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EPL takes first Wumags



EPL ACCESS has taken delivery of the UK's first Wumag WT 355 truck-mounted aerial work platforms through Wumag's UK distributor, SkyKing. The two 35.5 metre working height, 25 metre outreach machines are mounted on 18 tonne MAN chassis and each comprise a four-section telescopic boom with fly-boom and extending cage.

Commenting on the purchase, EPL's managing director John Jennings said: "We were

particularly impressed with each unit's ability to work effectively on narrow jacks, which makes the machines ideal for use in confined spaces. Even with the jack legs deployed within the vehicle width, the units can still provide a 12 metre outreach measured from the centreline of the machine, without compromising stability."

The units will be operated from EPL's London and Birmingham depots and will be used for a wide variety of applications such as property, structural and highway maintenance EPL today operates one of the UK's largest hire fleets of van and truck-mounted platforms. ■

Elevation files for voluntary liquidation

ELEVATION EQUIPMENT Company, until last year one of Ireland's largest aerial work platform rental companies, has filed for voluntary liquidation. Earlier this year, the company's bankers withdrew their support, while several finance companies and manufacturers decided to call time on the outstanding equipment leases and repossess the firm's equipment.

Hundreds of machines were taken back by manufacturers and finance companies, many of which were auctioned off. The net result of the loss of the majority of Elevation's rental fleet, along with the absence of bank support, made it impossible for the company to continue to trade. Staff were subsequently laid off and rental activity ceased.

Elevation was founded in Belfast almost 25 years ago by Robin Ardil, originally with alloy scaffold towers and then powered access. The company was for many years one of the strongest Simon customers in the UK and in 1989 moved to southern Ireland and opened up in the Dublin area. The company had a wide range of access equipment in its fleet, from mast climbers to crawler mounted booms and scissors to suspended cradles and alloy towers. It also added telescopic handlers in recent years. ■

JLG purchases Access Industrie facility

JLG has signed a letter of intent to purchase the inventory and equipment of the aerial work platform refurbishment centre owned by Access Industrie in Tonniens in the southwest of France.

As part of the agreement, JLG will sub-lease the 2,500 square metre facility that houses the rebuild activity. The operation was set up in 2001 specifically for the refurbishment, repair and rebuilding of aerial work platforms. The deal is expected to close early this year.

Israel Celli, vice president international sales, marketing and customer support for JLG stated: "This transaction is consistent with our strategy to bring reconditioning services to Europe during this fiscal year, and build on our JLG equipment services re-manufacturing model in North America." ■



HEWEDEN CRANE Hire supplied all the crane power over an 18 month period to assist in the restoration of 130 year-old Victorian water tower in Lymm, Cheshire. The tower's owner, Russell Harris, is restoring the grade II listed landmark into a family home. As part of the contract, Hewden supplied a 35 tonne Demag (pictured) to lift steel beams to reinforce the structure's floors and also lift a 26 tonne, 157 piece steel framework. ■



Bauma travel plans

WITH OVER 400,000 visitors descending in Munich for Bauma in just a few months time, flights and hotels will be very much in demand. But help is at hand! Bauma

organisers recommend two UK-based travel companies, which hold block bookings of hotels, and which can also organise an all-in package tour.

Three-day, two-night packages, including flights, single hotel room and a three-day pass to the show, cost from £545. Pressplan Travel and Commercial Trade Travel both have packages available, although the latter company has limited availability. Both companies' contact details can be found at the bottom of this article.

ENTRANCE TO THE SHOW: Pre-registering for your entrance ticket helps avoid the queues at the ticket booths and also saves money. A single day pass costs £10 and a three day pass £26. Both options are available from Bauma's UK agent, Pattern (details below).

If you are a buyer, however, you should be able to obtain a complimentary ticket from one of your suppliers if they are exhibiting. Your bauma entrance ticket will also serve as a pass for free travel on the Munich public transport network during the show.

