of view, when the MCWP is operational - ie it has been built, the platform is complete and has been handed over - when working inside that platform, you should not need a harness."

"If the users are going to be operating in a way that puts them at risk of falling over the edge protection that has been put in place, for example, if they are leaning over sufficiently to provide a risk to themselves, then that activity needs to be covered by their own method statement and risk assessment which should be drawn up by the trade contractor carrying out that activity."

"We carry out the erection, adaption, dismantling and maintenance of MCWPs and we only use fall protection equipment when we are outside of the safe zone that is

the completed platform.

"If you had, for whatever reason, got to climb onto the mast itself - say in an emergency situation where the machine might have ceased to move and there was no other way of getting down - then the operatives would have to use a twin-tail fall restraint lanyard."

So the position is clear - there is no requirement for a harness while working inside an MCWP that has a perimeter handrail around it.

However, the waters were muddied two years ago following an accident in which a twin MCWP malfunctioned, killing two workers and seriously injuring a third.

The construction company that had been building the structure went into receivership and the building was mothballed.

The client subsequently appointed another contractor to complete the project. However, the equipment had not been used for several months and the MCWP failed.

Fatal collapse

Although the full circumstances of the accident remain unclear, it was reported that the brakes apparently did not operate as they were designed to and the MCWP effectively collapsed, resulting in the fatalities and injuries.

As a result, principal contractors started to insist that all operatives working on their sites' MCWPs must wear harnesses.

This caused some concern in the MCWP community, according to Alimak Hek construction manager Adrian Bolton: "We have always considered that our platforms with the handrails and toeboards are a safe working area. Unless you are going to step out from that safe working area

