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Inspection and maintenance 'key to avoiding fatalities'

Rigorous inspection and maintenance regimes are vital to the safe operation of aerial work platforms, IPAF has highlighted this fact after a rental company manager was jailed for two years over safety failings that led to an incident in which one man died and another was seriously injured.

Donald Craig, 57, of Hamilton, Scotland, based Craig Services & Access, was found guilty of a breach of health and safety legislation and sentenced to the maximum penalty of two years imprisonment at Airdrie Sheriff Court, over an accident in 2012 in which Gary Currie, a safety net rigger, and Alexander Nisbet, a self-employed operator, were in the basket of a platform removing netting from the facade of the Buchanan House offices in Glasgow when a boom section buckled, causing the basket to fall 28 metres to the ground. Nisbet was seriously injured and Currie suffered fatal injuries.

HSE principal inspector Graeme McMinn said: "The death of Gary Currie was entirely preventable. Craig Services and Access and Donald Craig were advised by the manufacturer to replace the damaged boom. Instead, they chose a much cheaper repair that left the boom in an unsafe condition. At the time of the accident the platform had a catalogue of defects, some of which were safety-critical, demonstrating that Craig Services and Access did not have an adequate proactive maintenance and reactive repair system in place."

Chris Wraith, IPAF technical & safety executive, added: "This case was especially upsetting as in the view of both the HSE and the courts the incident was entirely preventable. IPAF cannot emphasise strongly enough the importance of maintaining a rigorous inspection, maintenance and thorough examination regime to any rental company or regular owner-operator of this type of equipment, in order to ensure defects are quickly identified and reported and that proper repairs are made to prevent mechanical failures, which can have tragic and far-reaching consequences. IPAF has been closely involved in the drafting of new inspection maintenance and thorough examination guidance. The new guidance was initiated through the UK strategic forum for plant safety at the request of the HSE, IPAF has been the technical author of the document which is due for publication in the next two to three months."

"This case highlights why IPAF is in constant and ongoing consultation across the industry to ensure the technical and safety guidance is right for rental companies and operators alike," he said.



First speakers announced for IPAF Summit 2017

Speakers from the USA, China and the UK will feature at this year's IPAF Summit, which is being held on 4th April in Wembley, London, with the theme "Safety by Leadership".

The confirmed speakers to date include: Terex president John Garrison, Steve Radcliffe managing director of Clugston Construction, Jim Senior health & safety director, Multiplex Construction Europe, Yanna Zhang chairman of China Construction Industry Association Rental Branch, Matthew Elvin CEO of Xtreme Manufacturing & Snorkel together with Giles Councell and Chris Wraith of IPAF.

"The IPAF Summit is a fantastic opportunity for those involved in the powered access business to come together to network and to update their knowledge of the wider industry, including the latest technical and safety developments," says Tim Whiteman, IPAF CEO & managing director.

The 2017 IPAF Summit conference will be held at the Hilton London Wembley. Attendance is free and those interested should register in advance at www.iapa-summit.info

IPAF helps develop new ISO standard for controls

Following the publication of UK Health & Safety Executive (HSE) reports RR960 and RR961 in 2013 (www.ipaf.org/en/publications/avoiding-trappingcrushing-injuries) a member group from the IPAF vehicle-mounted manufacturers technical committee has been working in partnership with manufacturer representatives and the HSE to review the design of aerial work platform controls.



The collaboration has also gained approval for a new ISO standard to be drafted ISO 21455 Operator's controls - Actuating forces, displacement, location and method of operation. ISO working committee TC214 has been working on the draft standard since June 2016 with the next drafting meeting scheduled for March.

Chris Wraith IPAF technical and safety executive and a member of the ISO drafting committee, said: "The new standard is a significant landmark in the move to standardise control design and layout, and is the result of the whole industry working closely together to continually improve the safe use of work platforms worldwide."

