

Do you receive a hard copy?

Would you prefer to receive your own personal copy of the printed version of **Cranes & Access**? Then register on-line now for your personal subscription. Cranes & Access: The Lifting Professional's magazine. www.Vertikal.net/en/journal_subscription.php

Download complete issues

Laptop users: Download complete issues of Cranes & Access or **Kran & Bühne** to read when you have the time. Using the latest version of Adobe Acrobat you can search for specific words or names in the issue or even have your PC read the articles out loud to you while winging your way across the Atlantic (or wiling away the hours on the Motorway!). Cranes & Access: www.Vertikal.net/en/journal.php
Kran & Bühne: www.Vertikal.net/en/journal.php



Do you read German?

Do you need to keep up to date with what's happening in the German, Austrian and Swiss lifting industries? Then our sister magazine, Kran & Bühne, is the magazine for you. Subscribe now to Germany's leading publication for the crane and access industries and keep up to date with the latest news (published in German). www.Vertikal.net/de/journal_subscription.php



Have you registered for email alerts?

When major news breaks in the lifting world, be the first to hear about it ..Free! News bulletins by e-mail straight to your mailbox. Register for **News Alerts** to get major head line news as it happens. www.Vertikal.net/en/newsletter.php

Use our on line access and lifting directory

Have you tried our on line Access and lifting directory? Direct links take you to supplier's web sites with one click of the mouse, with 29 product categories and hundreds of the best suppliers, this is a very convenient source guide as well as an easy way to find a lifting company's web site.

English guide: <http://www.vertikal.net/en/links.php>

German guide: <http://www.vertikal.net/de/links.php>



Central European rental companies

The world's largest on-line listing of mainland European crane and access rental companies is available to you now. Just click the link below to go to Vertikal.net/Vermieter where the bi-lingual site will guide you to hire companies throughout Europe. www.Vertikal.net/Vermieter

GET
more reach
AND CAPACITY UP HERE

AND
more control
AND COMFORT HERE

GET
rock solid
PERFORMANCE HERE

ONLY from JLG®, the 3500 & 4000 Series offer a range of telehandlers that can perform a wide range of tasks in a variety of applications. Our range, with reach from 7 m to an impressive 16.70 m of precise and controlled lift height, offer an unbeatable combination of JLG expertise, proven development and the latest in dependable technology.

JLG telehandlers have a wide range of load capacities from 3500 kg in the 3500 Series to 4,000 kg in our 4000 Series. Add to this a comprehensive range of accessories and fitments to suit the environment you work in.

JLG's high manufacturing standards and levels of tried and tested technology mean that we have the confidence to deliver a full 2-year parts and labour warranty. When you choose a JLG telehandler you're selecting one of the toughest and most powerful telehandlers in production. Ask for the powerful 3500 & 4000 Series by name, only from JLG.

Visit www.jlg.com

JLG®

The Power to do More

New Compact 266 and 307 models available now !



Boom time for crawler cranes

C&a crawler cranes

Global demand for crawlers is probably at its highest level for years, as they come back into fashion. Meanwhile the future for telescopic crawlers looks even brighter. Demand, particularly for larger crawlers, is mainly being driven by the oil and gas sector thanks to high energy prices, which is also pushing the development of alternative energy sources - such as wind power.