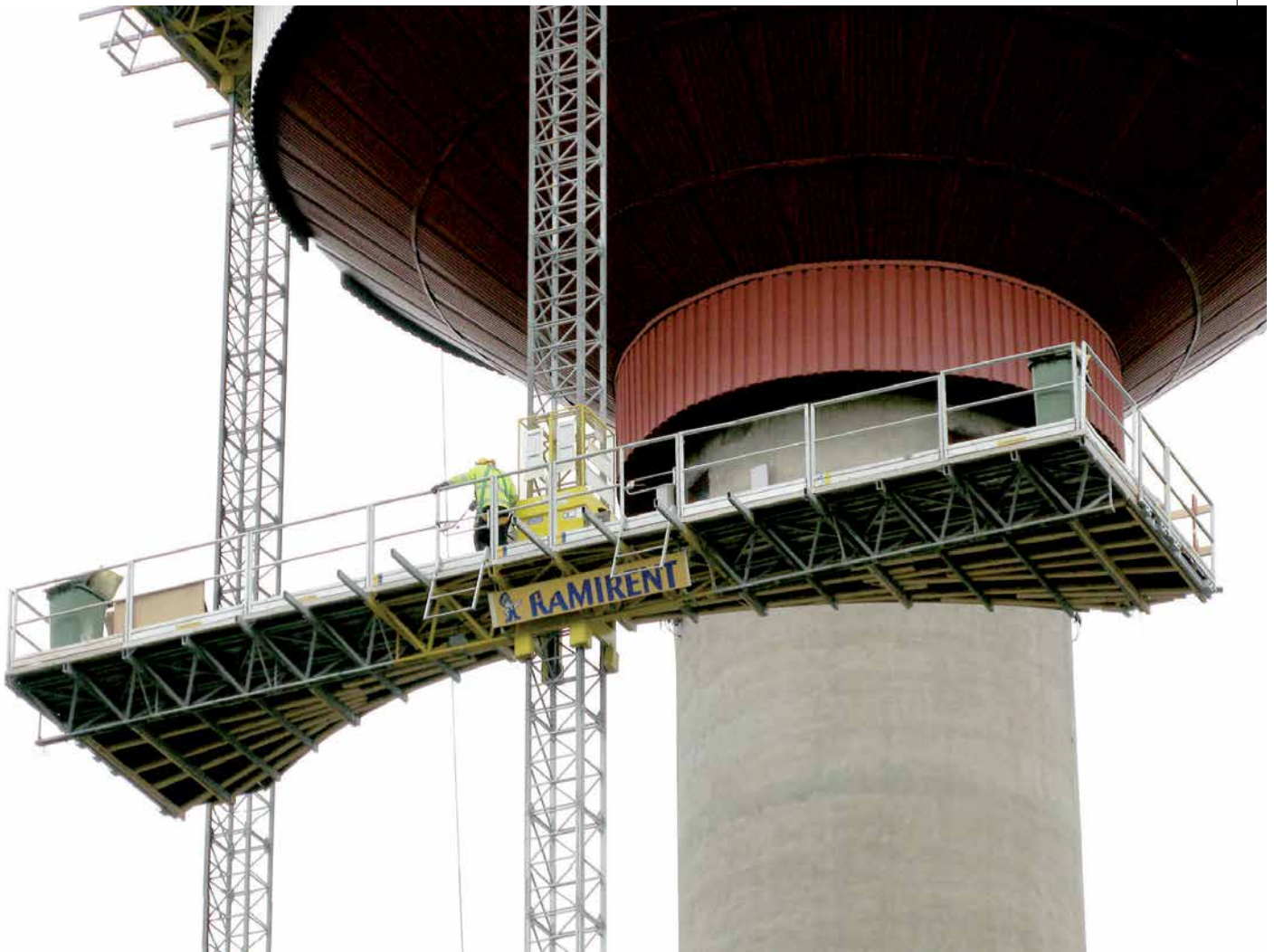
IPAF RECOMMENDATIONS

IPAF recommends that the use of additional fall protection is unnecessary for personnel working on a MCWP, where the platform is suitably guarded - regulation guardrails are installed as per manufacturer's instructions and local regulations, and there are no identified fall hazards or exposed edges.

It adds: "Where there may be an extraordinary requirement for a fall protection system (e.g. due to a job-specific risk assessment, or specific identified tasks, such as the erection and dismantling of the equipment), the designer of the fall protection system should take into account the local regulations regarding tie-off point strength minimum requirements for either fall arrest or fall restraint, and consult with the manufacturer to make sure that the extra load imposed is built into the total load profile for the specific configuration of the platform."

If harnesses are used, Adrian Bolton, construction manager at Alimak Hek, says that a risk assessment should also be conducted due to the additional hazards that using harnesses introduces.

- www.ipaf.org/mcwp



you have no requirement to wear a harness.”

Indeed, there could be problems if you do wear a harness on a MCWP, says Mr Bolton: “Say you step off the platform onto the building façade; if the platform moves away, you may be pulled or dragged by it.”

Mr Reid points to another potential problem: “If you’ve got, for example, four operatives working on a MCWP and they all connect their harnesses to one point which is not a defined harness connection point, you put the operatives at more risk than you would if you were to control and manage [the risk of] falling from height differently.”

That is why some vertical access equipment manufacturers, including Alimak Hek, have taken the view that, if anchor points were to be fixed

to MCWPs, then they must be properly designed.

Mr Bolton explains: “There are impact loads and dynamic loads that you have to take into account when the harness is deployed. Our equipment now has fixings available that can be used to attach harnesses. Having said that, they have not been widely taken up. I still think the majority of users of platforms consider that [wearing a harness] is a hindrance when they need to move.”

Mr Reid agrees with the need to prevent people falling from height when exposed to leading edges, but harness wearing on a MCWP is, in his opinion, overkill.

“When operating a machine that has been properly serviced, correctly installed, appropriately examined and well maintained, there should not be

Above If a MCWP requires harnesses to be worn, it requires appropriate anchor points **Opposite** Harnesses are not necessary when working on MCWPs with handrails and guarded edges

any concern with regards to the need to wear a fall protection harness,” he insists.

The health and safety code of practice that governs how MCWPs are used in the UK is *BS 7981: 2002 Code of practice for the installation, maintenance, thorough examination and safe use of mast climbing work platforms*, which is currently being adapted into an ISO standard.

IPAF has adopted the guidance and parameters set out in BS7981 for its non-UK members and MCWP users. Mr Reid explains: “We ended up using it as best practice [with some of it added to the IPAF MCWP Safe Use Guide] and then including the relevant country legislation applicable within those countries.” ■

More guidance on MCWPs can be found at www.ipaf.org/mcwp

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Maximum reach

One of the benefits of powered access platforms is their sheer versatility. These following pages present some applications and platform configurations from the past year provided by IPAF members around the world



I This 70 m Bronto S70XDT STH has been used to access the turbines on the Emu Downs Wind Farm in Western Australia. With a hub height of 68.5 m, the turbines required the large telescopic platform to enable maintenance work to take place.

