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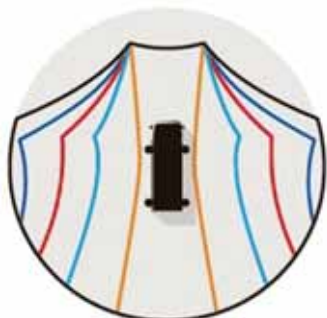
# Loading up

A year ago we reported on a loader crane market still struggling from the effects of the recession and the general economic environment, particularly in the building supplies sector which represents a significant proportion of loader cranes sales. Reading the papers or listening to news at the moment you would conclude that the situation had deteriorated, yet a year on the market is far more positive, no matter which way you look at it.

One area that has moved on considerably is how manufacturers are coping with the new regulations, not only have companies met the new rules, but many have gone beyond the minimum requirements, introducing 'all singing all dancing' systems that can automatically sense all crane movements and adapt the rated capacity to suit. In this regard loader cranes are way out in front of mobiles.

## Intelligent load charts

Hiab was first of the top four manufacturers to introduce a full system across its entire range. Its Variable Stability Limiting (VSL) system monitors each outrigger leg along with the position of the superstructure and boom to ensure the maximum safe capacity is available for a specific vehicle and set up.

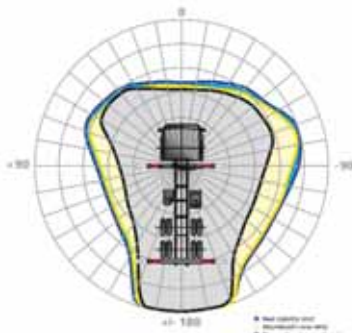


Hiab's VSL provides a completely flexible working area

Palfinger is the latest to follow Hiab's lead with its High Performance Stability Control (HPSC) replacing its three step ISC system. The HPSC system calculates and defines the permissible working range for the specific vehicle through 360 degrees of slew for any combination of stabiliser set up. It does this by monitoring each outrigger extension using an internal cable or electronic actuator along with the slew position, boom/jib lengths and load on the hook.