Buses run from the airport to the show.

HOTELS: The Bauma website has a good search engine for finding your own hotel, or alternatively hotel booking may be available as part of one of the above mentioned packages.

LOCAL TRAVEL TO THE SHOW: By far the best way is via the metro system, which has two stops within the exhibition grounds. For cranes and access equipment stands, visitors should take the second stop to save a long walk. From the airport you can take a bus, which will stop at the entrance to the new outside mining area. A medium length walk and you will be amongst the familiar booms of the crane and access area. Don't forget to collect your Vertikal Bauma guide from the Vertikal Press, which will also be available as follows:

- Posted on the Vertikal.net website a few days prior to the show;
- Available to order by special delivery before the show at £10 / €15 within the UK;
- Reserve a copy for collection at the Vertikal stand via info@vertikal.net;
- Collect a copy from the Vertikal Press stand or from one of the distribution points at the show. Please note, however that, we will only have around 10,000 unreserved copies at the show, so first come first served!

PRESSPLAN TRAVEL: Tel: +44 (0) 845 644 1381

or simply go to their website from the 'Links' section of www.Vertikal.net

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Grove flagship for Krangaarden

DENMARK-BASED crane hire firm, Krangaarden, is now amongst the first European owners of Grove's flagship 450 tonne capacity GMK7450 all terrain crane. The crane was put straight to work on a project in Skive for the dismantling of 110 metre high telecommunications mast, and the erection of a replacement structure. The crane was rigged with 100 tonnes of counterweight with a 30 metre boom extension on its 55 metre main boom, and a 61 metre luffing jib.

Krangaarden now operates a fleet of 14 mobile cranes with capacities ranging from 35 tonnes up to what is now its biggest unit, the 450 tonne Grove. The crane will also be kitted-out with Grove's MegaWingLift lateral boom support attachment for enhancing high-lift capabilities at short radii. ■

CIRIA releases updated crane stability guide

THE CONSTRUCTION Industry Research and Information Association (CIRIA) has published a fully updated second edition of its 'Crane stability on site guide'. The new edition takes into account changes in legislation and best practise and offers information on the various factors which should be considered when planning the use of mobile and tower cranes on site.

Topics covered in the guide include type and choice of crane, loading cases, ground conditions, foundation details and references to other topical material. A new section on the LOLER regulations has been included along with an updated and expanded section on crane types and method statements for climbing tower cranes. ■

Scaninter in management buyout

GERMANY-BASED scaffolding group, Plettac AG, has announced the sale of the majority ownership of its Scaninter Group subsidiary, which manufactures the Scanclimber mast climbing work platforms and personnel/material hoists.

A management buy-out team, comprising of Scaninter Group managing director, Juha Asikainen, and chairman, Markku Simanainen, the original founders of the Scaninter Group and previously minority shareholders of the firm, have together purchased 55 per cent of ownership.

A Scaninter official said that Asikainen and Simanainen decided to purchase the majority of the shares from Plettac, which has been in financial trouble since the beginning of the year, to regain independence of Scaninter and secure future growth.

*The announcement comes just a few days after the purchase of US-based access equipment manufacturer and supplier, Bil-Jax, also from parent company Plettac AG, through a partnership between a Bil-Jax management team and Indianapolis-based Centerfield Capital. ■

FULL STORY ON WWW.VERTIKAL.NET

JCB targets military



THIS NEW 2.3 tonne capacity military telescopic handler was among some of the new equipment on display from JCB at its recent military day at its world headquarters in Rocester, UK. More than 200 military representatives from as far afield as Columbia and Chile were invited to inspect JCB's latest equipment designed specifically for military applications.

