



IPAF POWERED ACCESS

2015

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Do we do enough
for safety? p10

Contractors proactive on achieving safer work at height with MEWPs p16

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Do more with MEWPs

Are you getting the most out of MEWPs? They are a feature of every job site, but are you using them really effectively? Some contractors don't think so and our interview on page 16 looks at how you might be able to improve your usage.

This debate is not just about using MEWPs safely – although that is extremely important. It's also about ensuring you've considered the most innovative way to use them in order to get the best out of the job. That means having people in your staff who know what MEWPs are really capable of and who can specify specialist equipment that will get the job done quickly, effectively and safely.

Where can you find people like that? Well you probably have them in your staff, but they might need some extra training and there is an HSE-supported training programme that might be relevant. The MEWPs for Managers course trains your staff to specify the most appropriate equipment, plan the most effective work method and identify any unusual or job specific risks before the job starts.

MEWPs are a great way to do temporary work at height, a very dangerous part of the overall job site, but you do need to take the time to plan and have the right people on your staff to truly get the best out of them.

I hope this magazine is useful to you – don't hesitate to contact IPAF for more information.

Tim Whiteman

Managing director & CEO

International Powered Access Federation

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UKCG MEWP Toolkit is welcomed by IPAF

IPAF welcomes and fully endorses the UKCG MEWP Good Practice Toolkit published by the UK Contractors Group. The document

provides guidance on how UKCG members should manage the use of MEWPs on their sites.

This document highlights where

contractors can find specific information and guidance from sources including IPAF on the various aspects of safe MEWP operation and management including statutory compliance, and acknowledged safe procedures. It should be seen as a minimum standard for specifying, managing and operating MEWPs on site. Individual, specific sites may have additional or higher requirements. The UKCG MEWP Good Practice Toolkit is available at the Publications section of www.ipaf.org

UK council pushes MEWP safety on sites

The IPAF UK Country Council has developed a five-year plan aimed at keeping the use of MEWPs safe on UK sites.

Two items on the plan are to develop guidance on operating MEWPs on public highways and to develop guidance on material handling in MEWPs.

HSE warning on covers

Alert based on review of seven fatal accidents in which operators were crushed

The Health & Safety Executive has issued a safety alert advising that “covers/shrouds on machine controls do not protect against entrapment of operators between the machine and nearby obstructions” (*Devices used to reduce operator entrapment and crushing on mobile elevating work platforms*, HSE bulletin no. FOD 3-2014, issue date May 2014).

The HSE alert also directs duty holders to two industry guidance documents that may be used in assessing and reducing the risk of entrapment or crushing accidents when operating MEWPs:

1. The Strategic Forum for Construction Plant Safety Group’s *Best Practice Guidance for MEWPs: Avoiding Trapping/Crushing Injuries to People in the Platform* (reference 1);

2. IPAF’s *Guidance on Secondary Guarding Devices* (reference 2).

Both documents are available at the Publications section of www.ipaf.org.

The alert was based on the HSE’s review of seven fatal accidents involving MEWPs in which operators were crushed. In five of the accidents, the operator was crushed between an overhead obstruction and a cover/shroud

fitted over the controls of the machine.

The alert further states that: “HSE acknowledges that it is not possible to conclude that the accidents involving shrouds would have been prevented if those machines had not been fitted with shrouds. Nevertheless, HSE wants to share the conclusions of its review with those responsible for the selection of MEWPs (and secondary guarding devices) where there is a risk of entrapment and/or crushing of the operator.”

The alert calls for these actions:

- Duty holders should assess the potential for entrapment/crushing accidents in MEWPs for the specific tasks they are to undertake. In making the assessment and deciding on appropriate safeguards, they should consider the issues described in reference 1.
- Where a secondary guarding device (see reference 2) is required, it should be selected for the specific application and its limitations should be clearly understood by those who will be using the machine.
- Covers/shrouds for machine controls should not be relied upon to reduce the risk of entrapment/crushing more generally.

Video: is your MEWP legal?

The latest 15-minute safety video from IPAF highlights the need to keep equipment in good working order through planned maintenance regimes as well as pre-use checks, inspections and regular thorough examinations.

IPAF has also released two other videos that provide visual tours of how to conduct pre-start inspections for scissor lifts and booms, as well as technical guidance on major inspections aimed at keeping MEWPs safe beyond the manufacturer’s design life.



All inspection videos and resources can be found at www.ipaf.org/inspections

New guidance

IPAF has published guidance on how to secure MEWPs when not in use. It is essential that MEWPs are secured and managed correctly to ensure that only competent and nominated personnel operate the equipment in accordance with the employer’s safe system of work. All MEWPs should be stored in a safe and secure manner when left unattended.

The document provides guidance on how this may be achieved and is available at the Publications/Technical Guidance section of www.ipaf.org.

Best Practice Guidance for MEWPs
Avoiding Trapping / Crushing Injuries to People in the Platform

Strategic Forum for Construction Plant Safety Group

IPAF National Construction College

IPAF welcomes the HSE guidance and reminds the industry that no single device or equipment will prevent entrapment in all known circumstances. MEWPs are a safe and efficient way to perform temporary work at height, but their use must go hand in hand with appropriate operator and management training, adequate familiarisation, risk assessment, proper planning and management of the work.

Strategic Forum MEWP Safety Group is back

The Strategic Forum for Construction Plant Safety Group (FCPSG) MEWP Safety Group, formerly the IPAF UK MEWP Safety Forum, has been re-established. This group is chaired by Kevin Minton, director of the Construction Plant-hire Association. Chris Wraith, IPAF technical and safety executive, is the convenor.

The MEWP Safety Group was instrumental in changing generic “anti-entrapment” terminology to “secondary guarding”. It has produced updated guidance on the selection of secondary guarding devices for MEWPs

where the risk of entrapment has been identified, and guidance on MEWP security and isolation of machines when not in use. It is currently drafting guidance on loading/unloading for contractors, rental companies, transporters and drivers. It is also drafting guidance for rental companies and contractors regarding MEWP maintenance, inspection and thorough examination.

MEWPs are safe by design

Manufacturer members of the IPAF Manufacturers’ Technical Committee have issued a statement confirming the safe design of MEWPs. It was prepared in response to a letter written by a major UK contractor, dated

January 2014, where concerns were raised “about the safety of this type of work equipment” (MEWPs) and requesting “additional confirmation as to the safety of all equipment being brought onto site”.

The IPAF manufacturers’ statement can be viewed at the Publications/Technical Guidance section of www.ipaf.org.

Look out for the CE marking

All MEWPs placed on the European market have to comply with the Machinery Directive 98/37/EC, and since 29 December 2009, its amended version 2006/42/EC.

All MEWPs placed on the EU market must clearly and

permanently identify the machine and manufacturer in one of the languages of the Community, and include the CE mark, serial number and year of construction, among others. They must be accompanied by a Declaration of Conformity that confirms compliance with the Essential Health and Safety Requirements of the Directive. Instructions on safe use and markings/warnings must accompany each machine and they must be in the language of the member state where the machine is placed on the market or put into service.

Full details are in the FEM brief guide for identification of non-compliant MEWPs, which can be downloaded from the Resources/Reference Guides section of www.ipaf.org.



Good practice guide for MEWPs produced by IPAF

Hire companies and contractors can refer to a good practice guide produced by IPAF which lists some of the key points that should be considered when managing any type of mobile elevating work platform (MEWP).

The document *Management of MEWPs – Good Practice for Hire Companies and Contractors* was produced in consultation with manufacturers, contractors, rental companies and other interested parties.

While this good practice guide was produced following requests for guidance on managing “large and complex” MEWPs,

IPAF’s members believe that the key principles of good MEWP management are relevant to all types of MEWP and not limited to “large and complex” machines.

The document guides rental companies and contractors through the entire process from planning and ordering equipment, right up to the point of delivery and during operation. It can be downloaded at the Publications/Technical Guidance section of www.ipaf.org

Good practice tips from IPAF are available to help hire companies and contractors manage MEWPs safely.

EN280 review is under way

Approval has been given for a full review of the European design standard relating to the manufacture of MEWPs. The European Committee for Standardisation (CEN) has recently gained a mandate for CEN TC98/WG1 to commence a full revision of EN280:2013 once the current amendment A1 has been finalised. IPAF technical & safety executive Chris Wraith explains why the developments in the European MEWP standard are necessary:

“The increasing popularity and increased use of MEWPs throughout the world in almost all sectors of industry, for new and differing applications, mean that there are constantly new issues that need addressing in the design standard.

“Possible topics for consideration in the next full revision of EN280 include:

- Exit at height;
- Retention of key in ground controls;
- Average weight of a person;
- Fire prevention;
- Ability to isolate power when elevated, other than emergency stop;
- Wind speed variations;
- Electromagnetic current (EMC).

“Continual technical and physical advances in MEWP design mean it is essential that the industry-specific design standard EN280 reflects ‘state of art’ and provides relevant guidance for manufacturers to ensure safe design of MEWPs,” said Mr Wraith.

IPAF Summit and Access awards

The next IPAF Summit and International Awards for Powered Access (IAPAs) will take place on 26 March 2015 in Washington, DC. Enter for an award, book gala dinner tickets, or register for the free IPAF Summit conference at www.ipaf-summit.info.



Regional meetings

Come to IPAF regional meetings! Members and non-members learn about recent developments in the industry and network with their peers.

These informal evening events usually start around 18:00 and last for two to three hours. Delegates hear from three to four speakers, followed by questions and answers. This is rounded off with a light buffet supper for which there is a nominal charge. Don't miss this easy and cost-effective way to learn about the powered access industry.

Regional meetings take place four times a year across the UK:

- 28 January 2015
Scotland Regional Meeting, hosted by Nationwide Platforms
 - 29 April 2015
North East Regional Meeting, hosted by Trainrite
 - 9 September 2015
West Midlands Regional Meeting, hosted by IAPS Group
 - 2 December 2015
West London Regional Meeting, hosted by AFI-Uplift
- Details and registration at www.ipaf.org/events

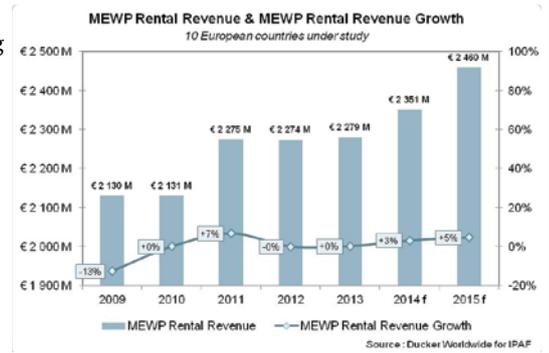
Double-digit growth for US AWP rental market

Latest results from IPAF's annual rental market research indicate that the European mobile elevating work platform (MEWP) rental market remained stable in 2013, continuing the trend in 2012. However, strong differences exist among the 10 countries under study: Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden and the UK. Some countries achieved positive growth: Germany, Norway, Sweden and the UK saw their rental revenue increase around 5 per cent.

The UK MEWP rental fleet appears to have reached its pre-recession levels. However, rental companies remained cautious and kept an unchanged split between construction and non-construction applications.

The US aerial work platform (AWP) rental market is rebounding with stellar growth of around 10 per cent in 2013. For the first time, IPAF has commissioned research into the Chinese market.

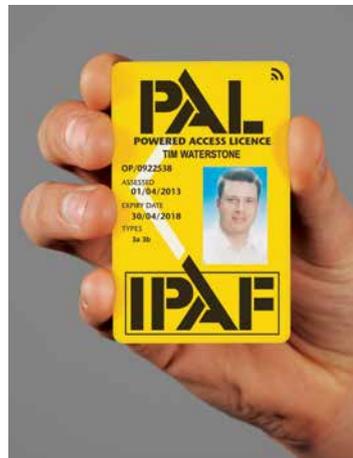
The IPAF US and European Powered Access Rental Market Reports 2014 include forecasts for growth and fleet composition in the coming years,



and an estimate of the size of the AWP rental fleet worldwide, with a breakdown by region and by machine type. The US report also covers Canada.

Get the full figures and purchase these publications at www.ipaf.org/reports. MEWP rental revenue and growth in Europe, source: IPAF European Powered Access Rental Market Report 2014 or at www.ipaf.org or visit www.ipaf.org/m4m

IPAF celebrates the issue of one millionth PAL Card



IPAF has issued the one millionth-ever PAL Card (Powered Access Licence) under its voluntary, industry-led operator training programme, which is certified by TÜV as conforming to ISO 18878.

To celebrate the one millionth PAL Card ever issued, IPAF is calling all valid PAL Card holders to enter a draw for some amazing prizes. The PAL Card expires after five years and there are currently more than 500,000 valid PAL Cards worldwide.

There will be five top prizes for verified operators to win a free trip to the access event of the year, the IPAF Summit and International Awards for Powered Access (IAPAs) – flight, accommodation and gala dinner included. This event will be held on 25 and 26 March 2015 at the Crystal Gateway Marriott Hotel in Arlington, VA near Washington, DC. All valid PAL Card holders are invited to enter the draw by verifying their PAL Card at www.ipaf.org/checkpal by 26 January 2015.

Manage your MEWPs

IPAF's MEWPs for Managers course is available from approved training centres worldwide in English, German, French, Italian, Dutch, Spanish and Portuguese. The course is not about operating equipment, but about planning, supervising and effectively managing the use of MEWPs on site, and understanding the responsibilities of owners, employers and operators. It ends with a written test that candidates must pass in order to obtain a certificate. Details at www.ipaf.org/m4m.



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Operator eLearning available across the US

IPAF's operator eLearning module is available across the US in both English and Spanish.

Operator eLearning does not replace practical training. With the eLearning module, trainees complete the theory (traditional classroom) part of the course online at their own pace and time, using the same material as in a classroom session and learning the same subjects. The trainee has access to an instructor via email or phone in case questions arise during the training.

Trainees who complete the online session must still pass a supervised theory test at an IPAF-approved training centre and must successfully complete practical training and testing before being issued a PAL Card as proof of successfully completed operator training. IPAF training is managed in the US and Canada by American Work Platform Training (AWPT), IPAF's North American subsidiary.

More about operator eLearning is at www.ipaf.org/eLearning

AWPT 3 - Categorías de PTA



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Keep safe distances from power lines, says IPAF

IPAF has called on MEWP operators and managers to always be aware of and keep safe distances when working near power lines, in light of accident data which points to electrocutions as one of the largest causes of MEWP-related fatalities in the US.

The not-for-profit Federation highlighted this safety message with a dynamic display at the Lift Safety Zone at the CONEXPO-CON/AGG show in Las Vegas, which illustrated the safe and minimum approach distances that a MEWP should be when working near power lines.

The IPAF demonstration at the Lift Safety Zone illustrated two recommended safe distances:

- 50 ft (15 m) + fully extended boom from electrical pylons;
- 30 ft (9 m) + fully extended boom from cables on wooden poles.

These recommended safe distances meet or exceed those specified in the US ANSI standards and OSHA requirements.

Tony Groat, IPAF North America manager, explained: "Operators or supervisors are often not in a



position to know the voltage in the power source. Knowing the voltage is essential to determine the minimum approach distance (MAD), which is the safest distance a person who has not had specific training in avoiding electrical hazards should approach 'live' overhead cables. The IPAF recommendations are safe distances until the

voltage is determined.