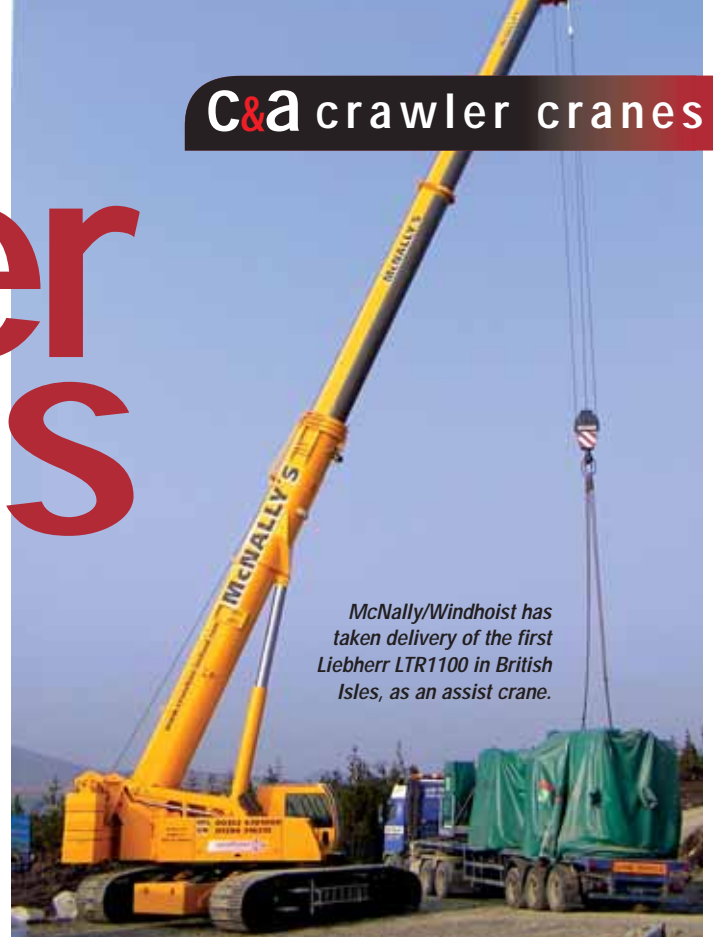
Windy work

For many in the wind power sector, mobile cranes would be the preferred choice for this work, but current telescopic boomed cranes cannot cope with the larger capacities and increased heights that are now becoming the norm, while truck mounted lattice cranes are too slow to break down and re-assemble.

The growth in wind power has resulted in several manufacturers designing application specific machines. Narrow widths and the ability to travel fully rigged gives these crawlers huge advantages for multiple turbine erection.

We take an in-depth look at the wind power market and how the manufacturers are coping with that challenge.

Telescopic crawlers are becoming an increasingly popular sight - offering easier transportation, rapid setup, the ability to quickly stow their booms while benefitting from optimum boom configurations. Telescopics are particularly suited to rental companies and shorter term contracts. We profile leading UK telescopic crawler crane company AGD Equipment which believes that the 50-70 tonne telescopic sector is where it is all happening.



McNally/Windhoist has taken delivery of the first Liebherr LTR1100 in British Isles, as an assist crane.

Wind power coming of age

Saving the planet by reducing green house gas emissions is very important, but only one of several reasons behind the growth in wind energy. Under the 1997 Kyoto Protocol, OECD member states have committed to cut carbon dioxide emissions by an average of 5.2 percent. However, energy supply volatility and pricing has become just as pressing.

The International Energy Agency predicts world energy needs will increase by 60 percent by 2030. Dwindling fossil fuel resources, over-reliance on energy imports from a few, mostly politically unstable countries and the uncertainty of oil and gas prices result in a shaky supply situation that is already threatening the global economy.

According to the recently published report 'Global Wind Energy Outlook 2006', wind energy is the most attractive solution to the world's energy problems. Twenty years of technical development means that wind energy is now developing as a mainstream power source. More than 60,000 MW of capacity has been installed worldwide an average annual growth rate of 28

percent. The report believes that wind energy could provide almost 30 percent of the world's electricity needs by 2030.

Crawlers in the wind

In a number of countries, the proportion of electricity generated by wind power is now challenging conventional fuels. In Denmark, 20 percent of the country's electricity is already supplied by wind and in Spain, eight percent, set to rise to 15 percent by 2010.

Wind power is now a well established energy source with Germany leading the way with 18,428 MW, followed by Spain (10,027 MW), the USA (9,149 MW) India (4,430 MW) and Denmark (3,122 MW). The UK along with Italy, Netherlands, China, Japan and Portugal have all reached 1,000 MW. Last year a record 11,531 MW of new capacity was installed - an increase of more than 40 percent on 2004.



Wind power is driving crawler crane development and demand

Valla

Cranes UK

Quality Cranes for a Clean and Safe Environment



Valla

English Street, Hull, East Yorkshire HU3 2BT

Tel: +44 (0)1482 227333 Fax: +44 (0)1482 587710

www.valla-cranes.co.uk



Onshore or offshore, wind is a major future power source

Offshore Wind

Offshore wind power is also growing and starting to make a contribution, with the UK taking a leading role. Almost 215 MW has already been built in four locations, with a further 1,000 MW ready to proceed across eight sites. Ever larger projects of up to 1,000 MW each are planned within three strategic offshore areas identified by the UK government. Northern European countries are particularly good for locating wind turbines on the sea bed because of the availability of relatively shallow coastal waters.