The specially adapted 523M Loadall telehandler (pictured above) is capable of speeds of up to 55 miles per hour and has a low profile design for easy cornering and improved travel over harsh terrains. It can also be transported in a Hercules C130 aircraft or by a heavy-lift helicopter. ■

Effer Holding merges operations

AN AGREEMENT between Effer Holding SpA and subsidiaries, Effer SpA and Hydrom Srl has resulted in the merging of the assets of the latter companies into Effer Holding SpA effective from January 1, 2004. Effer Holding SpA is also the holding company of the Effer knuckle boom and Bizzochi aerial work platform brand names.

The move was agreed at a recent meeting between the three companies' board of directors, where Giancarlo Monti, chairman of Effer Holding SpA, also reported that sales in the group's articulating knuckle boom crane sector in the 2003 fiscal year improved by 2 per cent compared with 2002.

"This tops a sales increase of plus 4 per cent during the 2001/2 period that goes opposite to the market trend," said Monti. "The most reliable sources predicted and confirmed a general slowdown for this industry, ranging from 10 to 20 per cent below last year's mark." ■

FULL STORY ON WWW.VERTIKAL.NET

Skyjack closes European base

CANADA-BASED scissor lift producer, Skyjack, has closed its continental European base in Mijdrecht, The Netherlands, and centralised all administration, invoicing and parts activities for Europe at its Oswestry facility in Shropshire, UK.

Only one of the six employees at Mijdrecht has remained with the company. Ron Schreurs, previously a parts specialist, has moved to the post of salesman for Benelux, Germany, Austria and Switzerland.

Skyjack will now locate stock machines at four locations in Europe, including Oswestry for the UK and Ireland, Nordic Lift in Goteborg, Sweden, which will cover Scandinavia, Plataformas Moyma in Madrid, Spain, which will cover southern Europe and a final location in the Benelux region yet to be announced.

Skyjack claims that the move does not represent a withdrawal from continental Europe but more of a "restructuring". Martin Davies who now has overall responsibility for Europe said that this change will allow the company to "bulk up its operation in the UK with all departing roles in Holland being replaced in the UK, possibly with some additional staff on top". ■

Manitowoc to take Kobelco crawlers

THE MANITOWOC Crane Group and Japan-based Kobelco Construction Machinery have signed an agreement which will see Kobelco supply Manitowoc with a range of lattice boom crawler cranes under 136 tonnes (150 US tons) capacity. The Manitowoc-branded cranes will be sold and supported through the company's existing North American dealer network.

Manitowoc said that lattice boom cranes supplied by Kobelco will be clearly differentiated from Kobelco's own lattice booms and that Kobelco will continue to market and distribute its own full lattice boom line, ranging from 55 to 250 tons (50 to 250 tonnes), through its current distributor network in the Americas. Manitowoc is yet to issue model designations for the new cranes, which will be available by the second quarter of 2004. ■

HSE calls on industry for Work at Height guidance

THE HEALTH and Safety Commission (HSC) is seeking views from industry, unions and workers on draft work at height regulations and guidance. HSC chair Bill Callaghan last month opened a four-month consultation period and launched a consultation document that sets out the proposed new regulations and guidance to improve the planning, organising and management of work at height. "Despite recent improvements," he said, "falling from height remains the single biggest cause of workplace deaths and the second biggest cause of serious injuries.

"These draft regulations are designed to ensure that people work at height safely in Great Britain across all industries. The consultation document sets out the draft regulations and guidance and we welcome views from all those with an interest. We have already consulted widely with industry in drafting these regulations in an effort to get them right. But if there are any outstanding issues or concerns about the proposed regulations and guidance, now is the time to tell us.

"The draft regulations bring together all existing regulations on working at height into one set of regulations and will implement the European Community Temporary Work at Height Directive."

The consultation period will run until 2 April, 2004, after which time final drafting and changes will be made, based on respondents feedback, and it is expected that final proposals will be put to ministers by late 2004. The proposed new regulations are set out in consultation document, CD192, which is available on the HSE website at <http://www.hse.gov.uk/consult/live.htm> ■

FULL STORY ON WWW.VERTIKAL.NET



Nootboom goes mega

THE NETHERLANDS-BASED trailer manufacturer, Nootboom, has come up with an altogether new concept for the transportation of the tower sections and nacelles of wind turbine installations of up to 3 megawatts.

