



Geoff Marshall

Increased interest in operator training at SED

The Cranes and Access Village at SED attracts visitors who want to keep abreast of developments and new business opportunities.

The Cranes and Access Village at SED has become a valuable UK showcase for all sectors of the powered access industry that attracts visitors who not only want to keep abreast of developments but who come expecting to find answers to questions and explore new business opportunities.

That certainly has been the experience of IPAF over the past years and the level of interest shown this year from companies wanting to set up training centres was particularly encouraging. Real interest came not just from the UK and other EC countries, but also from Eastern Europe and beyond. More than a

response to the steadily increasing pressure of legislation, there is a growing understanding that operator training represents a new business opportunity and that demand is set to rise steadily.

In the UK, legislation requiring training has certainly had its effect although it still requires even more effective enforcement, both from government and industry. There are promising signs that in the UK the push of legislation is helping to create real demand pull from what is an increasingly sophisticated user market.

Rental companies and their customers alike are

coming to appreciate that training has commercial benefits, including greater productivity, reduced downtime and maintenance that translate directly and quickly into higher profitability. The appeal of the IPAF Scheme is that the PAL card is the most widely recognised proof of consistent, high quality training, which ensures that its holders are able to work on any site.

Keeping training up to the mark

Geoff Marshall, IPAF Training Scheme Auditor, is responsible for the continual monitoring of training centre operation.

This is a central element of the Scheme that ensures that consistent training standards are maintained throughout the entire training network.

He was at SED to respond to enquiries about the audit process as well as training in general. The renewal procedure for the PAL Card came up not just at the show, but is now an increasingly common telephone enquiry according to Training Scheme Administration Manager, Margaret Caton. The card is valid for five years and must be renewed after that.

Renewal is not automatic; holders must prove that they are still capable of working safely. Geoff Marshall explains: "The essential requirement is that after five years, all cardholders will at least have to undergo a new assessment before the card can be renewed. Although it is up to the individual centre that carried out the initial training, they will strongly recommend that all operators take advantage of a full course to update themselves on machine developments and recent legislation". ■



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International Powered
Access Federation
PO Box 16, Carnforth,
Lancashire, LA6 1LB, UK
Tel: 01524 781393
Fax: 01524 781301
E-mail: mewp@ipaf.org
Web Site: www.ipaf.org