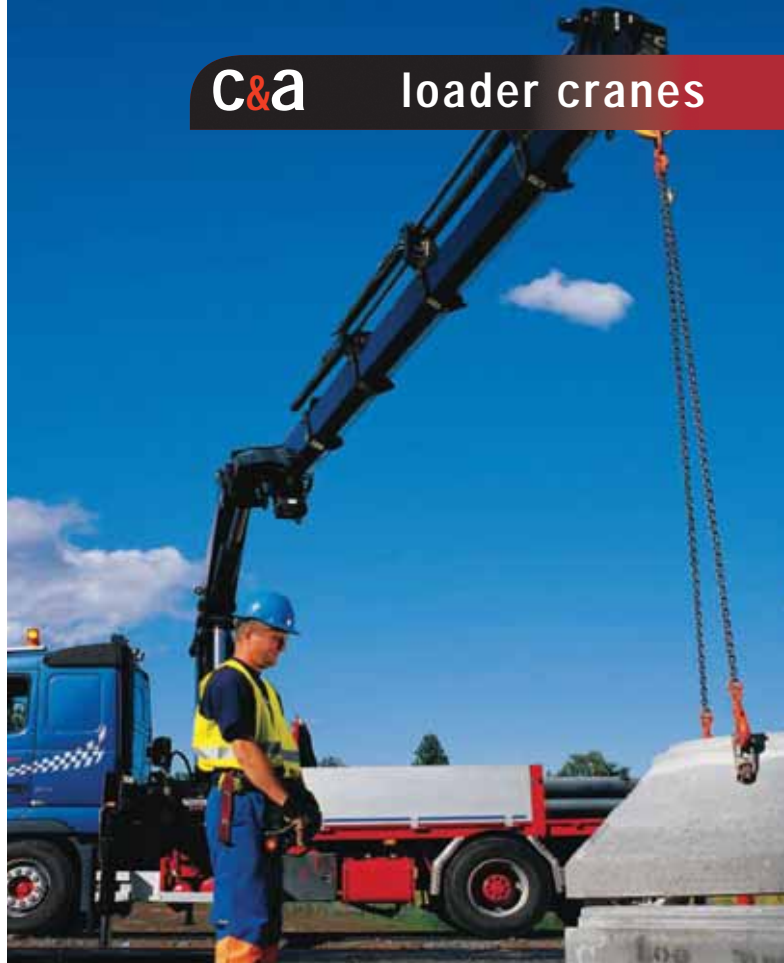


Palfinger's new HPSC system automatically adjusts the cranes working envelope and lift capacity according to outrigger set up and is being fitted across the range



Palfinger's working range and lift capacity automatically changes infinitely according to outrigger set up

The information is then fed into the system which incorporates an 'intelligent algorithm' calculation process and with the aid of Palfinger's 'Paldig' software, creates an accurate representation of the crane's stability based on the specific crane and vehicle data - including torsional deflection - and determines the inherent stability value for each 1.4 degrees of slew. The result is a unique load chart that fully exploits the specific crane's safe working range. The operator can read off the current status of the crane against this 'customised' load chart at any time on both the operator's console and the radio remote displays.



Both main control station and remote controller displays show percentage of extension for each outrigger

environmental equipment, optional filter clean kits were fitted which reduces oil and filter changes from every 12 months to approximately once every five or six years.

## Plenty of new models

With the new standards and directives behind them loader crane manufacturers have turned their engineering resources towards new or improved products with a slew of new models. The following are brief overviews of some of the more recent launches.

## Green credentials

In addition to meeting, or rather getting ahead of, the new directives and standards manufacturers are also looking at ways to make their units more environmentally friendly, driven as much by their own ideas as by large fleet owners.

Most loader crane manufacturers have made progress at reducing both overall weight for a given capacity, but also improved the fuel consumption that the crane systems use while operating. When Cargotec recently supplied 24 Hiab XS cranes to UK builders merchant Burdens for example, in addition to the standard

## Palfinger

Numerous new launches from Palfinger include the PK 65002 SH, 78002 SH and PK 92002 SH High Performance models, which offer 62, 74.7 and 85.5 metre/tonne ratings respectively. The PK 65002 SH and PK 78002 SH can be equipped with up to eight hydraulic extensions for an outreach of 20.4 metres, while the PK 92002 SH has up to nine hydraulic extensions and an outreach of 22.5 metres.

All units incorporate the new HPSC stabiliser/overload system, SH control concept and dual motor continuous slew. The two motors



are reciprocally hydraulically pre-stressed to minimise any 'play' in the slewing system - ideal for long reach lifts. New radio remote controllers with large LCD displays show capacity usage, stabiliser positions and graphics-assisted operator prompting.

In the middle of its range the new PK 44502 and PK 48002 EH High Performance models offer 41.9 and 46.5 metre/tonnes ratings respectively. Equipped with up to six hydraulic extensions, both cranes have a powered outreach of 16.3 metres.

guards against impact damage. Control options include single and dual platform, top seat and radio remote with a catwalk option to maximise visibility and operator safety. The new crane will include a two year parts and labour warranty both on the crane and clamshell package and three years structural warranty.

### First PM 100SP in UK

The first PM 100SP sold in the UK has now been delivered and is currently undergoing installation at Midlands-based dealer Central Hydraulic Loaders.



