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## On the cover:

One of Manchester-based K-Lift Crane Hire's Spierings mobile tower cranes lifting onto the roof of a multi-storey apartment building.



# C&A contents

## 17 Mobile tower cranes



## 23 Trailer lifts



## 29 Bauma review



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## Mobile tower cranes 17

With many businesses struggling to survive it would make sense to look for more efficient, money saving ways of doing things. We take a look at the many advantages of the self erecting mobile tower crane and ask why are they not more popular? Mark Darwin interviews Liverpool crane character John Sutch about his experiences over the past 40 years.



## Trailer lifts 23

The trailer lift - while still a popular powered access product with a loyal band of users - has settled into something of a sleepy backwater. Does the surprise entry into the market by Italian manufacturer Platform Basket signal a renewed interest in this sector? Does it know something no one else does? Cranes & Access investigates.

## In the next C&A

In the next issue of C&A we have our Annual Dealer Guide and Plant Shutdown feature including Industrial Cranes and Lifting and Industrial Access/Self Propelled Booms along with a review of Vertikal Days.

## Bauma 2010 review 29

This year's Bauma exhibition was set to break all records before a puff of Icelandic volcanic ash effectively scuppered tens of thousands of international visitors. Although final figures were down, the show lived up to its reputation as 'the biggest construction show in the world'. The Vertikal team were out in force to bring you this extensive review of the more interesting product launches.



## Vertikal Days show guide 39

The fourth Vertikal Days event at Haydock Park is almost here, taking on a much more important role with the demise of SED and so many UK visitors not being able to make it to Bauma. This 'pull-out' show guide has all you need to know about the show, the exhibits and the seminars.



## IPAF Summit in pictures 53

Here is our annual 'slightly irreverent' pictorial review of the IPAF Summit and Awards evening.

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# cranes & access

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# C&A comment

## A near miss?

In most of Europe it is a legal requirement to report 'dangerous occurrences' - something that happens that does not result in an injury but could have done - ie a near miss. However the low number of

reported incidents indicates that when it comes to cranes and access, the law is generally ignored.

Recognising this fact IPAF is testing a new incident reporting form with its members in a bid to gather this missing information and share the generic data with others in order to help reduce the number of 'near misses' and thus the number of 'hits'.

I am sure that we have all either been involved in or know of a significant near miss, I can remember many. In the early 1980s I was working as an engineer for a contractor on a nine storey apartment contract in central London. A sister site just up the road needed the tower crane to remove the large concrete floor 'flying' forms but unfortunately the crane operator had gone to lunch. As time was short his brother volunteered to operate the crane. The large formwork was hooked up before being 'freed' from the floor slab above. Unknown to us, the 'untrained' new operator had trolleyed the hook to the end of the jib so that when the huge formwork 'released' it was pulled rapidly away from the building, swinging across the busy A41 Finchley Road and just missing the top of a full London double decker bus.

Almost 30 years on, it is easy to see the 'funny' side of this incident but there is a serious point to 'near misses' that needs addressing. They allow others to learn from our mistakes - albeit mistakes that fortunately did not result in death or injury. Reporting them however needs to be done without risk of prosecution or recrimination which is currently not the case.

Information is also important when a 'near miss' is avoided. Take the example of a routine lift plan that is considered by one contractor to be dangerous enough to modify, but who does not then communicate this to a second contractor, who follows the original and has a fatal accident. Given that the first contractor spotted the potential for a 'dangerous occurrence', but did not share it with the other contractor, is he not at least partly to blame for the fatalities that followed?

We will only take the reporting of near misses more seriously if the information is used positively, rather than to feed our 'blame mentality'. IPAF's initiative should be applauded, but perhaps the HSE needs to review its 'near miss' prosecution procedures in order to encourage more open reporting which will ultimately reduce the number of accidents.

Mark Darwin

Please mail, email or fax any comments you may have, to the editor, stating if we may publish them or not.

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