The MEGA Windmill Transporter consists of 2 hydraulically extendable lift adapters that can be universally employed on various vehicle types. During transportation, the tower section or nacelle is clamped between the two 50 tonne capacity adapters (100 tonnes in total), which together can load and unload the tower sections without the need for an external crane.

Each lift adapter is infinitely hydraulically adjustable to fit the diameter of the tower section or nacelle and can be moved in any direction by remote control. The combination length is kept to a minimum, depending on the length of the payload, which in turn is dependent on the country of operation.

According to Nootboom, wind power capacity in Europe will have grown from 15,000 megawatts today, to 60,000 megawatts by 2010. This will not only mean more windmills, but larger structures of anything up to 100 metres or more in height with heavier nacelles, longer rotor blades and larger tower components. ■

FULL STORY ON WWW.VERTIKAL.NET



Manitowoc drops boom and scissor lines

Manitowoc Crane Group has announced plans to restructure its Manlift aerial work platform businesses in order to focus solely on its Toucan vertical mast product range. The firm's plans include the discontinuation of all US Manlift production at the company's US facility at Shady Grove in Pennsylvania, and also all scissor and boom lift product segments in Europe. The Liftflux facility in Dillingen, Germany will be closed.

The development of the Toucan product range, which is produced in France and marketed under the Manlift brand and Toucan product name throughout Europe, will continue to be developed, while all parts and service support network for the eliminated product lines will continue through Manitowoc Crane Care.

This announcement brings an end to 24 years of participation in the powered access market by Grove, and is the end of the line for three original access companies, Selma-Manlift, Liftflux and TKD. ■

FULL STORY ON WWW.VERTIKAL.NET



HAMPSHIRE PLANT recently supplied Winchester cathedral with this 12.36 metre Genie TZ-34/20 trailer mounted boom to help with re-wiring work for the building's sound system. ■

Kobelco opens UK crane HQ

AT THE time of going to press, Kobelco reported to C&A that it will be opening a new office in East Grinstead in the UK, solely dedicated to its crane business. Kobelco Cranes Europe Ltd, will be dedicated to selling, marketing and providing after sales product support for all Kobelco cranes directly to end-users throughout the Europe region. Up until now, Kobelco has centred all of its direct European crane operations, combined with its excavator business, from its Kobelco Construction Machinery (Europe) B.V. headquarters in The Netherlands. More information will be posted on www.Vertikal.net as it is issued. Both companies are wholly owned subsidiaries of Japan-based Kobelco Construction Machinery Co. ■

One to look out for

ON LOOKING into the amended *Special Types General Order* rules, August 2003, it has become apparent to C&A that the revised crane transportation rules will not actually have any major practical impact on most cranes. The effect on larger cranes at first looked daunting, but our research now suggests that most existing big cranes will still be able to travel intact. Watch out for the full report to be issued shortly on www.Vertikal.net and in the February/March issue of *Cranes & Access*. ■

Adorian acquires PAC



FORMER INTERNATIONAL Powered Access Federation (IPAF) managing director, Paul Adorian, has acquired PAC, the specialist EC Notified Body for powered access and related equipment. IPAF's Board accepted an offer made by Adorian, previously the managing director of both companies prior to his retirement from IPAF on the 31 December of last year, for 100 per cent of the equity of the former IPAF wholly-owned subsidiary. Adorian will continue his position as managing director of PAC.

Commenting on the purchase, Adorian said that among his plans for the company is the introduction of numerous new services, such as those in the area of legislation, its interpretation and implications. "I hope that we will be able to make the complex issue of European legislation more discernible, he said." PAC will maintain close links with IPAF and continue to provide technical consultancy and representation on EC and other technical committees, while its technical officers will continue to assess Competent Assessed Persons (CAP) Scheme attendees on behalf of IPAF, which will run the scheme.