The new Palfinger PK 78002 SH project

### Atlas world premier

Atlas has been testing a brand new crane - the GL130 grab loader - in the UK, aimed at rigid chassis trucks and trailers from 18 tonnes up, although a launch date has yet to be determined. The new crane has up to 8.4 metres reach on the main

The 84 tonne/metre crane is a totally new PM design not an update. The basic crane is available with up to nine hydraulic extensions plus four or six fly jib extensions giving a total horizontal reach of 33.55 metres and 37.35 metres vertically. The standard 10024SP



First picture of the new Atlas GL130 taken during testing at Atlas Cranes UK's Bradford facility.

boom, while the Atlas Power Glide (APG) jib system based on proven timber crane technology can also be added. A 175 litre aluminium hydraulic tank with twin filters is standard.

Spherical bearings on the first and second boom cylinders are said to counteract side loads and reduce the potential for twisting and a cylinder and jib protection system

crane weighs 7,615kg without tank. "This is exciting because it is lower, lighter and requires less fitting space than any of our competitors cranes in its class," says Deborah Deegan of PM Cranes UK. "With a height of 2,495mm it does not need the added expense or weight of an integral sub-frame and needs just 1,835mm mounting space."

By using the latest generation of

The PM 100SP is said to be lighter and requires less fitting space than its competitors.



highest grade steels we have gained considerable weight reduction, while the new octagonal boom profile increases the loading performance and improves rigidity. Less flex means more stability and increased accuracy."

### Hiab XS622

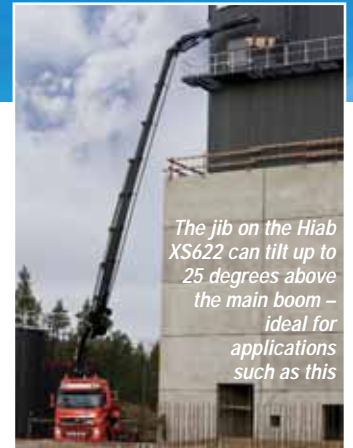
The main new launch for Hiab this year is the all new, 58 tonne/metre XS622 with its new boom, cylinders, couplings and seals. In its most powerful configuration, the crane offers up to 32 metres of outreach. The 150 jib can be raised by a full 25 degrees above the horizontal in relation to the boom. The Hiab HiPro control system and variable pump are both standard. The company says that the combination of a new cylinder design and improved boom section side supports give a far more rigid boom.

"Despite its robustness the Hiab XS 622 is still a light crane. It may sound like a contradiction but with great engineering we were able to achieve both," says Mikael Rietz, Cargotec's vice president of loader cranes.

### Special crane for art

T.H. White, the Palfinger distributor for England and Wales, has delivered a special crane to J.A. Mackenzie Haulage of Salisbury, Wiltshire. The crane and vehicle have been designed specifically for delivering and installing heavy or bulky works of art in city centres - mainly London. The crane, a 58 tonne/metre Palfinger PK60002 Performance installed on an extended wheelbase Scania tractor

unit, features an 'E' boom with six hydraulic extensions and can lift almost three tonnes at its maximum 15.7 metres radius. The crane also includes a removable PJ125C fly jib with four additional extension taking its total reach to 24.8 metres and can handle just over a tonne. The specifications include a 2.5 tonne winch with 65 metres of rope storage; four hydraulic outriggers; full remote controls with engine RPM returning to idle when power



The jib on the Hiab XS622 can tilt up to 25 degrees above the main boom - ideal for applications such as this

is not required and Palfinger ISC automatic stabiliser monitoring system.

The truck features a highline sleeper cab, a fifth wheel under a demountable flatbed body for semitrailer use in addition to its VBG drawbar coupling and a bespoke fabricated sub-frame and ballast box, including chain box behind the fifth wheel in order to balance the truck and prevent any overloading of the front axle. Final details include chrome wheels and fittings and banks of extra lights.



The crane is mounted to a three axle extended wheelbase Scania tractor

The end product is a highly compact truck and crane for delivering and placing a statue or other pieces of art on the upper floor of a London apartment. The company offers a turnkey service - delivering the artwork, removing windows if necessary, lifting the item into the building, placing it and replacing the windows. In between such specialised deliveries, it tows a trailer either with its drawbar or its fifth wheel for more regular work.