"It is possible to work closer to power lines than the IPAF-recommended safe distances, but this should only be undertaken after seeking expert advice from the power supplier and implementing extra safety precautions."

See video at the Publications & Films section of www.ipaf.org

A Smart safety move for new PAL Cards

All PAL Cards (Powered Access Licences) issued by IPAF for training on or after 1 January 2015 will be machine-readable, ie Smart PAL Cards. This move aims to improve site safety as Smart PAL Cards may be used to ensure that only trained operators can use mobile elevating work platforms (MEWPs) and mast climbing work platforms (MCWPs) on site.

The Smart PAL Card is marked by a wireless icon and has a chip embedded in it. The data stored on the card, such as the operator name, number and categories trained in, is also printed on it, so that the Smart PAL Card can still be used as a standard version.

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 (eg level of training, machine

categories) which in turn will allow the machine to be operated. This means that a machine can be programmed to start only if the operator has had the correct training.

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. They can also track who has used which machine for how long, and prevent fraudulent use.

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/checkpal.



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The big debate



Clockwise from top left: Health and Safety Executive construction inspector Justine Lee; Skyjack product & business development manager David Hall; IPAF technical & safety executive Chris Wraith; Loxam Access managing director Brian Stead

Safety – the journey continues

Our Big Debate brings together industry experts to grapple with the most important issues in the world of MEWPs. This year we tackle a fundamental question: do we care enough about safety? Andrew Gaved chairs the debate

AG So, do we really care enough about safety? Everybody talks about it, but are we practising what we preach and can we improve it?

DH The UK construction industry has been proactive with its approach to safety and training. Take secondary guarding, for example. In the UK it's practically a requirement. In Europe that's not the case, yet there is no

discernible difference in the way that MEWPs are used. When Skyjack launched its secondary guarding options, the emphasis was on the view that there was no one solution to meet all needs – that the choice was down to the user against the background of a risk assessment. It would be interesting to understand the different approaches. Is it culture, or stronger health and

safety regulations, or the more active role of contractors in the UK?

BS It is a combination of a couple of factors, from my experience – and we have colleagues in 14 countries now. Firstly, there doesn't seem to be quite so much governance in health and safety, and perhaps related to that, there doesn't seem to be the same safety ethic. So in the UK, we have very



good groups such as UKCG [UK Contractors Group], which is tackling health and safety at the point of work and trying to force something back up the supply chain. And then we have a well-regulated Health and Safety Executive where, regardless of one's opinion of the body, people are required to take the standards on board.

UKCG

JL You make a valid point about the role of UKCG, because HSE works closely with them. They are able to take forward certain things that HSE might not be able to ask for specifically, but which they can make mandatory on their sites. Secondary guarding is a good example. Whereas HSE would ask for a risk assessment to be undertaken rather than demanding specific measures, the fitting of guarding has been mandated by UKCG when undertaking certain specified activities on its sites. We work together very well with a common agenda, rather than the regulator leading.

CW How much authority does the UKCG have to enforce its measures and how much is it the individual contractor? Because we see things in its toolkit that have yet to filter down to some sites.

JL There is an expectation that the individual members should be enforcing what has been set out. They have a huge amount of power in UK construction and they use it to very good effect.

BS I think the real safety problems lie

with the sites of contractors who aren't members of UKCG, where the safety standards aren't being enforced. I don't think it is quite 'white van man', but it is the smaller firms, maybe those with one to five employees, who operate in an unregulated unstructured environment. The sort who aren't so proactive with safety but who think their PAL Cards are enough to make them safe - the sort who think they can then go on site without any kind of a risk assessment or method statement because they are "only clearing out gutters". This is even though the job has got the same level of risk as it would be on a full construction site, because it is essentially performing the same task. **People still have to be aware of the ground conditions and the potential movement around the machine, but it seems to be an attitude of 'drive up, operate and drive on'. That is the area we have got to grasp control of.**

Andrew Gaved chaired the debate



PAL Cards

BS We won't hire a machine to someone who doesn't have a PAL Card. That unfortunately is not the position of everybody in the industry. But even then, there is no guarantee that the person who is actually operating on the site has got a card.

DH Does he actually have to show the card, like when you show your driving licence when picking up a hire car?

BS If they are picking up the machine they have to show the PAL Card, yes. If it's a vehicle mount, they also have to show that they have the appropriate authorisation to drive, including insurance. But most of the time we will be delivering the machine to a site, and then we don't know who will be operating it. We have no control over it, until such time as smartcard technology becomes the norm on all machines.

CW IPAF, together with UK members, formulated good practice guidance for rental companies and contractors. The more companies that adhere to that as a template, the better safety will get.

AG UKCG works by taking a top-down approach to safety and it filters down the supply chain. But are there similar approaches among the bodies for firms outside of this?

BS I think the MEWP industry can help with banging the drum. What also works with UKCG is they can help drive change - with secondary guarding, for instance, thanks to UKCG's good efforts, over a period of 10 to 15 years, secondary guarding won't be an issue for anyone to worry about in the UK, because it will be fitted to all the machines. But there will be a long time lag till it is on all machines. And it won't stop people trying to bypass these systems. But, to the best of my knowledge, there is no clear forum that would cover the mass hire of machines outside of the UKCG. I would like to think that a subcontractor coming to work on a UKCG site would take on the same standards, but perhaps that is just a pipe dream.

JL I think that with UKCG it goes very efficiently down through its supply chain, but outside of that remit, I think that is where the problem comes.

DH I personally think that the Strategic Forum for Construction Plant MEWP Safety Group has been a good thing, because it has allowed the contractors, hirers and manufacturers - and the



regulators – to see it from the other parties’ perspective. Getting those things out on the table and then working on them together has been useful, such as secondary guarding. It is when people are felt to be making an arbitrary decision that the problems start.

Drawing in the end users

BS I think this is something that IPAF can have a role in. In my opinion, **the courses that are aimed at end users are not adequately taken up by those who they are designed for and some of that is because they don’t see the benefit.**

We don’t draw them in enough. Some of that is because of the commercial realities – if you are attending a course, you are not earning money – but I think there must be ways we can attract people. I attended an event on ground conditions with HSE and Working Well Together, which was really well-attended. There were probably more than 200 people and people in a position to influence. And it was free. Perhaps we need more open events for IPAF to attract that end of the market.

JL I think you are absolutely right and it goes across the piece for all work at height, not just powered access. The supply chain feeding the big contractors get to the information but there remains a group of people who are extremely difficult to reach and the question is, how do we get that safety message across? There are people who want to get it right, but who simply

haven’t received the message yet. That is our challenge, to reach those people.

Driving change from the client

AG And what about the customer of the sites – like the local authorities – making them aware of what is expected in terms of safety? Because that is another way to drive change. The guy in the van will then be under no illusions as to what a city council or whoever wants.

JL I think education of clients and those who procure the work is another route, yes.

DH It is maybe more those sites where there aren’t formal tenders or things like that – back to the guttering example, for instance – which are the ones to reach.

JL For scaffolding, now there is a protocol where if a scaffold company has to put up scaffold on the highway, the local authority can refer to the protocol, which covers things such as lighting and gantries. That is something that the MEWP industry could think about perhaps – producing something that will help the client, such as a checklist, and HSE’s new information sheet GEIS6 should help with this.

BS Safety on the highway is an important area – there is definitely a tendency for certain customers to try to avoid applying for a permit by insisting the work is done at four in the morning. But at that time of the morning, the

Justine Lee:
‘There are people who want to get it right, but who simply haven’t received the message yet. That is our challenge, to reach those people’

operator is less likely to be expecting an obstacle; he probably isn’t as alert as he will be at other times of the day. And it is dark. So you are actually increasing the likelihood of an incident. The cost of traffic management and the time factor involved puts a pressure on rental companies to supply the machines at silly times and without checking that there is traffic management in place. A professional hire company will ask to see it, and not do the job without one. But unfortunately there are often those who aren’t so professional who will do it anyway.

CW We know that we will see the same accidents again, where they haven’t cordoned the road off, or someone has gone through the cones because of inadequate warning and guiding. What is interesting, now that IPAF has got stats in place, is that we see the same type of accidents occurring year in and year out. We don’t seem to be learning the lessons.

Priority areas

AG Are there sectors that are really bad for safety at height?

BS For me it is the jobbing builder, the ‘property maintenance’ people who do everything, particularly when it involves roofing. They are quite good with going up, but they effectively use the MEWP as a ladder and get out on a fragile roof and fall through.

JL About half the fatal falls from height are people who fall through fragile materials and they are people who have gone up for short duration jobs, to do a quick repair or to survey something.

AG Presumably they could have stayed in the basket if they had used a MEWP with the appropriate outreach.

JL Yes, or they could have approached it from underneath in a MEWP.

Replacing of rooflights is a massive issue but it can be done from the safety of a basket. Instead they get on the roof.

AG Low-level access is an area. IPAF’s historic focus has been on the bigger kit, but now there is a lot of demand for machines at the lower levels.

BS In terms of demand, it is the fastest growing area, and I guess in terms of number of accidents too, if not severity. The risk is from back injuries from trying to push the smaller platforms around.

TREE SURGERY – A SECTOR THAT NEEDS REACHING

CW An aspect that is causing concern is objects falling into the basket and causing injury, or worse catapulting out the operator, in areas such as dismantling structures and arboriculture.

BS Tree surgeons are a large customer sector and it is an area we have to be most focused on getting it right – because you are working in a basket with confined space, you have highly dangerous machinery such as the chainsaw. You would normally like a wide safe area with such machinery but you can't because the operative is in the basket. Normally you would not want to work from underneath, but you can't always avoid that because trees are not designed in an ideal way to be pruned from above. And another thing about trees is that they aren't always on stable ground.

JL But presumably a much safer way to do it than using ropes?

BS It is safer, but it is not free of risk.

AG Are the customers in this sector, in your experience, aware of all the risks?

BS They are aware of the risk of using the chainsaw, but they sometimes express surprise that our operator believes he is safer not being in the basket on some tasks. Also the operator

needs adequate safety equipment too – it is not just the guy holding the chainsaw who needs the right leggings, it is everyone. We are very strict on that. A high proportion of our 'discussions' are around those risks. I believe it is not a regulated industry in that respect. Most of the customers are one-, two- or three- person operations; and on top of that, they are used to working with a high degree of risk, because until quite recently they would have been using ropes. So often they just want to hire a 20 m self-drive because they are not aware of all the factors. They will drive it onto grass and not realise the risks. They will tend to use significantly sized trucks, or a 3.5-tonne chassis if they self-drive, or a spider boom. And with all three, if you are operating them on soft ground you run the risk of overturning or falling from the machine.

DH That's because they don't understand the implications of ground conditions, I suppose?

BS Absolutely. At the Working Well Together meeting I mentioned earlier, I was quite alarmed at some of the questions. And that was from what you might call the more educated level of management.

CW Should IPAF be targeting new sectors such as

HVAC [heating, ventilating and air conditioning] and landscaping?

BS An event such as Assessing The Risk aimed at those sorts of people would work well because I think we are doing well with the other half.

JL We do need to look beyond construction; that is why we want to expand our information sheet about MEWPs to other sectors, such as agriculture.

AG The challenge for IPAF, as for this publication, is to keep reaching beyond construction.

CW IPAF has worked with the Arboriculture Association and continues to do so.

JL Is there some sort of refresher training for these sorts of people that the MEWPs side could be tied in with? Such as when they go for chainsaw training?

CW But training isn't the only answer; it is about education and about management too. The use of MEWPs in this sector has continued to grow consistently in recent years.

IPAF collaborated with the Arboriculture Association to produce guidance on *Safe Use of Mobile Elevating Work Platforms in Arboriculture*, which can be purchased at www.trees.org.uk/publications

CW I think the accident stats will show that there have been more accidents at low heights than from significant heights. Because perhaps those working at the greater heights are more appreciative of the risks.

BS The other issue is drivers getting injured trying to unload or manhandle them, because you should really be using a tail-lift to get them on site, rather than a low loader or beavertail.

CW Unloading becomes more of an issue on congested city sites, where deliveries have to take place on the road.

JL It is fine to do it, but it must be properly planned and supervised and that's where the whole thing can fall apart. It is the customer's responsibility that there is somewhere for it to be delivered safely, not the hire company's.

CW It is in the MEWPs for Managers course but it is an area where we need to provide more information and guidance.

BS For a hire company like us, MEWPs for Managers is absolute core business but it isn't so for the jobbing builder. The more we can deliver modules, e-learning and the like, the better.

David Hall and Brian Stead



If they can do it around the Champions League or whatever, that will appeal to them.

BS One of the key things about getting the issues across is to make it simple. The four-page guidance will get much more readership than the 105-page one.

CW If we do publish guidance, it must be short and sharp. The guy who we have identified as having a problem is not going to have a health and safety manager to read it for him.

Changing practice

CW The biggest causes of accidents are overturning and falling from height but people don't seem to change practice to avoid them, even when they know what causes the accidents.

As the machines get heavier and increase in size – up to 180 or 185 ft now – it becomes even more vital to assess the load on those wheels.

BS The load can change after you have set it up, too.

DH Risks can be quite different between smaller and larger units.

JL If you can show people visual evidence of the bad practice, that is good – the photos of what can go wrong can speak volumes. A lot of people genuinely think it won't happen to them.

DH I think familiarity can breed contempt – I wonder whether there is any correlation between the length of service and the accidents?

CW In the three fatalities I have been involved in investigating, the victims had all been trained, and were experienced operators, but there was a common factor – they were all under time pressures.

BS To me it doesn't matter whether it is contract labour or staff – the essential factor is you have to be properly trained. There will always be time constraints due to commercial pressures. As long as you assess

The big debate

THE BENEFITS OF ACCIDENT REPORTING

CW IPAF's UK rental members have mandated that all their firms should record all accidents and lost-time injuries to their staff on the IPAF accident database at ipaf.org/accident. As a result, we are getting data on the risks for the engineers and delivery drivers. It has highlighted that they both frequently have accidents. Engineers have fewer accidents than drivers but they have more injuries. One of the frustrating things is that I have invited contractors to supply their MEWP accidents on many occasions, but despite the UKCG mandating it, the response has been poor – fewer than five contractors are reporting to the database, and then not on a regular basis. Until we can get that data, we cannot know what the true scale of the problems is.

BS The issue is that contractors want to maintain their zero-harm accident statistics. They often differentiate themselves on it and submitting incidents to the database, however secure it might be, risks ruining their records.

CW I was talking to one contractor who said that they report every incident and near-misses too, but then this risks getting them penalised when it comes to tendering, as it is no longer a zero score.

JL Near-miss data can be so useful for painting a picture of the risks – it is a missed opportunity.

BS The secondary guarding issue first came up because UKCG had noticed a frequency of crushing injuries. They took it on board and did something about it. No one would say it was a cure-all, but over time it will probably reduce the number of incidents. If we are not reporting accidents and near-misses, we are just shooting in the dark on reducing them.

CW The contractors know the data because they have to sign it off, so it is a shame that they don't share it. After that, it is about approaching people individually and ensuring their trust, that it is managed confidentially.