The LR1400/2 was first in the narrow wind farm crawler concept

On the downside, installing wind turbines in the sea is proving more expensive than anticipated and a number of projects are on hold pending a re-assessment of their economic viability. One factor that is expected to improve this is the new generation of larger capacity turbines (over 5 MW).

As the market has grown, the cost of wind power has tumbled. A modern wind turbine now produces more than 180 times the electricity at less than 50 percent of the cost per kWh unit than its equivalent 20 years ago. And in good locations, wind can now compete with the cost of both coal and gas-fired power. The largest turbines now being produced are more than 5 MW capacity, with rotor diameters of more than 100 metres.

The Global Wind Energy Outlook Scenario examines the future potential for wind power up to 2050. Whichever scenario used, the figures are huge and the reason for the recent spate of new cranes aimed specifically at wind power work. As larger, heavier and taller turbines are developed the need for cranes capable of installing the equipment increases.

Wind Farm construction

As the name implies, a wind farm has numerous turbines, usually positioned about 100 metres apart, connected by narrow tracks. And as turbine capacity has grown to typically 2-3 MW, component weights have increased dramatically. Rotor diameters have also lengthened, requiring hub heights of more than 100 metres. Even the world's lightest 5MW turbine has a total tower head weight, with rotor blades fitted, of 310 tonnes and measures 56.5 metres.

Crane manufacturers have not been slow in developing equipment specifically for this market. Liebherr was the first to introduce the narrow wind farm crawler concept when it designed the LR1400/2 in conjunction with Scottish-based crawler crane hirer Weldex.

The basic idea was to produce a crawler crane with a width of five metres or less (the Liebherr is 4.8 metres) which can travel fully rigged on narrow wind farm roads - reducing environmental impact and saving time rigging and de-rigging.

This type of crane can typically walk to the next turbine location in about two hours compared to the standard day or more it would take to strip and move a normal heavy mobile or crawler crane by trailer.

The development of heavy duty offset fly jibs also allows the use of shorter booms leading to higher lifting capacities and easier boom erection.

Liebherr's 'narrow' solution is a tall machine which uses a double slew ring system so that it can lift its tracks clear of the ground with its outriggers and then rotate them to face the desired direction of travel. This elaborate but successful system allows the crane to overcome the perceived undercarriage problem of trying to turn such a heavy crane on such a narrow base while fully rigged.

Weldex currently has two such units which, it says, are performing perfectly. However, with a maximum lift capacity of 400 tonnes, the cranes are now struggling with the increasing height and weight of the larger capacity turbines. As a result, the company has placed an order for the recently launched Terex-Demag CC 28000-1 Narrow Track crane.

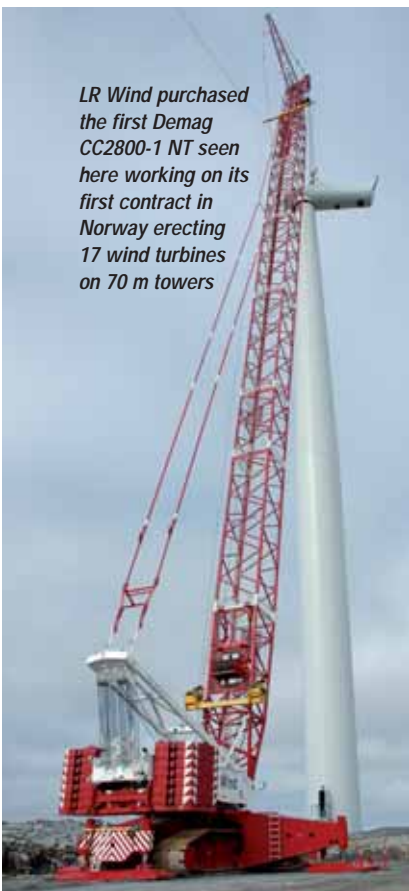
"We have a range of cranes that can cover the small - less than 1MW - nacelles of around 20 tonnes, through to our highly successful Liebherr 400 tonne LR1400W crane which easily handles the 2.3MW, 90 tonne nacelles," said Weldex's Brian Hyde. "Future requirements for the 3MW turbines will be covered by the Demag CC2800-1 NT 600 tonne crawler when it arrives."

