

The boom is definitely back.



# NEVER THINK SMALL.



\*Details on request.

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**Snorkel**

# Easy to push around

It is now more than two years since the Work at Height Regulations (WAHR) came into effect in an effort to cut the biggest single cause of workplace deaths in the UK.

Each year on average between 40 and 50 people die and nearly 4,000 suffer serious injury as a result of a fall from height in the workplace. However a more surprising statistic is that an average of 14 people die and a further 1200 are seriously injured as a result of falling from low-level ladders and steps.

The Work at Height Regulations do not ban ladders but require 'consideration' to be given when they are chosen. They should only be used when more suitable work equipment is not appropriate and then only for light work of short duration.

The introduction of the WAHR coupled with the general increase in health and safety awareness has made many trades that work at height, and 'height' is where there is ANY risk of causing personal injury, to take measures to prevent injuries and therefore re-evaluate access equipment used.

The Health and Safety Commission (HSC) is so concerned about these incidents that it has made reducing falls from height one of its nine Priority Programmes. According to the HSC, every business in the UK is affected as virtually all perform work at height in some fashion, from major construction projects to the simple task of climbing a ladder to change a light bulb.

## So which equipment should we choose?

There are still an estimated two million ladders in daily use throughout the UK. In certain situations they are still the best or only method of working at height. However as mentioned above, for anything other than light, short-term duties, an alternative has to be found.

Podium steps and towers are the next alternative and are seeing a growth in business. Compared to a ladder, they offer a more secure and superior working platform, but take longer to set up. Working at varying heights also causes problems and a tower generally has to be dismantled if moved between rooms or floors, usually a two-man operation.

This demand for equipment that is easy to move, has variable working heights and offers increased safety at a reasonable cost were the prime factors in the growth of the low level push around platform. However there have been several variations on the theme with a number of recently launched items.

## Monkey see monkey do



The Monkey Tower

The Monkey Tower is a car-towable, quick to erect tower-type system that can be hand winched with the platform locking at 250mm intervals up to a maximum height of 4.5 metres.

The aluminium unit has a total weight of 300kg which means that any vehicle can tow it to and from site and it is easy to push around when on the job. With the road wheels in their narrowest position and stabilisers removed, it is narrow enough to pass through a single doorway. Retailing for £4,300 the unit is the brain-child of managing director and designer Alan Watt, who started work on the unit a few years ago after working in the oil refinery sector.

With features similar to a fully adjustable aluminium tower, the unit has a 225kg platform capacity when locked in position but can also winch 75kg of materials and tools up to the required level.

The towable Monkey Tower has a platform height of 4.5 metres which can lock in 250mm intervals.

Access to the platform is via a side ladder and platform trap door with all safety barriers and handrails automatically in place. Watt is also working on a smaller three metre platform height machine.

## Is it a scissor or is it a tower?

Part scissor lift part alloy access tower, the Towermatic T4 is a crossover product combining many of the benefits of the alloy tower with those of small to medium size scissor lifts.



The Towermatic T4 combines the benefits of the alloy tower and a small scissor lift.



A total of 12 AFI Pop-Up machines are being hired by EA Electrical Limited to help install the fire prevention and alarm systems at the new Bankside 2/3 development on Southwark Street behind the Tate Modern in south east London.

Once it has been safely set-up and the platform cage assembled, depressing the mechanism release bar unlocks the height adjusters and activates the failsafe tension system. This allows the operator to manually raise or lower the work platform to a maximum height of four metres. Stepping off the foot control bar double locks the tower at the desired height and access to the work platform is then gained by the integral ladder. The manufacturers highlight the Towermatic's light weight at 320kg, the fact that it requires no batteries or hydraulics and its ease of use, requiring no PASMA or IPAF certification.

The product has been on the market for almost three years now and while it has sold well has not been the raging success that its designers might have hoped. Erecting it to full height requires a certain technique and at almost 900mm wide it is too fat for most single doors.

### Pop-Up setting the pace

In contrast the Pop-Up, a simple inexpensive push around battery powered scissor lift, launched barely a year ago has taken the UK market by storm, with more than 1,500 units already delivered.