JL There is only so much that is required to be reported under law and there is already significant under-reporting under RIDDOR. We would love to see more reporting of accidents, but people are already suspicious of reporting to the HSE. As the regulator, we can only go so far. But we can act on information brought to us.

Chris Wraith:
'We can do more.
Until there are
no accidents'



properly and operate according to the method statement, you will probably do things more quickly than otherwise.

JL I wonder whether in light of the current skills shortage across the industry, the lack of experience has an effect on the accident rate too.

Improving machine quality

BS It is not just the operators on the job site - if we are not careful, the shortage of engineering skills may lead to machines that are not maintained to the right standard either.

I see a massive demand for engineering in powered access and the resource isn't there. We need to improve the quality of machines. The Food Standards Agency is able to walk into any factory, and I would welcome the HSE having the right to do the same to any hire company.

AG But there would have to be an accident before HSE investigated, wouldn't there?

JL Effectively yes, as we have to use our resources as effectively as possible.

DH Sometimes it is hard to prove whether the machine went out in the right condition. Some of these guys are very skilled in getting round the systems. I know of some contractors who have told their staff that if they find that someone has changed the safety setting or done something to a machine that makes it more dangerous, then they will be sacked.

DH But sometimes it takes a long time for the HSE to get back to the industry with a meaningful response after an accident.

JL The answer to that, without referring to specifics, is that we can't go out into the public domain with anecdotal evidence and we cannot simply scare the industry, so we have to be very measured. We have to do a thorough investigation of the incident – and that takes time.

DH Sometimes though, an earlier indication would be useful to avoid the problem recurring.

Technology – friend or foe?

CW Is there anything that the technology can do to help with accidents, in terms of being tamper-proof, for instance?

DH There is a positive and a negative to this. The positive is you could have a system that helps prevent some of the misuse, but the negative is a more complicated machine would mean more computer-driven elements for the engineer to cope with – so we have always leaned towards keeping the machine simpler.

JL Do you need that level of sophistication? Most of the accidents that occur appear to have quite obvious causes, particularly when it comes to overturning and ground conditions.

DH You are right, all the accidents I have worked with all have had relatively simple causes, and all the sophistication in the world wouldn't help.

BS I think there is a midpoint, though. On the larger, more sophisticated vehicle-mounts and on cranes there is recording of the different movements, and I don't care if it is a bit more expensive to buy, because it actually reduces my overall costs in the long run. The customer can't say "it just broke", because we can tell what the movements were. That sort of thing isn't massive computerisation, you can get boxes that will cost around £500 and on a bigger boom that isn't much of a lift.

CW If you ask around the hire companies, the tampering is a significant issue.

BS This year I have already seen people cutting the secondary guarding wires.

Summing up

AG So, are we doing enough for safety?

JL On the plus side, there are some committed groups who will always want to move the agenda forward and to improve safety.

BS I think we have established that construction is generally doing a good job but there are other areas we need to tackle. And we need to ensure that the responsibility moves all the way up the chain from the operator.

CW I think we can always do more. Until there are no accidents. ■

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Safer work at height by design

Members of major contractors' body the UKCG have been proactive on achieving safer work at height with MEWPs and say that architects should take powered access into consideration during the design process. Greg Pitcher reports

Major contractors want designers to take more consideration of the capabilities of powered access equipment.

David Lambert, head of health and safety at trade body the UK Contractors Group, says it is time to think about powered access in the same way as cranes when designing buildings. His comments come in a wide-ranging interview about the safety issues surrounding mobile elevating work platforms, which are becoming ever more prevalent on construction sites.

Mr Lambert and Interserve Construction managing director Ian Renhard say MEWPs are often safer than previous ways of working at height, but that they must still be used by the right people for the right task. This is an issue for everyone in the supply chain to consider, they add.

"I would like to see designers think a little bit more about how these platforms are used," says Mr Lambert. "I'm not sure they have caught up with how these are used in installation.

"Designers could be thinking of access, and about size and shape of

components, and making sure these can be more easily handled in conjunction with this sort of equipment. It is a buildability issue but one we rarely hear covered. Of course, contractors can help make designers aware."

Mr Lambert says the move from fixed ladders and scaffolds to powered access for a range of construction jobs at height has been a huge safety improvement - but it has led to new challenges. "The technology developed and the management of that technology had to develop with it," he says.

"With more readily available powered access equipment, the risk increases of people without appropriate training using it."

Mr Renhard says training of site managers, powered access operators and ground engineers all has to be spot-on to ensure there are no dangerous gaps in understanding how the systems work.

Ground conditions are a big factor that need to be taken into consideration before using a powered access machine.

"This equipment is as dependent on ground conditions as a mobile crane,"

says Mr Lambert. "The loads can be every bit as high."

Mr Renhard agrees: "There is sometimes a reliance on the appearance of the ground. You need to ensure that the ground has the right bearing capacity for the machine that's going to be used.

"Most crane lifts are well thought-out, with the ground prepared. With a MEWP, there is an opportunity to just drive up and commence work at height."

Good management

The UKCG supports the IPAF MEWPs for Managers training course, which gives site managers and planners an overview of all the issues involved with using powered access machinery on a project.

"It comes back to the importance of planning, knowing the capabilities of equipment, making the right selection, taking into account ground conditions and knowing where to use certain machines," says Mr Lambert.

IPAF's PAL+ training is recommended for UKCG members undertaking high-risk activities such as operating MEWPs in congested areas and for steel erection.

On top of these training courses, the UKCG last December published a strategic toolkit in conjunction with IPAF that sets out how powered access should be used.

"We identified it as an area where there needed to be clear guidance, and we've used our ability to speak for the 30 per cent of the industry our members cover to establish standards," says Mr Lambert.

"If something is to go wrong with powered access machinery, the outcomes are likely to be serious."

Mr Renhard adds that complacency is the biggest threat on site.

"The risk with MEWPs is that people think they have a safe option before they start," he says. "It's about making sure you plan the work, the ground conditions are correct, the equipment is correct and



Left: David Lambert
Right: Ian Renhard





it's being operated by trained staff."

Mr Lambert adds: "You still see, at the smaller end of the industry, a builder with the best of intentions who goes off to do some work, for example, on a chimney on a domestic property but does not realise the issues associated with using that equipment."

Mr Lambert says the UKCG does not mandate a single approach, but encourages its members to make risk assessments and use common sense.

"We have an expectation that our members will follow the guidance and implement the standards in a way that's proportionate and appropriate to the risks on a project," he says. "Clearly there's a world of difference between the Shard and a single-storey shed."

He believes that the UKCG's work on standards will also have a wider effect, spreading best practice beyond just the big players and on towards other contractors and suppliers.

"We are committed to raising standards across the industry through our members. There is an element of trickle-down and also, with fluidity of labour, people move in and

out of projects and take standards with them."

Mr Renhard believes it is important to embed the standards for MEWPs, since he sees the use of powered access growing further, even to the extent of taking more work from the traditional scaffolding arena.

"Technology is playing an increasing part in the industry and powered access is part of that," he says. "I think we will see more operations where we are taking risk out. One of the risks you get with scaffold is putting it up in the first place.

"I think we'll see powered access built into buildings as they are put up. Sometimes MEWPs that will be used in maintenance of buildings are being put in early to help with the construction. It makes both stages safer."

Recovery challenge

Training has not dropped off during the economic downturn, according to the UKCG, although the recovery brings its own challenges.

"One of the issues coming out of

the recession is the way people move around the industry," says Mr Lambert.

"As the number of available machines is increasing, so is the risk of someone being trained on one piece of equipment and being confronted with a different type."

Good operator training coupled with professionally delivered familiarisation can overcome the problem, but people need to know to ask for both.

As well as all the guidance and training for contractors, powered access manufacturers are being involved in improving safety.

"One of the risks is an operator being trapped against equipment controls, so we've seen the advent of secondary guarding to eliminate that," says Mr Renhard.

Overall, the UKCG believes powered access safety practice across the vast majority of UK construction sites is now very good.

"Complacency is the biggest concern," says Mr Renhard. "You need to stay alert and aware of everyday risks." ■

Proper planning and management, good operator training and professionally delivered familiarisation are needed on all sites

Harnesses – exercising restraint

Thanks to the success of IPAF's Clunk Click campaign, awareness of the need to wear a harness and lanyard in boom-type MEWPs is greater than ever. IPAF's Chris Wraith gives advice on when, where and what type of fall protection to use

Booms – Static (1b) and mobile (3b) type MEWPs

It is now widely accepted and enforced that you must wear and attach some kind of personal fall protection equipment (PFPE) in all boom-type MEWPs (static boom 1b and mobile boom 3b type machines).

Anyone failing to wear suitable fall protection equipment at all times when in a boom-type MEWP is not acknowledging the potentially high risk of being catapulted out of the platform or the possibility of not being in a position to avoid violent movement of the platform.

IPAF's worldwide fatal accident data for the 33 months since January 2012 show 85 per cent of the 35 fatal falls recorded involved a boom-type MEWP and were due to climbing or reaching over the hand rails or to unexpected and sudden movement of the platform caused by one of the following:

- Driving the MEWP over uneven surface;
- The MEWP structure being hit by obstacle or vehicle;
- Incorrect use of platform;
- Unintentional movement of the platform.

There is a small minority who do not wear personal fall protection in a boom-type MEWP, hiding behind the excuse that they do not know what type of equipment they should use, or claiming they cannot find a harness large enough to fit.

Any type of recognised person fall protection equipment (PFPE) is better than none at all. But that is not an excuse for not using the correct PFPE and eliminating/minimising the risk of a fall resulting in injury. Moreover, extra-large harnesses are readily available to fit even the most generously proportioned person.

Verticals – Static (1a) and mobile (3a) type MEWPs

There is a possibility that an operator

Fall Protection in Mobile Elevating Work Platforms

Boom Type Platforms

When working from a boom type Mobile Elevating Work Platform (MEWP), it is strongly recommended that a full body harness with an adjustable lanyard be used to provide work restraint. The lanyard should be adjusted to be as short as possible and may contain an energy absorbing device.

This includes Static Booms (1b) and Mobile Booms (3b).



Vertical Lifts

It is not normally necessary for personnel working from a vertical lift to wear fall protection equipment, other than in exceptional circumstances.

This includes Static Verticals (1a), Mobile Verticals (3a), Push Around Verticals (PAV) and Mast Climbing Work Platforms (MCWP).

The need for a fall protection system will be the outcome of a job specific risk assessment undertaken prior to work commencing and taking into consideration the manufacturer's operators' manual.

Right: IPAF recommends that a full body harness with an adjustable lanyard be used to provide work restraint

can be ejected out of any work platform. However, due to the absence of the extendable boom structure and elimination of the "catapult effect" (www.ipaf.org/clunkclick), the likelihood of this occurring is far less when working from a vertical lift (1a and 3a type machines).

In the majority of cases, when operators are working in a stationary vertical MEWP (1a and 3a), the platform guardrails and toe board may be sufficient fall protection to demonstrate conformity with the Work at Height Regulations 2005 7.1.a. In many such cases, the requirement to use further

personal fall protection (PFP) measures and attaching a restraint lanyard may not be necessary.

A task-specific risk assessment helps identify where different jobs may require different safe working practices. Fall prevention solutions should be customised to the work to be performed and the vertical MEWP to be used. For example, driving over uneven surfaces, using high pressure hoses or reaching beyond the hand rails over a void may increase the risk of a fall and identify the need for further PFP measures.

The harness and lanyard

Where a need for personal fall protection is identified, a restraint belt is not recommended as this would not support the body should the platform unexpectedly tilt, or some other type of incident occur that ejects the wearer from the platform and leaves them suspended. The lack of support to the body and the concentrated forces applied to the abdomen would significantly increase any risk of serious injury.

Recently published HSE guidance *General Information Sheet 6 (GEIS 6)* states: "The preferred option is to stop the person falling from the work platform by using a work restraint system. A work restraint system should normally consist of a full-body harness (BS EN 361) connected to a lanyard (BS EN 354) which is connected to an anchor point on the MEWP basket."

It continues: "From the anchor point, the lanyard length should be short enough to prevent a person reaching a position where they could fall. The lanyard may contain an energy-absorbing device (BS EN 355), but should still only be used as part of a work restraint system."

The reason an energy-absorbing device (shock absorber) may be included in a work restraint system is that the minimum force taken to deploy any shock absorbing device designed to BS EN 355 is 2kN (ie approximately 200 kg force). Thus under normal restraint use, where the lanyard prevents the user from getting into a position in which a fall can occur, the shock-absorbing device will never have enough

force applied to cause it to extend.

It should be noted that the GEIS 6 guidance continues: "Do not use retractable-type fall arresters (BS EN 360) unless they are suitable and have been specifically tested in the proposed manner of use."

The obvious reasoning for this is that where the retractable lanyard is allowed to extend to a distance where the wearer could fall, they are no longer using a work restraint system. As such, there is an increased risk of a fall resulting in injury and requiring the need to formulate a plan for rescue of a suspended person(s) from height.

Inspection

UK legislation (Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992 and Work at Height Regulations 2005) requires PFPE to be kept in good repair and inspected at suitable intervals dependent on use and exposure to contamination.

Such an inspection regime should include: pre-use checks, detailed inspections (dependent on use but at least every six months in accordance with BS 8437:2005 + A1:2012 *Code of practice for selection, use and maintenance of personal fall protection systems and equipment for use in the workplace* and, where appropriate, interim inspections. Further information about harness and lanyard inspection can be found in HSE guidance INDG367 *Inspecting fall arrest equipment made from webbing or rope*.

Where to attach to

Lanyards should only be attached to the designated anchor point inside the platform as indicated by the manufacturer, and not as is often seen, to other points on the rails of the platform.

European MEWP design standard EN 280:2013 requires each anchorage point:

- To be marked with "Restraint only" (by words or symbol);
- To be capable of withstanding a static force of 3 kN (300 kg force).

Working over or near water

There is a significant and potential risk of ejection from a boom-type MEWP if not wearing suitable PFPE.

Dependent on the distance of fall on to water, the impact can be like falling onto a concrete surface.

Applying the principle of risk assessment (Regulation 3) and hierarchy of control (Regulation 4) contained in the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 should lead management to consider not using any MEWP where there is a risk of machine overturn resulting in the platform falling into water. Far better they address the overturn hazard to prevent the MEWP from becoming unstable.

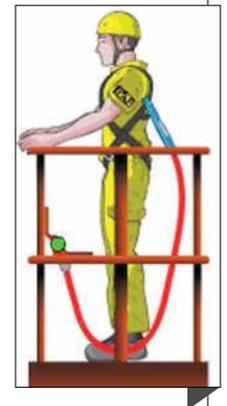
GEIS6 offers similar guidance and states: "Working next to, or over water must be assessed to identify whether the greatest risk of injury to the operator is from falling from the MEWP basket or drowning if the MEWP falls into the water. The decision can then be made as to whether it is most appropriate to wear a harness to address the fall risk or whether a harness should not be worn due to the risk of drowning. Life jackets, not harnesses, should be worn where there is a risk of drowning."

Problems with mandating the use of PFPE

It is widely acknowledged that the selection and use of PFPE is a matter of task-specific risk assessment – a fact supported by the HSE and recognised by some manufacturers in their operator manuals. However, there are some manufacturers, managers and safety professionals that recommend the use of a full body harness and lanyard in all scissor-type machines. This unfortunately leads to confusion and possible misuse of appropriate PFPE.

