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**[niftylift.com](http://niftylift.com)**

From: Peter Hird

Sent: 21 August 2006

Subject: Deaths using Powered Access - Safety Harness not worn again

Dear Leigh,

Reading Vertikal.Net most days, it is very worrying to see how many people have been killed or sustained serious injury by not wearing safety harness when using access equipment. As much as we have come along way with IPAF and its safety standards it shows there is still a lot more work to be done to ensure that operators adhere to these safety factors.

Regards

**Peter Hird**

Managing Director

Peter Hird & Sons Ltd

Valla Cranes UK Ltd

Hull

The following two letters were published in full on Vertikal.Net, they have been edited for space considerations, the full text of each can be seen on [www.vertikal.net](http://www.vertikal.net)

**Dear Editor,**

10th August 2006.

Re: Zealots are not helping

Well done for publishing your view that "Zealots are not helping". Too many times people get distracted from the big safety issues by small print and multitudinous sub-clauses.

Congratulations also to Frank Scarborough of Snorkel for his clear statement that: "People need the proper training and an understanding of what the machine operational capabilities are".

Time and time again IPAF researches accidents categorised as "machine failure" to discover that the machine failed because it was set up incorrectly or operated outside its safe limits- usually due to ignorance on the part of the operator.

However, I have to clarify one of Frank's comments. IPAF undertakes no training. What we do is provide an internationally recognised training programme that approved training centres deliver. Most IPAF approved training centres are run by, to quote Frank, "rental companies delivering a serviced product and providing the training the operators require".

What IPAF does is take away the hassle of developing a training programme, we keep it up to date and provide a universally recognised proof of training. Most of those companies charge for the training and are run as profit centres which means they work hard to increase the number of trained operators in the field.

A number of IPAF training centres are run by manufacturers such as JLG, Skyjack, Genie Europe and Haulotte etc...

Finally, what can we do to keep the zealots at bay? Well, all major manufacturers, including Snorkel, are members of IPAF entitling them to sit on our Manufacturers Technical Committee. Providing a united voice which has several times stopped the zealots from putting crazy clauses into European directives and other standards. Frank, we need you on that committee I invite you, or a colleague, to attend our next meeting in October!

Yours sincerely

**Tim Whiteman**

Managing Director, International Powered Access Federation,

Dear Leigh,

This letter is to add my comments to your very insightful editorial comments regarding aerial lift and crane safety in today's workplace. You and I have been involved in the crane and access industries for many years, and have witnessed many changes; clearly some changes have been very positive for the industry and sadly some changes that have missed the mark and impeded progress.

As a manufacturer, we are continually working to improve our products that provide the user easy operation method, simple daily, weekly, monthly and annual maintenance procedures along with meeting applicable global standards. Europe has its standards, the USA has ANSI design requirements, Canada has CSA regulations, Australia, a rather unique 10 year regulation, Japan also has its regulations, etc.

My responsibilities take me to many different parts of the world, working with distributors and rental companies. When it comes to safety, we cannot legislate the operator's awareness, nor can we design a product that has common sense, never allows the machine to enter an unsafe situation and then takes over all functions.

People need the proper training and an understanding of what the machines operational capabilities are.

Every major access manufacturer is aware of the European platform load sensing requirements and the continual service and calibration issues that it has placed upon rental companies and manufacturers.

Is operational safety in Europe better today? Has this made access platforms more functional, user friendly, operationally safer or more cost effective to rent or sell? Does the 10 year rule in Australia provide users with a better device than is available in America or Canada?

The UK has a great organization in IPAF, but is it a group that not only provides training (at a cost) but works to improve the industry? What happened to rental companies delivering a serviced product and providing the training the operators require?

All the training, machine placards, operational manuals and videos, can never take the place of the operators using common sense whether it is cranes or access platforms.

I feel it would behove your publications and others within our industry to continually monitor all the legal craziness and work with your industry readership to enlighten and expose the "misguided regulators (bureaucrats) and Zealots" that simply add restrictions, and costs that are truly unnecessary.

Common sense in our industry along with proper instructional guidance is key.

We, here at Snorkel focus all our efforts on providing top quality access products designed for safe operation with low ownership costs. Unit number one, built in 1977 still operates everyday here at the factory.

I applaud your stand and candor on this sensitive topic that affects the crane and access industries. We need more companies and individuals to follow your course.

Regards,

**Frank Scarborough**

Executive Vice President & C.O.O. Snorkel