With a platform height of just 1.63 metres, it offers an alternative to ladders for low-level access work at heights of up to around 3.5 metres. Designed specifically to meet the 2005 Work at Height Regulations, the Pop-Up claims it is the smallest and most easily transportable scissor lift on the market and is able to fit into spaces previously only accessible by ladder.

A fully charged battery is good for up to 400 cycles (the equivalent of two weeks use) while simple controls make it an easy machine to become familiar with. In order to expand on the theme the company has recently launched the Pop-Up Plus+ which has an additional one metre of platform height.

### Low-level and two man push around lifts.

Brand/Model	Platform height	Capacity kg	Manual/Powered lift	Platform size mm	o/a weight kgs	Towable
Pop-Up	1.6m	240	Power	520 x 1,010	215	N
Pop-Up Plus	2.6m	240	Power	520 x 1,010	300	N
CTE-Power Tower	3.1m	250	Power	650 x 1,500	310	N
Towermatic T4	4.0m	250	Manual	750 x 1,400	320	N
Monkey Tower	4.5m	250	Manual	600 x 2,000	300	Y
Planet TP9000	7.0m	225	Power	1200 x 2,400	1100	Y
Genie DPL 25S	7.7m	340	Power	700 x 1,830	622-672	N

### Take to the road

Another variation on the theme is the TP9000, a towable, trailer mounted scissor lift with a seven metre platform height. Imported from PLE inc in the USA it is a refined CE version of the PLE24 which has been selling in the USA for several years. With a platform height of 24ft and an all up weight of only 1,100kgs it should tow nicely behind most cars. Once on site with the outriggers set it offers a good sized platform at 1,200mm x 2,400mm and 225kg lift capacity.

### The king of push around?

Low level powered push around lifts were pioneered in the UK by Brian King with the Go Industries' Hop-Up in

the early 1990's. King later introduced the higher and more sophisticated towable Power Tower at Access Machines. Although an excellent machine with a platform height of over 24 ft, it was ahead of its time and never took off.

Now heading up CTE-UK, King is set to launch a new low level powered access platform called the CTE Power Tower. The new model is manufactured by a sub contractor in the Birmingham area and uses an in-line sigma type lift mechanism which provides a platform height of 3.1 metres, good for working up to five metres.



The CTE Power Tower uses an in-line sigma type lift mechanism providing a 3.1 metre platform height.

for an easily transportable platform for low-level work of up to five metres working height."

Lavendon UK has ordered 300 units, largely for Nationwide Access but with some units destined for A.M.P. while Planet Platforms has placed an order for 200 units.

"We're delighted with the end product, and we've already placed an option for 'several hundred' additional units. The number of applications is enormous, from M & E and Facilities Management through to the end-user market where the Power Tower could replace the traditional smaller aluminium towers used everywhere from to factories to hospitals," said Douglas.

The official launch the Power Tower will be later in the year when availability will be more reasonable.

### Going Up

Higher push-around powered platforms have never been as popular in the UK or Ireland as they have in the USA. Here the alloy tower was traditionally the quick access method of choice with numerous rental companies providing a deliver and erect service with the capability to solve all manner of access challenges.

In spite of this the market for these units has consistently ranged from an average of 750 units a year to a peak of nearly a 1,000 in the mid 1990's. They are still a popular choice for many end users who prefer to own their access equipment.

With platform heights ranging from 20ft (6m) to over 40ft (12.1m) they are well suited to institutional and industrial markets, with schools,

A towable trailer scissor lift, the TP9000 has a seven metre platform height and good sized platform.

With a 250kg lift capacity and a 1,500 mm by 650 mm platform there is room for two men and tools. However, as it is also rated for outdoor use, it is restricted to one man. Its overall width of 780mm is ideal for single doors, while its unique brake system locks the castors automatically when the platform is raised - a significant safety benefit.

### Developed in partnership

The new CTE lift has been developed over the past 12 to 15 months in close partnership with the Lavendon Group. Peter Douglas, commercial director at Lavendon's Nationwide Access said: "We are meeting a demand from the marketplace





The new UpRight UL35 abandons the usual box section mast adopting a similar configuration to other manufacturers.

museums, sports halls, theatres and plant maintenance departments all appreciating the low cost per foot of working height that these lightweight machines offer and the fact that they are easy to use and easy to store.

