

**Letters to the editor**

Please send letters to the editor: Cranes&Access: Po Box 6998, Brackley NN13 5WY, UK. We reserve the right to edit letters for length. We also point out that letters are the personal views of our readers and not necessarily the views of the Vertikal Press Ltd or its staff.

To the editor,

The increasing amount of tower crane accidents seems to be dividing opinions. Some say that it is unfortunate, just like buses, none turn up for ages and then three at the same time.

I beg to differ.

Accidents happen because of at least one failure in a particular area. Whether they happen all at the same time, or are nicely spread out isn't the issue. The main reason for the recent accident increase is a reduction of overall standards in the tower crane industry - primarily due to the lack of an experienced, fully trained and committed workforce.

Let's start at the top - the crane drivers. Not being ageist (or any ist) but younger drivers do not have the experience or the commitment to the job. This is exemplified by the fact that many sit for hours on mobile phones during work time - some even saying they can't do a lift because they are on the mobile! As in the current radio ads that warn us about driving a car and being on a mobile - it is very difficult to do two things that take effort and concentration at the same time.

This point has been raised before - by Geoffrey Marsh chairman of the CPA's crane's committee - so I am not the only one.

Drivers also don't have the mechanical sympathy required. Maybe it is lack of experience, maybe current courses are not sufficient, maybe it is just the attitude of today's younger workers. And because there is a demand for drivers, ones that are not great can get another job quite easily.

What can be done? Encourage more into the industry, train them better, give them more experience and easiest of the lot - get rid of the mobile phone!

Name and address supplied but withheld.

Dear Sir,

I work at Manchester Airport in the Airfield Operations Department where the main part of my job is Aerodrome Safeguarding, which basically means protecting the airport's operations against temporary and permanent obstacles. As such, I am looking for a way of communicating the safety obligations incumbent upon Crane or aerial lift operators wishing to use lifting equipment in the vicinity of airports.

We seem to have differing experiences when dealing with crane operators and contractors. Some operators seem to be aware of the limitations involved during operations in the vicinity of the airport, and contact us well in advance of any lifting operation with the appropriate details, whilst others appear to be blissfully unaware that they need to contact us at all.

Would it be possible for you to publish an article in your Magazine in order to raise awareness amongst the crane operator community? I would also be grateful if you could possibly be able to supply me with contact details for any Associations and other Industry Publications there may be.

I hope to hear from you soon,

Yours sincerely,

Shaun McAleer,

Airfield Operations,

Manchester Airport.

(Ed: We contacted Mr McAleer and are now planning to cover this important subject in detail in a subsequent issue of Cranes&Access. In the meantime it might be worth reminding your operators and customers on the need to notify airports when working with high equipment near an airport.)

Dear Sir,

I am an avid reader of Cranes&Access and think that what you are doing with the magazine is first class. On a couple of occasions however I have thought that you have been wrong to have allowed your pages to include some personalised comments. One concerned comments from Malcolm Bowers and more recently a comment in your annual rental rate guide pointed at an individual.

Unless you are trying to take the publication in the direction of the Sun then I think such personalised comments are out of place and do you no credit.

That is my opinion but I know that I am not alone in sharing this view.

Yours Sincerely,

(Name requested to be withheld)

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