Terex while obviously having decided that the narrow concept has 'legs', has adopted a totally different solution to Liebherr. By lowering the crane's centre of gravity, installing a four motor 'Quadro-Drive', allowing a greater degree of off-level travel and introducing electronic monitoring and balancing of the crane's centre of gravity,



Turbines are becoming heavier and towers taller causing crane manufacturers and contractors increasing problems

LR Wind purchased the first Demag CC2800-1 NT seen here working on its first contract in Norway erecting 17 wind turbines on 70 m towers



Kobelco has introduced a Wind-turbine Special - the SKE2500-2 WS

Kobelco enters the fray

The latest manufacturer to launch a crawler crane for wind power work is Kobelco with a modified Wind-turbine Special - the CKE2500-2 WS. Based on the recently launched and upgraded Mark-2 model the 250 tonne capacity CKE2500-WS features retractable tracks, reducing the overall width from 7.62 metres to less than five metres, allowing it to travel between turbines.



Manitowoc's Latest Crawler

The new Model 16000 is Manitowoc's latest offering in the 400 t (440 US t) capacity class. The 16000 comes with Manitowoc's patented EPIC with Can-Bus control system, easy to transport modules and Manitowoc's famous fast, efficient FACT assembly. Also available is a heavy-duty 97,6 metric ton (108 ton) pin-on point. And with all Manitowocs, the 16000 comes standard with Manitowoc quality, Manitowoc innovation and Manitowoc return on investment.

VISIT MANITOWOC CRANE GROUP AT SAIE - AREA 48 /CORRIDOR 123C20

www.mcgads.com/1073/



Manitowoc
Crane Group

The 27 metre WS fixed jib is a new design and with a 61 metre main boom the CKE2500-WS has a maximum capacity of 42 tonnes at up to 15 metres radius, and a height of 86 metres. Compared to the Mark 1 version of the CKE2500 the Mark 2 version has longer tracks giving greater stability and a larger foot-print. The 247 kW diesel engine is fully compliant with the worldwide Stage 3 emission standards.

Spanish-based heavy-lifting specialist Transbiaga has taken the first two European units.

Big mobile alternative?

For many in the industry, mobile or wheeled cranes would be the preferred choice for this work, but telescopic boomed cranes cannot cope with the larger capacities and heights that have now become the norm, while truck mounted lattice cranes are too slow to break down and re-assemble. The recently unveiled Grove GTK 1100 provides an interesting alternative. The 1,100 tonne/metre capacity crane is a massive mobile telescopic top slewing tower crane with up to 140 metres maximum tip height. (see news section)



The GTK1100 telescopic tower crane is delivered on four trucks

Whether this 'new' concept takes off remains to be seen. However even a conservative rate of growth in the wind power sector means future demand for equipment from installation contractors will be phenomenal. Current market growth is but a gentle breeze compared to the full force of demand we will see as environmental pressure continues to build. The result is likely to be plenty more wind related lifting equipment developments aimed at improving installation efficiency and speed.



Demag's latest offering gives contractors additional lifting capacity in a narrow chassis

Skinny conversion

The narrow track chassis for its CC2800-1 crawler crane unveiled early August, is part of Demag's large-scale offensive on the big lattice boom crawler market. Building on the success of its popular, 600 tonne capacity CC2800 (Demag claims that there are more than 250 units currently at work), the machine offers a narrow track of five metres and the capability of traveling between lifts fully rigged. Once in place it sets its massive flop-down "sideways" outriggers, which combined with jacks at each end of the narrow carbody, creates a 14.5 metre square lifting base.

A standard CC2800-1 can be converted into an NT with the Narrow-Track kit, and back again to suit a variety of applications.

If initial orders for the narrow track version are anything to go by, Demag appears to have a winner on its hands. The first crane has been delivered to international wind turbine installation specialist, Danish-based KR Wind which is said to be 'highly delighted' with the machine. The first order for the UK has been placed by Weldex for delivery mid 2007.

The standard CC 2800-1 is already a very popular crane for

C&a crawler cranes

the erection of two and three MW wind farms. When fitted with a 90-metre heavy duty main boom plus special 12 metre, LF2 wind power jib, the crane can take loads weighing up to 125 tonnes to hub heights of 94 metres (hook height 102 m).