Mandating such a policy does not give consideration to the fact that a correctly adjusted restraint lanyard will restrict operator movement in larger vertical-type MEWPs, or prevent the wearers safely performing their work tasks or encouraging them to lengthen the lanyard, which may then introduce a trip hazard to themselves and others in the platform.

Further guidance on fall protection in MEWPs can be found in IPAF technical guidance note H1/08/12, at www.ipaf.org/clunkclick ■



Above: the symbol for a designated anchor point used by the majority of manufacturers

An inspector reflects

As regulatory inspector Joy Jones hands over her leadership of the Construction Sector Safety Team to Ray Cooke and moves to another HSE post of operations development manager, she looks back on her work with MEWPs

My introduction to strategic MEWP issues was challenging – I was faced with controversy over one global contractor’s insistence upon the use of shrouds or trip wires on MEWPs, to prevent sustained involuntary operation of controls. I embarked on a steep and rapid learning curve to understand the issues and the key parties in the industry, so as to find a way through the frustration and hostility that I was sensing.

There were no easy answers to the issues that were being raised and I wanted to encourage a collaborative problem-solving approach. So, under the auspices of the Strategic Forum for Construction Plant Safety Group, expertise was drawn from manufacturers, hire companies, contractors, workers and others to build on the improvements already brought about by the widespread use of MEWPs to allow safe work at height. I wanted change to be understood and agreed rather than imposed.

The most significant output from that group to date has been the guidance on preventing crushing injuries, which has been taken up on a global scale, largely thanks to IPAF’s reach. A recent review of the document confirmed that it remains fit for purpose and that in itself is testament to the value of a collaborative/supply chain approach.

The MEWP Safety Group continues to tackle difficult issues collaboratively – this is no mean feat in an industry driven by contract and allocation of liability. There are other less tangible benefits, which stem from the approach, not least the current willingness of manufacturers to consider areas for continuous improvement, particularly in the design of the person/machine interface.



Manufacturers have recently agreed to be involved in ground-breaking HSE-sponsored research on the human factor elements of machine design. This will provide a sound basis for improvement in design of all machines, not just MEWPs.

Looking to the future

So as I move onto pastures new, I thought I would offer readers a wishlist for the future for MEWPs:

1. That the dialogue between different parties and collaborative working continues to grow, trust is enhanced and everyone can point to specific examples of improvement resulting from working together.
2. That manufacturers increase their knowledge and understanding of how their machines are used (and abused) and design them around predictable human behaviour rather than making the operator fit the machine.
3. That manufacturers strive to build

machines that are as safe as possible and exceed the minimum requirements set out in the harmonised European standard – and that users (customers) support this approach.

4. That the IPAF incident reporting system grows and matures to a point where it can direct priorities.
 5. That investigations into accidents involving MEWPs establish root causes rather than concluding ‘operator error’.
 6. That take-up of the IPAF MEWPs for Managers course continues to grow.
 7. That everyone in the supply chain understands that MEWPs are a very effective and safe method for conducting safe temporary working at height, as long as users implement sensible management controls.
- I have enjoyed working with the MEWP sector and wish everyone the very best in your future endeavours. You may not see me around in future, but I will be watching. ■

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PAL+ takes off

There has been a steady take-up of training up to the PAL+ standard as safety-conscious contractors discover its benefits

The PAL+ training course, introduced about two years ago, could be compared to the advanced driving test for motorists: it isn't required by many employers - with your 'standard' PAL operator's card under your belt, you are qualified to the satisfaction of virtually all potential clients to operate any of the machines listed on the card - but for those who do require it, it's really important demonstration of advanced skills.

PAL+ is designed to demonstrate to clients that the holder has the skill and knowledge needed to carry out the most challenging powered access manoeuvres in high-risk environments.

The course is, naturally, aimed at industries in which MEWP operation is both complicated and potentially risky. So it's no great surprise to discover that a few specific industry sectors seem to be driving the take-up of PAL+.

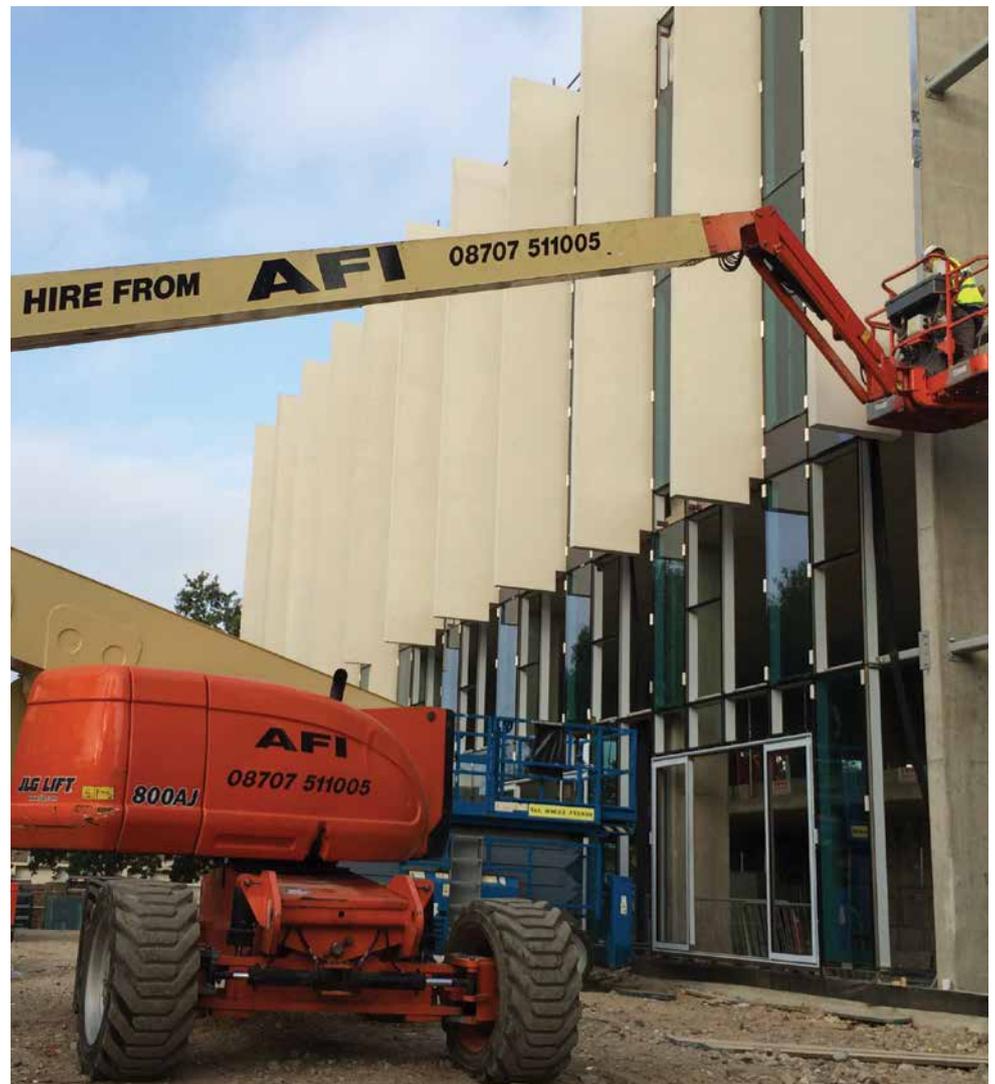
One such sector is steel erecting. "You're working in three dimensions with obstacles surrounding you and a high risk of collision," explains Darren Verschuren, director of training company ALS Safety.

Similarly, the specialised business of safety-netting on construction projects has found the PAL+ course especially useful.

"We've had quite a few airlines asking for it too," says Mr Verschuren, "though that's probably less to do with safety and more to do with the cost of accidental damage!"

Last year we spoke to Mr Verschuren, who was running the PAL+ course at the firm's Bracknell facility.

He said then that take-up of the course, just a few months after its launch, had been steady but slow. So a



year later we have returned to ALS to see if the take-up had improved.

"It's definitely caught on - probably better than we'd hoped," says Mr Verschuren. "There's been a steady take-up in the past 12 months but I still think it's early days," he adds.

Some of the demand has, of course, been stimulated by the sheer increase

Focus PAL+ training is specific to each type of MEWP

in construction workloads. But Mr Verschuren believes the main driver is probably the health and safety concerns of employers.

Specific training

Like the original PAL course, PAL+ training is specific to each type of MEWP. You might expect the big

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high-rise boom-lifts, rough-terrain scissors or self-propelled articulating booms to dominate the specification here, but Mr Verschuren says he has delivered PAL+ training on all types of machine.

“In my opinion **it’s not the size of the kit but the nature of the task that determines the need,**” he says. “A small machine in a complicated enclosed space is still very challenging.”

Ironically, while falls from height still account for the majority of serious accidents and fatalities in construction today, actually falling from a mobile elevated platform is relatively difficult (though not, of course, impossible) these days. So long as best practice is followed, harnesses worn and hazards identified, working from a MEWP is one of the safest ways of working at height.

“Height is almost irrelevant,” says Mr Verschuren. But there are other risks, such as that of entrapment beneath roof soffits or steel beams, a danger which has become the focus of much debate in recent years. This is precisely the kind of hazard the PAL+ course is designed to address.

So who should enrol on the PAL+ course? “The obvious candidates are defined by their trade,” says Mr Verschuren, which is why steel erectors and netting installers lead the field in signing up for PAL+.

The UK Contractors Group, which supported IPAF and collaborated in the development of PAL+, has even pledged



to make it a requirement for steel erectors and netting installers on members’ sites.

“Personally I think it should be based on need and not just the type of task involved,” says Mr Verschuren. “For example, a team of electricians might well need one member to carry a PAL+ card because of the type of work they’re doing. But they won’t all need one.”

So far, ALS Safety has trained between 40 and 50 people for the PAL+ ticket. “It’s nothing like the number of PAL courses we’ve run – and that’s good. PAL+ was never intended to replace the PAL qualification,” says Mr Verschuren. ■

SATISFIED CUSTOMERS

Clive Walton and Nathan Lewis set up their company, Rochester-based National Installations, four years ago in the teeth of the recession. Despite difficult trading conditions the business, which specialises in steel erection on fuel station forecourts, has thrived.

The work requires the frequent use of MEWPs, which National Installations hires from local hire firms.

“I’ve been using scissor lifts and boomlifts for about 15 years,” says Clive. “Back then we never had much training. You went up, you came down, you watched a video, answered a few questions and got your ticket.”

Things have changed a lot in those 15 years. And, Clive says, his customers have been the driving force behind those changes.

“We do a lot of work for Kier, which was involved in the development of the PAL+ course. Kier told us that this new PAL+ was coming in and that it was a more intensive version of the PAL course. It’s all to do with being aware of your surroundings and being able to follow a method statement.”

At his client’s suggestion, Clive enrolled on one of the courses run by ALS Safety. “It was quite clear to us that if we didn’t, we weren’t going to get much more work from Kier.”

Not that Clive resents his client’s insistence on this extra training: “I thought the course was absolutely brilliant. The course is very detailed and IPAF produces all the supporting material you need to work efficiently.

“We now download the maintenance-check forms from the IPAF website and use them for our daily pre-checks.”

As a legitimate input cost, the course fee is reflected in the prices quoted by National Installation when bidding for contracts. The client (who, after all, made this a contract requirement) is happy with that, says Clive.

National Installations has so far put four employees through the PAL+ course, enough to ensure that each two- or three-man gang has one member qualified to the advanced operator standard.

Smarter working

So long as best practice is followed, working from a MEWP is one of the safest ways of working at height



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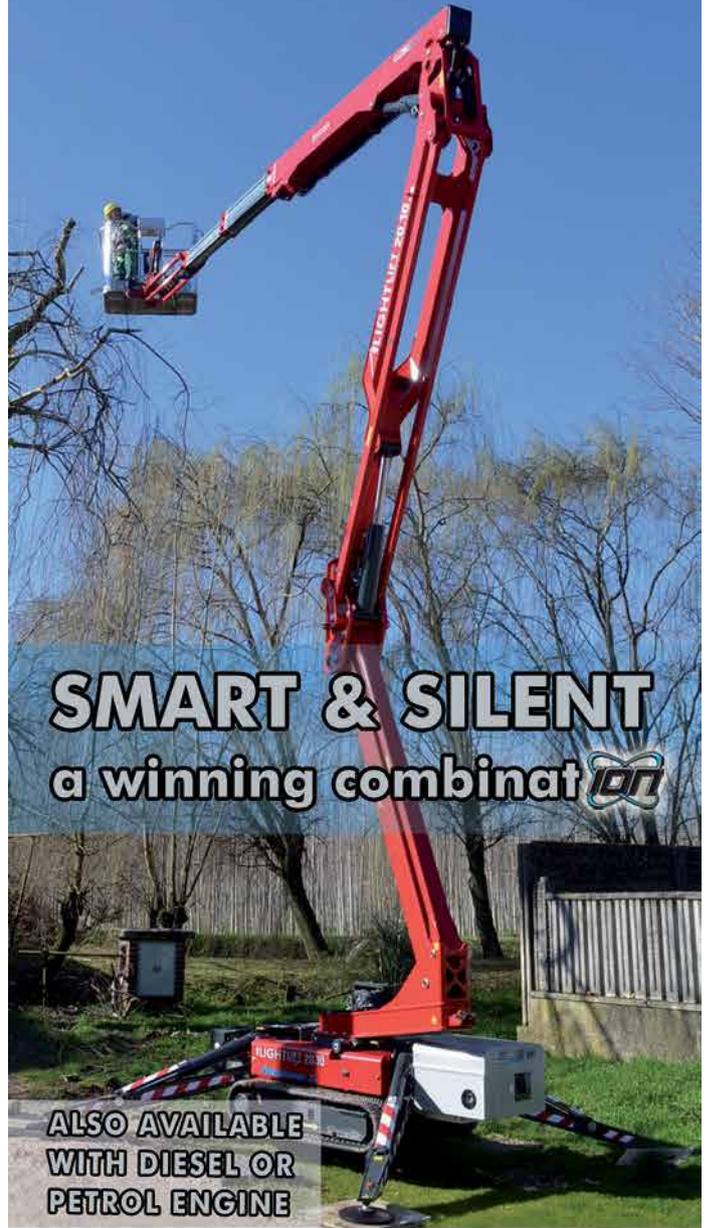
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A load less danger for drivers

A project by IPAF's UK members has highlighted that almost one-third of the accidents recorded by UK rental companies involve delivery drivers. Former delivery driver, now technical officer for IPAF, Chris Wraith examines the facts

The majority of guidance on the safe use of MEWPs focuses on the user and how the machine should be managed. With an estimated one million deliveries or collections of MEWPs annually in the UK, delivery drivers play a vital role in the success of any rental business. They are one member of staff who visits every site at least twice during a hire, to deliver and to collect the MEWP. Any accident involving drivers has the potential to be serious – but may also affect customer relations should it occur on site.

Yet the delivery and collection of MEWPs is often not given the attention it deserves. It is seen by many as a secondary operation, less important than the actual hire and use of the machine. In many companies, transport is not a profitable part of the rental business – but a part no rental company can exist without. Many companies only recover 60 to 70 per cent of the true transport costs from the customer.

