

Nationwide buys Lex Access

Not content with being the UK's largest powered access rental company, Nationwide has been on the acquisition trail. It has bought Lex's rental fleet in a deal approaching £4 million.

The purchase of Lex's 278 boom and scissor lifts brings Nationwide's UK fleet up to 5,400 units and further highlights the consolidation taking place in the industry. Two weeks previously the company acquired Plettac nsg's 80-strong rental fleet in a £350,000 deal and six months before that it purchased Vibroplant's fleet of 311 units.

Group finance director Alan Merrell said: "We believe that consolidation in

the market place will continue as the efficiencies and customer service benefits derived from operating ever larger fleets are identified and realised."

He added: "Our acquisition of the Lex fleet represented an attractive proposition because of its age, its compatibility with our existing fleet and the fact that its customer base is orientated towards the industrial and commercial sector, which fits in well with our aims."

At the same time the Lavendon Group, Nationwide's parent, has appointed Geoffrey Gestetner as chief executive. David Price, who previously held the position of chairman and



Nationwide has further expanded its fleet following the acquisition of 278 units from Lex

chief executive, will remain as executive chairman of the Group. Meanwhile David Shipman, Lavendon's group managing director has given his notice to resign due to per-

sonal circumstances and will be reducing his responsibilities over the coming months in preparation for leaving the Group on 30 September 2001.



National Merchants Buying Society (NMBS) member, KRM Building Suppliers, has invested in a second, identical Hiab 140AW truck crane just six months after its first purchase. Stuart Sherwin, director of KRM, is pictured with the two identical Hiab cranes.

Pinguely expands

Pinguely-Haulotte has concluded a lease agreement with Framatome for a plant of 10,000 square metre situated in the Harfleur Business Park in Le Creusot. It will be devoted to the assembly of certain models of its median range (working height of 12 to 18 metres).

Investment in the plant has been projected at around 3 million euros (£2million) and initially 100 jobs will be created. The plant, which will become operational in Autumn 2001, will have its capacity gradually increased to produce 3,000 machines a year, the majority of which will be exported..

UK companies at Bauma

The Federation of Manufacturers of Construction Equipment and Cranes (FMCEC) has confirmed that a total of 126 British companies, 38 of which are first-time exhibitors, will exhibit at Bauma 2001. Among them will be Grove Worldwide, JCB and Bridon International. The British Pavilion is 530 square metres

and includes the British Information Centre, with interpreters, a meeting room and a display facility for British companies.

● *Cranes & Access* is also exhibiting and will be distributing *Vertikal Bauma*, a specialist guide to lifting equipment at the show.

Alte buys Hek



Swedish company Alte has taken over Hek International from ThyssenKrupp AG. Mr Werner, director of Alte, which already owns Alimak, said that each company would retain its existing structure and continue marketing respective products and technical support services through established sales and rental networks. Hek International's head office, he said would remain in Middlebeers in the Netherlands and Alimak's in Skelleftea, Sweden.

Ernest Van Hek, managing director of Hek International, has been appointed to the management team of the holding company along with Krister Kempainen, manag-

Hek mastclimbing platforms supplied by SGB enabled contractors Carillion and Mero to clad the exterior of the 12,000 square metre Science Centre on the banks of the River Clyde

ing director of Alimak.

Van Hek said: "The acquisition of Hek International by Alte ends six months of speculation during which time our employees have been extremely loyal. With the acquisition by Alte, there will be no reduction in manufacturing capacity or employees. In fact, the contrary. The current expansion of our facilities at Middlebeers will continue and the number of employees could, in fact, increase in the next year."

Safety awards

The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) is asking organisations to prove that they are genuinely on top of health and safety management by entering the 2001 RoSPA Occupational Safety and Health Awards Scheme.

Entrants to the RoSPA awards are required not only to supply evidence of success in reducing accidents and cases of ill health at work, but other indicators which show how well their health and safety management systems are working.

For a brochure and entry details contact David Walker or Jackie Bradley at RoSPA on 0121 248 2091.

News highlights

- Cambridgeshire based **Partek Cargotec** dealer, Lorry Loaders, has just moved to new premises in Weasenham Lane Industrial Estate, Wisbech. The new 6500 square foot premises are almost two and a half times bigger than the former site.
- **Certex** has achieved ISO 9001 accreditation at its Wakefield branch which specialises in the design and fabrication of lifting beams and spreader beams.
- The **Prefabricated Access Suppliers' and Manufacturer's Association (PASMA)** has launched the first of its four new advanced training courses – the Advanced Instructors' Course for Roof Scaffolds.
- **Versalift Distributors** has recently been awarded another major order for their Eurotel vehicle mounted platforms. The order for a total of 145 units, is valued at more than £2.75 million and represents BT's entire platform purchase for the period 2000/2001.
- **Baldwins** has won three UK contracts worth approximately £860,000. They include lift operations at Commercial Union Tower, London, Shipbuilders in Birkenhead, Wirral and the Conoco Refinery in Immingham.



A crane designed specifically for working in cities has made its first appearance on UK soil at Birmingham's NewHampton Lofts development. The Raimondi MR185 tower crane travelled from Italy on seven articulated lorries and took two days to erect and test.

NEWS

Revised IPAF safety guide

The International Powered Access Federation (IPAF) has extensively revised and updated its Operators' Safety Guide for Mobile Elevating Work Platforms.

The 48-page guide has been brought up to date with new legislative requirements, with platform technology and design and with the latest views of best practice. It also has a brand new format. The new pocket size (A6) format that it shares with the PAL Operators's Log Book, is half



The new pocket-size edition of IPAF's Operators Safety Guide for mobile elevating work platforms clearly sets out recommended safe working practices for platform use over a wide range of applications

the size of its predecessor and has been introduced to encourage operators to carry it with them all the time. The Guide is available by mail order on 015395 62444.

R-B sold

R-B International, which went into administration last year, has been bought by Langley Holdings. The new owner has told C&A that it will continue manufacturing crawler cranes under the R-B name. However, Langley will be transferring the R-B business and the 30 R-B employees to its Retford and Gainsborough facilities. R-B will become part of Clarke Chapman, which Langley

acquired on the same day from Rolls Royce. Clarke Chapman manufactures overhead cranes and harbour cranes.

Crista Baxter, group head of marketing for Langley: "We will keep the R-B brand name and will be contacting existing and new customers."

She added that the two purchases would give Langley a strong foothold in the crane manufacturing industry.

Harness for safety

Peter Skinner, MEP and Tony Bingham, barrister and arbitrator, were just two of a prominent cast of speakers at the third National Access and Scaffolding Confederation Conference held in Brighton. While Peter Skinner spoke about the issues and developments from Europe which will face the industry, Tony Bingham highlighted the benefits and risks of adjudication.

Mark Shearon and Ruth Kennersley from the Health

and Safety Executive discussed the significance of the introduction of safety harnesses and the implications this will have on the industry as a whole.

The conference ended on a high note with the presentation of the first annual NASC Health & Safety Awards. SGB won the highest award because its initiatives enabled it to reduce the company's accident frequency rate by 40 per cent from 1998 to 1999.



Three new Skyking-equipped access platform vehicles commissioned by the Amey Group are helping to make night driving safer along Britain's motorway and trunk roads. The equipment is being used for street lighting maintenance and repair service undertaken by Amey Highways.