

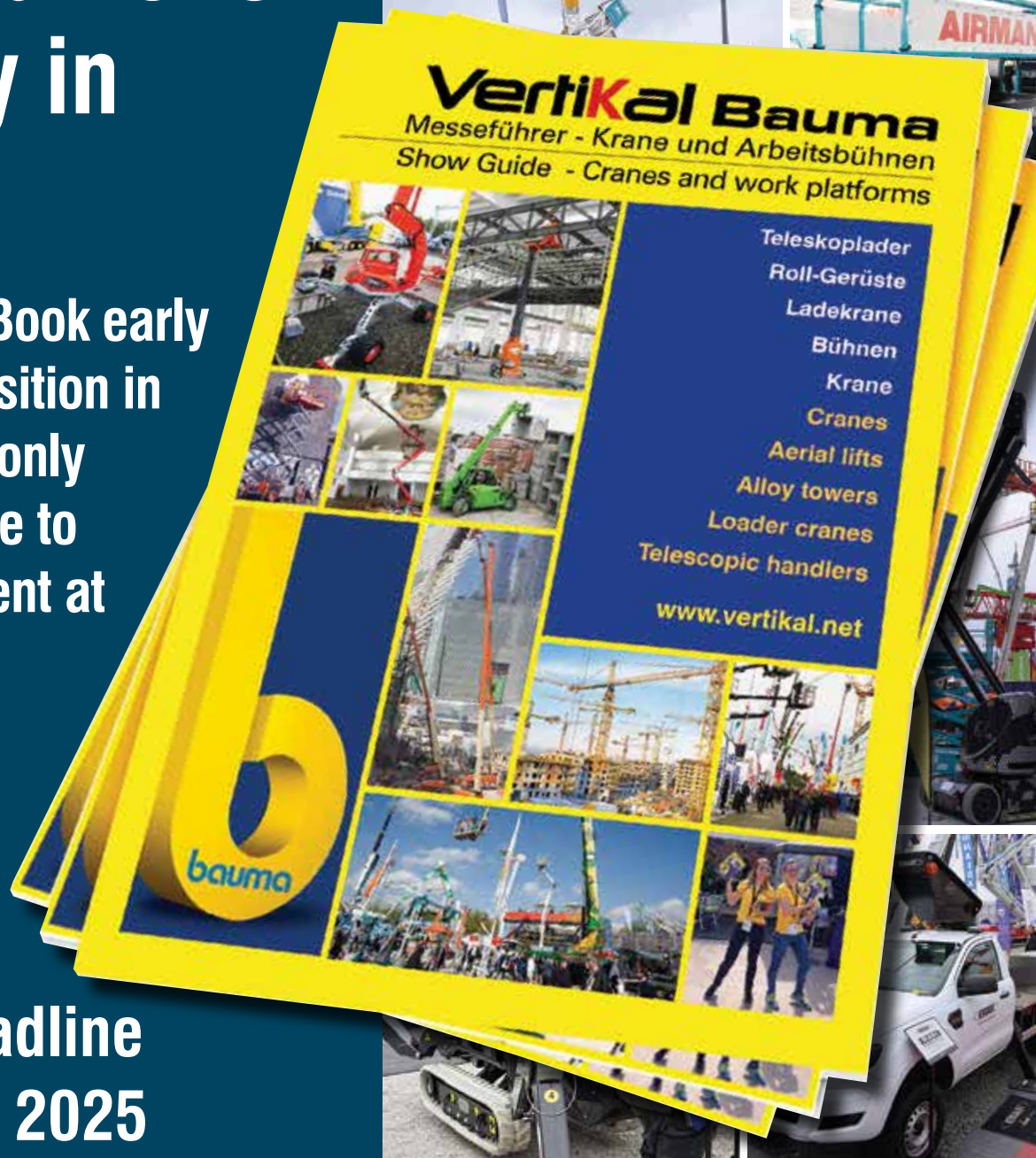
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April 7th - 13th 2025



OPEN MEETING AT VERTIKAL DAYS

More than 150 people attended an open meeting at Vertikal Days last month, organised by two of the CPA's special interest groups: the Crane Interest Group (CIG), chaired by Peter Gibbs, chief executive of Ainscough, and the Tower Crane Executive Group (TCIG), chaired by Dave Holder, European operations director of Wolffkran.