Since the initial transfer of the total equity to Adorian, existing persons within PAC have already taken an equity stake in the company. These now include, John Hocking, PAC technical director, and Tim Watson and Peter Reed, PAC technical officers. "It makes sense for those most active in providing the service to our clients to have a direct interest in the company," said Adorian. "In this way, I believe the level of service that we provide can only improve, and I want to assure everyone that our general approach will remain as before." ■

Clapham crane collapse

A GERMAN-made 100 tonne capacity Kirow 810(UK) rail mounted crane belonging to Balfour Beatty Rail toppled over earlier this month, blocking two of the four rail tracks into the UK's busiest station, Clapham Junction, causing chaos for up to 75,000 commuters.

The crane was carrying out routine point replacement duties between Clapham Junction and Waterloo station when it toppled over. No one was hurt in the incident. Specialist engineers from the Kirow factory in Leipzig, eastern Germany, later flew into London to help assess the cause of the accident. It is understood that the crane's computerised load management system which carries a record of all the crane's lifting sequences will hold the clues as to what caused the crane to collapse.

A Kirow official said that once engineers had downloaded data from the crane's computer, it should become clear what was happening when the crane collapsed and whether or not mechanic failure or human error played a part in the incident. ■

FULL STORY ON WWW.VERTIKAL.NET

de Vigier dies at age 91

SWITZERLAND-BORN William Alphonse "Bill" de Vigier has died at the age of 91. He passed away on December 20, 2003. Veterans of the crane and access industries will know his name well from all he achieved, following on from the founding of Acrow (Engineers) Ltd, which went on to dominate the UK crane industry.

Acrow was transformed into a truly global company after de Vigier made it into a public company shortly after the Second World War. Acquisitions included Bailey bridges, scaffolding and formwork before the group was turned into world leading player in the crane business with the acquisition of the Steel Group in 1975. This gave Acrow ownership of Coles Cranes, which incorporated Neal & Co, Taylor & Sons and Priestman brothers of Hull, the bulk of the UK crane industry. In 1985 after several years of difficulties, the Acrow group went into administration and the slimmed down crane division, based in Sunderland, was picked up by Grove. ■

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Basket stays on track

SPECIALIST RAIL access hire company, Rail Access Platforms, has taken delivery of the first batch of specially designed 'road-rail' access platforms custom-built by Italy-based manufacturer, Basket. The 14 metre working height SEL 14 AJX RR platforms were delivered through Basket's UK dealer, Promax Access, complete with full EN280 and CE approval and are, according to Promax, among the first units to be actually designed and built specifically as road-rail platforms.

Each unit features a tilting turret system connected to a plate rather than directly to the platform's carriage to allow platform levelling independently of the chassis. This enables work to be carried out safely on rail cambers of up to 200 millimetres, said to be the most extreme on UK railways.

Promax Technical Director, Mark Caves said: "The only purpose designed and built 'road-railer' with EN280 approval, the SEL14 AJX RR has set the standards for all future road access platforms, surpassing the latest and most stringent VAB requirements. Unfortunately, the existing mix of rail-road platforms include excavators with man cages attached, or use standard access platforms with retrofitted rail gear known as 'cut & shunts', normally resulting in an extreme loss of working envelope. Because the existing road rail machines were never designed for use on rails, they clearly fail to offer the level of rail specific safety and operator features and refinement that are now being demanded, and bring into question the validity of existing EN280 and CE approval when major changes are being carried out." ■



NCC takes new crantage

THE NATIONAL Construction College East, the training division of Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) in King's Lynn, Norfolk has taken delivery of four brand new cranes as part of its ongoing plant replacement programme.

The purchase includes a 10 tonne capacity Liebherr 132 ECH tower crane, a 30 tonne capacity Demag AC30 city class crane, a 30 tonne Liebherr truck mount and an 80 tonne capacity Kobelco CKE800 crawler crane.

