

# cranes & access

December 2004 Vol. 6 issue 7

## Crawler-mounted platforms



## Knuckle booms



**2004** HIRE RATES  
SURVEY P24



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## on the cover:

According to most industry experts, the UK mast climber market is beginning to gather pace after an arduous journey of acceptance over the years as an alternative to façade scaffold. Improved full contract rental provision, along with increased education, knowledge and training through programmes such as the new IPAF mast climber users course, should encourage more contractors to realise efficiencies to be gained. Pictured is a Scancrawler SC4000 twin mast set up at a recent Allift Nederland job site in Vlissingen, The Netherlands. Turn to page 17 for the full mast climber report.



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are looking to the capabilities of these earth-conquering machines.

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## Face-to-Face Hewden 30

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# C&A comment



Well, here we are. The last issue of C&A for 2004, and a brief opportunity to draw a deep breath and take a quick look back over the past 12 months. As ever, the lifting industry has been its usual hyperactive self

this year producing acquisitions, consolidation, closures, legal battles and, of course, the odd product development.

Above all though, one word that seems to have provided an underlying theme to 2004 is 'refinement'. Since this time last year, both the cranes and access sectors have seemingly become that little bit more toned with a some excess having been shaken off - not quite enough though, judging by some of the comments made by the respondents to our 2004 Hire Rates Survey, which starts on page 24.

There are certainly a few less crane and access companies in operation today and some industry experts predict that a few more will be gone by this time next year. For those that remain, and indeed wish to in the future, it is becoming less and less acceptable, not to mention non-profitable, to offer customers the bare basics. And, some say that their customers are increasingly warming to the idea of paying that little bit extra for value-added service.

As Hewden general manager – Crane Hire and Powered Access, Martin Hender, points out in our Face-to-face interview on page 30, "customers are not settling for the cheapest options anymore. They need to be sure that quality and safety are also integral parts of the overall package. This, he says, may cause some companies to rethink their positions in the future.

On the other hand, for those companies that continue to operate in a professional manner, the future for the UK crane and hire industries is looking bright, as one access industry professional commented in the Hire Rates Survey, "we have an extremely positive outlook for us and the industry as a whole for the next two to three years."

One thing's for sure, all this will make for very interesting viewing over the next 12 months and C&A will, of course, be watching events very closely and reporting them as they happen. We hope that you feel that we have kept you informed and up-to-date with all the happenings and important issues that have gripped the lifting industry in 2004. If, however, you, as a valued reader, feel that we can improve the magazine in any way, we are always open to suggestions and criticisms. Please do not hesitate to contact us. After all, it's your magazine.

From the team at C&A and all at The Vertikal Press, we wish all our readers a fantastic Christmas and a Happy and Prosperous New Year. Until then!

*Warren Wadsworth*

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## Bryn Thomas takes UK's first GMK 7450

Bryn Thomas Crane Hire of Flint in North Wales has taken delivery of the UK's first seven-axle Grove GMK 7450 all terrain. The 450-tonne capacity crane replaces a 300-tonne Demag as the company's flagship unit. "This purchase takes us up there into the big league," said Bill Butler, area manager at Bryn Thomas. The GMK 7450 is available for hire on a nation-wide basis.

The delivery comes as the latest phase in a significant investment by Bryn Thomas in Grove cranes over the past 12 months. Previous purchases include a 100-tonne GMK 5100, three 50-tonne GMK 3050s and a 35-tonne capacity GMK 2035. Mr Butler said that this latest string of purchases takes the firm's fleet up 40 units and that the company is expecting to reach an average fleet age of three years over the next 18 months.

Grove's GMK 7450 has a 73-metre, five-section main boom and provides a maximum under hook height of 128 metres when used with the lattice jib. The unit also features Grove's independently sprung hydro-pneumatic Megatrack suspension system.

## Terex increases crane prices

Terex Cranes has announced a four to six percent increase in the price of its cranes effective from 1 November, 2004. Additional surcharges on certain components, such as unusual and extra counterweight configurations, will also be implemented.

Steve Filipov, president of Terex Cranes, said: "Our near term challenge is to work through supplier issues, most notably with respect to steel and tyres. In order to offset the pressure from vendor pricing, we will be initiating a four to six percent price increase for all product lines worldwide."

"In addition, we will be adding a surcharge for certain components such as unusual counterweights, where we have seen a 50 percent

or more increase in prices from our vendors."

The announcement follows the release of Terex Crane's third quarter financial results in which the company reported a fifteen-percent jump in crane sales compared with 12 months ago. Operating profit slipped by eight percent for the nine-month period. The firm looks to be on track though to meet, or exceed, last year's billion dollar sales revenues.

"While our tower crane business has demonstrated significant year over year growth in revenue and profit, our North American crane business remains difficult," said Filipov. "But, we have seen demand in certain crane products begin to return, and are generally optimistic about the longer term prospects of the crane business."

## Maxim Crane wins Court approval

Maxim Crane, the world's largest crane hirer currently going through the Chapter 11 process, has received full approval from the US Bankruptcy Court for the Western District of Pennsylvania for the adequacy of its Disclosure Statement in support of its Plan of Reorganisation.

The court has also agreed to suspend the marketing programme that was ordered by the judge on

18 October. (See Vertical.Net News Archive October 18th 'Maxim forced to sell up'). It appears that all of the major creditors now believe that the company's plan offers the best return for Maxim creditors.

At the same time Amquip, which launched an alternative bid with the help of Maxim's president Al Bose, is now understood to have dropped its acquisition plans.

Full story on [vertical.net](http://vertical.net)

## Brambles snaps up first Sennebogen

Brambles Industrial Services has taken delivery of the UK's first 100-tonne Sennebogen 6100HD 'B' series crawler magnet crane from the German crawler crane producer's UK dealer EH Hassell. The crane is the first of two units that will be put to work at the Port Talbot steel works for main contractor Corus. Faced with arduous duty cycle work, the first unit will be working 24 hours, seven days a week on a three-shift basis in one of the Port Talbot balling pits.



## Davies purchases new Sumitomo

Camarthen-based Davies Crane Hire has supplied the UK's first Hitachi Sumitomo SCX900-2 hydraulic crawler crane to Morrison Construction after purchasing the unit through Hitachi Sumitomo UK distributor NRC Plant. The crane represents the first of Hitachi Sumitomo's completely redesigned 90-tonne class units. The main boom capability is 60-metres with a maximum combination of 48-metre main boom plus 28-metre fly-jib.

Modifications include the fitting of multi-plate wet disks rather than conventional clutches on the unit's main winches, which according to Davies gives a much greater capacity drum and smoother operation. The unit is also fitted with 26-millimetre diameter hoist ropes with a maximum line pull of 20 tonnes. A new negative brake system is also said to reduce operator fatigue and enhance safety, while other features include a redesigned



air-conditioned cab and a newly designed load moment indicator.

The unit is currently on hire to Morrison Construction at Llanelli lifting rebar and concrete where it is assisting in the construction of a 5,500 cubic metre under ground storm water tank.

# Nolte reaches new heights

**Nolte Auto-kran of Hannover, Germany, recently supplied its flagship eight-axle Liebherr LG 1750 lattice boom mobile crane, the first of its kind to be produced by Liebherr, to erect what Liebherr claims will be the world's tallest wind power plant, the 5-megawatt Repower plant near Brunsbüttel, North Germany. Prior to the lift, a total of 48 low-loaders were required to transport the LG 1750 to the job site, where it was then faced with numerous daunting lifts**

**including the turbine's 18-tonne, 61.5-metre long rotor blades.**

The heaviest lift of the project comprised a 170-tonne component, which was positioned at a 26-metre radius with an under hook height of 85 metres. This lift was accomplished with 105-metre lattice boom and 42-metre luffing jib. For the final three lifts, including the top tower section, machinery deck and rotor blade a four-man team from Nolte extended the crane's boom to 122 metres to

which a 12-metre offset jib was mounted. And because the slewing ring of the crane is already situated five metres above ground level, a total tip height of 135 metres was achieved.

The turbine's machinery deck, weighing in at 140 tonnes and measuring 18 metres long and six metres high was subsequently completed with other components before the massive 126-metre diameter blade could be assembled on the ground and lifted into position.

During the lift, however, brisk winds meant that this final component was left suspended on the crane's hook for several hours until wind conditions subdued. Eventually, and under powerful spotlight, the blade was lifted 120 metres up to its final resting-place where it was bolted to the machinery deck. On completion, the Repower plant will generate 17 million kilowatt-hours per annum and supply 4,000 homes in the Elbe harbour region.





## Moody launches UK access co.

**Access industry veteran Steve Moody has established a new sales business that will offer access products from all major European and US suppliers throughout the UK. Mr Moody told C&A that the new Midlands-based company, Safe 2 Reach, will provide end users with safe solutions for working at height and a variety of custom solutions to help businesses with difficult access problems, particularly in light of the new 'Working at**

**Height Regulations' due to come into force next year.**

Previously a director of GT Access, Mr Moody decided to set up on his own after the troubled firm went into voluntary administration in October (see Vertical.Net October). While Safe 2 Reach will retain ties with GT Access, Mr Moody is also aiming to network with other powered access providers to cover requirements for the sale of aluminium tower products and special applications.

## Dutch firm takes Omme's 5,000th unit

Kors Hoogwerk Systemen BV, The Netherlands distributor for Omme Lift, has sold the firm's 5,000th aerial lift to Dutch cleaning firm, van Roon of S-Gravenhage.

The unit allocated serial No. 5,000 is a 25-metre working height Bi-energy 2500 EBDZ trailer-mounted aerial lift equipped with hydraulic stabilizers, turnable basket, proportional controls and hydraulic propulsion, all of which can be operated from the unit's basket.

The landmark 2500 EBDZ was handed over by Omme to van Roon at a recent meeting in The Netherlands, where the very first Omme machine was displayed alongside its younger descendent. Now 23 years old, the nine-metre working height unit was produced back in 1981 on request from Westergaard Electrics based in Omme Lift's native Sonder Omme in Denmark.

Today Omme Lift produces a variety of trailer, truck and crawler chassis-mounted aerial work platforms from 10 to 31 metres working height.

## HMS Invincible takes a knock

**Five people were taken to hospital in Portsmouth last month when a 70-metre dock crane collapsed onto HMS Invincible while lifting a telescopic boom lift off of the ship at Portsmouth Naval Base.**

The crane's driver, employed by Navy contractors FSL, was trapped in the crane's cab for almost an hour and a half before being freed by fire fighters and taken to a Portsmouth hospital. His wounds were not thought to be serious. Two sailors were also taken to hospital where they were treated for hypothermia and shock caused by time spent in freezing cold water after jumping overboard to avoid the crane's boom as it toppled. Marcus Watson, services director for crane owner FSL, said that the crane had undergone



an inspection only three weeks before the incident.

Captain Ian Beaumont, acting commander of the base, said that the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) had launched a full investigation and that the possibility that the crane's load limitation was exceeded has not been ruled out. HMS Invincible suffered minor damage in the incident.

## Snorkel extends European network

Aerial lift producer Snorkel has appointed Omniconstruct-Europe, part of the Milcon Group, as its main distributor for The Netherlands with sales opportunities in Portugal, Poland, Czech Republic, Hungary, and Romania, where Milcon is also active.

The appointment is part of Snorkel's plan to return to playing a more active role in the European market as the business continues to grow under independent ownership. Omniconstruct has placed an initial stock order with Snorkel, which includes a 40-metre T126J boom lift and numerous scissor lifts.



**Persimmon Homes has almost doubled its £1.5-million JCB telehandler investment to date with the delivery of the new generation Loadall machines with**

**lift heights ranging from 9.5 to 17 metres. The units will be distributed among some of Persimmon's 400 sites throughout the UK.**

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**Portdore Stevedores In Ireland has become one of the first companies to put Liebherr's new LRS 645 reachstacker to work since the launch of the unit in April this year (see C&A April/May 2004). The company has rented out four out of the first ten machines currently at work across Europe.**

Other rental contracts for the LRS 645 have so far included that of the prototype model itself, currently at work at a container yard near to Liebherr-Werk Nenzing's Austrian factory, one unit to C Steinweg in Germany and a further four pre-series models for various locations in the North Sea/ Benelux region. Liebherr says that it expects that more than 25 units will be put to work during 2005.

## Manitowoc ANNOUNCES SALES JUMP

**The Manitowoc Crane Group, which includes the Grove, Potain and National truck crane operations, has disclosed a 24-percent sales increase to US\$306 million (UK£159 million) for the third quarter of 2004 and a 25 percent jump to \$890 million (£462 million) for the nine-month period.**

Operating earnings year-to-date increased by 48 percent to \$42 million (£29 million) despite

continued increases in steel and commodity prices, which, according to the firm, had a net negative impact of \$1.0 million (£0.5 million).

The company said that the earnings performance was mainly due to strong performance by the Grove and Potain operations. The order book for new cranes at the end of September was \$289 million (£150 million), up from about \$150

million (£78 million) a year ago.

"Our Crane and Marine segments continued to report substantial improvements with strong demand in international markets offsetting continuing weakness in the US crawler crane market," said Terry D Growcock, Manitowoc's chairman and chief executive officer. *Full story on Vertikal.net.*

### Bamford hands over MD role at JCB

**Sir Anthony Bamford has handed over his managing director's role at JCB to the firm's chief executive, John Patterson. Mr Bamford took over the role from his father Joseph Cyril Bamford in 1975 and will continue his position as chairman of the UK-based company.**

Commenting on the decision, Mr Bamford said: "This change in responsibilities is recognition of the excellent job John Patterson has done in leading the team that has taken the company to where it is today. It also better reflects changes in the internal management structure with the formation of a new group executive. However, I will still continue to be actively involved in the business on a day-to-day basis."