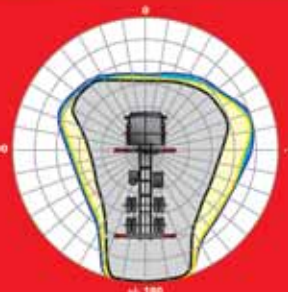
Maximum reach with fly jib is 24.8 metres at which it can still handle over a tonne.



# The most intelligent stability control system of all times! PALFINGER's new HPSC



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# The turn around king



Fil Filipov

*An interview with Fil Filipov of Atlas Cranes & Excavators.*

Fil Filipov has a reputation for being a hard-nosed businessman. After joining Terex in 1993 he was a key player in the successful growth and integration of many companies into the Terex group at a time when the business was extremely strapped for cash. He ended his Terex career as president and CEO of the crane division at the end of 2003. Known for his no-nonsense, straight-forward (abrupt) management style - and therefore often at odds with management and unions - he is always focussed on reducing costs, keeping product prices stable and making a profit. Cranes & Access managed a very quick chat...

Last April Filipov resurfaced after several years out of the 'cranes and lifting' sector, to purchase the German company Atlas Cranes & Excavators - a company he had already purchased while at Terex in 2001. The first time around Atlas was a heavily overstaffed business that had lost money for many years before the acquisition. Rapid and severe cost cutting - including cutting 700 staff - and restructuring 'Terex-fied' the company but it never really became the 'global excavator' part of its portfolio mainly because it could not achieve the product cost advantages required to be successful, while the loader crane business seem to have been forgotten by the Terex senior management.

The strategic repositioning of Terex combined with the tough economic climate of 2009 and an operating loss at Atlas of \$61 million on sales of \$194 million - the majority of the loss coming from its excavators - caused Terex to draw a line under the business and put it up for sale. It was quite a surprise to learn that its

new owner was previous purchaser Filipov, although cost reduction and turning companies around is his speciality.

The deal was finalised in April 2010 with the new company headquartered at the Atlas crane plant in Delmenhorst, Germany with manufacturing in three German locations - excavators in Ganderkesee, cranes in Delmenhorst and hydraulic cylinders in Vechta.

This interview was indeed quick in that Filipov was travelling at 200 km per hour in a car on the German autobahn in between meetings. He hates lengthy (more than 30 minutes) meetings of any kind but always seems to be working wherever he is in the world. At the time of the interview he was in discussions with the workforce and unions on restructuring and changes.

**C&a Having bought the company twice what do you like about it?**

**FF:** I like the name, the German quality, the dedicated dealerships and the well established (niche)

product. I also like companies that loose money because they give me the opportunity to turn them around. Atlas in Germany has been loosing money for more than 20 years and this year is the first time it has actually made a profit. The UK division on the other hand has always made a good contribution. Atlas has a majority share of loader crane market in the UK and has excellent backup and dedicated support through its 37 mobile service vans. I have not spent much time in the UK mainly because the management team there has been doing very well.

**C&a How bad were Atlas financial figures?**

**FF:** The company was loosing €2 million a month. Firstly we reintroduced the Atlas name then reduced the price and reduced the costs to make us profitable. We picked up volume - without volume you cannot become profitable - because of price and improved product and were also fortunate to benefit from a small construction 'wave' in Germany that has helped to carrying us along.

**C&a Have you made any product improvements?**

**FF:** We have modified our excavators and introduced improved models such as 'short tail' and improved the boom design to reduce areas that were costing us excessive warranty costs. In the cylinder plant we have improved quality and reduced overheads drastically. With the loader cranes we are not striving to be the number one in terms of volume, we want to be a customer driven manufacturer. You can see from our production line a variety of models and customer liveries, primarily from customers in

our main markets in the UK, Germany, Saudi Arabia, France and Benelux. We also continue to provide military cranes. Some of our stable suppliers had become very arrogant by increasing prices so we have had to restructure and go to other suppliers, particularly for steel components and other ridiculously expensive small components.