This general lack of focus on the whole of the “transport operation” is one possible reason why many in the industry incorrectly believe that delivering and collecting of MEWPs is a low-risk activity.

However, recent data collected from IPAF UK rental company members has prompted a re-evaluation of the risk to delivery drivers. In January 2012, the IPAF UK Country Council requested UK rental company members to report MEWP-related accidents involving their own staff to the IPAF accident reporting database at ipaf.org/accident. The success of this initiative over the first 12 months yielded some previously unsubstantiated facts about the commonality and type of accidents rental company employees are having. So significant were the findings that the IPAF UK Country Council voted to mandate the monthly reporting

programme for all UK rental company members from January 2013.

Increased risk

Further analysis of the first 20 months' worth of data has highlighted that drivers are involved in significantly more incidents than other rental company employees.

Of the 438 reported incidents, 138 involved delivery drivers, with nearly 60 per cent of all incidents happening away from the company depot. This data highlights the fact that **no matter how good safety is in the rental company depot, the majority of incidents occur out of the area controlled by the employer.** A key indicator, if one were needed, that a behavioural safety programme and a positive safety culture are imperative, especially for “mobile” employees.

Of the 138 reported incidents involving delivery drivers, 63 resulted in personal injury, of which 26 (41 per cent) resulted in lost-time injuries, with 8 incidents (13 per cent) resulting in more than seven days' absence.

Closer examination of the 63 reported incidents where driver injury occurred revealed that injury was not too severe, more through good luck than good management, as many

incidents had the potential to inflict major injury. The main causes of the more serious injuries were shown to be:

- Falls from height – mainly from the vehicle body;

- Operating upper controls of scissor while walking beside the machine, resulting in severe bruising and/or fractures of lower limbs;
- Manual handling – handling ramps, securing chains, and manoeuvring pusharound vertical machines (PAVs);
- Slips, trips and falls from same level – site ground conditions.

A further 53 incidents involving drivers, which resulted in damage to machines, property or buildings, and eight near-misses – all with potential to cause injury, loss or damage – were reported. This non-injury data raised concerns as it not only highlighted a significant amount of avoidable and potentially expensive machine/property damage, but also showed that many of the incidents were very fortunate not to have resulted in serious injury to the driver and/or others. These include:

- Lost loads – dropping between ramps when unloading, falling off side of the lorry when loading/unloading and unsecured load lost in transit;
- Instances of hitting/damaging MEWP, lorry or structure (does not

Many in the industry incorrectly believe that delivering and collecting MEWPs is a low-risk activity



Job role and number of reported incidents

138 delivery driver
 92 engineer
 92 operator
 59 site contractor
 34 none
 14 office/sales
 5 third party
 4 other

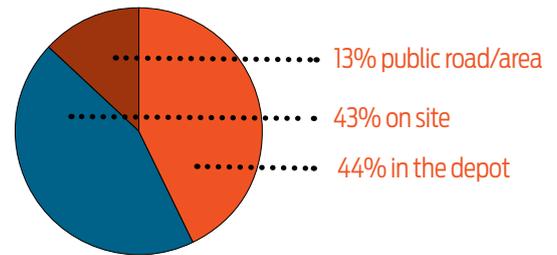
Location of staff incidents

167 in the depot
 161 on site
 47 public road/area

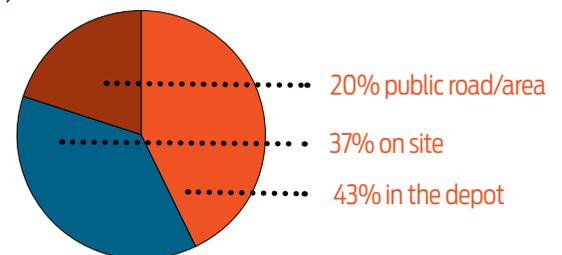
Driver incident location

58 in the depot
 50 on site
 28 public road/area

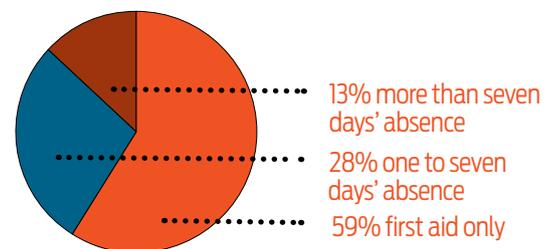
Location of all incidents involving company staff



Location of reported driver incidents



Duration of absence



include road traffic accidents);

- Runaway machines – due to failure to use the winch correctly or at all.

The information revealed by the accident reporting project is being used by IPAF to complete a thorough review and update of its load/unload course. The course is currently a one-day course specifically aimed at drivers delivering MEWPs but the key messages are relevant to anyone managing or supervising this operation and those loading or unloading general types of plant.

Course delivery

Since the introduction of the Certificate of Professional Competence (CPC) requirements (EU Directive 2003/59/EC) for UK and European drivers, IPAF training centres, who have gained approval from the Joint Approvals Unit for Periodic Training (JAUPT) are now able to deliver the load/unload course and other IPAF courses, including the IPAF operator course, as part of the CPC training programme requirements.

With more than 1,200 people holding a current IPAF load/unload

qualification and training numbers increasing by approximately 30 per cent each year for the past three years, it would suggest that many rental companies now make the load/unload course a mandatory requirement for their own drivers, agency drivers and external hauliers that supply transport, thus further professionalising the role of the delivery driver.

As the management duties and responsibilities for loading and unloading on site are often overlooked by some site management, this subject is also included in the IPAF MEWPs for Managers course.

Through its Hirers' Forum and the Manufacturers' Technical Committee, IPAF is discussing with manufacturers and rental companies how machine and transport vehicle design improvements can be developed.

IPAF is also facilitating a working group specifically looking at the load/unload activity. The group – made up of industry representatives from contractors, rental companies, transport companies, enforcement

authorities and manufacturers – is examining the delivery and collection process to produce guidance for all identified duty holders.

With approximately 1m MEWPs movements every year and an average of 82 driver-related incidents happening, there is a 1 in 12,278 chance that a load/unloading incident will happen on your site.

The potential consequences of lost-time injury, damage to equipment/property, loss of company reputation and business are such that the industry must work together to reduce the existing risk factors.

The rental companies, and the IPAF UK Country Council, should be congratulated for partaking in the groundbreaking accident reporting project which is providing previously ignored, factual data that is now helping to raise safety standards and ensure employees not only work safely but go home safe every day. ■

Safety from the top down

Those who manage the use of MEWPs must have the appropriate knowledge and expertise. This is the reason why more than 4,800 managers and supervisors have attended IPAF MEWPs for Managers training during the past 32 months

Records from IPAF show that during the 32 months leading up to September 2014, one MEWP fatality in the UK was caused by entrapment. During the past 12 months, there have been significant moves to address this danger: official recognition of the term “secondary guarding”; revised guidance for the selection of secondary guarding devices; and introduction of new devices by several manufacturers.

We should remind ourselves of the management choices to minimise this significant risk.

Essential reading

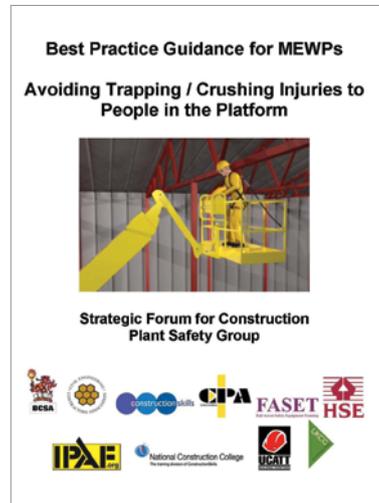
Anyone managing or supervising the use of MEWPs should read and digest one very informative document. In July 2010, IPAF worked with the Strategic Forum for Construction Plant Safety to produce *Best Practice Guidance for MEWPs: Avoiding Trapping/Crushing Injuries to People in the Platform*. This provides comprehensive advice for management (Part 1), and supervisors/MEWP operators (Part 2). The Health & Safety Executive highlights this as essential guidance, which it frequently uses as the template when conducting site visits and investigation into incidents involving MEWPs.

Equipment selection

Selecting a MEWP with the right operating characteristics can substantially reduce the risk of entrapment. Selection should be the result of a comprehensive risk assessment to identify the most suitable machine for the task, taking into account many factors including:

- Travel to and from the work area;
- Access to the work area;
- Work task(s) at height including the risk of entrapment;
- Emergency rescue procedures.

MEWP selection should not be determined predominantly on the



availability of a secondary guarding device. This may lead to overlooking key design features, which could enhance the safe use of the MEWP and the safe completion of work at height. Failing to take such factors into consideration may well compromise the safety of the operator.

Competences

The appropriate skills, knowledge and expertise are essential for anyone working at height; even more so when selecting individuals to operate a MEWP in an area where an increased risk of entrapment has been identified. At the request of contractors, IPAF recently developed PAL+, a one-day category-specific training course aimed at operators working in higher risk or challenging environments.

It is not only the operator who must be competent. It is widely accepted that a large proportion of accidents are due to poor planning and management issues rather than operator error. Hence, those who plan, supervise and manage the use of MEWPs must have the appropriate knowledge and expertise. That is why more than 4,800 managers and supervisors have attended the

Managing risks

Responsibility remains with managers to implement safe working systems. Guidance is available at the Publications section of www.ipaf.org

IPAF MEWPs for Managers training programme during the past 32 months.

Additional measures

Once the most suitable type of MEWP has been selected for the work at height task(s), consideration to further reducing any foreseeable risk of entrapment can be considered. This may include selection of an additional secondary device, but could equally include other options such as provision of a second person at the ground station or in the platform as a look-out.

There are two main types of secondary guarding device:

- Physical barrier(s) that offer differing forms of protective structures;
- Pressure sensing device(s) that stop further movement and activate audible and visual warning devices (some are more sophisticated).

Further information can be found in the IPAF publication *MEWPs – Guidance on secondary guarding devices available to reduce the risk of entrapment injury*.

Design advances

MEWP manufacturers are engaged in a never-ending challenge to build “safer” machines, which has led to significant advances in MEWP design and standards. For this to continue we must support the manufacturing industry, share information and work together. However, responsibility remains with managers to plan and implement safe working systems. Accidents can be avoided if good practice is encouraged and followed. The basis of preventing trapping accidents must be task-, site- and equipment-specific risk assessment. It is vital that we do not lose sight of the fact that, when used safely, MEWPs significantly reduce the risk of injuries attributed to work at height. They save time, make work at height more efficient and can be safer than using other traditional methods of access. ■

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Pecolift

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Recovery brings challenges

With more and more work taking place at height across the UK every day, the sector needs to ensure contractors understand the benefits, and safety rules, of using MCWPs, say the experts in this specialist sector of powered access

The recovery in the construction industry is driving demand for mast climbing work platforms (MCWPs) – and there is a better understanding of the benefits of using powered access to work at height than ever. The challenge now is for the MCWP sector to win back the favour of contractors who turned to scaffolding during the downturn.

“We believe MCWPs are safer, quicker and can give a cost saving. But the initial outlay can be more. Scaffold companies were pricing themselves to win work. We need to win that share of the market back,” says Adrian Bolton, construction sales manager for Western Europe at equipment manufacturer Alimak Hek.

There are safety benefits to MCWPs over scaffolding, as well as productivity gains, and it will often cause less damage to a structure than fixing scaffolding. But no one believes it will be easy to tempt contractors away from tube and fittings. “We will have to actively fight to get the market share back,” says Mr Bolton.

Steve McEwan, training manager at Scot-Train in Glasgow, agrees. “People have been using scaffolding because it became cheap. Some scaffolding companies were putting it up just to get it out of the yard,” he says. “MCWP suppliers had to buy the machines and so they had to recover that cost.”

Mr McEwan notes **it is quicker to build a mastclimber for a 40 m-high building than to put up scaffolding.**

“Some of the new platforms have safe working loads of above 3 tonnes, which means a significant boost for where they can be used,” he adds.

Alongside the campaign to increase use of MCWPs, manufacturers and suppliers have a battle to ensure the machines aren't used too much. That may sound counter-intuitive, but it's because of concerns that MCWPs are being used when they shouldn't be.

The Construction Plant-hire Association's Construction Hoist Interest Group chair Kirsty Archbold-Laming says the body has noticed a sudden increase in the use of MCWPs in place of hoists. “I'm all for saving [money] where possible but not at the expense of health and safety,” she says. “MCWPs are simple pieces of equipment, with a suitable approach for cladding, brickwork, external works and so on, and I understand the need for these. However, we have seen them used as hoists for lifting men and materials to open landings on structures, with complete disregard for safety measures such as landing gates, bridges and edge protection.

The safety risks that are being taken in some instances are considerable. “We have seen people literally jump from an MCWP into a building, pass materials onto open landings, stand on the handrails to reach further and so on,” says Ms Archbold-Laming. “We consider this to be extremely dangerous.” She has proposed that IPAF and the CHIG form a working group to produce a guidance document on the subject.

Better standards

Meanwhile, a standard is being created for the use of transport platforms – a commonly misused type of hoist – by a group established under the relevant European technical standards committee. “This will help clarify the position and distinguish transport platforms from MCWPs,” says Mr Bolton. “It will be clear what a supplier is offering people and what they can do with it.”

Mr McEwan insists responsibility for safe use of MCWPs is on the companies renting out the machines as well as those using them.

“Suppliers need to make sure they are giving the right machine for the right application,” he says. “Transport



Clear benefits

MCWPs offer a safe means of access with time and cost savings. You can find more about MCWPs and training at www.ipaf.org/mcwp

platforms are for taking materials in and out, while MCWPs are about getting men above ground height. Contractors don't always know what they need so it is up to the supplier to ask what kind of work they need doing.”

It will be down to suppliers to explain the best use of the technology to users, he says: “There are British and European standards and they say that a MCWP is not to be used as a hoist to go in and out of the building unless a risk assessment has taken place and all alternatives evaluated.”

Mr McEwan is passionate about what MCWPs can offer contractors, and about ensuring they are used safely and correctly. “We have trained 120 people this year; the same number as we did in the whole of 2013,” he says. “We need more people to understand the capabilities of MCWPs as they still only make up a tiny part of the access industry. People need to understand that these are not just for 100m-tall buildings but also for two-storey structures. They offer a safe means of access with time and cost benefits and often fewer ties than scaffolding. I am excited that so many people are coming to us interested in MCWPs.” ■

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"Syrinx is easy to use, self explanatory and yet sophisticated." Ben Hirst

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Keeping pace with the UAE

The United Arab Emirates construction sector is growing quickly – and this brings with it challenges for safe operation of MEWPs. Greg Pitcher talks to IPAF's UAE members, who are ensuring the powered access boom is managed safely

Like much about the United Arab Emirates, the powered access market is evolving at pace. The country's construction industry suffered heavily during the recent global economic meltdown, but now cranes dot the skyline once more, thanks to its status as an investment haven and Dubai's position as host city for the Expo 2020 world fair.

Importantly for powered access users, this new wave of construction is being conducted with a different mindset. A more cautious, safety-conscious approach is being taken.