JCB is the world's largest producer of telescopic handlers and the fifth-largest construction equipment manufacturer, employing more than 5,000 people at 13 facilities around the world.

**Italian producer Locatelli recently completed two orders for a total of 25 units from its Gril rough terrain crane range. The order was split between Tartus Port General Authority, which took delivery of ten, 40-tonne capacity Gril 840s, and Genral Directorate of State Hydraulic Works (DSI) in Turkey, which received 15, 18-tonne capacity Gril 818s. Locatelli also told C&A that it would soon be releasing details of a brand new 60-tonne capacity rough terrain unit, the Gril 860.**



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**More than 700 delegates from Manitou dealers across the globe celebrated the production of the 200,000th Manitou machine and the unveiling of a new corporate identity and logo last month at the company's 2004 World Dealer Convention at its Ancenis facility in France.**

The actual 200,000th unit was a new M160H rough terrain forklift, while Manitou's new identity and logo was presented to reflect the firm's new forward looking vision to take it up 2010, by which time it hopes to have produced an ambitious 300,000 units.

Laying down Manitou's new vision was the company's president and chief executive officer, Marcel-Claude Braud, who announced plans to boost product development at the firm – Manitou claimed a 40 percent increase in Research and Development spend in 2004, and also an upgrade programme for the whole Manitou forklift range. Mr Braud said that the company will be looking to increase annual unit sales by 50 percent and bring about a greater balance between the three sectors of its business, construction, agriculture and

industrial sales, aiming for a 40/30/30 percent split respectively. The target is already in Manitou's sights - this year construction sales represented less than 50 percent for the first time and agriculture rose to 27 percent.

Mr Braud also promised customers additional services, such as financial programmes, more training courses, a new on line information service allowing customers and dealers to access a much wider range of Manitou material, a new dealer charter to help step-up the quality and consistency of field service and a new range of service contracts.

Mr Braud also vowed to maintain a strong independent financial structure for the business and was very clear that "the Manitou distribution policy will not change".

In terms of commitment to the access industry, it is clear that Manitou's core product is, and will remain, material handling, but it wants to be in the access business for the long term and will continue to develop the access product line at a steady but determined pace.

## Genie hits new sales records

Terex's powered access manufacturing business, Genie Aerials, reported a massive 56 percent sales increase for the third quarter and a year-to-date sales increase of 37 percent. It is estimated that this is likely to be around US\$900,000 (UK£467,508) for the full year. The company also announced a six-percent price increase effective from January 2005. *Full story on Vertikal.net*

**Birmingham-based demolition contractor DSM has taken delivery of the UK's first Terex A600C telescopic boom crawler crane.**

Built at the Terex Bendini plant in Italy, the A600C is a 60-tonne capacity unit with a four-section boom. DSM, which specialises in the demolition, dismantling and recycling of old bridges and structures, has put the unit straight to work at the Cadbury factory in Bournville, Birmingham.





## Kobelco develops special offshore crawler

Heerma Marine Contractors (HMC) is soon to take delivery of a specially developed Kobelco CKE2500 Offshore Special lattice boom crawler crane for work on board of its Balder Deepwater Construction Vessel in the Gulf of Mexico. The unit will be replacing an existing assist crane on the vessel.

Modified in accordance with the requirements of HMC and Lloyds, the 250-tonne capacity unit has been specially prepared with marine paint and several back-up systems, including double brake systems on the winch and an electric back-up system in case of engine failure.

The crane successfully passed extensive pre-delivery testing at Kobelco's Okubo facility in Akashi, Japan, before being delivered to HMC's Port Fourchon facility in Louisiana in the US for assembly. The fully assembled unit, complete with a 64-metre main boom will be lifted onto the deck of the Balder vessel and sailed into the Gulf where it will be used to erect and assemble oil-production platforms for the foreseeable future.

## Hewden parent discloses record profits

**Finning International, the Canada-based parent of the Hewden group of rental operations in the UK, has reported quarterly earnings in the three months to the end of September 2004 of C\$43.1 (£18.8) million, up by 18 percent on 2003, and more than C\$1 billion (£0.44 billion) in quarterly revenues.**

Hewden's revenues were also up marginally in sterling terms, but a beneficial exchange rate saw this translate into an eight percent increase in Canadian dollars. Hewden's revenues were £78 million for the quarter and £228 million for the nine months year-to-date.

According to Finning, margins at Hewden also improved significantly, thanks to higher utilisation, particularly in the tool hire sector. Plant, crane and access rental also showed signs of pricing improvement and better utilisation.

When asked about the UK market Doug Whitehead, finning president and CEO, said that sales and

marketing programmes instituted by Nick Lloyd since his arrival 18 months ago, were making a difference with "excellent volume coming through in tool hire," while "some daylight was showing in the plant hire market in terms of pricing."

He said that the downside in earnings that they had seen since Finning had taken over Hewden was all related to pricing. With the market now firming and manufacturers no longer dumping products onto the UK, the market should produce the growth in profits at Hewden that Finning is looking for.

When asked if Finning would take part in any rental market consolidation in the UK, Mr Whitehead said: "We want to get Hewden reformatted and in a robust position before we move into more additions. There are opportunities but prices are on the high side. We will get our house in order and wait for better pricing or look to benefit from improved market conditions resulting from consolidation by others."

*Full story on Vertical.net.*

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SED's organisers have released preliminary details of next year's event that will take place at its usual Fen Farm location in Milton Keynes from 17 - 19 May, 2005. The Cranes & Access village will be back in business with Genie UK, Cormach Cranes, SkyKing Equipment, Scanlift and NRC Plant all announcing their participation. Also taking up its regular stand for the third consecutive year is Hiab, which reported a total of £380,000 worth of orders from last year's event. Once again Cranes & Access will be the official publication for the cranes and access village section.



Malcolm Cardy, the ex-European divisional manager of Genie Industries and its longest serving European employee has now officially departed the business. Mr Cardy joined Genie in April 1983 and was the firm's first European employee. Originally based in The Netherlands, he moved to Genie's Redmond facility in the US in the 1990's before returning to The Netherlands where he remained until his retirement.

Aerial lift producer Teupen has received its second order for the 50-metre crawler mounted Leo 50 GT from German rental company Gerken. The ability of the machines to work indoors was a major consideration said Ludiger Pottbeck, head of the company's vehicle-mount department.

Schaumann in Germany called on the know-how of trailer manufacturer Broshuis to come up with a solution that would see a set of 61.5-metre wind turbine blades transported 350 kilometres across Danish and German countryside and eventually come to rest on the what is claimed will be the world's largest wind power plant, the 5-megawatt Repower plant (see news story on page 8).



JLG reported an \$8.7 million (UK£4.5 million) net loss in its first fiscal quarter to the end of October, compared to an operating income of \$9.76 (£5.06 million) disclosed last year. Sales revenues were up by 44 percent to US\$306.7 million (UK£159.1 million).

Geoff Till Access has emerged as GT Access Ltd nine weeks after entering voluntary administration. The GT Access business has largely completed the restructuring process that began at the end of September. (See Vertikal.Net September 24). The new company has just over 300 platforms in its fleet, while all Till depots are up and running as part of the new business. Full story on Vertikal.net.

Ainscough, the UK's largest crane hire company, has placed an order for 37 new all terrain cranes from Liebherr's Ehingen mobile crane plant. The model mix includes 30, 60-tonne LTM1055-3.1s, five 100-tonne TLM 1100-5.1s and two 220-tonne LTM1220-5.1s. The first ten units are being delivered this month with the remaining units scheduled for a January/February arrival. More details will be published in the next issue of C&A.

The Construction Plant-hire Association (CPA) and the International Powered Access Federation (IPAF) have joined Cranes & Access' call for the wearing of harnesses in booms. Full story on page 40.

Kevin Aspinall has been named as the new technical director designate of Barnsley-based Lifting Solutions. Mr Aspinall has been with the company since 1998 and moves up from the position of engineering manager.



The Electrical Contractors' Association (ECA) has published an eight-page guidance document covering alternatives to stepladders for working at height in preparation for the implementation of the Temporary Work at Height Directive in the UK.

Riwal, Holland's largest cranes and access rental company and JLG distributor for Holland has placed a €29 million (UK£20 million) order for 1,000 JLG booms and scissor lifts and laid down an expansion strategy that should make it Europe's second largest rental fleet in 2005. Full story and interview with Riwal's owners on Vertikal.net.

C&A has learned from JLG that JLG-Liftlux pre-production units are due to go on test shortly with the first deliveries planned for April 2005. The aim is to re-introduce certain Liftlux models under the JLG-Liftlux brand along the lines for the JLG-Toucan branding. Full story on Vertikal.net

Manitowoc has announced that Eric Devautour will take over from Lothar Hahn as the new managing director for Deutsche Grove GmbH in Wilhelmshaven. The appointment is effective this month. Mr Hahn will move to a new position within the Manitowoc group.

The deadline for the fitting of STGO plates in the UK has now passed, although most rental companies have not yet fitted plates to all of their fleet. Confusion has also come back into the equation thanks to a 'clarification' or legal interpretation from tyre producer Michelin. Full report on Vertikal.net

JLG expects to relaunch the first Liftlux unit under the JLG-Liftlux brand in April 2005. Further models will follow later in the year. Only Liftlux units that have no corresponding JLG model equivalents will be introduced.

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# Alternative access

Since the early days of development, the mast climbing work platform (MCWP) has struggled to find its place in the powered access rental market.

## C&A reports.

According to Mike Pitt of US-firm, Mast Climbing Platforms, the first mast climbing work platform (MCWP) was produced by Alimak back in 1958 - the original Jacob's ladder. Although not a great success at the time, it was at least the first platform that climbed a mast under power to enable men and materials to reach their place of work. A stagnant period followed until Hek, Malmqvist and Access Engineering produced their own versions in the early 1970s giving the MCWP a new lease of life.

Responsible for introducing the first units to the UK market was Yorkshire-based firm, Satellite Systems, which subsequently became BET and then Powerclimber. At this point in the company's history the firm crossed the Atlantic to North America where the fundamentals of the product were allegedly copied by the Canadians with the primary design functions of handling two full pallets of bricks and a four-tonne load capacity. These specifications have remained at the core of Canadian MCWP design to this day. According to Mr Pitt, it was also in Canada in 1991 that the first self-contained internal combustion powered MCWPs were developed. This was driven largely by the poor availability of three phase power supplies in North America.

One of the original North American producers was Fraco Products of Quebec, whose units were closely followed by those of Hydro-Mobile in 1994, Klimer in 2001 and Bennu in 2002. All of these units had self-contained power sources and were initially slower than the European-built alternatives, but offered greater lift capacities. Today, these producers have different models to cater for the many different markets, but almost all are still operated from the unit's self-contained power source.

The European-style electric machines have also increased in both unit numbers and in the number of manufacturers producing them, each developing new markets and new distributors. Among the products are a number of ultra-lightweight units, pioneered by some of the Italian producers for what was originally seen as a small niche market. Companies such as Safi and Electroelsa claim that they have even found a good market for this style of product in North America.

In the 1980s, it was initially European units that were imported into North America following the demise of Access Engineering, while a number of local rental companies that had

units in their fleets, such as Access Solutions, American Mastclimbers, Dunlop and Safeworks, turned their hands to producing their own versions.

### UK rental

In the UK, the mast climber rental market has been subject to significant change since it first emerged in the early 1980s. Many powered access rental firms purchased units at this time thinking that they could operate them alongside scissor lifts and booms. Virtually all of these companies failed to convince contractors that the MCWP was

an efficient alternative to façade scaffold. It became clear that MCWPs were closer in concept to façade scaffold than they were to powered access lifts.

As the provision of MCWPs diminished in the UK, one company, Mastclimbers Ltd, set up shop in Scotland and started to expand by offering mast climbers on a full "turn key" contracting service along the lines of the better contract scaffold firms. As other providers continued to drop out, Mastclimbers at one point exceeded a 90 percent share of the market, having absorbed the SGB fleet (which included an equity injection) and then later the Ashtead fleet.

Of the 16 managers at Mastclimbers, 12 are university trained graduates, and the firm has worked with Strathclyde University to establish an engineering course in MCWP logistics. It was also involved in establishing the first CITB/IPAF (Construction Industry Training Board/ International Powered Access Federation) approved training centre for mast climbing work platforms in Europe.



The Fraco product, which is made in Canada, is quite different from European-style mast climbers.

***“at least 20 percent of today’s traditional façade scaffold could be profitably replaced with mast climbers, equating to a rental market of around £140 million”***

Today, new companies are entering the mast climber rental market as it begins to gather pace. At least four companies now cover the UK market place. But why the general hesitation? Well, perhaps one reason is the level of service that a rental firm is required to provide alongside the mast climber product compared with traditional powered access platforms. With access platforms, it’s a case of simple asset rental supported by back up and after sales service, but, if a company is to be successful at hiring out MCWPs, on the other hand, it also has a number of extra requirements to consider. A skilled design service has to be offered, as well as application engineering and full delivery and erection logistics. If a contractor is to make the change from using contract scaffolding, then it is important that the service provided by the new technology is every bit as hassle free as the one he/she is moving from.