Using a 102-metre main boom of the same type, the unit will raise 109 tonnes up to a 106-metre hub height (hook height 114 metres). For the absolute top end its Superlift attachment will haul 97.5 tonne loads up to a hub height of 130 metres above ground (hook height 138 m).

The Narrow Track Kit can be used either with 1.2 metre wide track shoes for the narrowest overall width, or 1.5 metre wide track shoes for lower ground pressures.

For transportation, the carbody is the largest single component - measuring 3.5 metres wide, it weighs around 36 tonnes. Its 'sideways outriggers' are three metres wide and can be transported with pads attached.

The counterweight is fitted a metre lower than on the standard crane to keep the centre of gravity as low as possible to help maximize lateral stability. The unit can travel with boom configurations of up to 114 metres, with up to 2.4 degrees of lateral tilt approved by the manufacturer.



When travelling the side outriggers can be lifted giving a 5m track width

Deepwater flagship project

The €41 million Beatrice Wind Farm is the flagship project for offshore, deepwater wind energy development in Europe. Situated 25 km off the east coast of Scotland, the project is pioneering a 'distant from shore' wind farm. Talisman Energy (UK) and Southern Energy - the principal backers of the five year project - are hoping to prove the technical and commercial viability of such deepwater wind farms. If the project is a success, a full-scale wind farm - capable of producing a gigawatt of electricity - will be considered.

Two, 85 metre high, 5MW capacity wind turbine generators - the largest currently available anywhere in the world - are in the final stages of installation and commissioning adjacent to the Beatrice Alpha oil platform in the Moray Firth, in water depths of up to 45 metres. Existing offshore developments are normally in territorial waters close to shore in water depths of less than 10 metres.



65 metre long blades being unloaded prior to final assembly

Weldex Offshore was selected as the onshore lift contractor and also supplied craneage to the offshore lift contractor to facilitate piling and other lifts.

A number of different crawler cranes were in constant use during the onshore erection phase including a 600 tonne Demag CC2800-1, a Manitowoc M2250+Maxer and a Liebherr LR1200.

Work initially involved setting up the two section support base, each section weighing 125 tonnes. Next a 230 tonne, 61 metre tower section was upended and installed into the base. Turbine component deliveries such as the 310 tonne nacelles, 60 tonne hubs and 18 tonne, 65 metre long blades were offloaded and stored ready for final assembly.

The installation of the 5MW nacelle

An 85 tonne spreader bar was used to lift the complete turbine assembly

required a tandem lift with around 80 metres of boom on each crane. A purpose-built eight metre long lifting beam was designed to be rigged to the nacelle and the two cranes.

The three, 65 metre long blades were fitted to the 60 tonne hubs at ground level and then installed to the nacelle. Finally, in order to allow the offshore lift contractor to lift the complete turbine assembly, an 85 tonne special spreader bar was installed.



Turbine installation in water depths of 45 metres is being pioneered in the Beatrice Wind Farm project



Almost a mirror image, the two LR1750 cranes only differed in colour and counterweight systems

Seeing double

Two ageing motorway bridges were dismantled by two, almost identical Liebherr LR1750 crawler cranes at Gersthofen/Augsburg in Germany during the summer.

The cranes - supplied by Riga/Baumann and Felbermayr - set up on opposite sides of the River Leech to lift the 90 metre long and 500 tonne bridges.

Both cranes were equipped with a 56 metre main boom and 31.5 metre back mast. Besides the colour, the only obvious difference between the two crawlers was the suspended counterweight trailer with 312.5 tonnes on the Felbermayr crane and 325 tonnes suspended ballast pallet on the red Riga/Baumann machine. Both had 170 tonnes of superstructure counterweight and 45 tonnes carbody counterweight.

As it was only possible to calculate the approximate weight of the bridges, so a test lift of the entire bridge was carried out, with the bridge lifted a few centimetres from its bearings, the crane's cabin display's read a load of almost 500 tonnes in total.

The plan was to cut each bridge in two so that each crane could lift half the bridge to its side of the river. Each crane had to lift around 250 tonnes to a radius of 30 metres - well within the capabilities of the LR1750. Working with cutting torches from platforms suspended from a Liebherr LTM 1250-6.1 and LTM 1160/1 cranes, it took the demolition crew two hours to cut each of the 60 year old bridges in two. Once the two halves separated, the sections were placed safely on each bank. Each crane was then driven back into position ready for the demolition of the second bridge the following day.