IPAF UAE country council chairman Mark Robinson moved to Dubai three years ago with supplier Rapid Access. The firm, for whom he is now training and innovations manager, set up in the emirate in 1996 and Mr Robinson has heard plenty of tales about the crash.

"We had a peak in 2008/9 and then demand dropped," he says. "Building projects were just stopped; people would turn up for work and the gates would be shut. Since 2012 the market has started to look better and the main impetus came last November when Dubai won the Expo. That has

Along with an increase in construction in the UAE, there is a shift about how that construction is being done. The picture below does not show good practice – site managers are keen to move away from this and do things right

made a big difference for the UAE."

Work on the vast expo site, where countries from around the world will design and build pavilions to showcase themselves to tens of millions of visitors, is only the beginning of the story.

On top of this comes a wealth of leisure and tourism development to satisfy the visitors, and then another layer of construction to meet the needs of the builders themselves.

"So many people are coming from Europe, the Philippines and India to work on the expo construction that they need housing and schooling, and then that leads to more infrastructure work," says Mr Robinson.

"So there is an increase in general construction, and also there is a shift in how it's being done. The boom in the past decade saw many developers throwing money at projects – lots of scaffolding, lots of men. Now they are more focused on productivity and safety."

High-profile projects

Mr Robinson thinks the recent headlines about construction of the Brazil 2014 and Qatar 2022 World Cups

have been food for thought in the UAE.

"They have seen how high-profile the Qatar and Brazil World Cup projects have been in terms of safety and labour and they want to make sure the UAE does not get that type of publicity," he says. "By using powered access instead of scaffolding, the contractors can make labour and time savings as well as improving safety."

Ensuring the powered access boom is managed safely is naturally a key concern of IPAF in the UAE.

"I've been in the UAE for four years and seen an increased use of MEWPs over that time," says IPAF's man in the region Jason Woods. "But price remains a big driver in this country and unfortunately, if companies can use a man in a bucket, then some still will."

Although a national law exists from the 1980s requiring adequate equipment to be used on sites, Mr Woods says enforcement is patchy.

"You will still come across people cutting corners. There is often a desire to do everything cheap, and in that sense it's a hard country for us to work in. The main reason for IPAF being in the UAE is to support its members, but we also



try to support legislation, working with the Ministry of Labour.”

The main ambition at the moment, he says, is to get to a position where all operators of MEWPs can demonstrate their competence by way of IPAF-accredited Powered Access Licences (PAL).

“Our big drive is to get the PAL Card as the only accepted ID card to work at height,” says Mr Woods.

Currently an operator can combine third-party training on top of a rental company familiarisation process to gain a one-year certificate to use machinery. But Mr Woods does not believe the system is appropriate for the demands of operating a MEWP at height.

“We are in talks with the Ministry of Labour to change it, but it can’t happen overnight,” he says. “We have to use stepping stones. We have a forum with the ministry and others and we are putting together action plans for regulating working from height.”

IPAF is working with contractors to encourage training of project managers as well as operators.

“When we do train operators, sometimes the managers can contradict what we’ve taught them, so it’s important we reach the managers too,” Mr Woods says.

There are also cultural differences in the way powered access machinery is used in the UAE, compared with in the UK.

“Everyone uses a harness for everything at height over here,” says Robinson. “That just seems to be the rule for simplicity, given that people from different countries are working together on sites. But it’s not always the best way.”

Mr Woods notes that highlighting poor safety performance can also be difficult.

“The UAE has had its fair share of accidents, but it’s not always mandatory to report them to the Ministry of Labour,” he says. “We want to support the industry and the legislation and we hope things will change within 12 months.”

Mr Robinson adds: “MEWPs are one of the safest means of working at height but only when they are used by properly trained people. I am

passionate about making sure people using our equipment go home at the end of the day.”

The two men agree that the MEWP market is growing markedly.

“There are five or six sizeable powered access rental firms that cover the Gulf Co-operation Council area,” says Mr Robinson. “We are seeing each business expanding, taking on more staff and buying more equipment.”

“There is room for more companies because it is such a big marketplace,” adds Mr Woods. “I am in discussions with one European rental company that might open in Dubai this year. There are opportunities in FM, construction, aviation and oil and gas. MEWPs are in demand; large and small.”

Differences in demand

The type and volume of demand for individual machines is subtly different in the emirates, says Mr Robinson: “Booms are the most common powered access machine we hire. Truck mounts are not used as much as in the UK. The M&E sector over here is now beginning to use low level power access after a history of relying on steel scaffolding.”

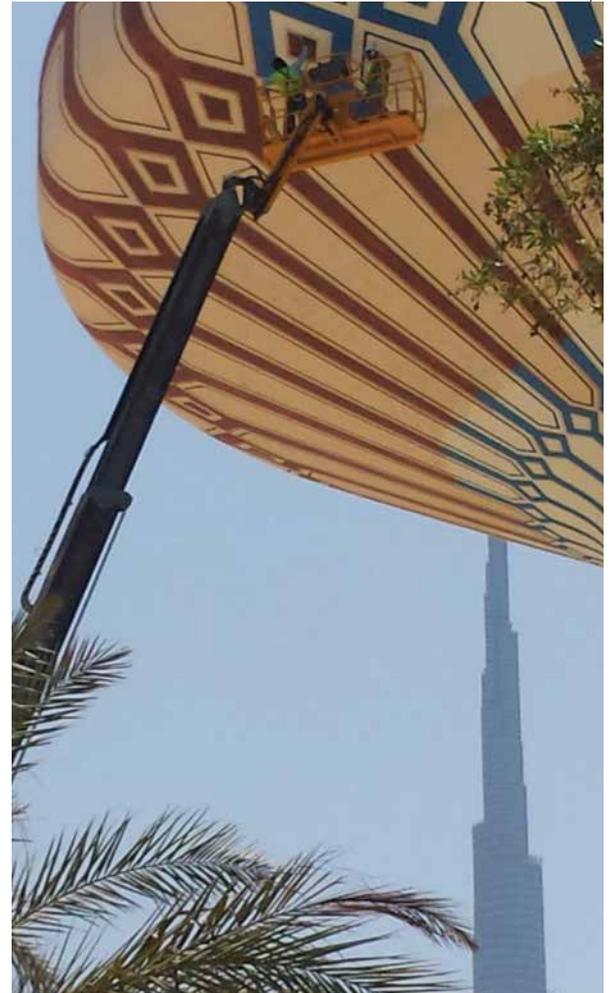
Mr Woods says scissor lifts are a common request.

“Category 1b machines – static booms – are in more demand than at home,” he adds. “There is still a lot of steel scaffolding in the emirates but they are starting to get their heads around using a boom lift for certain work.”

Machines are often wanted for much longer in the Gulf, Mr Robinson says. “The hire periods are longer. You get a lot of spot hires in the UK, and you’re average hire period may be seven to nine days per machine. In the UAE it is 10 times that due to the scale of the projects. Because they are away for so long, and in hot, dusty conditions, the machines often need servicing on site. The location can be remote – two hours out of town in the desert.”

Mr Woods agrees that adapting to the climate and culture of the UAE is critical for powered access providers.

“There are different grades of oil



needed,” he says. “More breaks for staff. It is mind-opening coming here.”

And as the market is growing in the UAE, so is IPAF.

“We have seven training centres and that could increase to 12,” says Mr Woods. “We’ve gone from 13 members at the start of the year to 26 now and should be at 30 by the end of this year. We are getting the word out that IPAF is there to support businesses.”

Through the country council, IPAF is working with nationality-specific safety bodies in the region, including those for Indian and Filipino workers.

“Our training will become mandatory not only through our work with the ministry but because the industry itself will demand it,” predicts Mr Woods. “This is how it happened in the UK.” ■

Adapting to the climate and culture of the UAE is critical for powered access providers

Watching brief

Making sure that IPAF training courses are delivered to a consistently high standard is the task of a small team of expert auditors

IPAF's training courses are highly regarded not only among the Federation's own membership but also among the members' customer base. The reach of IPAF's training provision is considerable – its courses are recognised in more than 40 countries around the world.

If IPAF courses are to deliver their full benefit, they need to be delivered by instructors who are skilled, competent, and conscientious. With more than 600 IPAF-approved training centres training over 100,000 people around the world every year, it is essential to have some mechanism whereby standards can be monitored and maintained.

All IPAF training providers have been, themselves, trained and their competence has been tested. But out in the field it is difficult to monitor the way the courses are delivered and guarantee the standards to which candidates are examined and assessed.

Most training centres maintain the required standards without any external intervention because it is in their own interests to do so. A sullied reputation can have disastrous consequences. But that is no cause for complacency, and IPAF therefore carries out frequent audits on a random basis to keep a finger on the pulse.

The task of auditing training centres is undertaken by a team of eight auditors with assistance, as required, from other IPAF staff and external audit companies. All this is coordinated from IPAF's head office. Leading the team is Lynn Price, who manages audits and unannounced spot-checks for registered training centres and instructors in all territories.

"There are three types of audit – four if you count the initial audit that all new training centres go through," explains Mr Price. "Each training centre receives a surveillance visit on an annual basis, which involves a review of the training facilities. "The



High standards

There are more than 600 IPAF-approved training centres training more than 100,000 around the world every year

auditor goes through all the paperwork and checks training records to ensure compliance with IPAF requirements. The auditor notes any areas that need improvement and identifies any corrective action that's needed.

"The second type of audit is an unannounced visit where we turn up without any prior notice and observe a training session in action."

All IPAF training centres know that they might be visited at any time – it's written into the standard conditions signed by the training centre at the outset and is also included in the manual provided to each training centre, says Mr Price. This knowledge keeps them on their toes.

The audit team knows exactly who is running a course and when because all courses must be logged electronically on the IPAF online application database by at least 6pm of the evening before the course takes place. Of course, most are logged days or even weeks in advance. Those who receive a visit on the day are usually chosen at random, explains Mr Price.

Following the visit, a detailed report is prepared outlining any areas of concern and also highlighting any good points found. This is a chance to give positive feedback to the instructor as well as to highlight any areas for improvement. This report is sent to the training

centre and, if the instructor is an independent instructor, to the instructor. A countermeasure report, to be received within a specified timescale, detailing measures to prevent recurrence of any problems, is also requested from the training centre at this time. Depending on the seriousness of the non-conformities and the responses from the instructor/training centre, further action may be deemed necessary. If this is the case, a recommendation is given to IPAF's Director of Operations, who then decides on any necessary action.

Geographical concerns

A logistical challenge is the uneven geographical distribution of IPAF auditors. Mr Price's inspectors are all independent quality-assured professionals with ISO9001 accreditation. Of these, four (including Mr Price) are based in the UK. There is one dedicated auditor each for Germany, Switzerland, Italy and Spain and another currently being trained in Singapore. Other areas including the Benelux countries, Middle East, Latin America and North America are covered by the shared expertise of the international auditing team, assisted by other staff or external audit companies.

This distribution reflects IPAF's European origins. There are 200 IPAF training centres in the UK alone. But as the organisation grows, new territories are coming on stream.

"The Middle East and Singapore are growing rapidly and that is a challenge," says Mr Price. "The attitude to safety in Europe and North America is pretty much aligned with the UK. But in many developing countries the expectations just aren't as high."

Telephone audits are also carried out on a regular basis. "It's another way of finding out how the instructor is performing and it's a very important part of the audit," says Mr Price. ■



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MEWPs fit for purpose

Just as a car requires regular maintenance and inspection, so does a MEWP – these are the basic inspections that will keep your equipment in good working order and safe to use

Well-maintained mobile elevating work platforms (MEWPs) provide one of the safest means of access to perform temporary work at height. It is vital to keep this equipment in good working order. This requires a planned maintenance and inspection regime which includes:

- Pre-use checks;
- Interim inspections;
- Statutory thorough examinations;
- In specific cases a major inspection.

Pre-use inspections

The first measure is to do a visual inspection of the MEWP – a walk-around check. Starting at a set point, and walking slowly around the machine, check all the base, superstructure and platform. Look out for: unsecure pins/retainers, which may work loose; obvious cracks or damage to the structure, oil leaks, loose and damaged electric cables/wiring. Check the safety notices (decals). Make sure they are not damaged or covered in dirt or paint as decals must be clear and readable – and you should understand the safety information they display. Make sure the operating manual is on-board and check the machine is free from site debris and loose equipment.

Now do a function check of all controls. Check the ground controls and emergency/auxiliary functions before going up in the machine. You need to make sure the platform entry gate/bar closes properly and is secure. Check that switches/levers move freely and do not stick on. Check that outreach limiters and slope sensors are working. Refer to the operator's manual to see all the pre-use checks the manufacturer requires.

Interim inspections

Both the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations (PUWER 1998) and the Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations (LOLER 1998)

First things first

To start with, do a simple visual inspection. See videos and guidance documents at www.ipaf.org/inspections



identify the need for additional inspections together with the pre-use checks and thorough examination.

MEWP manufacturers also identify interim inspection requirements in the operator manuals so that deterioration can be detected and remedied before it results in unacceptable risks.

Thorough examinations

Pre-use checks and interim inspections are not the same as a thorough examination. Thorough examinations are more detailed and are conducted by a “competent” person – usually a trained and experienced engineer, who assesses the condition of the MEWP to establish if the machine is structurally sound, in good working order, and functioning correctly. This includes assessing the correct function of all safety devices and identifying defects or weaknesses that could compromise the safe use of the MEWP.

It is against the law to use, or to allow to be used, powered access equipment that does not have physical

evidence of a current thorough examination by a competent person. The exception is when a MEWP is under six months from the date it was first put into service, in which case the manufacturer's Declaration of Conformity may well be sufficient.

In addition, a thorough examination is required following exceptional circumstances that may jeopardise the safety of the equipment, eg following damage that results in major repair or modification, following an accident or incident. A thorough examination report – often referred to in the industry as a LOLER certificate – is required by law as an official record of thorough examination.

Major inspections

Certain countries outside the EU – Canada, Australia and Finland – have a statutory requirement for every MEWP to have a 10-year inspection. This is a major inspection to validate structural integrity and functionality of critical components of a MEWP and is aimed at keeping equipment safe beyond the manufacturer's design life.

The growing demand around the world for secondhand machines and the retention of machines in some rental fleets has led to the use of MEWPs beyond the original design life. This has led IPAF to publish specific guidance recommending that MEWPs should undergo a major inspection within 10 years of being put into service and subsequently every five years after that. The guidance has been written for an international audience and does not identify any country-specific inspection requirements. The guidance does not put greater onus/responsibility on MEWP owners in the UK than is required in LOLER. If a UK MEWP is maintained correctly as per the requirements of LOLER, there is no need for a separate 10-year inspection report. ■

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Higher calling

Powered access continues to allow work in areas that other equipment cannot reach, as this selection of challenging jobs illustrates





2



3



4



6



5

1 Italian manufacturer **CTE** has a range of tracked and van-mounted machines providing impressive outreach. This ZED 20.2H, shown in Verona, Italy being used for roof maintenance, uses 20 m of working height, 9.2 m of outreach and a 300 kg capacity.

2 Spider and tracked access specialist **Higher Access** saw the benefits of the narrow access of spiders put to good use on this job in Wakefield.