**Ownership**

It has been known for some contractors to buy their own mast climbing equipment, but generally, the hassle of owning, storing and erecting the equipment, not to mention the planning and application engineering that is required on all but the simplest of jobs, is enough to put most off of owning their own equipment.

For those contractors who do change from facade scaffold to MCWPs, however, the returns are certainly there to be reaped. According to Mastclimbers’ founder Andrew Reid, at least 20 percent of today’s traditional façade scaffold could be profitably replaced with mast climbers,

equating to a rental market of around £140 million. At present though, according to Mr Reid, the market is closer to £10 million. No wonder companies are looking to enter the field.

**Time savings**

The prime benefits of MCWP use are gained from mid-term rental contracts where the time and expense of scaffold erection forms a relatively high percentage of the total contract cost. To give an idea of the potential savings on such a contract, Mr Reid explains that the scaffolding for a 10- to 12-storey block on four sides can take up to four to five weeks to erect and three to four weeks to dismantle. To cover the same building with MCWPs would take about a week to both erect and dismantle, saving around seven weeks on a contract and a considerable cost.

**Greener access**

The problem seems to be that in the UK, many sub-contractors do not have the incentive to use a more efficient method of access, or, to save time on a contract. Yet mast climbers can provide many other advantages, such as energy savings and congestion easing – the delivery and removal of a complete façade scaffold system for a whole building normally requires dozens of trucks and numerous site visits that block streets, obstruct traffic and of course add to the cities pollution levels.

**Safer access**

Another plus for the MCWP is the safety aspect. A number of studies over the years have shown that the number of accidents that occur during the erection and dismantling of scaffolding are far more numerous



*Companies are slowly returning to mast climber rental in the UK, albeit with a different offering, with at least four companies now covering the market place.*

than those using powered access. Accidents involving scaffold collapsing or falling parts are also far more common, despite falling numbers in recent years. The number of accidents involving MCWPs in the UK, on the other hand, could be counted on it! The fact remains, however, that the UK MCWP population remains at around 1,000 units, lower than it was 10 years ago.

Despite the slow conversion rates in the UK over the past ten years, there is a new optimism. “The future for the MCWP looks bright,” says Mike Pitt. “Andrew Reid recently sold his remaining shares in Mastclimbers to his partner SGB in the UK (see separate news story), which already has mast climbing fleets in a number of other countries around the world. Intervect, the Alliance of Hek, Alimak and Cimar, will of course continue its international success with the electric units. While, more and more manufacturers are producing equipment in Italy, Spain, and Eastern Europe, all developing their own sectors of the market.”

“The North American manufacturers may face some new opportunities from the weak US\$ with over 1500 units being produced each year for the US. Competition will also increase from foreign markets,” says Mr Pitt, “but product support, pricing and distribution will remain key issues for success.”

So surely, will education, training and knowledge will continue to improve through associations like

the International Powered Access Federation (IPAF), which recently expanded its training program for MCWPs to North America and is expanding fast in continental Europe. According to Mr Pitt, an international committee could soon be formed to co-ordinate the globalisation and harmonisation of standards and procedures for this ‘stand-alone’ sector of the powered access industry.

“Most of the world markets are growing and developing just as quickly as contractors are being educated in the safe use of the equipment,” says Mr Pitt. “What is really needed though is more experienced people coming into the industry, more people taking on the responsibility of education and training, and for those that are already in the business to make sure that they do things right.”



*Scaffolding for a 10- to 12-storey block on four sides can take up to four to five weeks to erect and up to four weeks to dismantle. To cover the same building with MCWPs would take about a week.*

# new kid on the block

Just under 18 months ago a new company was established in London under the name, Universal Sky Platforms. Its start up assets included the Fraco mast climbing work platform distribution rights for the UK and Ireland and in its first year carried out a number of high-profile specialised jobs for contractors such as Laing O'Rourke, Bouygues, and McAlpine.

The Canada-produced Fraco product is quite different from the European-style mast climber. For one thing, they are diesel powered rather than electric, which Sean O'Sullivan, managing director and joint owner of Universal Sky Platforms, claims makes the installation a lot less complicated and avoids the use of trailing cables, power supplies and additional kit such as boosters.

The other big difference is the mast capability. A single Fraco mast is capable of supporting platform lengths of up to 13 metres and lift capacities of 4,000 kilograms, while a twin mast set up can provide lift capacities of up to 8,000 kilograms, a 37-metre decks and platform widths of up to 7.7 metres.

Other possibilities provided by the heavy-duty mast include a split platform, two level applications and much greater platform cantilevers. This makes the unit ideal for tackling special application obstacles, such as the steep profiling of curved buildings.

Universal has already built up a fleet of around 25 units in the London area, but this only confirms Mastclimbers' Andrew Reid's view that mast climbing work platforms have hardly made a dent on the ultimate market potential (see article starting on page 17).

Mr O'Sullivan told C&A that Universal plans to build a strong business based on quality and safety and on strict adherence to HSE rules and recommendations. The company also said it will not be making a mad rush for growth, but will head for steady, solid, year-on-year expansion. As part of its entry into the UK market, the company has joined both the CPA and IPAF.

Universal Sky Platforms is 51 percent owned by the Gavin group, after a recent buy-in to the business, and 49 percent owned by Mr O'Sullivan and partner Tony Zaccaria, one of North America's most experienced mast climbing consultants.

*MPG Facades Ltd is currently using a 14-metre freestanding Fraco ACT twin mast installation with 37-metre long work platform on an insulated render contract at the Royal Quay site in Becton.*



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# Vertical access

Intervect Deutschland has provided all vertical access for construction of a 107-metre high grain mill in Ulm, Germany. In addition to an Alimak rack and pinion hoist used for access to the forms during concrete slip forming and a HEK transport platform used to deliver various materials, Intervect supplied several HEK mast climbing work

platforms for the installation of aluminium façade panelling on the building.

Faced with serious space restrictions on one side of the mill tower due an imposing existing structure, Intervect was forced to employ a two-tonne capacity, six-metre platform length HEK MSL mast climber, as it was the only MSL unit capable of fitting in the narrow

space. Installation was made all the more tricky as the platform had to be assembled on the ground and then lowered 30 metres into the gap by crane. The unit will be dismantled in the same way. The 1.2-metre wide platform left clearance of less than 100 millimetres.

On the opposite side of the mill, no space restrictions meant that Intervect could opt for the more economical choice of a 1.6-tonne capacity HEK MSM Super work platform in single mast configuration. The company was also responsible for all access technical calculations, engineering, installation services and maintenance for the job, which is scheduled for completion by the end of the year.



First seen at the recent SAIE exhibition in Bologna Italy, Spanish producer, Camac, has produced a compact rack and pinion hoist designed for residential lift shaft work that fits into shafts as small as 1.5 x 1.5 metres.

## SGB acquires Mastclimbers

SGB acquired a majority shareholding in Mastclimbers in 2001, growing it from a regional base in Scotland into a national supplier serving the broader UK market. Today, Mastclimbers operates the UK's largest fleet of rental platforms, with over 750 units and a range of services that extend from project feasibility and design to site erection and dismantling.

Steve Shine, managing director of SGB UK commented: "We see the use of mastclimbing platforms continuing to increase, particularly in high rise residential and commercial construction where there is growing pressure on build and maintenance cycle times without compromise to the safe movement of men and materials."

Mastclimbers' founder Andrew Reid will continue to be involved in the development of the business in a consultancy capacity. Cameron Reid, previously Mastclimbers' operations director, has been appointed managing director in succession to his father.

\*Mastclimbers was also recently awarded its fourth successive Inner City 100 award, which was presented to Andrew Reid by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Gordon Brown and John Snow, Secretary of the US Treasury, at a recent ceremony at Downing Street in London.

Italian company SAFEM turned to two of its Geda MCP 750/1500 mast climbing platforms when it was asked to provide total access to an office building for façade work in Bozen, Italy. The fact that a car park ramp ran down one side of the building meant that on one of the two units (pictured), one mast tower was in contact with the ground at a completely different level from the opposite mast, taking full advantage of the unit's 1.5-metre modular tower sections. Geda's MCP 750/1500 platform is available as a single or twin mast version and can provide a total platform length of 23.6 metres. Maximum erection height is 100 metres.

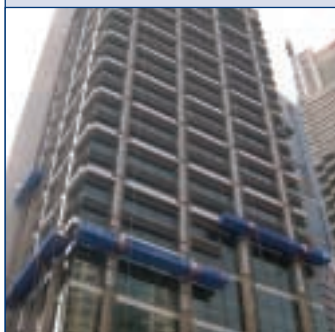
## Leaning tower of Singapore

HEK rapidly supplied several of its MSM Super MCWPs, to main contractor, Samsung Corporation, for work on this 35,000 metre squared building in the financial

district of Singapore recently, when it was realised that during construction, the 30-storey structure developed a very slight lean. Access was needed to allow engineers to carry out extensive structural testing and analysis to ensure that the building retained design load bearing capacity.

To access the 125-metre high exterior facades of the steel and glass building, HEK supplied the platforms in both single and twin mast configuration. Under these

configurations, a maximum deck length of 20 metres was provided with payload capacities of 4 tonnes for twin mast and 2.3 tonnes for single mast. HEK says that the MSM units are ideal for the removal and installation of façade elements because of the units' large open work platforms, while on-board power supplies allow the use of power tools and other equipment. The two units were supplied to Samsung Corporation through CME, Singapore's largest rental supplier of HEK mast climbing work platforms.



# Making tracks

Since rubber tracks were perfected the crawler chassis has not only become popular on compact equipment, such as mini excavators, but the number of aerial lifts now available on both rubber and steel tracks has also ballooned. **C&A** looks at the larger crawler-mounted aerial lifts.

The main boom categories adopting the crawler chassis are light trailer lifts, such as the Octopussy model from Oil and Steel, or the very large specialist machines

such as Falck Schmidt, Teupen and Omme. All of these units feature narrow crawler chassis with outriggers and are only self-propelled in the stowed position.



*Aichi booms are being used on Holland's motorways to install sound suppression a number of the units have special 4x1m platforms.*

There is, however, a surprising range of heavy-duty, full width aerial lifts that are fully self-propelled, including telescopic booms and scissor lifts. The crawler units are mostly popular in regions where ground conditions are at their worst. Thus, the largest market in Europe for such machines is The Netherlands, where glass house construction on reclaimed polder land is big business.

The ground of UK and Ireland job sites tends to have a firmer base so that high-wheeled machines with high flotation tyres manage perfectly well. However, a number of contractors have found that crawler mounted booms are well suited for some applications where ground conditions are particularly bad, or a low ground bearing pressure is required. Some users also appreciate the rock solid base that a heavy crawler chassis provides.

## Booms

Most crawler-mounted booms are straight telescopics rather than articulated, the straight boom being more suited to rugged applications, while providing more outreach for a given height. Japanese producer,

Aichi, now 100 percent owned by Toyota, claims market leadership in the crawler-mounted sector. It has been selling its machines in Europe for over 15 years with working heights from 14 to 23 metres. The units sell at a substantial premium to regular-wheeled booms, partly due to the fact that Japanese lifts cost more and also because of the extra cost of the crawler chassis itself.

Users that have purchased or used Aichi crawler booms usually become fans. Not only are they well suited to applications such as steel erection, but they also handle



*Tadano's Super Deck - a scissor lift sized platform on a stick! It offers a lift capacity of up to 800 kilograms and up to eight metres of outreach.*



*Mega scissor lift: The two-tonne capacity HTN with a dual extension 12- by 5-metre deck and side scissor stack rotation.*



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just about any ground conditions with ease and have a reputation for rock solid reliability. Aichi claims a total machine population in Europe of almost 3,000 units, many of which are crawler mounted.

The only "major" US/European producer to offer a crawler mounted boom is JLG with its 600SC and SCJ units. But, while a fine machine with a strong specification and sleek appearance, it does

scissors are popular, but turning to big diesel models, Aichi produces the RV range with working heights of 11 and 13.5 metres. Having sold over 50 units, mainly in The Netherlands, the company has now stopped importing them into the EU.

This leaves the highly specialised crawler mounted scissor lift market open to a handful of Dutch producers. The most mainstream



Hitachi boom lifts are rarely distributed in Europe outside of The Netherlands.

not appear to have done as well as was expected.

For a totally different crawler mounted boom, Tadano offers the Super Deck - a scissor lift sized platform on a stick! With a lift capacity of up to 800 kilograms and up to eight metres of outreach, it offers some unique potential. But with only 14.5-metres working height and a very high 'sticker price', it is a very niche product.

## Scissors

Crawler mounted scissors is a very mixed category. In Japan, for instance, small rubber tracked mini

is Holland Lift, which is now represented in the UK and Ireland by Russon Access. While producing a number of standard units, the company will customise them to fit a particular application. Rather than use outriggers, Holland Lift's scissors are trunion-mounted so that the entire stack can be levelled from the platform on sloping ground for faster set up times and greater stability.

The demand in The Netherlands and North Germany for crawlers is such that a number of other producers have sprung up in

recent years. One such firm, Omega lift is looking to enter the UK market with its range of diesel crawler scissors with working heights from 10 to 18 metres. The company has even incorporated dual deck extensions, an option particularly appreciated on diesel scissors in the UK.