Demolition firm Max Wild contracted Lampertheim based Weiland Crane to manage the lifts.

New football stadium takes shape

A new £60 million, 35,000-seat stadium and business complex is now taking shape alongside the A5 in Milton Keynes and should be completed by summer 2007. As well as playing host to the local MK Dons division one football team, the new centre will include conference, business and commercial facilities.

Structural steel and pre-cast concrete terrace segments have been installed by Nuneaton-based sub-contractor Quadro Services using a 135 tonne capacity Kobelco CKE1350 crane hired from Alfreton-based GH Johnson. Equipped with a main boom of 55 metres, the crane is lifting segments of up to 11.5 tonnes on a single line, at up to a 30 metre radius.

Quadro, which erects a variety of precast concrete structures and

has worked on the Stadium of Light (Sunderland), Ricoh Arena (Coventry), Walker Stadium (Leicester City), and White Rock Stadium (Swansea). "The secret when erecting precast concrete structures is in well-organised logistics and accurate handling on site, which is where the right choice of crane can make all the difference," says Quadro director Cliff Wright.

A 135t-capacity Kobelco CKE1350 crane being used by Quadro Services will hopefully help complete the MK Dons' stadium in time for next season's kick-off.

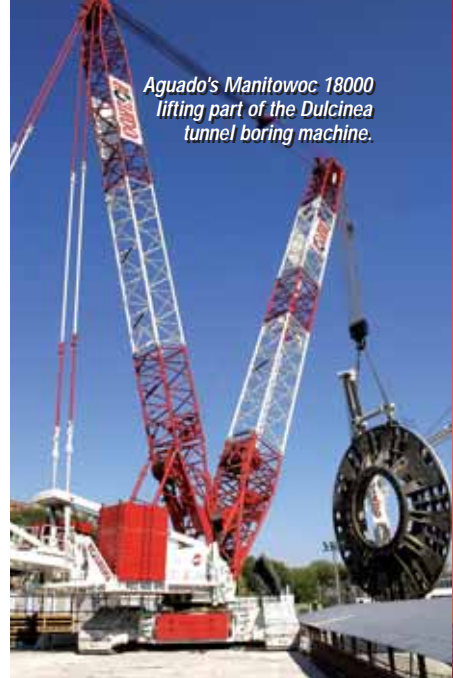


A model lift

An ambitious project to ease traffic congestion to the south of Madrid utilised a 15 metre diameter, 350 tonne tunnel boring machine (TBM) known as Dulcinea. The TBM is being used by joint venture contractors Ferrovial and Acciona on the M-30 project which involves boring 3.5 km of tunnels under Madrid's streets to reduce traffic from its peripheral motorway.

To move the TBM, Spanish firm Transportes y Gruas Aguado used its latest purchase - a Manitowoc Model 18000 crawler crane rigged with 145 metres of main boom and Max-er attachment which increases its capacity from 600 to 750 tonnes.

"The Dulcinea lift was our first job with the 18,000 and it was very successful," said Aguado Sr, general manager of Aguado. "We rigged the crane a month before the lift, as concise detail and preparation were vital."



Aguado's Manitowoc 18000 lifting part of the Dulcinea tunnel boring machine.

Aguado purchased all additional jibs and counterweights for the 18,000 to provide maximum flexibility for a wide range of applications. The crane offers up to 186 metres of tip height with luffing jib, main boom and Max-er attachment.

Hitachi expands range

The first 80 tonne Sumitomo Hitachi SCX800 in Europe, has been delivered to BPH Equipment and is already busy on site in Kent. Hitachi claims that the SCX800 is the only model in its class to be fitted with a hydraulic counterweight removal system removing the need for assistance with rigging and de-rigging. Other features include a clutchless winch system, hydraulically assisted brakes and a clean, low noise engine.

Maximum lift is 80 tonnes at 3.3 metres, with up to 1.35 tonnes at its maximum reach of 48.5-metre. The cab, the best in the industry according to Hitachi, has excellent all-round visibility, an advanced joystick control system, tinted windows, demister system, air conditioning and an adjustable seat. The crane also benefits from the latest Hitachi Sumitomo Total Moment Limiter with easy to read graphics.