The cranes will be used by trainees on CITB crawler crane, tower crane and truck mounted crane courses and on various lifting and slinger/signalling courses at the NCC. ■

Verschoor takes first new Spierings



VERSCHOOR KRANEN of Sassenheim in The Netherlands has taken delivery of the first Spierings "Mighty Tiny" SK1265-AT6 mobile folding crane. Mounted on a six-axle carrier, the 132 tonne/metre crane comprises a three-tower closed boom and a five-section jib which extends out to a total length of 60 metres where the lift capacity is 1.7 tonnes. Maximum capacity is 10 tonnes at a 13.2 metre radius. At maximum radius the unit's jib can also be luffed a further 30 degrees, decreasing the radius to 52.2 metres, but increasing hook height from 60 to 64 metres with a 1.7 tonne load. The whole crane can be set up in just 12 minutes from its folded position.

Verschoor is also expecting delivery of the second SK1265-AT6, which will also be supplied with a brand-new cab, built by Spierings and Belgium-based cab producer Ypcar. Spierings Kranen founder and designer of the Spierings folding crane, Leo Spierings, named the "Mighty Tiny" after his late wife, Tiny, who died in October 2001. ■

Sennebogen boosts SL crawler line

SENNEBOGEN BOOSTS SL crawler line Sennebogen in Germany has extended its Star-Lifter crawler crane line with the launch of a new 110 tonne capacity unit. The 3300 Star-Lifter (SL) crawler closes the gap between Sennebogen's 80 tonne capacity 2200 and the 140 tonne capacity 4400, and is now the 4th model in the range, which is capped at 180 tonnes capacity with the 5500 Star-Lifter version.

Main boom combinations of the crane are 63.5 or 74.7 metres, while an underhook height of 93.4 metres can be achieved with the machine's 41.1 metre main boom and 52.3 metre luffing jib. Also available for the 3300 SL is the option of a 57.9 metre main boom with a 29.9 metre fixed jib and also an auxiliary jib. Maximum capacity when working with the luffing jib is 37 tonnes.

As with all the models in Sennebogen's SL line, the 3300 features the standard self assembly system, incorporating a self ballast system, which allows for a crane set-up time of just a few hours. All boom elements of SL crawler cranes can be telescoped into one another to allow for transportation in a standard ISO container. ■



SEV delivers in Romania

GATESHEAD-BASED SEV Group has delivered its first batch of powered access equipment to its Romanian distributor, Electricom SA. The first order comprised an 18 metre truck mounted platform, three 13 metre truck mounted platforms and one 17 metre truck mount, all of which are destined for the Romanian electricity distribution authority and an additional municipal authority.

Commenting on the purchases, Stefan Ponea, Electricom marketing manager, said: "The Romanian market is growing rapidly but is currently dominated by refurbished machines which do not have full Romanian approval for rent or re-sale to end users. With the help of SEV, we were able to obtain the Romanian authority's ISCIR and Labour Safety approvals for the various models. We are now among those very few who are actually operating legally on the Romanian aftermarket."

Also commenting on the order, Brian Wiggins, SEV export manager, said: "Whilst sales here are very price driven, we believe that we will open up a potentially huge market – certainly for trailer mounts up to 17 metres." ■



WARWICKSHIRE COUNTY Council (WARCO) has taken delivery of the UK's first Versalift ET26NEXS van-mounted platform through Cambridge-based hire company, Risehire. The 9.2 metre working height, 5.5 metre outreach unit is mounted on a 2.9 tonne Vauxhall Vivaro van and has been developed to be operated without the need for stability jacks. The ET26NEXS is available in one-man configuration (120 kilogram platform capacity) without stabilisers, plus a two-man configuration (200 kilogram platform capacity) with stabilisers and a telescopic main boom and fixed fly-boom. ■

Filipov senior retires

TEREX CORPORATION has announced the retirement of its long-standing president and CEO, Fil Filipov, and that he will be replaced by his son Steve. Filipov senior has agreed to continue as a consultant to the company, focusing on restructuring activities and working on special projects.