The scissor stacks can also be levelled and the units are typically supplied with radio remote controls. Counter rotating tracks allow the lifts to literally rotate with their footprint, while with low ground bearing pressure and plenty of power, it would be very hard to get them stuck.

Right at the top end of the market is a true beast of a product. HTN builds special crawler mounted scissor lifts for special applications, including 12 metre long by 5 metre wide working platforms with lift capacities of up to two tonnes. Not only can these big machines level themselves on sloping ground, but the scissor stack is mounted on a slew bearing allowing it to rotate. Most of the units built so far have been to put to work on the construction of glass houses on reclaimed land where the soft fine sandy soil literally has no base to it and where wheeled-lifts simply get bogged down.

## Demand

It seems that planning permission for vast glasshouses on virgin reclaimed land is easily given. The structures are erected and then a few years later it becomes possible to apply for industrial or residential use for these now "brownfield" sites. The glass houses are demolished and new ones are built on new sites and so the development process keeps demand high for crawler mounted units.

These vast scissor lifts would also be suited to other applications, and



The largest market in Europe for heavy-duty, full width aerial lifts is The Netherlands, where glass house construction on reclaimed polder land is big business.

have been quoted for jobs, such as bricklaying and special façade work. In a way, these large units offer a cross between a mast climber and a big scissor lift. Ideal for shorter term projects perhaps.



Japanese producer, Aichi, claims market leadership in the crawler-mounted sector.

# Hire Rates Survey 2004

Those now familiar with the annual C&A Hire Rates Survey will notice a more defined listing this year with a more comprehensive equipment category breakdown. Readers are invited to browse at leisure over the following pages for C&A' annual crane and access equipment hire industry 'health check'.

For the next part of the survey, those same companies were asked to indicate which capacity cranes provided them with the best physical utilisation rates, against those which have given the best financial returns for the past 12 months. For the 2004 survey, we have redefined the crane capacities and produced an extra two categories.

Fig 5. Cranes giving the best physical utilisation rates annually

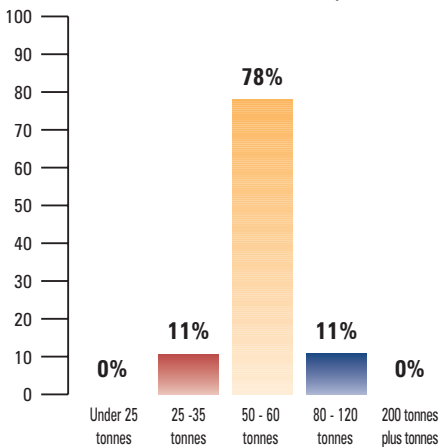
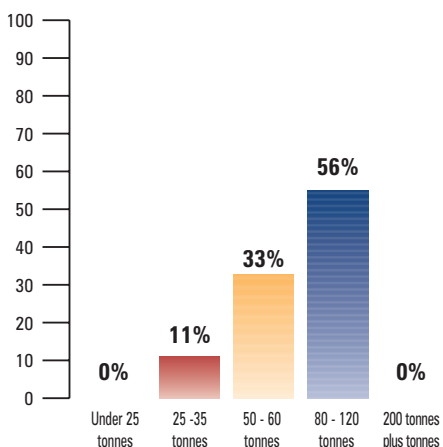
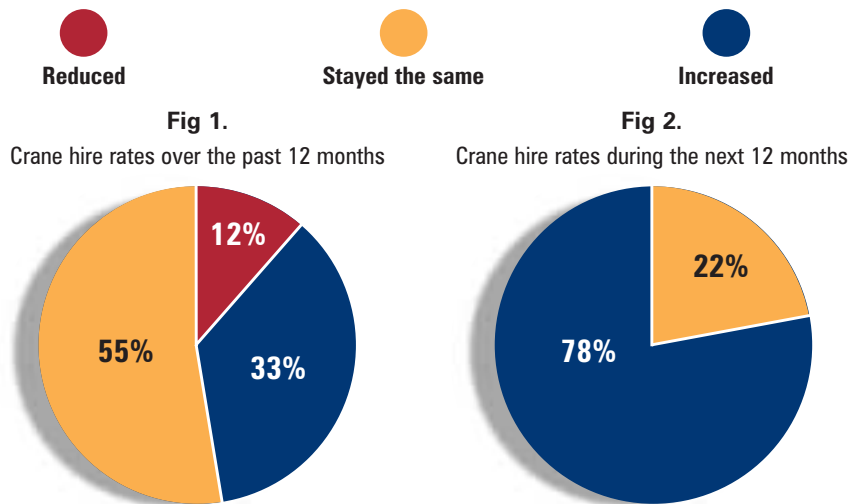


Fig 6. Cranes giving the best financial returns



## crane rates

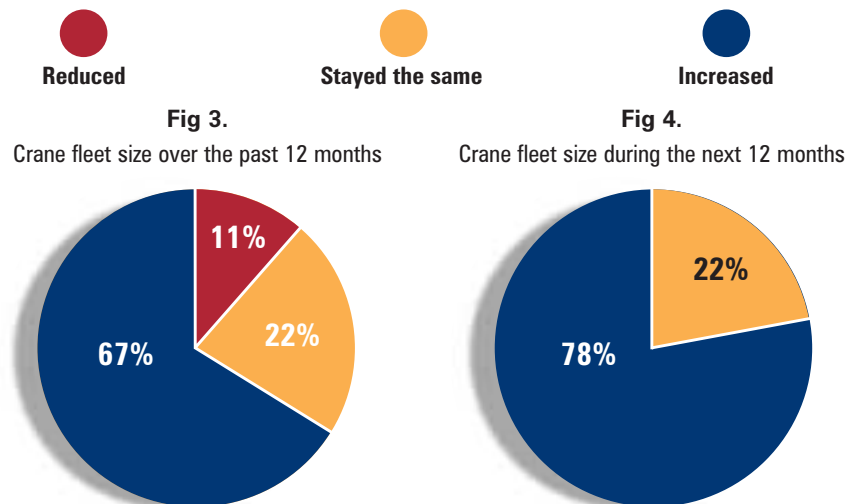
We kick start this year's survey with a look at what has happened to UK and Ireland crane hire companies' rental rates over the past 12 months, and what they expect to happen to them in 2005.



**Comment:** In last year's survey, not one crane hire company in the UK or Ireland saw its hire rates fall during the previous 12 month period. This changes this year as 12 percent of respondents reported a drop in rates in 2004. Perhaps the most significant difference though is that just 33 percent of this year's respondents increased their rates in 2004, compared with a massive 73 percent in 2003.

Despite the drop in hire rates increases though, our 2004 respondents remain optimistic for the future with 78 percent predicting that rates will increase during 2005.

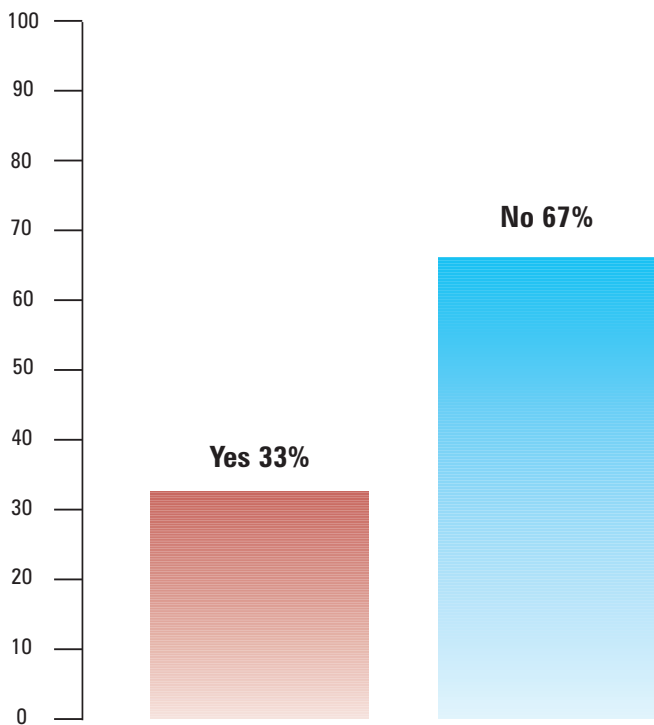
Turning to crane hire company fleet sizes, investment in new equipment is always a relatively secure way of gauging just how healthy an industry is at a particular point in time. Here we asked companies to tell us what strategies they have employed in terms of their fleets during the past 12 months, and whether their plans are any different for 2005.



**Comment:** Last year, 73 percent of respondents were expecting to increase their fleet size this year and almost all kept their word. 67 percent of this year's respondents reported investing in their crane fleets in 2004, while a promising 78 percent expect to continue the trend next year. While the remaining 22 percent are happy with their fleet size for the time being, not one company said that it would reduce the number of cranes in its fleet in 2005.



**Fig 7.** Would you recommend the crane hire industry to your children?



**Comment:** Our traditional, 'Would you recommend the crane hire industry to your children?' question has delivered a rather despondent reply this year compared to last year, where an optimistic 55 percent of respondents took the 'yes' vote. The events of the past 12 months have seemingly changed the minds of many with just 33 percent willing to nurture their young into the crane hire industry.

Next up and the most popular part of the survey is our breakdown of the crane hire rates that have been quoted to hirers during 2004 and those that are currently being charged by UK and Ireland crane hire companies.

**Fig 8.** Average weekly hire rates for mobile cranes

Capacity	Lowest weekly rate	Highest weekly rate	Average weekly rate
under 25 tonnes	£1,200	£6,559	£2,192
25 – 35 tonnes	£1,400	£8,285	£2,588
50/60 tonnes	£2,080	£10,357	£3,638
80 – 120 tonnes	£3,000	£17,951	£5,843
200 tonnes plus tonnes	£5,110	£24,169	£7,683

**Comment:** The figures are difficult to compare with last year's results as we have taken the decision to rearrange the categories to give a more accurate breakdown of rates for certain sized cranes this year.

At a glance, however, the results seem to support the above response that only 33 percent of crane hire companies increased their rates last year, for instance the average rate for a 100-tonne capacity crane was £5,382. This year, a 80- to 120-tonne unit would be marginally more expensive at an average of £5,843.

# industry comments

*"The Irish crane industry is saturated with cranes over 200 tonnes so rates are very low. Small crane rates are holding well because of the volume of work being carried out at the moment."*

*Crane professional*

*"Cranes are still priced low in consideration of other plant and labour."*

*Crane professional*

*"Crane rates must rise to keep in line with a six percent increase in labour and 10 percent increase in cranes."*

*Crane professional*

*"Too many people in the industry who make a mess of it for others."*

*Crane professional*

*"Rates too low (our fault)."*

*Crane professional*

*"Still based on rates used ten years ago. Should be much higher."*

*Crane professional*

*"Large crane rental companies reducing rates to give national coverage and gain domination of market. If this works, then in time rates will increase, by which time the smaller companies will have been forced out of business."*

*Crane professional*



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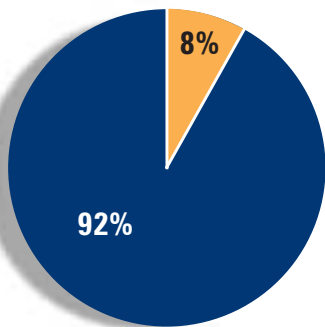


# access rates

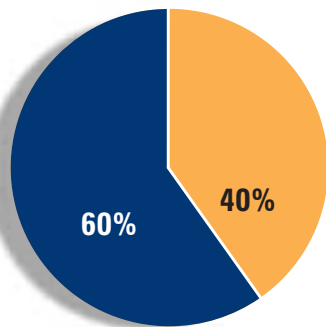
The access segment of the 2004 Hire Rates Survey has been beefed-up this year to include numerous additional categories under the 'average weekly hire rates' section. The following charts have been researched to give the reader an idea of what has happened to hire rates for access equipment during the past 12 months, and also to give an idea of what the industry's platform hire companies are expecting to happen in the following 12 months.

● Reduced      ● Stayed the same      ● Increased

**Fig 9.**  
Access hire rates over the past 12 months



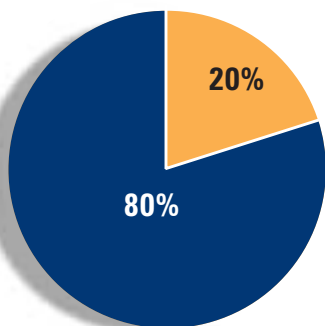
**Fig 10.**  
Access hire rates during the next 12 months



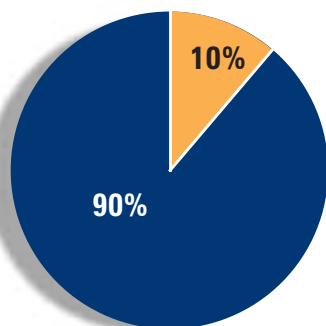
**Comment:** 40 percent of last year's respondents were expecting access equipment hire rates to increase this year, and they were right. According to this year's respondents, 92 percent reported an increase in its hire rates. But, the question is by how much. Judging by the industry comments dotted throughout the survey, not enough - "we have seen an excellent improvement in hire rates over the past 12 months, and we still feel there is room for even more over the next 12 to 24 months", said one access industry professional.