3 Interstate Aerials provided some of the **Skyjack** aerial work platforms used to build Amazon's 305,000 sq m warehouse in Robbinsville, New Jersey. More than 30 SJ 66T telescopic booms were deployed to handle the bulk of the workload, because these booms can position workers at a working height of 21.9 m from the ground and have a platform capacity of up to 227 kg.

4 The HR28 Height Rider from **Niftylift**

has a working height of 28 m along with an outreach of up to 19 m. The 4x4 machine is driven by a hybrid motor, offering battery power or diesel or a combination for additional power.

5 **Hinowa** says that its Lightlift 1775 Performance III S is the result of three years of research and development, producing a high load capacity of 230 kg and a 17 m working height. Among the features are a pantograph system that

allows working flush with the wall, and inclination control, which automatically decelerates the platform in extreme conditions to enhance operator safety.

6 The Toucan 12E Plus from **JLG** is well-suited to applications from maintenance to building and has a two persons indoor/outdoor capability. It excels at work where outreach is required and space is limited (its base measures 1.20 m).

Applications



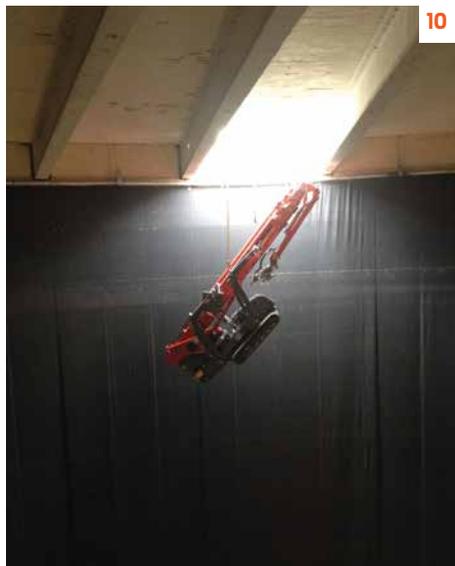
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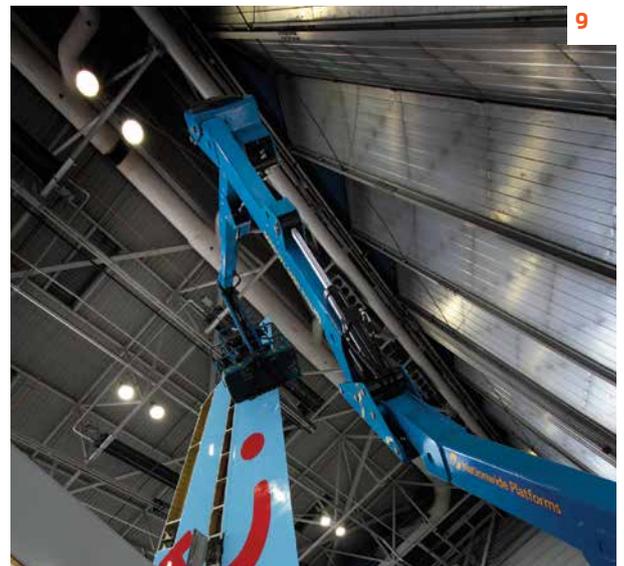
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7 Hirer **GT Access** saw its Skyjack SJ66T in use at the Avoncroft Museum of historic buildings. It was used to inspect and repair the museum's 19th-century windmill.

8 Access hire specialist **Height for Hire** supplied an FS 420C Spider Lift to carry out roof work from the indoors on a new hospital in the UK. The customer didn't have time to scaffold the atrium,

so the FS 420C was brought in. The FS range's double jib arm provides added access to hard-to-reach areas. The machine also needed to be lightweight as it was working on a finished floor with a basement underneath.

9 MEWP hirer **Nationwide Platforms** has supplied equipment to engineers and cleaning specialists for

maintaining and preparing aircraft before their flight.

10 The **Palazzani** Ragno TSJ 30.1 tracked spider has been used by contractor Sivi for maintenance and waterproofing work inside a massive water tank at Padua, Italy. The spider's extremely light weight of only 4,650 kg allows the technicians to lift it and pull it through a 1 m-wide trap

door and then be lowered into the tank.

11 The ETM36-F from **Versalift** has been developed specifically for the new 2014, 3.5-tonne GVW Ford Transit, the Euro V. With a working height of 13m and a maximum outreach of 7.3m, the ETM36-F features a 'point and shoot' telescopic boom, 110 degree articulating fly-boom, and 'zero tail-swing'.



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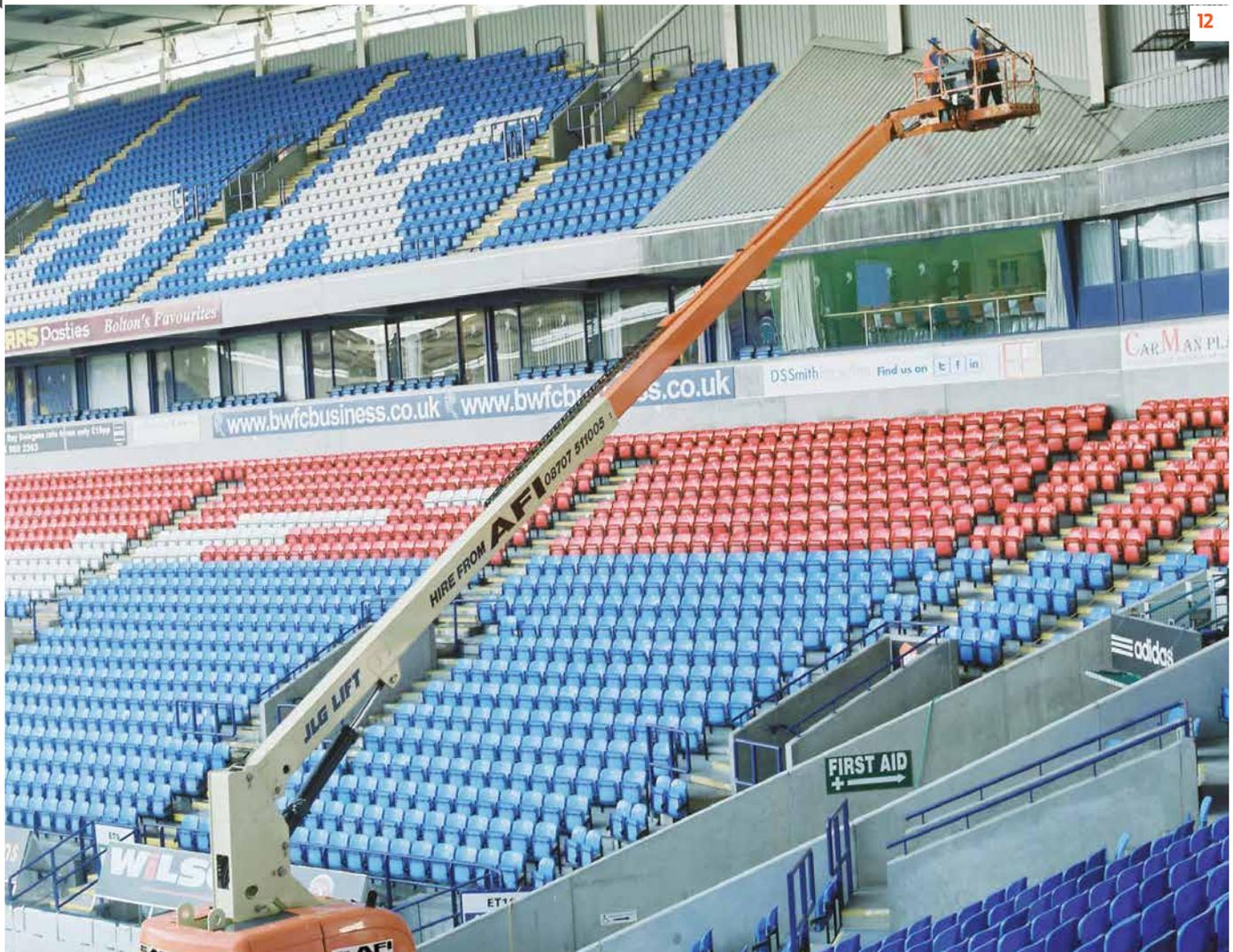
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Applications



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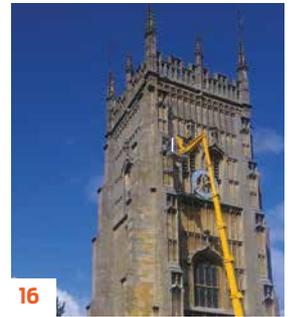
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16

12 Clean Ultra Cleaning Service needed a versatile boom to clean cladding at the Reebok Stadium, the home of Bolton Wanderers FC. It found one in the shape of JLG 860SJ boom lift, hired from **AFI**, which has a working height of 28.21 m and an outreach of 22.86 m.

13 **Ommelift** has supplied the first 37 m crawler lift sold in Denmark to enable forestry workers to harvest

20,000 litres of fir cones in just a fortnight, from six acres of giant fir trees.

14 Manufacturer **Haulotte** took the opportunity of the Tour De France passing near to its HQ by displaying both an articulating boom, the HA32 PX, and its HTL 4017 telehandler along the roadside.

15 **Alimak Hek** In Rotterdam's De Markthal, Alimak Hek engineered a

solution for ensuring access for the installation and tensioning the steel cables and the subsequent installation of the structurally cemented glass façade.

16 The inspection and repair of Evesham Abbey Bell Tower in Worcestershire required access to heights of up to 33 metres, but the only way to the Grade II-listed

building was via a narrow gate and through the soft ground of the graveyard. **Avon Access** provided an Omme 3700 RJ spider lift, which features a narrow width and low height for passing through interior doorways; tracks instead of wheels to distribute weight; and fold-down outriggers to stabilise the machines so they can reach significant heights.

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Armed for safety

IPAF offers a comprehensive range of training programmes that emphasise safety in powered access – all supported by auditing, by quality control checking and by professional development seminars for IPAF instructors around the world

Training is just one means by which IPAF promotes the safe and effective use of powered access. A full range of training programmes is available.

Courses delivered by member approved training centres range from MEWPs for Managers, which enables supervisors and managers to prepare for and safely coordinate various types of MEWPs on site, to operator training, available in many languages across 30 countries. Successful completion of the practical and theory sections of the operator training leads to the issue of the PAL Card (Powered Access Licence), which proves the operator has been trained to the required level.

These complete training programmes are backed up by regular auditing, quality control checks, and professional development seminars for all IPAF instructors.

Operators

IPAF's flagship training course instructs an operator to prepare and safely operate various types of MEWPs. Categories of MEWP equipment include: Static Vertical (1a), Static Boom (1b), Mobile Vertical (3a), Mobile Boom (3b), Push Around Vertical (PAV) and Insulated Aerial Device (IAD).

PAL+

PAL+ is an optional, additional one day of category-specific training aimed at advanced operators working in higher risk or challenging environments.

Demonstrators

This course trains a demonstrator to familiarise operators with their responsibilities and demonstrate pre-operational and safe operating procedures, as well as the limitations of MEWPs.

Instructors

This course trains and assesses an



instructor to understand the delivery of the IPAF training programme, and assesses knowledge on machines and ability to convey information to candidates.

Harness Use and Inspection

This course instructs a user to select, inspect and use a harness and associated equipment safely when using a MEWP.

Loading/Unloading

This course instructs an operator in the correct safety procedures for the loading, unloading and securing of machinery prior to or following transportation by road.

MEWPs for Managers

MEWPs for Managers is the essential, one-day course for those who plan, supervise and manage the use of MEWPs in the workplace.

MCWPs

IPAF-approved training centres also provide courses for mast climbing work platforms (MCWPs) to the levels of Mobile Operator, Demonstrator, Installer, Advanced Installer and Instructor.

CAP

The Competent Assessed Persons (CAP) programme is not about training, but is an assessment programme targeted at experienced engineers that allows them to be certified as competent persons to plan, manage or carry out inspections/ thorough examinations of MEWPs in line with relevant legislation.



A full range of management and operator training programmes is offered by IPAF member training centres. Free copies of this poster (pictured above) are available from info@ipaf.org.

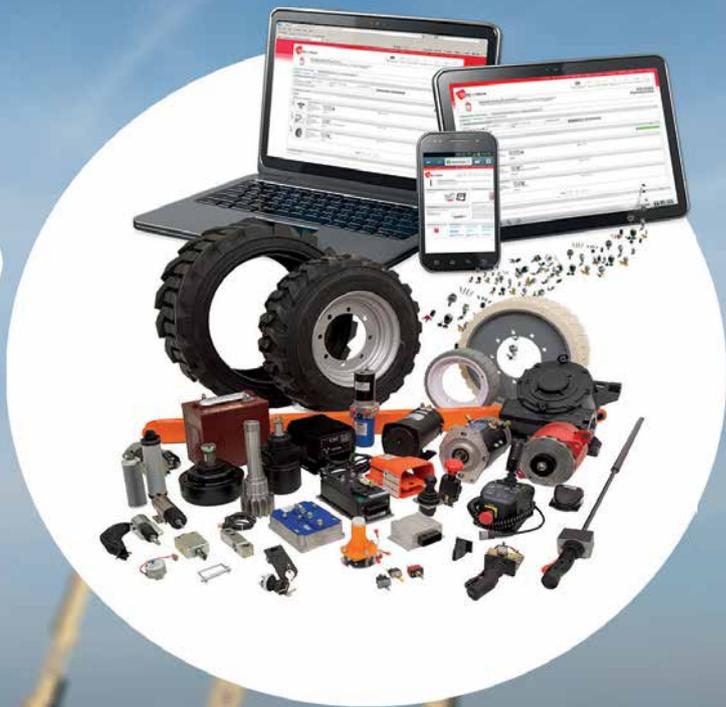
Selling safety

Apart from training, IPAF runs campaigns such as Spread the Load (www.ipaf.org/spreaders), which calls for the proper assessment of ground conditions and the correct use of stabilisers, outriggers and spreader plates, and Clunk Click, which calls for all users of boom-type platforms to wear a full body harness with a short restraint lanyard attached to a suitable anchor point.

IPAF's accident reporting project (www.ipaf.org/accident) collects data on worldwide fatalities involving MEWPs, with the aim of identifying key causes and developing further safety initiatives.

These resources and more are available free from IPAF – visit www.ipaf.org or email info@ipaf.org. ■

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Work safer, work smarter

More access rental companies are asking for IPAF's Smart PAL Card (Powered Access Licence), not only benefiting from the advantages made possible by smartcard technology but also raising their standards

Companies such as AFI-Uplift, HSS and Nationwide have opted to issue all trained operators with the Smart PAL Card as standard. The numbers are growing and IPAF currently issues more than 3,000 Smart PAL Cards a month.

For AFI, introducing the Smart PAL Card was a clear sign of the company's commitment to raising standards. "We have experienced the costs involved as a result of unauthorised use of our equipment in the past, and we wanted a security system for the machines that would prevent this happening again," says AFI UK major projects technical manager John Robertson. "Traditional systems such as keypad access all had weaknesses. We narrowed the choices and identified a system that used a unique operator smartcard to lock and unlock the machines. When IPAF launched its Smart PAL Card, it made sense for AFI-Uplift to offer it as standard on all IPAF operator courses as it worked with the hardware and software we were using to protect the machines from unauthorised use."