MEWPs



2



3



4



2 This Multitel MJ 201 sold by Access Industries demonstrates the versatility of the small platform mounted on a 3.5-tonne chassis cab. Its outriggers can be deployed in the line of the vehicle or extended only on one side.

3 This Skyjack SJIII 3219 scissor lift allowed access in tight working quarters for servicing on a manufacturing paint-line production facility.

4 This Genie Z-60/34 has been used by SLUM Urban Cleaning Bureau of Maceió, Brazil, to perform pruning services on coconut trees. Its hydraulic booms and

rotating gearing enables the platform to reach 20 m of height and 11 m of length in under two minutes. For the pruning of the coconut trees, one operator and one trimmer get onto the platform. In the meantime, an assistant removes the pruning remains off the ground.

5 Italian manufacturer Barin has developed a new maintenance platform: the AB 10.5 Combi for Lincoln Hire in Queensland, Australia. The machine has a bucket which can be launched from either the right side or the left side of the

vehicle. While it is initially expected to be used for rail inspections, and is fitted with two sets of rail axles and hydrostatic drive for this purpose, the AB 10.5 Combi can be used on either road or rail. The Scania base truck has lockable suspension for stable use on-road.

6 CTE's ZED 20.2 HV is a new truck-mounted articulated platform with variable stabilisation. It is suitable for work at 20 m height in conditions of reduced space, with 300 kg of maximum capacity and 9.2 m of maximum outreach.

7 Geda has four of its lifts in action at a nickel mine in New Caledonia in the South Pacific, where maintenance access is required to a 100 m-high flash dryer. The Multilift P12 provides passenger and material access at up to 150 m height.

8 Socage has unveiled the Forste 28D, which claims to be the first 28 m double articulated boom on a 3.5-tonne truck. The previous 28 m model, the DA328, was mounted on 5.6-tonne truck. The Forste 28D is able to reach 28 m working height, its maximum outreach is 14 m



and its SWL is 300 kg. Socage says the platform is ideal for the city centre as it is extremely compact, with a 6,690 mm travelling length and a 2,100 mm width with front and rear H frame outriggers. **9** Avon Access used its Ommelift 3700 RJ for repair and inspection work on Evesham Abbey Bell Tower in Worcestershire, UK. The 37m 3700 RJ, purchased from Access Platform Sales, had to enter via a narrow gate and through the soft ground of the graveyard. The job site was also just above the ancient crypt, which meant

weight – and particularly ground pressure – was also an issue for reaching the 33 m heights. The options for the Trust were £30,000 for scaffold or Avon Access with an Ommelift for two days. The lift provides outreach of up to 14 m and precise final positioning thanks to a 130° fly-jib and 180° platform rotation. **10** JLG says its Toucan vertical mast platform offers the dual benefit of a turntable that rotates over 340 degrees at the base of the mast for precise positioning and a jib boom that provides the platform with additional

up-and-over outreach. This manoeuvrability makes it well suited for maintenance work. **11** With its ability to drive across and set-up on uneven, boggy terrain, the Ommelift 2750 RXBDJ Spider Lift was the ideal choice for undertaking bridge inspections in New South Wales, Australia. The light weight of the 2750 RXBDJ allowed it to be craned down off the bridge, and then it was able to drive across loose gravel and set up, using large stabiliser pads to spread the load and ensure a safe set-up.

12 The Pecolift platform is being used as a fast-ascending alternative to podiums and steps during the £80m refurbishment of Reading train station in the UK. To date, around 25 Pecolifts, which can elevate to working heights of 3.5 metres simply by operators turning an intuitive handle, have been deployed for daily use on the site. With no electricity or fuel required to provide power, the Pecolift boasts clear environmental credentials while also enabling a highly safety-focused method of working compared with podium steps.

The safety movement

As a contractor who frequently uses powered access equipment on job sites, you might be considering what you can do to keep your operations safe and effective. How do you keep up with regulations and guidelines affecting your use of MEWPs and MCWPs? Do you need standard terms and conditions of hire for powered access equipment? Do your employees need operator training? Or are you looking to network with others in the industry?

IPAF can help you achieve these objectives. Being a member makes you part of the movement that keeps the powered access industry safe. Membership is open to contractors and users of platforms, as well as manufacturers, distributors, rental and training companies. Many IPAF members joined to demonstrate they are responsible and have made a serious commitment to safety.