We have also used this exercise to improve quality as it was affecting us directly with warranty claims and costs, so all these improvements have contributed to the bottom line. About two excavator models and two loader crane models were contributing around 50 percent of the warranty costs. These have now been drastically reduced.

**C&a Atlas has three facilities in Germany but what is the product split?**

**FF:** Revenues are made up of 60 percent excavators and 40 percent loader cranes with sales about 45 percent in Germany 25-30 percent in the UK with the rest in countries surrounding Germany such as Italy, France and Benelux.

We are now profitable, the company has no debt and we have a healthy order book. We are doing very well but we are in markets where the economy has picked up - such as Germany and the UK, France.

**C&a What is the current situation in Germany with the employees?**

**FF:** The unions and the works council thought they would run the company like they had been doing for the past 20 years. I told them that they were misinformed and they went on a seven week strike. I didn't give an inch (In fact Filipov returned to Chicago). They judged me wrong because I have no



shareholders to consult, no bank debt and no corporate or lawyers to tell me what to do. After the seven weeks they decided to return to work but we do not have a good relationship because they want to go to court for every little thing, they think I am wrong. I have followed the rules as much as possible to run the company. However because the company is now doing well I sense a lot of the employees are starting to question their representation from the works council and the union.

I said in the letter and to local press that there are two things that drive me – one that I am in good health and secondly I like what I do, which is even better when results are good. If the German employment rules will not allow me to run the business the way I want then I will get out of the business and sell it. I do have some candidates but I am not in any discussions at the moment to sell the business. So I thought a crazy idea would be to ask employees if they wanted me in or out - I just wanted to know.

**C&A And the outcome?**

**FF:** That doesn't matter, I will be the only one to know anyway - the ballots have been printed in Bulgaria and the outcome has been predetermined! (he laughs). If the unions want to go on strike then that is their and their members choice. I will find different ways to run the business.

I do not know what their problem is - I took on the company when they were working a short week. I stopped this and they have been working overtime and I gave them a pay increase of three to five percent in May of this year. I do not know what they want - they seem to want

to run the company as it was before and I'm not going to let them. An unprofitable company will not exist for long.

**C&A Why did Terex sell – was it because of the labour problems?**

**FF:** No Terex was looking for a volume business and this is what we were looking for 10 years ago when I originally bought the company. I thought that with German technology and sourcing components from other areas we could be a player in the crawler market and a niche player in the rubber tyre market. But 70 percent of the crawler market is in the 19-21 tonne capacity and the Germans could not engineer a popular volume product.

When I established Terex Cranes I did not take Atlas cranes into it because the product, customer and distribution is not the same as any other crane. It was a wise decision for Terex to get out but most potential purchasers wanted one bit or the other - whereas I knew it as a whole and I am a risk taker so took it.

**C&A Are you happy with the decision to buy Atlas?**

**FF:** Yes it was an excellent move - excellent for Terex because we have not had any trouble, excellent for the employees because they are still in work and one factory scheduled to close last June is still open and producing, excellent for the distribution because the Atlas name was reintroduced and distributors are happy and selling products and excellent news for me because I came back and whereas people thought I would fail I have not and excellent because I am going to make money.



An Atlas rubber tyred excavator

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The only reason I can see why the unions are adopting their current stance is to gain more membership. They need members and when someone like me - a foreigner - comes in, they do not like it. I am not the easiest guy to get along with!! But every place I have been has needed turning around. I have a saying - "you don't have to like me but you will!"

**C&a And the future?**

**FF:** I want to continue to improve the products and make the company great which means creating a good atmosphere, making the employees realise we are all in this together, creating more and more speciality products (unlike when I was at Terex when volume was king) I want to be in the niche markets so I don't need to have so much working capital. I will do this with or without the unions.