A second unit has now been delivered to Belfast-based Farrans (Construction).

The second new model to be announced is the 275 tonne SCX2800-2, the first of which has just been sold to Dutch Equipment and Cranes, for delivery at the end of October. Basic specification includes a 91.45 metre main boom, or 70.1 metres plus 36.55 metre fly jib. NRC



Latest Hitachi Sumitomo crane is the 275 tonne SCX2800-2

says that it is pleased with the current range of Hitachi cranes and the current high demand. "2007 looks like being our best year with sales of crawlers up by as much as 50 per cent over 2006," said MD Rod Abbott.

The SCX800 on its first contract - installing shuttering on a new storm water tank.



TEREX AT WORK.



WE WILL NOT BE SATISFIED
UNLESS YOU ARE

The new AC 55-1: Reduced axle weight. Higher lifting capacity. New, hydraulically offsettable main boom extension.

What makes the AC 55-1 so valuable for you:

New boom design results in performance increase of up to 20%

- The 40-meter boom and the maximum tip-height of 58 m enable great lifting heights and ranges
- Fully hydraulic boom system: Shortest telescoping times and large loads that may be telescoped
- Spacious comfort cab, 20 degree tiltable

New, hydraulically offsettable main boom extension

- Control of angular offset from cabin - easy and simple
- Adjustment possible even under full load

 **TEREX** | DEMAG

Expansion based on rental

Despite being the UK and Ireland's distributor for IHI crawler cranes, Stratford upon Avon-based AGD Equipment is adamant that there is no future just being in specialist equipment sales. Mark Darwin talks to managing director Robert Law and hears how the company has developed and expanded - and not just through new crane sales.

Robert Law believes that equipment rental is a fundamental requirement of any successful equipment 'sales' company and accordingly has built up a sizeable crawler crane fleet over recent years. With 115 crawlers, AGD has the second biggest hire fleet in the UK. (See last month's C&A Top 30). In the crane business, rental is the bread and butter; sales are the icing on the cake.

"The company's roots were in dealing in second-hand plant and because of the extensive workshop facilities AGD has in-house, we are able to buy good used equipment in the Far East, bring it back to the UK and refurbish to a very high standard. We then either re-sell immediately or add the equipment into the growing rental fleet," said Law. "Every item in the rental fleet is for sale from the three tonne mini right up to the 120 tonne units."

Sitting in AGD's very impressive and still expanding offices in Stratford upon Avon, it is easy to forget the ups and downs of the crane markets over the last 20



AGD's impressive head office

years or so. And what companies have to do to make ends meet. Large infrastructure projects in the UK have been 'few and far between over the last couple of years. So to keep his larger cranes (70-100 tonnes) out on hire, Robert Law scoured other European countries for suitable contracts. Last year AGD had 20 large cranes on long-term hire out in Spain and Portugal which helped the situation.

Back in the UK, the company currently sees the 50-70 tonne sector as the most popular, but with more and more cranes of this size available, hire rates are shockingly low.

"We have a wide range of crawler cranes covering most situations but machines in demand can change quite rapidly," said Law.

AGD Equipment sold a few of its lattice boom crawlers out of the hire fleet and promptly bought four used telescopic crawler machines - three from Japan and one from Hong Kong.

"There are many advantages when using the telescopic crane but the main reason has to be the setup speed," he said. On restricted inner city sites the telescopic machine does not need a rigging area, it can hydraulically extend the tracks and boom and start work.

On short term contracts in particular, this quick and easy setup can save transport costs and time the machine is on hire, resulting in cost savings.

From the hirers point of view, this rapid 'available to work' time is

bringing big returns on the hire rates. For a similar lift capacity machine (50 tonnes), a lattice boom unit would have a non-operated rental rate of about £1000 per week. The telescopic version's hire rate is 50 percent higher!

"On short term contracts, customers can make this pay," he said. "IHI machines are also very compact for their lift capacity. Currently we have a 30 tonne crawler telescopic working in The Strand, London. With its tracks retracted it has a reduced limit of 20 tonnes, however, the unit is just narrow enough to work in the available space - which is too small for any other crane with this lifting capacity."



Telescopic crawlers save costs on short term contracts

AGD Equipment has been distributing IHI crawlers since 1988 and during the last 18 years has seen many changes in the market.