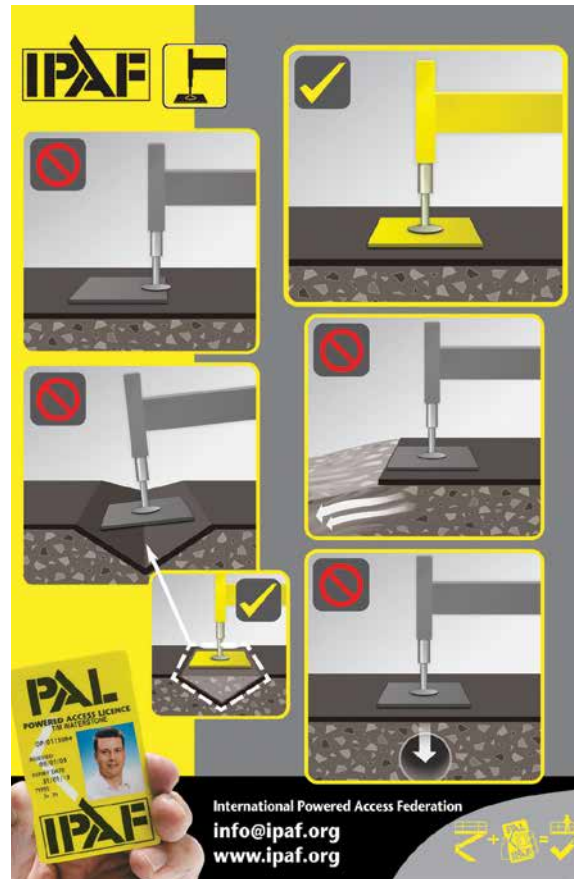
IPAF is a not-for-profit association owned by its members. Membership keeps you up-to-date with the latest technical and safety advice. Members also have access to many services that save time and money.

What IPAF can do for contractors

- Lobbying and representation;
- Monitoring regulations and developments;
- IPAF experts;
- Technical hotline and guidance;
- Safety campaigns.

Safety guidance

One topic that has recently concerned contractors is the risk of entrapment when using MEWPs in confined spaces, and how secondary guarding devices can prevent this from happening. IPAF, as part of the Strategic Forum for Construction Plant Safety Group, published *Best Practice Guidance for MEWPs: Avoiding Trapping/Crushing Injuries*



to People in the Platform. This guides the reader in the safe use of MEWPs including planning, equipment selection and training.

The document is divided into two parts. The first is aimed at managers and instructors. It covers hazards, risk assessment, controls and responsibilities. The second is a handy seven-page document for operators. It has been designed to be used for briefings or toolbox talks.

IPAF has also published *Guidance on the Selection of Anti-Entrapment Devices for MEWPs*, where the risk of sustained involuntary operation of controls and/or overhead entrapment is identified. IPAF also convened

Above The Spread the Load campaign provides guidance on safe use of load spreader plates and outrigger positioning. This and other posters can be ordered free from info@ipaf.org

a seminar in November 2012 that brought more than 30 contractors together and featured a presentation by the Health and Safety Executive on this subject.

You can also support IPAF's safety campaigns by registering to report fatal or serious accidents involving MEWPs or MCWPs. Those who do can access a dashboard showing their company's figures against the national average – a major benefit for health and safety benchmarking.

You can also get involved in the Spread the Load campaign (pictured), which calls for proper assessment of ground conditions and correct use of outriggers and spreader plates.

Member services

CITB grants and training

IPAF members in the UK who pay a levy to the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) and who are eligible for the CITB Grants Scheme could potentially claim back more than they pay in, and claim grants for IPAF training done by employees.

A dedicated training advisor from CITB-ConstructionSkills can provide support to IPAF members in the UK in providing relevant training.

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 training centres that have IPAF approval. ■

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

A smart idea for safety

IPAF's Smart PAL Card ensures that only trained operators can use MEWPs on site. While it looks the same as a standard PAL Card, it is embedded with a data chip that can be used to restrict a machine's use to trained operators

With IPAF's PAL Card (Powered Access Licence) now going smart, how can site management and operators benefit from the advantages of smartcard technology?

IPAF has launched a Smart PAL Card (Powered Access Licence), available in different languages, which is machine-readable and can be used to ensure that only trained operators can use mobile elevating work platforms (MEWPs) on site. Standard PAL Cards will continue to be issued and accepted on site.