**C&a Strategy for different markets?**

**FF:** I only have one strategy, satisfy

the customer. In Italy Atlas has not been sold. We started at the beginning of this year and have sold 35 excavators which is more than in the UK - sold because we now have seven dealers and we are providing a product that they need and we stand behind our products.

We have not changed or cancelled one dealer and are concentrating on the markets we already have.

**C&a Other businesses?**

**FF:** I have few small companies in France and Holland and some investments in Bulgaria but my major investment is with Atlas and I want to share my time between the US and Germany. I am not actively looking for any other acquisitions.

**C&a UK loader crane market?**

**FF:** We are making large investments in IT giving customers an even better service. Because of the exchange rate we are looking to source some parts/components in the UK for the UK market or supplied

An Atlas TLC 240.2E loader crane



back into Germany. Jim Smith has a free hand on gaining new business and we have a couple of brand new models that we are introducing and we are actively pursuing the military business. We have a lot of things going on in the UK.

**C&a Success?**

**FF:** I would measure success by making more products, keeping the customers happy and making money. I am 65 years old, I have my health and like what I am doing so why would I sell the company? If

one of those two things change then I will sell but if anything happens to me I do have a young wife. I did not bring anyone in from outside the company to make Atlas successful. It has been achieved primarily with the existing good staff. And this is true for the UK as well.

**C&a Would you work with your son Steve?**

**FF:** I couldn't afford to pay him what Terex pays him so no - there are no plans at the moment.

## Service every step of the way

Atlas has led the UK loader crane market for many years being particularly strong with builders' merchants, brick and block manufacturers and utilities, as well as being preferred supplier to the ministry of defence. It claims that the key to its success is its 'national company - local service' mentality with the largest number of directly employed engineers in the UK loader crane sector.



Jim Smith

Atlas Maschinen was purchased by Fil Filipov in April 2010 (see interview above) and Bradford-based Terex Atlas UK acquired a few months later. The business then adopted the original Atlas logo and orange livery and began trading as Atlas Cranes UK, with one of its longest serving employees, commercial director Jim Smith and financial director Jackie Kilcoyne jointly at its helm.

"There are 20,000 Atlas loader cranes operating in the UK, the

oldest being a boat crane installed around 35 years ago. Almost 8,000 of those were delivered within the past five years," says Smith. "With this population and around 6,500 services a year, we need the large service and support team to ensure that Atlas is the most cost-effective crane on the market."

The company has 36 service vans operating across the UK from Inverness in the north to Cornwall and Kent in the south, carrying a parts stock of more than £3 million. For some time now, the company has operated a sophisticated telephone system which logs and records calls and immediately passes the customer to the correct department depending on their requirements. The system - run by four controllers based in Bradford - also tracks service van movements via GPS, so the nearest available engineer can



Atlas Cranes UK has the largest backup and support of any company in the UK loader crane sector

be sent to the next call.

"We have more than 2,500 cranes on contract service - with customers such as Travis Perkins, Jewson, Ryder and Wincanton - most of which are 100 percent Atlas," says Smith. "In 2012 we are implementing a new parts management system with live mobile data to speed up the process even further, allowing customers to track each enquiry - even to seeing if the engineers are en-route. The system will also link into its Sage accounting system speeding up associated paperwork." Seeing the current system in operation is impressive and as such every new customer is given a full

tour. The level of backup is illustrated by the standard annual hydraulic oil sampling - which tests for the presence of water and metal - giving an early indication of potential wear problems. The company also takes working at height seriously - each engineer equipped with a folding work platform which is included with every new service van.

"We must be doing most things right as our new owner, Fil Filipov, rarely visits the UK," says Smith. "He is a firm supporter of what we are doing and the way we go about the business. We are all striving to achieve ways of producing a more cost-effective product and a happier customer."



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