● Reduced      ● Stayed the same      ● Increased

**Fig 11.**  
Access fleet sizes during the past 12 months



**Fig 12.**  
Access fleet sizes during the next 12 months



**Comment:** Last year, 90 percent of respondents reported an increase in their fleet size in 2003 with the same 90 percent expecting to continue the trend in 2005. According to this year's survey, 80 percent of them have done. Not one company reduced its fleet size during the same period and is unlikely to in 2005. 90 percent of respondents said that they will be adding equipment to their hire portfolios during the next 12 months.

As with the crane hire rates section, the next two tables highlight the platforms that hire companies believe have given them the best physical utilisation rates during the past 12 months, compared to those giving the best financial returns.

Using the scale, '1' being the best and '5' being the worst, respondents were asked to give their top 5 equipment categories. The results were then combined for each category to give the final scores in Figures 13 and 14.

**Fig 13.** Best physical utilisation

Category	Score
small electric scissors	1
45 ft articulated booms	2
small electric booms	3
larger trailer lifts	4
small diesel scissors 10 m under	4
big articulated booms (60/80 ft)	5

**Fig 14.** Best financial return

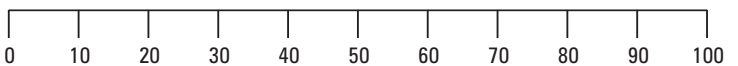
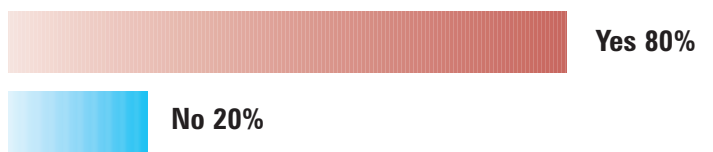
Category	Score
small electric scissors	1
small electric booms	2
45 ft articulated booms	3
larger trailer lifts	4
mid to large electric scissors	5

**Comment:** The jury's out. According to our 2004 respondents, small electric scissor lifts have given them the best physical utilisation and the best financial returns to boot over the past 12 months. In the best physical utilisation chart, 45-foot articulated booms, which 54 percent of last year's respondents claimed gave them the best utilisation in 2003, came in a close second. Small electric scissors took the number two spot last year with a backing of 22 percent.

Small electric scissors also provided the best financial returns in last year's survey, taking 54 percent of the votes. Providing the second best financial returns in 2004 were small electric booms, taking the place of joint second place holders last year, 45-foot articulated booms and electric bi-energy articulating booms, with a 15 percent each.

Just like with the crane industry we once again get personal with the crunch question, would you put your business where your mouth is and recommend the access industry to your children?

**Fig 15.** Would you recommend the access industry to your children?



**Comment:** Unlike the crane industry though, the majority of access industry professionals would be more than happy to see their young ones follow them into the access equipment hire market.

# industry comments

***“The industry still has its band of unprofessional low hire rate merchants. However, their demise is but a phone call away from a bank or investor. Maybe they will learn one day that low hire rates, poorly maintained equipment and low service levels does not win in the end.”***

*Access professional*

***“Still buoyant in East Anglia, but lead in time from suppliers now creating a problem. We still take the cautious approach.”***

*Access professional*

***“Due to increased users, improved health and safety and the demise of some established MEWP hire companies, we have seen an excellent improvement in hire rates over the past 12 months, and we still feel there is room for even more over the next 12 to 24 months.”***

*Access professional*

***“Still access capacity and marginal returns, but very good potential for growth and improved returns.”***

*Access professional*

***“At last, the hen’s come home to roost! A shame though that badly run companies manage to rise from their self inflicted ashes and continue to line their own pockets at the expense of those running professional operations.”***

*Access professional*

***“We have an extremely positive outlook on the industry as a whole, and for us, for the next two to three years.”***

*Access professional*

Fig 16.

Electric scissors	Average weekly hire rates
under 5 metres	£105.00
6 m	£107.80
8 m	£129.40
10 m compact	£151.60
10 m plus	£226.50
Scissors diesel bi-energy	Average weekly hire rates
8 – 10 m	£140.20
10 – 14 m	£172.60
14 m plus	£233.60*

Fig 17.

Electric booms	Average weekly hire rates
under 11 m	£226.40
10 – 14 m	£232.00
14 m plus	£233.60
Mast booms	
6 m	£125.00
8 m	£160.00
Rough terrain articulating booms	
15 – 16 m	£255.60
20 – 25 m	£336.25
25 m plus	£565.00
Straight booms	
under 17 m	£234.00
18 – 23 m	£335.00
25 – 29 m	£571.25
30 m plus	£1,075.00
Trailer lifts	
12/13 m	£167.50
17 m	£247.30
over 20 m	£500.00
Van mounts	
all sizes	£375.00
Truck mounts	
under 22 m/3,500 kg	£425.00
23 – 35 m	£420.00
36 m plus	£700.00

\*Respondents reported that diesel scissors with full spec and seven-metre plus dual extended decks typically fetch around £100 more than standard units of the same height.

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# Hender's Hewden

Following Finning International's recent £7 million investment in Hewden Crane Hire, and a further significant investment in Hewden Powered Access planned for early 2005, C&A met up with Hewden general manager – Crane Hire and Powered Access, Martin Hender, to talk about life at one of the UK's largest rental operations.

**Cranes & Access:** Mr Hender, you were appointed as general manager of Hewden's Crane Hire business back in mid-2003 from a non-lifting background. How has your time at the company been to date? And what are your first impressions of the lifting industry?

**Martin Hender:** Great! I have really enjoyed it so far. I joined Hewden at a very exciting time and have

been supported 100 percent by a great team ever since. The UK crane hire market is very competitive, which also means that it is very progressive in terms of the equipment available from today's producers. This link between market demand and the available technology is central to Hewden's purchasing strategy and we prize ourselves in investing in new equipment to keep up with



market demand. Our customers, who are often sub-contractors carrying out work for a main contractor, do not want to be supplied with old, unreliable equipment, so providing them with the latest technology means that they can keep their side of the bargain in terms of completing contracts safely, efficiently, on time and within budget.

**C&A:** Finning, the Caterpillar (CAT) distributor and owner of the Hewden group, recently invested nearly £7 million in new craneage for Hewden Crane Hire. Can we assume then that Finning is fully committed to the specialised crane hire market unlike most other general rental companies?

**MH:** Yes! Since acquiring Hewden in 2001, Finning has invested around £27 million in new cranes. That's an average of about 23 new cranes per year. Hewden Crane Hire currently operates

around 250 cranes with an average fleet age of 6 years, while another 50 cranes are operated elsewhere within the Hewden Group. So yes, Finning is hugely committed to its Crane Hire business.

Hewden Powered Access has more or less experienced the same level of investment. During the same four-year period, Finning has purchased just under 1,000 new machines at a cost of around £6.3 million per year. In total, it has invested £52 million in cranes and access, and £85 million across the whole of Hewden this year alone.

**C&A:** Cramo, a very strong brand name, in Scandinavia and The Netherlands and MVS in Germany have both re-branded themselves a CAT Rental Stores. Are there any plans at all to do the same with Hewden?

**MH:** Hewden is a strong UK brand and customer research shows that it is associated with safety, quality and accessibility. This said, the CAT brand is obviously very complimentary. And, being able to offer a complete plant line with brands ranging from CAT to Terex-Demag obviously presents a fantastic proposition. We would only re-brand if we were fully satisfied that customers wouldn't be confused into thinking that we were not able to supply non-cat brands. Hewden's focus is on providing the 'best of breed manufacturers' products' and promoting awareness that this is the case regarding products ranging from cranes to access platforms to saws.

**C&A:** Now that you are general manager, Crane Hire and Powered Access, are there any plans to share facilities and service coverage, or even backroom functions, such as accounts?

**MH:** It's all about improving customer services and working toward what we call the 'One Hewden'. We are currently reviewing back service facilities and working towards the concept of a single Hewden entity. We want to make life easier for our customers and decision-makers who don't want to have to deal with three or four Hewden managers to hire out three or four different types of equipment. We recently launched Customer Connect, a new national number that directs customers to their nearest Hewden depot relevant to their product requirements.

We are also seeing an increasingly greater co-operation between Hewden management from all sides of the business. Although the Hewden businesses will continue



Since acquiring Hewden in 2001, Finning has invested around £27 million in new cranes for Hewden Crane Hire.

According to Hewden general manager – Crane Hire and Powered Access, Martin Hender “for those [crane hire companies] that continue to operate on a regular basis, the future looks rosy.”



to be run separately, one of my aims will be to engage all staff, from crane drivers to sales people, in working towards the ‘One Hewden’ concept.

**C&A:** *Hewden Hire Centres and Hewden Powered Access both offer access solutions. Are there any plans to bring the two businesses together?*

**MH:** Hewden Hire Centres do operate certain access solutions, but they are part of wider range of products. The question is not really one of product separation though. It’s more to do with product alignment and suitability and offering the right tools for the job. So, here there is no competition between the two operations.

**C&A:** *Hewden, unlike Lavendon, SGB or Ashtead have seemingly shielded away from international expansion in the past. With Hewden now part of Finning, is this a policy set in stone or at least one with restrictions where Finning also has a CAT presence?*

**MH:** With the UK plant hire market currently worth about £3 billion a year, there is more than enough work to do here. So no, no plans for international expansion.

**C&A:** *Was the sale of Hewdens’ Irish business (North) to the Irish CAT dealer last year part of such a restriction?*

**MH:** The Irish sale was made purely for commercial reasons. Hewden management received an attractive offer and sold it. Simple as that!

**C&A:** *Unit for unit, it seems that Hewden Powered Access has*

*been subject to less expansion than Hewden Crane Hire and it may even slip a few places in the 2005 C&A UK Top 20 listing. Is this intentional, or does the crane business currently justify more investment?*

**MH:** This has not been the case. The level of investment has been mirrored by both the crane and access operations. In terms of the 2005 Top 20, having the most number of machines is not really the issue here. It’s about having the right number of machines in utilisation, delivering sensible returns for Hewden as well as offering the best possible solution for the customer.

Hewden Powered Access currently operates at a utilisation rate of 85 percent, while Crane Hire operates at over 80 percent. We don’t buy cranes only to then work out where to use them. We approach our customers, then invest in what the market requires. Across all operations, investment is very ‘customercentric’. We are continually investing in both Crane Hire and Powered Access equally, reflecting our customers’ demands in safety, quality and accessibility.

**C&A:** *October’s near £7 million investment by Hewden saw the company turn to Terex for the purchase of 25 new Demag all terrain cranes and 180 access platforms from sister company Genie UK. Why Terex?*

**MH:** This was pure coincidence. The purchase was up for grabs among the various producers, but it was Demag that came back with

the best overall deal in terms of the product and after sales service. Genie also offered a very good product from a very good range.

The sale is open every time we look to invest in new equipment and we will buy whichever products best suit the customers at the time. When we look to further invest in new access equipment next year, for example, the sale will be wide open again to all producers.

**C&A:** *Would it be safe to say that Hewden Crane Hire is the core business operation of the Hewden group?*

**MH:** No, it is not the core business. Each operation is an important core part of the complete Hewden customer offer.

**C&A:** *It has been said that a key strategy of Hewden is to promote contract lifting as opposed simple crane hire. What is the reasoning behind this?*

**MH:** Lifts are becoming increasingly complex. Hewden promotes contract lifting because it believes that it is the way forward. Some people say that with the potential liability surrounding complex lifts these days, the future availability of straightforward Construction Plant-hire Association (CPA) crane hire lifts will be severely limited as more people opt for contract lifting. Hewden does offer straightforward crane hire under CPA conditions, but progressively we are seeing revenues from contract lifting increase. Customers simply do not want the complexities of straightforward crane hire lifts resting on their shoulders.

**C&A:** *How do you think the UK crane hire market will pan out in 2005?*

**MH:** It certainly has a lot of potential, but I think we will see consolidation next year. It’s a very fragmented market place at present and I think that the progressive move towards health and safety and contract lifting may cause many of the smaller crane hire firms to rethink their position.

What it certain is that the market simply cannot sustain the large number of crane operators currently in operation in the UK, but for those that continue to operate on a regular basis, I think the future looks rosy.

For Hewden itself, I would not rule out acquisition, but it is not an issue at the forefront of our business development plans at the moment. Organic growth will be the main focus in the coming months.

**C&A:** *And the powered access sector?*

**MH:** As with crane hire, I think that there is still room for rate growth, but it’s not all about rates. Rates are just one element in Hewden’s basket and we are seeing more and more evidence that customers are not settling for the cheapest options anymore.

Customers need to be sure that quality and safety are also integral parts of the overall package.



*In just four years, Finning has purchased just under 1,000 new machines for Hewden Powered access at a cost of around £6.3 million per year.*

**C&A:** *What are Hewden’s own plans for its crane hire and powered access businesses over the next 12 months?*

**MH:** We will be continuing to improve customer service and promote awareness amongst our customers of the full range of the Hewden offer, while working toward the ‘one-stop’ Hewden solution. And, of course there will be further investment in new cranes and access equipment.

**C&A:** *Finally Mr Hender, C&A would like to end this interview with our regular ‘What is your favourite?’ questions.*

## ‘What is your favourite..?’

- C&A:** *Film?*
- HF:** The Godfather (trilogy)
- C&A:** *Song?*
- HF:** Stairway to Heaven
- C&A:** *Gadget?*
- HF:** Portable DVD Player
- C&A:** *Hobby?*
- MH:** Travelling

# Knuckle junkies

The world's knuckle boom crane producers have, over the past 12 months, been as busy as ever keeping this fast moving sector at the forefront of crane design. C&A rounds up the highlights.

