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All training centres above offer IPAF approved and audited courses for Operators of Mobile aerial work platforms, European directives require that all staff are fully and adequately trained in the safe use of the equipment they operate.

See www.ipaf.org for full listing

Lack of safe access equipment costs £2,500

John Hartshorne of Monk Bretton, Barnsley, was fined £2,000 plus costs of £500 after pleading guilty to breaching the Work at Height Regulations 2005. Hartshorne and two employees were spotted by a passing HSE inspector on 23rd January 2008 working on the roof of Walmsley's Furniture Superstore, Barnsley, without any measures in place to prevent falls.

HSE Inspector David Bradley said: "This particular project was very poorly planned, and there were no controls in place to prevent falls of 30ft to the ground. The HSE will not tolerate poor safety standards particularly where simple, affordable controls, namely scaffolding, are recognised throughout the industry as being appropriate. As this prosecution demonstrates, when workers are put at obvious risk, HSE will not hesitate to take strong enforcement action."

Myerscough crane awards

Myerscough College held its annual Crane Academy Awards Ceremony on Thursday 22nd May. The apprentices received their awards from Construction Skills assistant apprenticeship manager Dave Lester.

In addition the 'Best Student' Trophy was awarded to Michael Birch of Ainscough Crane Hire (Stanlow) who received the award as a result of his hard work, work-based evidence and exam results. The 'Award for Endeavour' went to James Flaherty of AFI Uplift who showed maximum effort and a willingness to learn throughout his time at the College.



The Myerscough crane and lift apprentices

The Crane Academy is now in its fourth year and was developed to meet the need for vocational maintenance training in the crane and lift industry. The College has excellent resources to support this sector, offering dedicated apprenticeship opportunities for young people working in the Crane Hire, Plant Hire and Tool Hire industries. Myerscough provides apprenticeship tool hire businesses across the UK.



(L-R) Michael Birch, Ann Turner Myerscough chief executive/principal and James Flaherty

Loading accident costs £500,000

Two companies, Border Rail and Plant and the aerial lift manufacturer, LH Access Technology, have been fined £240,000 each after admitting health and safety failures which led to the "unnecessary" death of a worker in a loading accident with an aerial lift. The fines were handed down in mid-May at the Edinburgh Sheriff Court after both companies pleaded guilty to breaching Health & Safety regulations.

Neil Martin, 46, from Essex, an employee of Border Rail, was helping load a self propelled road-rail boom lift onto a low loader at Edinburgh's Waverley Station in the early hours of March 21st 2006, when it slipped on the ramps and ran him over.

Sheriff Nigel Morrison QC said the operation to move the machinery was "not adequately planned" and had placed Martin, a service engineer, at an "unacceptable risk of serious injury and that the loss of his life had been unnecessary. The method adopted to move the machine was inherently and obviously unsafe involving, as it did, a man walking between two moving wheels."

Martin had been taking part in the overnight operation to remove the platform from the railway station in order to have it repaired by LH Access, its

manufacturer. He was taken to Edinburgh Royal Infirmary but did not regain consciousness and was pronounced dead shortly afterwards.

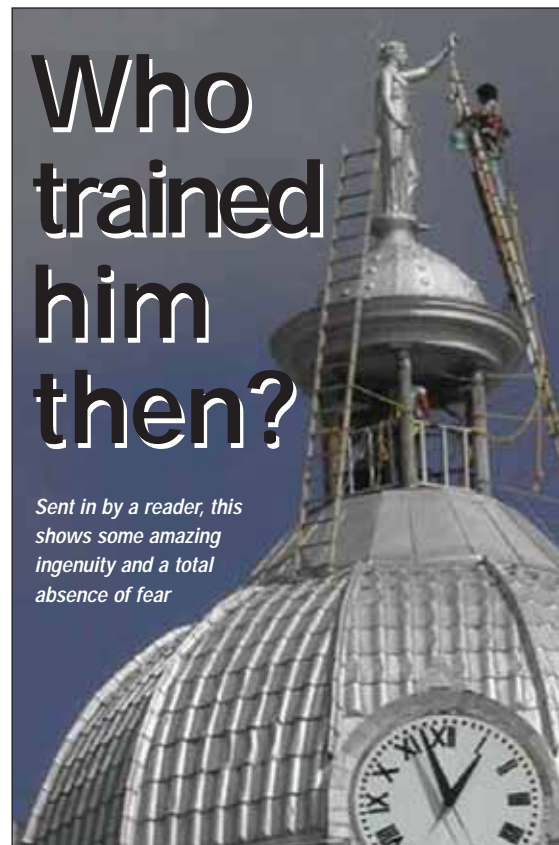
Lawyers for the two companies, which had no previous convictions, told the court that the level of the fines were high enough to force either company into administration and asked for up to 18 months to pay, Morrison gave them six.

Border Rail argued that it could not have foreseen that the cherry-picker would be moved in the manner that it was, which went against normal industry practice, even though its foreman knew what was being done. Morrison replied that the failure to recognise the risk and to stop the operation once it was spotted as being obviously unsafe was a serious failure of duty.

He added that he did not have the power to direct the fines be put towards increasing safety in the rail industry, as Martin's family had requested. His mother Frances Martin said the size of the fine was a matter for the court, but added that she would be sorry if Border Rail went out of business, as her son had enjoyed working for the company. "They were extremely good, considerate employers and they have treated us with utmost respect," she added.

Who trained him then?

Sent in by a reader, this shows some amazing ingenuity and a total absence of fear



A recent accident in New Zealand involved a truck ripping out overhead power lines including pulling over a pole

Training or technology

Forgetting to stow a loader crane's boom, happens far more than most would care to admit. The question is, is this down to insufficient training or should loader cranes be equipped so that the drive is disabled unless the boom is stowed?