Initially, Filipov senior and his company will assist with the restructuring, integration and operation of the company's latest acquisition, Tatra, a manufacturer of on/off road heavy-duty vehicles located in the Czech Republic. Filipov will continue his role as chairman of the supervisory board of Tatra.

"Fil has been an important part of Terex and I expect him to continue to make a meaningful contribution to the company in the future as a consultant," commented Ronald M DeFeo, Terex's chairman and CEO. "Fil has helped me over the past 10 years in transforming Terex from a small and financially stressed entity into a first class company. In the last year alone, he has been largely responsible for the successful integration of our acquisition of Demag Mobile Cranes into Terex. He is highly regarded in the crane industry and by everyone associated with Terex."

At the same time as the announcement of Filipov senior's retirement, Terex also announced the appointment of the new crane segment management team. Filipov's son, Steve, who has served most recently as group president of Terex Cranes International will assume the role of president of Terex Cranes.

"This is a natural transition as Steve has worked in the crane business for over 8 years and has strong customer and industry expertise," stated DeFeo. In his new position, Steve Filipov will oversee the worldwide operations of the Terex Cranes business. "I am pleased to accept this new challenge and look forward to taking Terex Cranes to the next level as an industry leader," commented Steve Filipov.

"We have had a successful and difficult year in 2003, considering the economics in the crane business. Following the acquisition of Demag Mobile Cranes a little over one year ago, we restructured the business and have built a strong base for our segment going into 2004." ■



News highlights

POWERED ACCESS hire firm, The Platform Company, has announced the completion of its acquisition of the Meek Group. The deal brings a further three UK depots to The Platform Company located in Bristol, Heathrow and Liverpool, adding to its existing eight UK sites.

MIC CORPORATION, Japan's largest crane rental company, has put its two new flagship 1250 Uston (1134 tonne) capacity Demag CC8800s straight to work on the construction of a new highway around the city of Nagoya.

ATLAS TEREX has appointed Thistle Marine subsidiary, Thistle Hydraulic Solutions, as its North of Scotland dealer for its range of knuckle boom cranes. Thistle Marine will be responsible for the sale, support and maintenance of Atlas-Terex's range of knuckle booms in the North of Scotland region from its three depots in Aberdeen, Peterhead and Old Deer.

UNIC CRANES Europe has announced the first sale of the recently launched Japanese-built 2.9 tonnes capacity UNIC 295C mini crawler crane. Cambridgeshire-based firm, S&W Process Engineering. S&W, a provider of processing machinery, plant and services to manufacturers of food, beverages and pharmaceuticals, will use the mini crane for installations at its customers' factories and sites.

CATERPILLAR'S BOARD of directors have appointed James Owens, currently vice chairman, as the next chairman and CEO of the company. Owens will replace Glen Barton, who retires on January 31 after nearly 43 years with Caterpillar, five of which he spent as chairman and CEO.

EPL HAS placed an order for a number of Z20 'Sigma/telescopic van mounted platforms from Italy-based manufacturer CTE. The 20 metre working height machines are mounted on the 3.5 tonne Nissan Cabstar E 120 and offer an up and over outreach of 9.5 metres. EPL is now one of three UK access rental companies, including Tobin Plant and Panther Platform Rentals, to add CTE Z20s to its fleet.

SIMON BAMFORD, managing director of the Rossendale Group, has been elected chairman of the Lifting Equipment Engineers Association (LEEA). Announced at the association's general meeting at the end of last year, the appointment will run for the next two years.

HM WINSON Green Prison in Birmingham has purchased a 14 metre working height Oil & Steel Octopussy 1465 to assist with refurbishment and cleaning work at the facility. The unit was purchased through The Platform Company, which also provided prison personnel with the necessary IPAF training.