## Palfinger in 2004

2004 has been a very successful year for Palfinger. Achieving record revenues and profits, the company seems intent on maintaining the momentum in the years ahead.

### Recovery unit

Palfinger's new 'T' crane range is specifically designed for mounting on recovery vehicles. Each unit has been designed with side-mounted boom cylinders to minimise the transport height in the stowed position, while internally routed

hydraulic hoses keep it compact and give greater component protection. The cranes also feature high controls over the base of the boom. The line comprises four versions, the PK 12000 T, PK 14000 T, PK 16000 T and PK 18000 T, with capacities ranging from 12.4 to 17.2 tonne/metres.

### Top of the tree

The company also extended its heavy-duty knuckle boom range with the introduction of its



117-tonne/metre PK 150002 "Performance" (above). Palfinger says that the geometry of the crane enables the unit to carry out loading and unloading of its vehicle and work in a much smaller space than is usual for this size of machine, providing a significant advantage over mobile cranes on general lifting work. The PK 150002 offers a maximum outreach of 21.5 metres and is available with up to six fly jib extensions, offsettable by up to 25 degrees.

### Automatic set up and stowage

Most recently though the company launched details of its automatic control technology, the Autofold System (PAS), which has been integrated into Palfinger's remotely activated 100 electronic. With the aid of a special control sensor system, the crane can be automatically put into the working position and stowed again at the push of a single button.



*Hiab extended its XS-Series knuckle boom range spanning from five to 76 tonne/metre units. The smallest, the 11.4-metre outreach XS 055, targets middle-weight trucks, while the at the other end of the scale is the XS 800, which features Hiab's integrated computerised Space 5000 operating system. Pictured is the XS 288.*

## Effer shines at SAIE

Italian producer, Effer, made the most of the SAIE show in Bologna in October, launching two new crane models. At the heavy-duty end of the capacity scale was the 114-tonne/metre 1550-J-Power 6S (pictured above) with up to 29 metres of full-powered outreach, six extensions and a 6S fly-jib and two mechanical extensions. The other new model at the other end of the range was the 11-tonne/metre 110E-115, featuring Effer's now standard DMU 3000 (Data Monitor Unit), which among other functions, automatically reduces the speed of the boom extensions as they approach the end of their stroke.

At an Effer convention held during the SAIE show, attended by more than 150 Effer delegates from around the world, the company announced an 18 percent increase in Effer sales in 2004, with a further €10 million (£7 million) generated by access affiliate, Bizzocchi. During the last four years, Effer has invested €15 million (£10.5 million) in the enlargement of its Taranto production facility and is due to complete a new, €4.5 million (£3.2 million plant, Minerbio 3, in 2005.

Effer Holding and Bizzocchi managing director, Roberto Meneghinello, also announced that a further eight knuckle boom units will be added to the Effer range in 2005.





## Fassi fuels top-end range

Fassi says that it has completed its heavy knuckle boom range with the "little sister" version of its flagship 150-tonne/metre F1500 AXP, the F1300 AXP. The 130-tonne/metre unit features Fassi's Extra Power (XP) system which, when used in conjunction with the FX hydraulic load control system, slows down the crane's movements, while proportionally increasing the power and lifting capacity.

The crane is remotely operated and uses Fassi's extra fast system (XF) system which, combined with the LS load sensing function, gives effective multifunctional operation.

Fassi was also present at the SAIE show in Bologna in October with a significant development to its mid-range offering. The F175A, F195A, F215A and F235AXP, according to Fassi, bring two new design elements to the mid-range sector. Firstly, there is a double connecting rod system engaging the main and secondary booms to ensure that the lift power is maximised in all configurations. Secondly, the Pro-Link (Progressive Positive Link) system permits the secondary booms to rise up 15 degrees beyond the horizontal. All four models are available with six hydraulic extensions.

At the smaller end of the Fassi range at SAIE was the 2.8-tonne/metre ultra light F28B unit for mounting on non-HGV vehicles. Up to three hydraulic extensions can be applied, while extra-wide stabilisers keep the weight to a minimum.

Terex Atlas brought six new knuckle boom models to the forefront at the IAA exhibition in Hannover, in October, including the models 210.2 and 240.2E 'fold-up' cranes." Commenting on the new units was Terex Atlas construction manager, Andreas Finger: "The cranes are distinguished by an optional ratio between their unloaded weight and the lifting power. Eight hydraulic booms with a reach of up to 20.7 metres together with the articulated jib arm, which can be over-stretched, enable an extended area of movement for cranes this size."

## Italian force

Italian producer Amco Veba had an eventful year having taken over fellow Italian producer Flii Ferrari. The two companies continue to operate separately in terms of products and branding, but are benefiting from synergies, such as pooled purchasing power, according to the company.

Amco Veba unveiled two new models at SAIE, the 911 designed primarily for tilt bed recovery vehicles and the 950 range. In its most extreme version, the 950/65+ jib4s, offers a 32-metre maximum under hook height, an almost 90-degree powered offset of its 11 metre jib and an outreach

of almost 28 metres, where it can lift over 500 kilograms. Both models utilise standard HBC Radiomatic remote controls.

The company is also currently developing a new knuckle boom series in the 85-tonne/metre class. Dubbed the VR 85, the range will be available with up to 10 hydraulic extensions and three slew motors instead of the traditional two.

Flii Ferrari, now owned by Amco Veba, is currently in the development stages of three new knuckle boom models to be launched in 2005, one of which will be in the 50- to 60-tonne/metre class.

Cormach will be adding to its product line-up in the coming months with the addition of two new wallboard cranes, dubbed the 45 and 65. The Italian firm is currently processing an order from the Italian fire brigade for 11, 160-tonne/metre units.

## HMF serves the access sector

Earlier in the year, the only Danish knuckle boom crane producer, HMF, added its access basket capabilities to its flagship knuckle booms, Odin and Thor. "The reach offered by these two giants is 38 metres height and 34 metres horizontal outreach with a platform capacity of 215 kilograms," says René Dahlkilde, technical manager at HMF. "The double safety system also means that there are no external sensors that can be damaged during utilisation. The solution has been tested several times and is based on standard components."

HMF now delivers all of its knuckle boom cranes ready to accept the company's range of personnel baskets so that the local vehicle body builder can easily fit the platform attachments and basket options, complete with overload systems, after the sale.

### Keep it safe

2004 also saw the development of a new safety system from HMF for the protection of the manual extensions



on its cranes. The ECT 5075 system ensures that the manual extensions are not overloaded and damaged while the knuckle boom is working. Using a control panel, the operator is able to programme the crane so that the maximum working load is not exceeded. The system was accepted by the German Working Environment Service and meets the requirements of the EU's Machinery Directive.



# When Mary Rose

Avon Cranes in the UK joined forces with PM Cranes to replace the existing cranes that had been assisting in the preservation of King Henry VIII's 16th Century Mary Rose warship at its Portsmouth location. The project meant replacing two 18-year-old 34-tonne/metre PM 34003 lorry loader units with new larger 43-tonne/metre PM 43024 units complete with three-extension fly-jib, twin man basket and remote control. The contract also entailed the refurbishment of one of the PM 34003s as a tailing unit. The cranes were designed to marine standards, with heavy duty chroming on the cylinders and wide use of stainless steel hardware. The units are mounted to self-propelled Pelloby platforms that allow the crane to travel up and down the length of the ship.

During the project, special access had to be prepared using a temporary rail track and scaffolding to dismantle the cranes. Working conditions were made all the more tricky due to low lighting inside the ship hall and the

fact that the engineers were required to wear breathing apparatus to avoid intoxication from the preservative chemicals that are continually pumped onto the historic ship.

The lorry loaders form a significant part of the project to both modernise the ship hall and preserve the Mary Rose and will be used to assist archaeologists to inspect the ship and monitor its condition. After serving King Henry VIII for many years, the Mary Rose was sunk on 19 July 1545 while defending attacks from advancing French galleys two kilometres off the coast of Portsmouth. She was discovered again in 1836 and, following several failed attempts, was eventually brought to surface in 1982.

\*Autogru PM launched two new models at SAIE 2004, the 28-metre outreach 43S and 47SP. Both models are available with between two and eight hydraulic extensions and a four-extension jib with reverse angle articulation of up to 20 degrees from the horizontal.



## Alternative loaders

While the versatility of the knuckle boom is widely appreciated for many lorry loading tasks, the market for "piggy back" fork lifts has continued to expand, nibbling away at some knuckle boom applications. However, Manitou has introduced the Manitransit product to offer a unit that offers the benefits of a mobile fork with the advantage of a telescopic boom.

Manitou claims that it has introduced the logistics sector to the first truck-mounted telescopic handler. The four-strong Manitransit range with lift capacities from 2 to 2.5 tonnes has been designed to carry out the duties that would be normally carried out by small knuckle boom cranes.

The unit can be mounted on the tail-end of a truck and dismantled for unloading duties as required. The range offers an outreach of up to two metres, while the booms are built to withstand repetitive and intensive loading and unloading. Each unit is equipped with stabilisers and a safe load indicator.

## British Standards Committee to update lorry loader standard

Peter Oram, crane safety expert and chairman of the British & European Crane Standards Committee, has told C&A that, following discussions with the Association of Lorry Loader Manufacturers and Importers (ALLMI) and Health & Safety Executive, the BS 7121 Part 4 Safe use of Lorry loader cranes standard will be updated to accommodate larger lorry loader cranes.

Over the past few years, the ever-increasing lift capacities and capabilities of lorry loader cranes have seemingly outgrown the BS 7121 Part 4 Safe use of Lorry loader cranes standard issued back in 1997, causing much confusion among users over the correct procedures and guidelines of operation.

Mr Oram addressed the issue in the August/September issue of C&A, stating that the very large loader cranes have to now be looked upon as mobile cranes and subjected to Part 3 of BS 7121 Code of Practice for the safe use of mobile cranes.

"The consequence of this is that the crane operator cannot take on any other role than driving the crane," said Mr Oram. "The lifting operations that these larger lorry loaders perform must be supported by a written plan, be supervised, and have slingers as defined by Part 3 of the standard." Mr Oram was unable to confirm when exactly a revision of Part 4 of the standard would take place.



The present situation with regard to Stabiliser Interlocks (SI) for lorry loaders is that they are not mandatory. By definition, a SI comprises a device that would prevent a lorry loader being operated unless the extendable stabilisers are fully extended and secure. Whilst one or two loader manufacturers presently offer such a device, this is usually to meet a specific customer requirement on a specific model and not across its whole range.

It is a requirement of the Machinery Directive in Preliminary Observation No 2 that suppliers must take into account 'State of the Art'. 'State of the Art' as defined by CEN is the developed state of technical possibilities at a given time relating to products, processes and services as based on scientific knowledge and experience'.

Subsequent to the action of the HSE in issuing statements to the effect, SIs were mandatory, a

meeting was held in April 2002 in Finland where European lorry loader manufacturers, the HSE and ALLMI were represented. It was recognised that, at present, manufacturers fully comply with the requirements in EN12999 through the Machinery Directive in that their machines are 'State of the Art' with respect to SIs.

It was agreed that manufacturers would work towards introducing a practical system of SIs, but that any such industry introduction was unlikely before 2006.

At this time, VOSA, who are responsible for inspecting vehicles for compliance with 'The Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations', is making the installation and satisfactory operation of stabiliser leg locking devices subject to examination at any inspection. These are purely simple locking catches to prevent the stabiliser leg support beam from extending sideways uncontrolled.

## Bridge bashers

Network Rail has collaborated with the freight and construction plant transport industry to produce two new guides 'Transport Managers' Guide' and 'Professional Drivers' Guide', in attempt to raise awareness and reduce the number of 'bridge-bashing' incidents in the UK.

According to Network Rail, the number of bridge bashing strikes has almost doubled in the UK since 1996 to over 2,000 incidents, or, around five a day. One of the main causes is unsecured knuckle booms, which account for 88 percent of all bridge strikes. Of this number, 11 percent are caused by the lorry not being in the centre of the road at arch bridges, 26 percent caused by the knuckle boom being left in the raised position and 32 percent due to the driver being ignorant of the vehicle height. According to drivers, the most risky bridges are those that cross the road at an angle because if the vehicle is travelling at speed the top of the vehicle is deflected sideways causing it to overturn.

Both guides feature information including what the law says about bridge strikes, actions to prevent bridge strikes and to what should be done if a strike occurs.



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# Working Platforms for Tracked Plant

The new, *Working Platforms for Tracked Plant*, guide covers the design, construction and maintenance of platforms from which to operate tracked plant such as crawler cranes and piling rigs. The book has been instigated by the Federation of Piling Specialists in an attempt to help reduce the number of accidents caused by the overturning of cranes and piling rigs due to a poor working platforms and highlights safe practices, while helping reduce unnecessary or excessive expenditure.

With 47 pages including appendices, the guide is concise and easy to read (for a technical publication) and covers all aspects from site investigation to design, construction, maintenance and inspection. It also includes design calculations along with completed

examples from different subgrades. It presents the subject in a format that will prove useful to crane hire companies, safety officers and site managers, as well as consulting engineers and designers.

The book has been produced and monitored by a steering group representing several major contractors and foundation



specialists and has been supported by manufacturers such as Liebherr, Cassgrande and Bauer. It provides an excellent reference work for anyone involved with using or providing heavy tracked

equipment for work on new or disturbed ground.