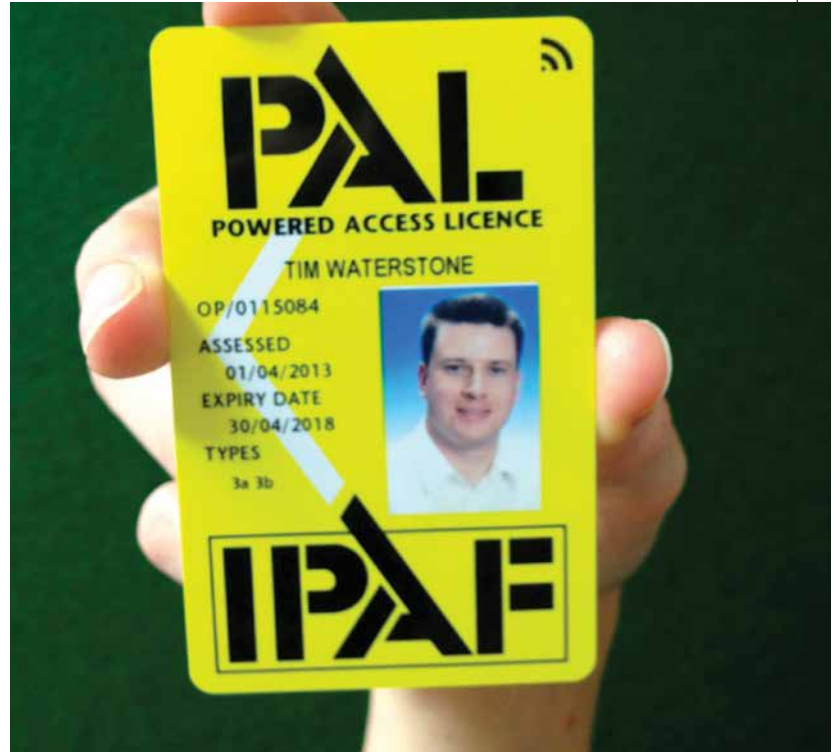
The Smart PAL Card looks the same as the standard PAL Card – the data stored on the card, such as the operator name, number and categories trained in, is also printed on it. The only difference is that the Smart PAL Card is marked by a wireless icon and has a chip embedded in it.

The data in the chip can be read by a card reader fitted to the machine. The reader can be set up to accept certain data which in turn will allow the machine to be operated. This data includes whether or not the cardholder (operator) is trained, to what level and in which machine categories.

No additional personal contact details are contained within the card. IPAF and its approved training centres keep any personal data secure in line with data protection legislation.

Using a Smart PAL Card along with a reader device can allow control of machine access and thereby improve site safety. Site managers can use the system to ensure that only correctly trained operators can operate MEWPs or MCWPs (mast climbing work platforms). They can also track who has used which machine for how long, and prevent fraudulent use.

"The yellow PAL Card is established as a must-have qualification on most job sites and the optional new



smartcard technology will bring added benefits," said IPAF CEO Tim Whiteman. "The Smart PAL Card can be used as part of an electronic logbook of operator experience and can be linked to machine tracking systems. It brings exciting possibilities to make MEWP access safer and MEWP use more secure."

Smart PAL Cards have been tested extensively on multiple machines by operators on site. They can be read by virtually all card readers and there are no restrictions on which smart card readers should be used. Operators or companies can specify if they wish to be issued with a Smart PAL Card or a standard PAL Card when booking courses with their IPAF-approved training centre. ■

WHAT IS A PAL CARD?

PAL Cards are issued to operators who successfully complete the IPAF training programme after passing a written and a practical test. They are valid for five years and show the machine categories that operators have been trained in.

More than 100,000 PAL Cards are issued each year through IPAF-approved training centres worldwide. The PAL Card is accepted widely and recognised as proof of high quality platform operator training. The validity of a card can be checked by using the online verification tool at www.ipaf.org.

More information on IPAF training and the Smart PAL Card can be found at www.ipaf.org/pal.

