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Telehandler platform fall costs £1,758

A UK builder was fined £1,200 plus £558 costs after the platform of his telehandler broke free dumping three men on the ground. In December 2015, Jeremy Waudby was contracted to construct a hen house at Argham Fields Farm, Yorkshire.

He subcontracted A L Cladding to do the work and provided his own telehandler and platform attachment for the work at height involved. Three A L Cladding employees were working from the platform when it detached from the forks dropping five metres to the ground. One man suffered injuries to his head, shoulder and his kneecap was shattered, while another - his father - fractured three vertebrae and sustained a head wound which required 12 stitches. The platform had not been connected according to the manufacturer's instructions with only one of the three separate mechanical attachment clamps installed.



CrewSafe competency verification



The Crane Industry Council of Australia (CICA) is trialling new CrewSafe software which allows Verification of Competencies (VOC) to be stored online and accessed by employers and site managers from any computer or via a mobile app. VOCs have been introduced so that employers and contractors can verify if someone is competent to work safely with a specific crane model or type, given that some licences allow the operation of crane types that were not part of the test. However, each contractor or site has its own verification method, often by a safety officer who has never seen the specific crane type before.

CrewSafe is a peer review system where an operator assesses and records another operator performing tasks on a crane including prestart checks, setting up and rigging, driving the crane and lifting a test weight through an obstacle course. An assessor must hold a licence for the specific crane/type and be CrewSafe certified. The verification test is recorded and can be accessed online.

Scaffold fall costs £3,240

UK builder Nicholas Lawrence Birkin has been fined £2,400 plus costs of £840 after one of its employees fell from a scaffold in Heanor, Derbyshire in April. The man was using an electric hoist to lift roof tiles up to the scaffold and a 1.6 metre length of guardrail had been removed to facilitate the unloading. While attempting to tighten the fittings securing the hoist, the man fell five metres to the ground fracturing his eye socket and wrist and requiring 40 stitches to his face.

HSE inspector Andrew Bowker said: "This incident could have been fatal, Birkin failed to provide other means of falls protection once the scaffold guardrails had been removed. After the accident, the defendant hired a conveyor-type tile hoist which has enabled the job of lifting roof tiles to be done with the scaffold guardrails still in place. This has delivered a safer and more productive site at relatively little cost."



Signalling demo in Mammoet's Academy yard

Mammoet USA training accreditation

Mammoet USA's academy has become an Accredited Assessment Centre (AAC) and an Accredited Training Sponsor (ATS) for the National Centre for Construction Education & Research. The company was also asked to be part of the board of subject matter experts for the crane and rigging industry to update the core curriculum.

The NCCER has three forms of rigging training, Basic - for any level, Intermediate - for experienced riggers and supervisors and Advanced - for senior supervisors and engineers. The Basic training is 40 hours rising to 65 hours for the Advanced.

Mammoet USA training specialist Ed Burke said: "While many of the attendees have been in the industry for a number of years, there are aspects of the basic rigging that they have never been exposed to. In most classes, seasoned individuals are able to contribute by sharing their experience and coach those that are new."

Who trained him then?

Two men spotted last month in Long Sutton, Lincolnshire, UK, installing an overhead cable. One man used a ladder and harness to climb the pole - a practice increasingly frowned upon - but more critically his accomplice is standing on top of their van and using a pole to lift the cable above a tree. The van is parked in the street with no attempt to 'cordon off', or alert passing motorists.

