

Competency requirements for thorough examiners

During recent discussions amongst the ALLMI membership, concern has been raised over the quality of Thorough Examinations being carried out within the loader crane industry. At the October 2010 General Meeting for ALLMI's manufacturer and service company members, it was agreed that the association should launch a campaign highlighting the competency requirements for people conducting Thorough Examinations and Load Tests, and promoting the correct methods for carrying out these procedures. ALLMI chairman, Mark Rigby said: "there's growing concern from within our membership regarding the standard of Thorough Examinations taking place within the wider lorry loader industry, and we feel there's a real need to educate people on the requirements detailed in LOLER and BS7121 Parts 2 & 4. We plan on running a campaign throughout the coming months, which will not only be aimed at companies performing this type of work, but also at end users as they need to be fully informed in terms of what they should expect when having Thorough Examinations and Load Tests carried out. This project will be one of ALLMI's top priorities over the next few months."

This article represents the first in a series of steps designed to raise awareness of the legal requirements and correct procedures in relation to Thorough Examinations and Load Tests, as well as the expected levels of competency for the people carrying out this work.

What are the legal requirements relating to Thorough Examinations and Overload Tests?

In the UK the Construction and Use (Lifting) Regulations 1961 covered this subject, but these were repealed in 1998 with the advent of the Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations (LOLER), which introduced the requirement



for an annual "Thorough Examination and Inspection". This made it the responsibility of a "Competent Person" to determine if and when an overload test should be carried out on the grounds that "the design of certain lifting equipment is such that damage may be caused by conventional overload tests". Loader cranes do not fall into this category, as witnessed by the fact that BS7121 Parts 2 and 4 have entire sections devoted to the testing of this type

of equipment. Whilst BS7121 is a Standard and is therefore guidance rather than legislation, it is regarded as a most important source of advice, demonstrated by the fact that it is referred to eight times in the LOLER Approved Code of Practice and Guidance. In the event of a prosecution following an accident, it's highly likely that the Competent Person and loader crane owner would be questioned as to whether the requirements of BS 7121 Parts 2 and 4 were applied

Recommendations for periodic testing of lorry loaders as a supplement to thorough examination

Years	Age Months	Stability installed test	Static overload test	Dynamic test	Thorough examination plus 110% static overload	Performance test	Function test
1	12				✓	✓	✓
2	24				✓	✓	✓
3	36				✓	✓	✓
4	48		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
5	60				✓	✓	✓
6	72				✓	✓	✓
7	84				✓	✓	✓
8	96		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
8.5	102				✓	✓	✓
9	108				✓	✓	✓
9.5	114				✓	✓	✓
10	120		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
10.5	126				✓	✓	✓
11	132				✓	✓	✓
11.5	138				✓	✓	✓
12	144		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
12.5	150				✓	✓	✓
13	156		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
13.5	162				✓	✓	✓
14	168		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
14.5	174				✓	✓	✓
15	180		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
15.5	186				✓	✓	✓
16	192		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
interval							
After re-installation		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
After structural component repair/replacement		✓	✓				
After hydraulic valve repair/replacement				✓			✓
After RCI/L repair/replacement						✓	✓
After significant vehicle modification		✓					

during the Thorough Examination, and if not, what alternative standards were applied. Failure to satisfy the court that an acceptable standard was used could well result in serious consequences for both parties.

What tests should be conducted and when?

As stated above, LOLER stipulates the requirement for the annual Thorough Examination, but BS7121 Part 4 clearly lays out the requirements for the additional tests to be undertaken, and the frequency at which these should take place.

It's very important to note that prior to any Thorough Examination taking place, previous reports of Thorough Examination and test certificates should be made available to the examiner, as these will form the basis for any testing to be conducted. The previous test certificates should be checked for any limitations placed on the crane at the initial installation, and if a test certificate cannot be found then the crane / testing procedure should be treated as if it's a new installation. This would mean it's necessary to carry out additional tests, i.e. stability test, overload test and dynamic test. One source of concern amongst ALLMI members

is that a number of companies carrying out Thorough Examinations have standard disclaimers on their reports stating that they have not viewed the previous reports or test certificates, nor have they accessed the original vehicle build file. This means they are quite possibly unaware of what types or levels of safety systems are required or are fitted to the crane and whether the machine was de-rated or declared unstable over a particular area of the slewing range.

Who can be considered competent to carry out these procedures?

Who is a "Competent Person"? A Competent Person is defined in the Approved Code of Practice for LOLER as having "such appropriate practical and theoretical knowledge and experience of the lifting equipment to be thoroughly examined as will enable them to detect defects or weaknesses and to assess their importance in relation to the safety and continued use of the lifting equipment".

Practical Knowledge: This translates as "hands-on" knowledge and experience of the safe operation, repair methods, common faults and / or product foibles of the machine being examined.

Theoretical Knowledge: Knowledge of the relevant legislation and Standards, knowledge and experience of the associated hydraulic, mechanical and electrical safety systems, and how to calculate test loads and calibration parameters.

If you're a loader crane owner, it's essential that you ask the person conducting your Thorough Examinations for evidence of their "practical and theoretical knowledge and experience".

What information should be contained within a report of a Thorough Examination?

Another concern within ALLMI's membership is the quality of documentation being issued after a Thorough Examination has been conducted. Schedule 1 of LOLER is very clear about what should be contained within the report and ALLMI's template documentation issued to its members reflects this. Any document purporting to be in accordance with the above must clearly state "Report of Thorough Examination in accordance with

LOLER Regulation 9.3.a (ii)". If it merely states that it is a Certificate of Thorough Examination or a Report of Non-Thorough Examination then it is not worth the paper it is written on.

To summarise: a report of Thorough Examination issued by any company (along with the person conducting the Examination) should meet the requirements and processes outlined in this article. If you have grounds to believe that this is not the case then it is strongly recommended that you ensure an ALLMI member carries out this work for you, as they are signed up to the ALLMI Code of Practice and have access to a training scheme which includes both theoretical and practical competency assessments in relation to this very subject.



ALLMI accredited Lorry Loader Operator Training Providers

Nationwide

T H WHITE

Contact: David Ottaway 01380 722381

Email: cranes@thwhite.co.uk

www.thwhite.co.uk

Nursted Road Devizes

PALFINGER Wilts SN10 3EA



Ireland



Church Road, Tullamore, Co. Offaly, Ireland

Tel: 086 2500 825 Mobile: 086 1042 787

Nationwide

ATLAS CRANES UK LTD

Wharfedale Road, Euro Way Ind. Est. Bradford. BD4 6SL

Tel: 08444 996688

Alan Roberts: 07860 414782

Nationwide



Hiab Ltd

Cargotec Industrial Park, Ellesmere, Shropshire, SY12 9JW

Tel: 01691 626427 Fax: 01691 626472

e-mail: training.uk@hiab.com • Web: www.hiab.co.uk

Are your Lorry Loader Operators properly trained? Call a certified ALLMI training provider and Insist on the ALLMI card.

The training accreditation service of Lorry Loader Manufacturers and Importers

ALLMI Unit 7b, Prince Maurice House, Cavalier Court, Bumpers Farm, Chippenham, Wiltshire. SN14 6LH
TEL: 01249 659150 email: enquiries@allmi.com web: www.allmi.com