The Smart PAL Card has the advantage of forming a unique relationship between the operator and the MEWP, Mr Robertson says:

"Although it is possible to lend a card to another user, we have found that having a Smart PAL Card, which has the individual's details on it, makes operators realise that they are liable for their actions should an incident occur if they were to lend their card to a third party.

"Depending on the hardware and software system being used together with the IPAF Smart PAL Card, the information contained on the system around this operator/MEWP relationship can be used to identify whether or not the operator has previous training and experience on a particular make, model or type of machine and therefore whether

Right The Smart PAL Card features a wireless icon at top right and has an embedded chip that contains the same data printed on the card, such as operator name, number and categories trained in, with the addition of a unique card number



training and familiarisation is required prior to use. Another key assurance for managers and supervisors is that if the operator's licence has expired and not been renewed, the Smart PAL Card will not unlock the MEWP."

PAL possibilities

The Smart PAL Card is used predominantly to prevent unauthorised use of machines on site. The possibilities are only limited to the hardware and software packages being used, and how these are programmed. Mr Robertson says that AFI has customers who receive "machine detailed usage" reports, which enable them to view live utilisation reports for the equipment they have on site - total shift time worked, engine run time and function-enabled time on electric machines.

The customer also has the option of receiving LOLER inspection due reports, which the system collates for all machines on site fitted with Smart PAL Card technology and emails out

directly to key stakeholders such as managers, supervisors and rental company engineers. AFI has also worked with the system developer to launch operator pre-use check reporting, where the card reader will ask each new operator using the MEWP that day to confirm that they have carried out their checks.

Feedback has been positive. One of the first sites that took Smart PAL Cards in the UK was a waste-to-energy plant being built in Oxfordshire. Before the system was introduced to site, the customer had complained that each week, between leaving site on Friday afternoon and returning to work on Monday morning, operators would always discover their machine had been moved and had noticeably less fuel in it. Once the Smart PAL Card was introduced and the hardware fitted to the machine, these occurrences stopped immediately.

Or take another example that most MEWP hirers will relate to - a supervisor working for an M&E company on a hospital site had 13 machines fitted with Smart PAL Card technology. "The guys don't have the usual ritual of having to hunt for their machines when they've left them for any length of time," says Mr Robertson. "I've also noticed that they've not reported any breakdowns due to the machines going flat prematurely."

While security or misuse is still a problem on sites generally, there have not been reported incidents on any of the sites that have adopted Smart PAL Card technology, says Mr Robertson. The system can take human nature into account to some extent - should an operator accidentally forget to 'swipe off' his machine before leaving it for a period of time, the system will auto-lock the machine after a period of sensing no function inputs. Thus the Smart PAL Card lets operators work smarter and safer. ■



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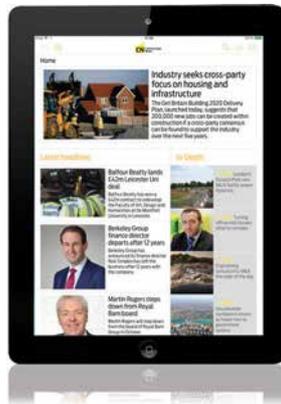
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IPAF goes back to basics

Contractors looking for good practice guidance to manage mobile elevating work platforms (MEWPs) on site, or wondering what fuel regulations and load restrictions apply for the use of truck mounted platforms, can benefit from joining IPAF.

The International Powered Access Federation (IPAF) exists to promote the safe and effective use of powered access equipment worldwide. That was the objective of its founding members and it is a theme that IPAF is returning to strongly in its 30th year.

IPAF is a global movement to ensure the safety of people in the powered access industry and to keep the industry up to date with the latest technical and safety advice in MEWPs and mast climbing work platforms (MCWPs).

The not-for-profit organisation is owned by its more than 1,000 members who include manufacturers, rental companies, contractors and users of powered access. IPAF members reaffirmed the Federation's original objectives and re-adopted them into the Federation's rules at the annual general meeting in April.

Among others, IPAF's objectives are:

- To encourage the highest standards of safety and good trading by members;
- To encourage technical efficiency in the industry by cooperation in the establishment of standards.

More than training

"People sometimes focus on IPAF's training activities, but we are much more," says IPAF CEO Tim Whiteman. "IPAF's members cooperate to protect the safety of people in the access industry. At our last AGM we re-adopted the founding principles from 30 years ago - by doing so, IPAF members have made very clear what IPAF stands for and what it sets out to do and deliver. Work at height is inherently dangerous, but powered



access is a safe and effective tool, and IPAF is here to keep the industry safe."

What makes IPAF unique is its ability to unite manufacturers, rental companies and end-users into one member organisation dedicated to promoting the safe and effective use of powered access.

IPAF's founding managing director, Paul Adorian, provides insight into the early years: "At that time, manufacturing and user organisations tended to keep each other at arm's length. However, the benefits that would accrue to all concerned by establishing an organisation where manufacturers and their customers could rub shoulders regularly soon became apparent. This situation was certainly unique and has led to an

IPAF The world authority in powered access

IPAF PROMOTES THE SAFE AND EFFECTIVE USE OF POWERED ACCESS WORLDWIDE

IPAF is a not-for-profit organisation owned by its members who include manufacturers, rental companies, contractors and users of powered access.

IPAF'S OBJECTIVES

- 3.0 The objects of the Federation are to provide goods and services for the powered access industry, including education, training, and research, and representing and promoting the interests of its members at national and international level. In particular:
 - 3.1.1 To promote and extend the use of Members' products on a world-wide basis and, where necessary, take action on all matters of interest to the powered access equipment industry.
 - 3.1.2 To encourage the highest standards of safety and good trading by Members.
 - 3.1.3 To represent the Industry in discussions at Government level in user countries and to liaise with other trade associations as necessary, particularly on the use of powered access equipment and international trade.
 - 3.1.4 To encourage technical efficiency in the industry by co-operation in the establishment of Standards.
 - 3.1.5 To provide for co-operation between all Members in the discussion of common problems, and to do all such other lawful things as are incidental or conducive to the achievement of the above objects.

www.ipaf.org

JOIN IPAF AND BE PART OF THE GLOBAL MOVEMENT TO ENSURE THE SAFE USE OF POWERED ACCESS

Working together
IPAF's members cooperate to protect the safety of people in the access industry

enormous amount of harmony and goodwill within the industry ever since.

"By manufacturers and rental companies joining forces, the flow of information on safety related topics has obviously been beneficial in promoting safety. The feedback from the companies that buy, use and rent the products relayed directly back to the manufacturers was a tremendous contribution to the continuing development of safer products."

That early enthusiasm has transformed into a full palette of IPAF services. The range of activities and services is growing and if you work with MEWPs or MCWPs, you should be part of it. Join IPAF and be part of the global movement to ensure the safe use of powered access. ■

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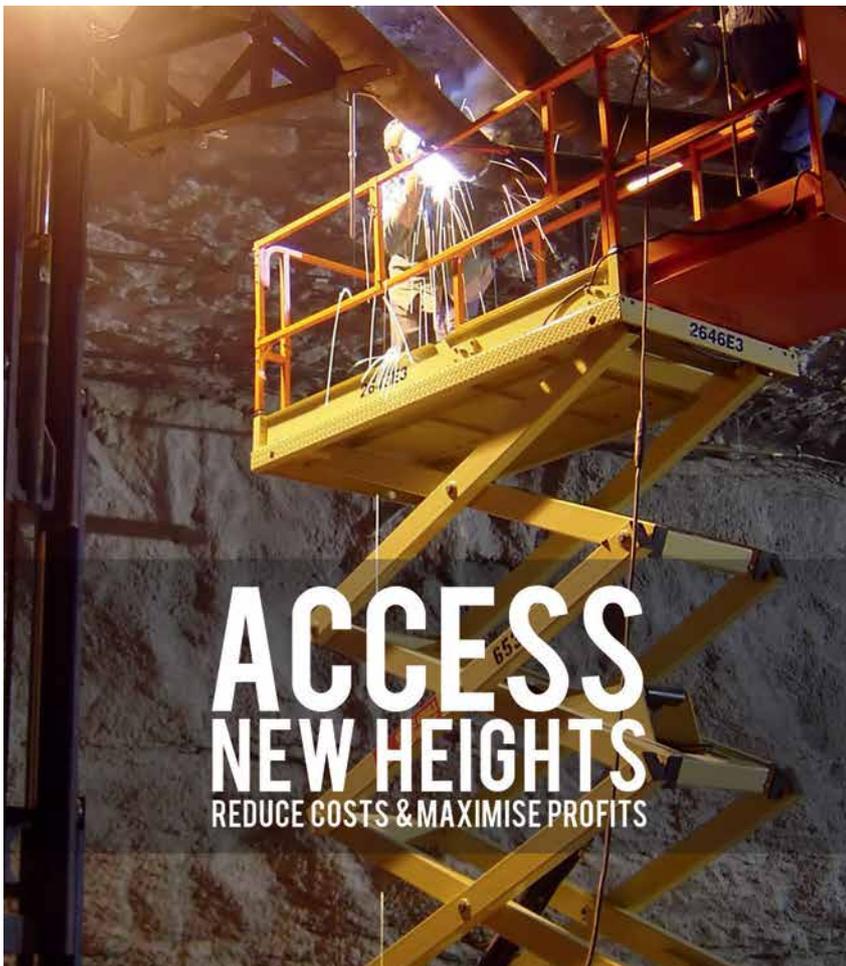
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IPAF training is provided by a network of approved training centres that operate independently. This directory helps you find your nearest training centre in the UK and around the world. All active IPAF training centres are subject to audits and expected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

United Kingdom

EAST ANGLIA

Access Training UK Ltd

Thetford
01842 888999
www.access-training.co.uk

Alan Barker T/a SkillsTec

Norwich
01508 550430
www.skillsotec.co.uk

Ashtead Plant Hire Co Ltd, Customer & Technical Training

Norwich
0845 6008572
www.aplant.com

Aurelia Ltd

Kentford
01638 751492
www.aureliatraining.co.uk

Eastern Counties Access Solution

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01603 735130
www.ecaccesssolutions.com

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www.hsstraining.com

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0845 6017738
www.jpstoolandaccess.co.uk

Mark One Hire Ltd

Chelmsford
01702 561818
www.mark1training.co.uk

National Construction College, Study Centre C

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www.nationalconstructioncollege.co.uk

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www.nationwideplatforms.co.uk

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Peterborough
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Sigma Access Training

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01986 896948
www.sigma-access-training.co.uk

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www.smartplatforms.co.uk

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www.britanniaitts.com

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www.thsp.co.uk

Warren Access Upton Ltd

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www.elavation.net

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www.hirestation.co.uk

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JLG Industries (UK) Ltd

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0870 200 7700
www.jlg.com

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www.skyking.co.uk

Kingscote Ltd t/a Webbs Training Services

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01283 222 044
www.mainline-hire.co.uk

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Midland Access Platforms Ltd

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www.brogangroup.com

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www.mrplanthire.co.uk

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www.nationalconstructioncollege.co.uk

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0845 6011032
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Nationwide Platforms Ltd

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www.rapidplatforms.co.uk

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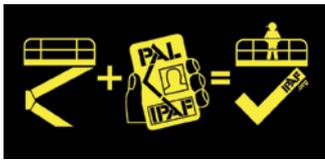
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0845 7667799
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www.hsstraining.com

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01392 255211
www.lighthire.com

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01752 485303
www.ltctrainingservices.co.uk

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www.ltctrainingservices.co.uk

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www.nationwideplatforms.co.uk

Nationwide Platforms Ltd
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www.nationwideplatforms.co.uk

OTJ Training
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www.otjtraining.com

Prolift Access Ltd
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www.proliftaccess.co.uk

Prolift Access Ltd
Wellington
01823 665902
www.proliftaccess.co.uk

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WALES

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www.hsstraining.com

Mid Glamorgan Fork Truck Training Services Ltd
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www.speedyhire.co.uk

Training-4-Safety
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www.training-4-safety.co.uk

WEST MIDLANDS

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Easi Uplifts (Safety Training) Ltd
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www.boomtraining.co.uk

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Generation (UK) Ltd
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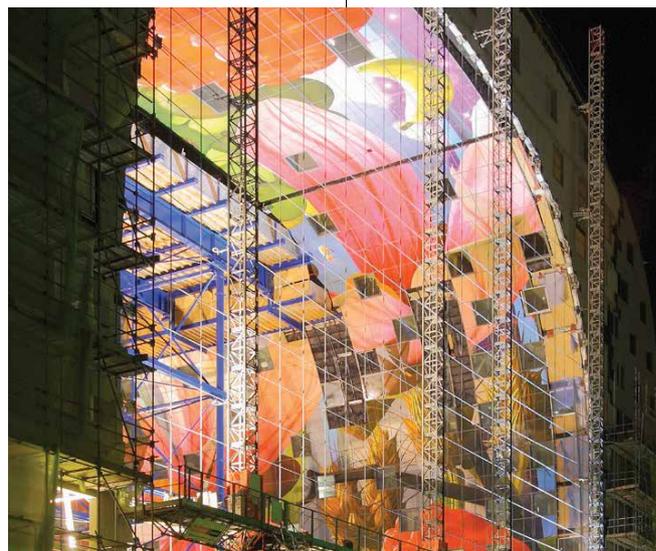
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Al Laith Scaffolding LLC

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www.allaith.com

Globalplus Machinery Trading (GMT)

Dubai
www.globalplus.ae

Instant Access For Sales and Rental of Construction Equipment LLC

Abu Dhabi
www.instantaccess-co.com

Manlift Middle East LLC

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www.manliftgroup.com

Rapid Access LLC

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www.rapidaccess-gulf.com

Safe Lift LLC

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Titan Equipment Rental LLC

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www.blazingtech.net

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www.buildsafe.org

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www.cvdwater.com

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www.hoj.net

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www.jlg.com

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www.asiplocal150.org

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www.mastclimbers.com

Motion Picture Studio Mechanics Local 476

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www.nesrentals.com

Niftylift Inc

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Operating Engineers Local 324 SEEC

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www.iuoe324.org

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www.palfinger-northamerica.com

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www.safetysite.us

Scaffold and Access Industry Association

Kansas City
www.scaffold.org

Sheet Metal Workers #33 Cleveland JATC

Parma

Sheet Metal Workers Local 137 JATC, Signage

Long Island City
info@local137.com

Sheet Metal Workers Union Local 33 - Toledo area

Rossford
www.smwlu33.org

Sheet Metal Workers' Local 73 Chicago

Belwood
www.jatc73.org

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www.stevensonsales.com

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Teupen USA Inc

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www.ussafetydepot.com

Valcourt Exterior Building Services of NJ, LLC

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All IPAF member manufacturers, distributors, hirers, contractors and instructors undertake to abide by and observe the IPAF Code of Conduct. The Code of Conduct states, among others, that a company shall not knowingly misrepresent facts, or mislead any customer or supplier, concerning any aspects of the goods and services it provides. It shall market only products and services that conform to specific industry standards relevant to its business.

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* This company also has group membership in other countries.

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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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What is IPAF?

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

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

IPAF's training programme for platform operators is certified by the international certification organisation TÜV as conforming to ISO 18878. More than 100,000 operators are trained each year through a worldwide network of over 600 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.