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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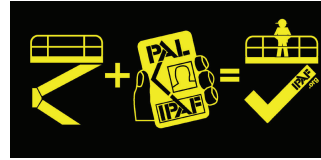
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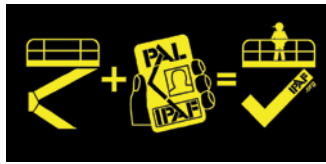
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00 39 0541 756872
www.bluelift.it

Böcker

Werne
Germany
00 49 23897989-0
www.boecker-group.com

Braviisol

Castelfidardo (AN)
Italy
00 39 071 7819090
www.braviisol.com

Bronto Skylift

Tampere
Finland
00 358 20 7927 319
www.bronto.fi

CELA

Corte Franca (BS)
Italy
00 39 030 9884084
www.cela.it

CO.ME.T.

San Giovanni in Persiceto (BO)
Italy
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www.officinemet.com

CTE

Rovereto (TN)
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www.ctelift.com

Custom Equipment

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United States of America
00 1 262-644-1300
www.hybridlifts.com

Dinolift

Loimaa
Finland
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www.dinolift.com

Electroelsa

Poggibonsi (SI)
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www.electroelsa.com

GEDA-Dechentreiter

Asbach-Bäumenheim
Germany
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www.geda.de

Genie *

Grantham, Lincolnshire
United Kingdom
00 44 1476 5834328
www.genielift.co.uk

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Brazil
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www.gsplatforms.com

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www.gsrspa.it

Haulotte *

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www.hinowa.com

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Hoorn
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www.hollandlift.com

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China
00 86 731 84083599
www.runshare.com.cn

Hunan Sinoboom

Hunan
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www.sinoboom.com

Hydro Mobile

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IMER

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King Highway Products

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China
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www.mecAWP.com

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United Kingdom
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www.merlo.co.uk

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Italy
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www.multitelgroup.com

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United Kingdom
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www.niftylift.com

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www.oilsteel.it

Omme Lift

Sdr Omme
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www.ommelift.dk

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www.ruthmann.de

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www.skyljack.com

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United Kingdom
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www.snorkellifts.com

Socage

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Italy
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www.socage.it

Talleres Velilla

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Spain
0034 938493777
www.talleresvelilla.com

TCA Lift

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Denmark
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www.tcalift.com

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Gronau
Germany
00 49 256281610
www.teupen.com

Time International

Farsoe
Denmark
00 45 99 6616 07
www.timeintl.dk

Xuzhou Handler Special Vehicle

Jiangsu Province
China
00 86 516 8798 7705
www.xzhz.com

Youngman

Maldon, Essex
United Kingdom
00 44 1621 745900
www.youngmangroup.com

Zhejiang Dingli

Deqing Zhejiang
China
00 86 572 868 1688
www.chinadinli.com

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Companies that carry the IPAF Rental+ quality mark have been independently audited as meeting defined standards in customer service, safety, staff training, contract terms and machine inspection. Companies get a return visit from the auditors every year.

Visit www.ipaf.org for the current list of IPAF Rental+ companies.



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United Kingdom
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www.1staccessrentals.co.uk

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00 44 1865 779778
www.2cousins.co.uk

Access Plus (Scotland) Ltd

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United Kingdom
00 44 800 3288178
www.access-plus.co.uk

Advanced Access Platforms Ltd

Sutton, Surrey
United Kingdom
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www.accessplatformsuk.com

Aerial Platforms Ltd

Leigh, Lancashire
United Kingdom
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www.apltraining.co.uk

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www.balloohire.com

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www.elavation.net

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www.highlevelplatforms.co.uk

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United Kingdom
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www.highwayplant.com

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www.ipaftrainingcourses.co.uk

Kimberly Access Ltd

Harrogate
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00 44 1423 816080
www.kimberlyaccess.co.uk

Lifterz Ltd

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United Kingdom
00 44 1283 222044
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Swadlincote, Derbyshire
United Kingdom
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www.mainline-hire.co.uk

Midland Access Platforms Ltd

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www.hird.co.uk

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www.plantfinderlimited.co.uk

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www.platformhireltd.co.uk

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www.rapidplatforms.co.uk

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United Kingdom
00 44 844 3352993
www.riwal.co.uk

Smart Platform Rental Ltd

Minworth, Sutton Coldfield
United Kingdom
00 44 871 8719292
www.smartplatforms.co.uk

* Also has group membership in other countries.

Contacts



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, which include manufacturers, rental companies, distributors, contractors and users. Members operate about 90% of the MEWP rental fleet in the UK and manufacture about 85% 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 100,000 operators are trained each year through a worldwide network of over 550 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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The IPAF operator training programme is certified by TÜV as conforming to ISO 18878.