The guide costs £35 and is available from BRE bookshop, Watford WD25 9XX. A £9 discount is available for FPS members.

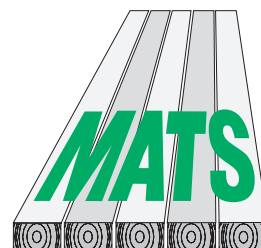
## Crane Hire - The Plimsoll Portfolio Analysis

Plimsoll Publishing recently produced the fourth edition of its report into the UK's Crane Hire industry, '*Crane Hire - The Plimsoll Portfolio Analysis*'. This is a work of considerable length and detail, which attempts to give an overview of the health of the industry in an easy-to-understand format. It also presents company specific data using the Plimsoll chart - an assessment measure which analyses and weights sales growth, trading stability, profitability, working capital, gearing and liquidity.

'*Crane Hire - The Plimsoll Portfolio Analysis*' serves as a health check of the UK crane hire industry and detailed statistical analysis, is based on 37 companies, and is professional in providing a general picture. However, the lack of meaningful and accurate information on so many companies leaves big gaps in the report, which may disappoint a potential reader looking for the low-down on a particular business or trying to determine the future of the industry. If you want a high level snapshot, this report does its job, but you will have to dig much deeper to get the full picture.

The report is available from Plimsoll publishing 01642 626400.

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# Are your pads up to scratch?

The UK's Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has recently been on the lookout for sloppy cribbing and make-do outrigger pads used with lifting equipment. The days of carrying old railway sleeper off cuts and mixed assortments of timber as outrigger pad substitutes is coming to an end. C&A reports.

It is true that most reputable crane owners have already equipped their cranes with purpose built synthetic mats or purpose made timber mats. However, even some of the best companies rarely provide enough purpose made timbers to allow for safe levelling under the outriggers pads.

Several readers have reported that their crane drivers have been warned and even stopped on site and instructed to replace scrappy collections of timber with purpose made mats. But there really shouldn't be any excuse because the range of purpose made mats and shoring material produced for the job of spreading outrigger loadings is now very wide and readily available.

It is a sorry fact that the majority of crane, lorry loader and truck-mounted aerial lift accidents are due to problems with outrigger set up. A common incident involves small outrigger pads punching through weak surfaces or sinking in soft ground.

Some of the worst offenders are smaller "taxi cranes", truck-mounted aerial lifts and lorry loaders, largely due to the fact that they are used on routing lifts or applications that are subject to less planning and investigation than larger lifts. The latter two categories are particularly at risk due to their use by operators less familiar with the equipment. On the other hand, cranes in the 30- to 60-tonne category, common in most small companies' fleets

can create very significant outrigger pad loadings and are more likely to need mats.

When it comes to outrigger mats and shoring, individual timbers are very versatile, but require more skill. Expect knowledgeable inspectors to frown on gaps left between timbers and sloppy placement.

Redundant railway sleepers are a good source for timber mats. Cut to size they can make a reliable foundation for crane outrigger jack pads, but great care is needed in their placement beneath a crane. On uneven ground, a method of making certain that the sleepers are kept in place and do not move under load may be necessary, which could include a steel plate positioned on top to tie in the sleepers together.

Care needs to be taken when handling though, as timber can, and will, splinter if handled roughly. These splinters could easily penetrate the hands of the unwary, causing very unpleasant wounds. Timber will absorb moisture and in extreme low temperatures will freeze. Thus, poorly positioned timber cribbing could break up under the load.



Neat outrigger pad provision and storage on a Ruthmann truck-mounted boom lift.

Recycled polyethylene pads provide a good foundation of known sizes and density along with other additional benefits. The pads will not splinter, will not absorb moisture, are safe, are unbreakable under normal working conditions, will adapt to the working surface and will return to the original shape after use.

Standard rope or chain handles allow for ease of handling and when not in use are easily stored in a crane's purpose built racking. Having a known weight, the pads can also be positioned in such a



Recycled polyethylene pads provide a good foundation of known sizes and density.

way as to allow loading ensuring equal axle weights. The polyethylene material also allows engraving to be carried out, providing an identification of the owner. Polyethylene pads can be made in special sizes to accommodate particular low ground bearing pressures and some forward thinking crane rental companies have placed a set or two in their depots ready for the jobs that require them.

It would not be correct to say that site safety inspectors or the HSE spend their days looking for trouble, an HSE inspector recently stated, "We do have a



Outrigger pad provision and stowage on a Bison 3.5-tonne truck-mounted platform, now part of the Palfinger portfolio.

responsibility to encourage safe practice, as it's our job to do so." And as safety starts at ground level, if your crane is standing on firm ground and with the right tools, then so will it remain!



Pictured is a Manitou telehandler rigged as a crane and supported by the correct use of purpose made outrigger pads.

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*Advances in remote control technology have permitted the control of loader cranes from much greater distances allowing the operator to remain in safe visual contact with the load.*

applications require remote control and, in fact, there are several environments where the use of radio controlled equipment is not permitted, such as in hospitals for example. However, most radio-controlled loader cranes have the option of a cable connection and they always retain the traditional manual controls.

So is there a 'downside'? The answer to this lies with the training of the operator. The technology is sound, of that there is no doubt, but, as with any piece of equipment, there is always room for human error. For example, with a radio remote control system the operator is free to move anywhere he likes, even under the load! Obviously this kind of situation should never occur, but may well do if the correct training hasn't been given.

ALLMI Training Ltd recognises the need for training, which is specific to remote control systems and, as such, has a separate licensing category for the use of radio remotes. It is the only accreditation scheme in the UK to recognise this.

other radio remote systems operating in close proximity.

Remote control systems can also protect the operator against unintended operations through the crane's own lever controls. There are systems available that constantly monitor the lever positions and will stop the crane immediately if the manual levers are operated at the same time as the remote control. This makes it impossible for the crane to be tampered with, or, moved in any way whilst the remote control is activated.

So, if using radio remote control has so many advantages, why is it not fitted to every new crane? Well, it obviously comes at a price. But, like most things electronic, the price is dropping. The take-up of remote controls in the UK, however, is still relatively slow compared to its European neighbours.

In Sweden, approximately 80 percent of new knuckle boom cranes are supplied with radio remote control systems, whereas in the UK this figure is less than 10 percent, although it is growing. The additional cost for such a system is in the order of 4 to 6 percent of the cost of the new vehicle cost (of a lorry loader), but it is easily recovered due to the improvement in efficiency obtained.

Obviously, not all loader crane

# from a distance

**The extended reach and increased lifting capacity of today's loader cranes means that they are more versatile than ever before. But, these benefits have not come without additional demands for operators. Here we take a look at the value of remote controls.**

As the lifting operations, as well as the technology, of loader cranes become increasingly complex, greater vigilance is required on the part of the operator. The use of remote control systems with loader cranes though can play a major part in enabling the operator to carry out his/her duties in a safe and efficient manner.

Remote controls for loader cranes have been available for many years, but early versions were connected to the crane by a cable. These systems provided a significant improvement in flexibility for the loader crane, but the cables were subject to damage and naturally had a finite length, thereby restricting the range over which the controls could be used.

More recently, the 'wireless' or 'radio' remote control has become a widely available option on knuckle boom cranes (in fact, with certain models it now comes as standard). With the developments in digital technology, radio remote control systems have become extremely sophisticated, enabling major steps forward in the safety and efficiency of loader crane operations.

These advances in technology permit the control of loader cranes from much greater distances, provide the operator with a better view of the working area and allow him/her to remain in safe visual contact with the load. This often negates the need for a banksman and allows more accurate positioning of the load. The operator's ability to be closer to the load also allows him/her to work more efficiently if hooking or slinging is required.

Add this to the fact that the operator can now remove him/herself from noise and exhaust pollution associated with traditional control positions and also the improved safety of the new operating location, and it is easy to understand why an increasing number of end users are opting for remote control systems when purchasing loader cranes.

## The technology

With customers driving demand, manufacturers are responding with impressive developments. Radio remote control systems can now incorporate many specialist features. A selection of different working speeds for the crane can be offered enabling specific adjustments to suit the operating situation, while integrated display panels give the operator continuous information about the load condition of the crane. Pre-programmed frequencies allow all frequency ranges to be checked simultaneously when the remote system is activated. An available frequency is selected automatically, thus preventing interference from



*In Sweden, approximately 80 percent of new knuckle boom cranes are supplied with radio remote control systems, whereas in the UK this figure is less than 10 percent.*



## IPAF members help light up London

Two IPAF members recently provided the access know-how at this year's traditional turning on of London's Christmas lights. Access training company, Kingfisher Access Services supplied an operator to manoeuvre a scissor lift, supplied by SGB, into position in front of Selfridges' Oxford Street store.

Mayor of London, Ken Livingstone, was joined on the scissor lift platform by five of Britain's Olympic medallists from this year's games to turn on this year's lights and promote London's 2012 Olympic bid.

Rochester-based Kingfisher has a training centre in West Thurrock, Essex and is a specialist in operator training for access platforms used in film, broadcast and entertainment events, as well as a general training provider.

The highly qualified operator for the prestigious London job was Brian Philips – one of Kingfisher's IPAF Instructors.



## CPA joins IPAF in harness campaign

The Construction Plant-hire Association (CPA) has joined IPAF in a new campaign that stresses the need for platform operators to wear a full body harness – unless a specific risk assessment gives valid reasons for not doing so.

The joint IPAF-CPA Powered Access Interest Group is convinced that lives would be saved if the wearing of a full body harness becomes the norm. "We know of tragic cases around the world where the correct use of a harness and restraint lanyard would have almost certainly prevented an operator being killed," said Tim Whiteman, IPAF managing director.

IPAF Training Centres already offer half-day courses on the correct selection, inspection and use of harnesses in powered access equipment. The message of the courses, reiterated by the campaign, is that users of self-propelled boom or vehicle-mounted boom work platforms should wear a full body harness with a restraint (short) lanyard, unless a risk assessment has established valid reasons for not doing so. Scissor lift users do not normally need to wear a full harness, but a risk assessment should still be performed to establish whether or not one is necessary.

## Worldwide safety debate heats up

A series of conferences organised by IPAF at Modena and the SAIE exhibit in Bologna, Italy in October attracted an impressive turnout of Italy's regional machinery safety inspectors, executives from companies specialising in the supply of services to the county's hospital sector, representatives from town councils and rental companies.



Tim Whiteman highlighted the need for operator training at both venues, and repeated his message three weeks later on the other side of the Atlantic in his keynote opening address to the Aerial Platform Safety Conference in Dallas, Texas. Hot topics included the correct use of harnesses and the legal responsibilities of rental companies when delivering equipment. Delegates included contractors, rental companies, manufacturers, trainers, safety organisations and state officials.

## EN280 in Italy: inconsistencies accepted

**Dr Ing Antonio Luigi di Renzo's acceptance of inconsistency in Italy over the interpretation of the load sensing requirements in EN280 has created real hope for a solution to the problem which seriously concerns manufacturers and platform users.**

As coordinator of MEWP Homologations and Certifications for Italian safety body ISPESL, Dr di Renzo made the point during his presentations 'Harmonised EN280 – limits of applicability and impact on the market' at IPAF conferences during SAIE, in Bologna, and Italy's leading occupational health and safety fair in Modena.

Almost 30 percent of nearly 200 delegates at Modena were regional machinery safety inspectors, so questions from the floor confirmed significant differences in interpretation between ISPESL and the regional institutions (ASL, USL, ARPAV) responsible for decisions on the ground. Some areas apply their own interpretation of the regulations and, in others, inspections are hampered by the shortage of experienced technical staff. The lack of an official Italian language translation of the EN280 standard itself further compounds the problem.

Dr di Renzo was also critical of the development of EN280. Slow progress and the late addition of load sensing resulted in many manufacturers designing to pr EN280 – which did not include load sensing. Hence, some regional control bodies refer directly to the machinery directive, which was

harmonised in Italian national legislation – decree DPR 459 of 24 July 1996, which came into force on 21 December, 1996.

In addition to the problems in Italy, Dr di Renzo recognised a Europe-wide dimension. Machinery inspection is inconsistent across the EU as it is regulated by individual member states. This also threatens the free movement of machines.

With the underlying reasons for the problem clarified, Gerhard Hillebrand of IPAF-Italia anticipated further involvement in the resolution of the problem: "IPAF has been pushing for action on this for a long time – both internationally through the EU and locally within Italy. Now that we have a clear acceptance of the problem, IPAF can work closely with ISPESL, ASL, USL and ARPAV as well as present further evidence to the EU itself to help ensure uniform interpretation of load sensing requirements throughout our country."



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# Self-propelled TELEHANDLER

HTN of The Netherlands has designed a complete self-propelled, remote control kit for smaller sized telehandlers, such as the Merlo P26.6 pictured, that allows the unit to not only be remotely operated, but also driven from a boom-mounted platform.

Full EN280 compliance and approval is available for converted machines. The modification is based around an Autec remote control system. The only visible external signs indicating the modification of a unit is an electrical box fitted behind the driver's cab. Larger units can also be modified, but only to a height or radius that allows the unit to comply with EN280 regulations. The unit shown offers a platform height of six metres and has also been equipped with a set of external speakers for the machine's radio, providing on board music while you work.