The company has had mixed fortunes with mini crawler cranes. At the SED exhibition in 1991 the company launched the concept in the UK. Although a high cost unit, two were sold to utilities contractor J Murphy and six more new five tonne units were also sold. However, the market never developed as anticipated, and a stock order for 25, three tonne, zero tail-swinging units just didn't find customers.

"We sold a few into Belgium, Holland, Denmark and Ireland, but the UK was really only a rental market for mini crawler cranes," said Law.

Obviously other markets around the world were not ready either because IHI cut the range after the crash in the Japanese market in the late 1990's.

It was about this time (1998) that IHI entered into an agreement with American Hoist (acquired by Terex Demag in 2003) to supply base crawler cranes with Cummins engines for the USA market.

After the acquisition of Demag, Terex started to market 50-70 tonne IHI cranes in the UK badged as Terex-Demag against IHI machines supplied by AGD.

"Terex in the UK tends to concentrate on the mobile crane sector, so this arrangement doesn't cause us too much of a problem," said Law. "We sold three units of this size to Nuttall last year and this year a CCH700 - the first 70 tonner - to Biwater for work on contracts with Severn Trent and Anglian Water." Terex-Demag has since decided not to import any more branded IHI cranes from Japan into Europe.

But these sales are a bonus - the core of the business is rental..



The market for mini crawlers has never developed as anticipated



Large infrastructure jobs have been scarce over the last couple of years

Biwater purchased a CCH700 - the first 70 tonner in the UK



AGD has 15 large telescopic cranes in the fleet - all sourced at the right price, fully refurbished from the ground up to look and perform like new, and achieving a reasonable rental rate. There is very little competition for this type of equipment in the UK.

"If we had gone down the line, like other rental companies, of buying new equipment say £300,000 for a 30 tonne telescopic crawler, the rental is only £1000 per week - which is not economically viable," said Law. "We can make it pay because of the competitive cost of the refurbished machine coupled

when the company owning the building (micro-tunnelling company Iseki UK) was looking for a buyer, AGD not only ended up with the building but also the European, Middle East, African and sub-continent distributorship for the Iseki product. In keeping with the company ethos, AGD has built up a large rental fleet of micro-tunnelling equipment and this is now a significant part of the company's business.

Part of the premises' development is a purpose-built paint booth which can easily accommodate large cranes or any item of equipment.



The lattice boom crawler sector in the UK is very competitive

with the fact that IHI build reliable machines that were very advanced when they were first launched, and have not changed a great deal over the years."

AGD has invested about £2 million on buying cranes over the last year, in particular 50 tonne telescopic crawlers.

"The lattice boom crawler crane has many competitors whereas the telescopic crawlers fit into a niche sector," said Law, "good machines with good performance at a good rental price."

AGD Equipment is rightly proud of its offices in Stratford upon Avon and has made a big investment in its facility. A further £2 million has been spent adding to the original building and extending it to suit the business perfectly.

A few years ago, AGD had identified the building as ideal for its operations and was keen to purchase. However

"This is an area that we are actively promoting," said Law. "There are very few, if any, companies offering the refurbishment and top quality paint facilities that we have here. We obviously specialise in cranes but can cope with any type of equipment. We have recently finished painting excavators and other items of construction equipment."

As with any successful company, it has to continually move forward. Without rental and other operations, AGD Equipment would not be in the excellent position it is at the moment.



Before and after - AGD has a purpose-built paint booth that can accommodate large cranes



MILLENNIUM LIFTING LIMITED

THE WORLDS' MOST COMPACT CRANES



MINI CRANE DIVISION

URW - A295CR
MINI CRANE

01303 263999



McNALLY CRANE HIRE

Offer lifting solutions with our skilled team of personnel across Ireland and England.

Specializing in Wind turbine erection.

We have a modern fleet of cranes from 25t to 1000t capacity.

www.windhoist.co.uk
Email. info@windhoist.co.uk

Services

- Turbine mechanical erection packages
- Heavy crange
- Maintenance
- Engineering
- Windfarm Decommissioning

WINDHOIST Ltd.
Ayrshire Innovation Centre
Irvine, Ayrshire, KA11 5DA
UK
Tel. +44 2890 232 595
McNALLY's Crane Hire
Dawson Street
Monaghan
Ireland
Tel. +353 47 81000