(L-R) Dave Holder, Steve Mulholland, Peter Gibbs & Rob Squires

It was an opportunity to discuss issues including abnormal loads and embargoes, electrical supply issues and updated Network Rail guidance regarding the use of cranes beside railways.

CPA chief executive Steve Mulholland opened the meeting and handed over to CPA consultant Craig Hook, who delivered a presentation on tower crane electrical supply issues and a subsequent update to Technical Information Note (TIN 036).

Hook demonstrated how the existing guidance required updating after a tower crane technician was injured due to an electrical fault where the wrong type of Residual Current Device (RCD) with incorrect sensitivity failed to trip. He highlighted the fact that many tower cranes and hoists now use inverters to convert AC to DC for better motor control, energy efficiency, and precision, but not all RCDs can detect faults in high frequency DC circuits.



Craig Hook

and lightning protection as per manufacturer guidelines. Hook's second presentation of the day focused on guidance on the tendering, management and operations of tower cranes, and particularly the introduction of a new document - TCIG 2404 - which is designed for use by tower crane suppliers and rental customers.

The TCIG and CIG have sister documents to support crane tendering, management, and operations. The new document clarifies offers, standardises client questions, and enables suppliers to prepare effectively and demonstrate good practice.

The third presentation focused on updated guidance to Network Rail rules with regards to the use of cranes beside railways. Hook explained that Network Rail document CIV0063 Cranes and Plant Beside Railways had been updated and became operational on 7th September, following proactive conversations between Network Rail and industry.



In his final presentation, delivered jointly with CIG chairman Peter Gibbs, Hook discussed new 'ready for work' checks for mobile and crawler cranes, which are intended to reduce incidents caused by incorrect crane rigging due to human error. The checklists, if used properly, will help minimise 'single point of failure' events, but emphasised that it remains the Appointed Person's responsibility to ensure the crane is properly rigged before use.

Chris Britton, head of operations support at Ainscough, delivered the final presentation of the meeting, focusing on travel embargoes and enforcement challenges.

He expressed the industry's frustration with the enforcement focus on the crane rental industry over the past two years and highlighted the need for a revision of the outdated STGO legislation introduced 21 years ago. He also criticised the inconsistency among the country's 42 police forces in applying the 2010 ACPO Guidance on the Movement of Abnormal Loads, leading to varying interpretations and disproportionate restrictions.



Chris Britton

Britton gave an example in which Greater Manchester Police found it was acceptable to move up to a five axle crane during the embargo hours, yet in the West Midlands there is a total ban at peak times. The poor implementations have led to higher costs, with operators having to be paid to travel before and after embargo times, often well before a site opens and well after work is halted for the day, while police insist on escorting vehicles where previously there was no requirement to do so.

Britton mentioned the formation of the Abnormal Loads Group (ALG), which has been working to engage with policymakers, including members of parliament and government departments, to effect change. The ALG is involved in revising guidance and addressing key issues. He praised Gwent Police for their role in a trial to remove crane movement embargoes and urged attendees to engage with local MPs and Chambers of Commerce about these challenges. Britton also highlighted an upcoming meeting on November 6th, regarding the approval of new NPCC guidance.

The meeting concluded with a talk by Marcus Gough, chairman of the Heavy Transport Association and director of operations of Strate Logistics. Gough referred to the collective efforts being made to try and implement guidance that is right for both industry and enforcement, promoting collaborative working and the highest road safety standards.



Marcus Gough



(L-R) David Smith of CPA with John Sutch & Paul Parry

He also emphasised the importance of using type 'B' RCDs, which are better suited for detecting faults in such systems and advised attendees on the importance of ensuring proper earth bonding



Some of the attendees