## Gearing up

Italy-based producer Bonfiglioli has launched its new 1,750 to 45,000 Nm range 600 series gearbox line for direct control of drive wheels on vehicles with hydrostatic transmission. The new series comprises two versions. The smaller 'R' version has been designed for applications with small diameter wheels, whereas the larger 'W' version targets plant with greater diameter wheels and, according to Bonfiglioli, is particularly suitable for off-road vehicles. Other main applications include overhead cranes for deck or container handling and aerial work platforms.

Depending on design, the two versions can be used with many wheel-types, e.g. single or twin-type,



while bearings positioned close to the rim-connecting flange prevent the excessive reduction of transport loads. Available for both versions are a wide range of reduction ratios and two brake designs, while there are numerous, ready-to-install facilities for leading makes of hydraulic motors. A mechanical de-clutching device between motor and gearbox is available as an optional item permitting the towing of the vehicle in an emergency.

## All-weather hoists

Allied Power Products (APPI) in the US has developed this 181.4 kilogram capacity material handling davit crane equipped with AC electrical wire rope hoists. Developed on request by the US Department of Commerce (DOC) a total 160 units were originally supplied to the National Ocean Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) for material duties and maintenance on the Nexrad weather radar domes operated by the NOAA.

Each davit utilises an APPI brand Columbia hoist with 35 metres of cable on the drum, while the average hoisting speed is 7.62 metres per minute, which according to APPI reduces the time to move materials to the working levels of the radar platforms by a factor of four or more.



## Tough control

Control hardware producer, Penny + Giles, has introduced a new addition to its JC6000 robust multi-axis joysticks. The company claims that through the use of non-contact Hall effect technology, the new JC6000, designed for use in harsh operating environments, lasts up to 15 million operations, double the amount of joysticks that use potentiometer technology. The unit has been designed with a 50 percent stronger lever than its JC600 predecessor and meets EMC requirements of up to 100V/m.

The Hall effect technology utilises contactless sensing of the lever movement and dual independent output signals that can be monitored and compared for failure detection in safety critical operations. A combination of Hall sensors with independent contacting track switches on each axis can be selected to provide further operator safety features.



## enquiries ↓

To contact any of these companies simply visit the "Industry Links" section of [www.vertikal.net](http://www.vertikal.net), where you will find direct links to the companies' web sites for up to five weeks after publication.

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[www.platformcompany.co.uk](http://www.platformcompany.co.uk)

All training centres above offer IPAF approved and audited courses for Operators of Mobile aerial work platforms, European directives require that all staff are fully and adequately trained in the safe use of the equipment they operate. See [www.ipaf.org](http://www.ipaf.org) for full listing

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## Apex 2005

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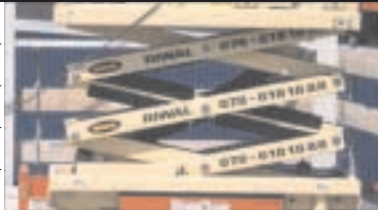
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JLG 80HX+6	1999	2	4x4, oscillating axle, jib



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CONEXPO	<a href="http://www.conexpoconagg.com">www.conexpoconagg.com</a>
PLATFORMER DAYS	<a href="http://www.platformers-days.de">www.platformers-days.de</a>
SED	<a href="http://www.sed.co.uk">www.sed.co.uk</a>
WORLD of CONCRETE 2005	<a href="http://www.worldofconcrete.com">www.worldofconcrete.com</a>

## CRANE ENTHUSIASTS SITES

Crane Gear	<a href="http://www.cranegear.com">www.cranegear.com</a>
German Crane Model Site	<a href="http://www.igfbsk.de">www.igfbsk.de</a>
Lifting World	<a href="http://www.lifting-world.co.uk">www.lifting-world.co.uk</a>

## ALLOY TOWERS

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1999 - £28,000 (€40,000)



**Grove MZ46cxt – 4WD**

telescopic boom. Hatz diesel. 46ft work height (14m) Choice  
1999 - £13,000 (€18,500)



**MZ116**

telescopic boom. Cummins diesel. 116ft work height. (35.3m) Choice  
1999 - £45,000 (€64,500)  
2000 - £50,000 (€71,500)

**Genie Z45/25 BI – 2wd articulated boom.**

Battery and Kubota diesel. 51ft work height (15.5m).  
1999 - £16,000 (€23,000)  
2000 - £18,000 (€25,750)  
2002 - £22,000 (€31,500)

**Genie Z45/25 RT – 4WD articulated boom.**

Battery and Kubota diesel. 51ft work height (15.5m).  
2002 - £22,000 (€1,500)

**Genie Z60/34 – 4WD articulated boom.**

Deutz diesel. 66ft work height (20.1m). Choice.  
2003– POA

**Genie Z80/60 – 4WD articulated boom.**

Deutz diesel. 86ft work height (26.2m) Choice.  
2003 - POA

**Genie S60 – 4WD telescopic boom.**

Cummins diesel. 66ft work height (20.1m) Choice.  
1999 - £ 24,000 (€ 34,500)

**Genie S65 – 4WD telescopic boom.**

Cummins diesel. 71ft work height (21.6m) Choice.  
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**Genie S85 – 4WD telescopic boom.**

Cummins diesel. 91ft work height (27.7m) Choice.  
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**Genie S125 – 4WD telescopic boom.**

Cummins diesel. 131ft work height (40m) Choice.  
2002 – POA

**Grove MZ46c – 2WD telescopic boom.**

Hatz diesel. 46ft work height (14m) Choice.  
1998 - £11,000 (€15,750)

**Grove MZ66b – 2wd telescopic boom.**

66ft work height (20.1m). Hatz diesel. Choice.  
1997 - £10,000 (€14,250)

**Grove MZ66c – 2wd telescopic boom.**

66ft work height (20.1m). Hatz diesel. Choice.  
1996 - £10,000 (€14,250)  
1997 - £11,000 (€15,750)

**Grove MZ66dxt – 4WD telescopic boom.**

Deutz diesel. 66ft work height (20.1m) Choice.  
1999 - £19,000 (€27,250)

**Grove AMZ68xt – 4WD articulated boom.**

Deutz diesel. 68ft work height (20.3m) Choice.  
1998 - £18,000 (€25,750)

**Grove AMZ86xt – 4WD articulated boom.**

Cummins diesel. 86ft work height (26.2m) Choice.  
1997 - £25,000 (€35,750)

**JLG 120HX – 4WD telescopic boom.**

126ft work height (39m). Deutz diesel. Choice.  
1999 - £45,000 (€64,500)



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### Skyjack 7027 – 4wd

Kubota diesel scissors.  
33ft work height.  
Deck extension.  
Choice.  
1996 - £ 5,000 (€7,250)  
1998 - £ 8,500 (€12,000)  
1999 - £ 9,750 (€14,000)



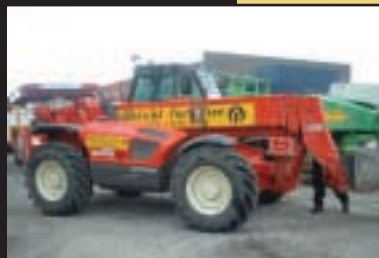
### Falck Schmidt FS290

Specialised indoor access machine. 90ft.  
Multi-Fuel power.  
2002 - POA



### Manitou BT420 – 4wd

Perkins diesel teleporter.  
4m work height,  
2 tonnes max lift.  
Choice.  
2000 - £ 15,500 (€22,000)  
2001 - POA  
2002 - POA



### Manitou MT1233

4wd Perkins diesel teleporter. 12m work height, 3.3 tonnes max lift.  
Jacks  
2000 - £ 19,950 (€29,000)  
2001 - POA  
2002 - POA



### Skyjack SJ9250

4wd Kubota diesel scissors.  
56ft (17m) work height.  
Hydraulic outriggers.  
Choice  
1998 - £ 13,500 (€19,950)  
1999 - £ 17,750 (€26,000)

### Denka DL28 – Trailer mounted hoist.

Donkey diesel. Hyd. Outriggers,  
90ft work height (28m). Choice.  
1999 - £27,500 (€39,250)

### Denka DL22 – Specialised narrow access hoist.

Hydraulic jacks. 72ft (22m) work height.  
Battery powered. Choice.  
2000 - £29,500 - (€42,000)

### Scanlift SL185 – All terrain hoist.

4WD, Crab steer. 60ft work height (18.5m).  
Kubota diesel. Hyd. Outriggers. Choice.  
1999 - £15,000 (€21,500)  
2000 - £19,500 (€28,000)

### Scanlift SL240 - All terrain hoist.

4WD, Crab steer. 78ft work height (24m).  
Kubota diesel. Hyd. Outriggers. Choice.  
2000 - £27,000 (€38,500)  
2001 - £29,000 (€41,500)

### Nifty 170 – Trailer mounted hoist.

Kubota diesel and battery.  
56ft work height (17m) Hyd. Outriggers. Choice.  
1997 - £9,000 (€13,000)  
1998 - £10,000 (€14,250)

### Upright AB38 – 2wd articulated battery boom.

44ft work height. Choice.  
2001- £11,000 (€15,750)

### Upright XRT33 – 4wd diesel scissors.

39ft work height (12m) Deck extension. Choice.  
2000 - £9,000 (€13,000)

### Skyjack 4626 – 2wd battery scissors.

32ft work height. Deck extension. Choice.  
1999 - £5,000 - (€7,250)

### Skyjack 7027 – 4wd Kubota diesel scissors.

33ft work height. Deck extension. Choice.  
1996 - £5,000 (€8,000)  
1998 - £8,250 (€12,000)  
1999 - £9,500 (€14,000)

### Skyjack SJ8841 – 4wd Kubota diesel scissors.

46ft work height. Deck extensions. Choice.  
1998 - £12,500 (€18,000)  
1999 - £14,000 (€21,000)

### Skyjack SJ9250 – 4wd Kubota diesel scissors.


56ft (17m) work height. Hydraulic outriggers.  
1998 - £13,500 (€19,950)  
1999 - £17,750 (€26,000)



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### Telescopic AT-Cranes

capacity	manufacturer	type	year	drive/steering	boom/jib (m)	delivery
90 t	Liebherr	LTM 1090	1991	10 x 8 x 10	45 / 20	direct
80 t	Krupp	KMK 4080	1994	8 x 6 x 8	43 / 13	direct
70 t	Liebherr	LTM 1070/1	1995	8 x 6 x 8	40 / 15,8	direct
70 t	Liebherr	LTM 1070	1992	8 x 6 x 8	42 / 18	direct
70 t	Krupp	KMK 4070	1991	8 x 6 x 8	38 / 16	Dec. 2004
70 t	Krupp	KMK 4070	1990	8 x 6 x 8	38 / 16	direct
70 t	Krupp	70 GMT AT	1988	8 x 6 x 4	37 / 16	direct
60 t	Krupp	KMK 4060	1989	8 x 6 x 8	35 / 16	direct
55 t	Demag	AC 125	1987	6 x 6 x 6	30 / 14,5	Dec. 2004
50 t	Demag	AC 155	1997	6 x 6 x 6	40 / 17,6	direct
50 t	Demag	AC 155	1993	6 x 6 x 6	40 / 17,6	direct
50 t	Faun	ATF 50-3	1995	6 x 6 x 6	38,6 / 16	direct
45 t	Krupp	KMK 3045 (3x)	1990	6 x 4 x 6	32 / 13	direct
40 t	Demag	AC 40-1	1999	6 x 4 x 6	31 / 13	direct
40 t	Liebherr	LTM 1035-3	1989	6 x 4 x 6	30 / 8,3	direct
35 t	PPM	400/3 ATT	2001	4 x 4 x 4	30,4 / 15	direct
35 t	PPM	380 ATT	1989	4 x 4 x 4	30,4 / 7,5	direct
35 t	PPM	380 ATT	1986	4 x 4 x 4	30,4 / 7,5	direct
35 t	P&H	S 35	1989	4 x 4 x 4	25,9 / 13	direct
35 t	P&H	S 35	1986	4 x 4 x 4	25,9 / 8	direct
35 t	Krupp	35 GMT	1986	4 x 4 x 4	26 / 8	Dec. 2004
35 t	Krupp	35 GMT AT	1985	4 x 4 x 4	26 / 1	direct
25 t	Liebherr	LTM 1025	1990	4 x 4 x 4	26 / 8,2	direct
25 t	Liebherr	LTM 1025	1990	4 x 4 x 2	26 / 8,2	direct
25 t	Krupp	KMK 2025	1994	4 x 4 x 4	23 / 13	direct
25 t	Krupp	KMK 2025 (4x)	1992	4 x 4 x 4	23 / 13	direct
25 t	Krupp	25 GMT AT	1987	4 x 4 x 4	23 / 9	direct
20 t	Krupp	KMK 2020	1990	4 x 4 x 4	20	direct

### Rough-Terrain Cranes

capacity	manufacturer	type	year	drive/steering	boom/jib (m)	delivery
35 t	Pinguely	TT 386	1979	4 x 4 x 4	31 / 9	direct

### Telescopic Truck Cranes

capacity	manufacturer	type	year	drive/steering	boom/jib (m)	delivery
60 t	Grove	TT 865 E	1993	8 x 6 x 8	38 / 16	direct
50 t	Grove	TM 750 E	1988	8 x 4 x 4	38 / 16	direct
50 t	Grove	TM 750 E	1985	8 x 4 x 4	38 / 16	direct
25 t	PPM	C 280	1990	6 x 4 x 2	30 / 9	direct
25 t	PPM	C 280	1990	6 x 4 x 2	30	direct

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