Powered access manufacturers UpRight and Genie both built their businesses on the back of the vertical aluminium push around lift and both still produce this type of platform in significant numbers. In more recent years they have been joined by JLG, Haulotte, Faraone and Böcker with its Alp lift range.

While all of these producers build machines with aluminium masts, Ohio based Bil-Jax largely builds its units with steel masts which it hopes to sell in Europe.

### A new mast for UpRight

Until recently UpRight has always taken a different approach to its push around lifts, preferring to use a thin wall aluminium box section mast which it claims gives greater rigidity compared to the fork lift type masts used by most other producers. Its UL range has changed little over the years and currently comprises the UL25, UL32 and UL40 with platform heights from 7.62 metres to 12.15 metres and basket capacities between 136kg and 159kg. A new addition to the range is the UL35 unveiled at SED. This unit is different in that it abandons the box section mast, adopting a similar configuration to the other manufacturers.

### Genie rules OK

Unlike UpRight, Genie has consistently invested in its push around lifts and has a dominant position in the world market. It now offers three ranges, from its original AWP line with heights up to 12.29 metres to its IWP line which was conceived for industrial applications



Genie has three ranges and a dominant position in the world market.

where portability is less critical and a compact base that does not require outriggers is appreciated. The IWP range offers platform heights of up to nine metres. Finally Genie still produces the DPL dual mast range that offers a two man platform for working up to 12.62 metres.

In addition to expanding its range Genie has invested in a wide range of options and accessories including a powered drive assist system for its IWP DC models which takes all of the effort out of moving these heavier machines around.

### Later arrivals

JLG was a late entrant into the

'aluminium' market, with the acquisition of Alumaloft. Today its AM series comprises seven push around lifts with platform heights from 4.57 metres to 12.42 metres. The company also has the SP series of push around stock picker machines with improved basket capacities and platform heights from 3.58 to 4.62 metres. Haulotte is though the most recent self propelled manufacturer to enter the market, launching its Quick-Up range barely two years ago. With platform heights of up to 11.9 metres it has a full range but has barely dented what is a relatively mature and hard to reach end-user market.

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# personnel lifts C&a



This 'far eastern' push around spotted on the Tacklestore stand at SED will soon be marketed in the UK.

The number of options for these machines is endless and includes auditorium kits for working over fixed seating in cinemas, theatres, lecture halls and churches, so configuring an ideal machine for the job is usually possible.



## The tomCat from Ohio

With Genie having such a strong market position in Europe, particularly in the UK and Ireland, few companies even try to challenge it. However Bil-Jax is intent on winning a share, not only in the European trailer mounted platform market but it is also keen to sell its push around lifts. The company has several ranges and models in this category including the Odyssey 34 (10.36 metre platform height) the Stockpicker Lifts (227kg capacity, bigger basket and a 4.5 metre platform height), Cougar Lift and XLT Cat lift. However only one is currently CE marked the tomCat 24.

The largest in a range of three with 15, 19 and 24ft platform heights and rugged steel forklift type masts. The tomCat's lift capacity is higher than most at 159kg in spite of its compact base. The Bil-Jax models have always sold well in North America, particularly into industrial applications where the heavier steel mast is often preferred, particularly as it traditionally came with a lower price tag.

The options for these machines are endless and include kits for working over fixed seating.

Whether or not it succeeds in the European market will depend ultimately on distribution, a problem for all new entrants.



Only one model - the tomCAT 24 - is currently CE marked, but more will follow from Bil-Jax.

## Get off the chair

The dropping of the two metre platform rule, the arrival of the work at height directive and a strong focus on low level access by the HSE has made the UK a strong potential market for innovative products that are realistic alternatives to ladders not to mention podium steps or low level towers.



Push around powered access is likely to replace a good number of step ladders, but more importantly it is also hoped that they will replace the practice of standing on a chair, table, box or bodged up trestle to carry out work at height.

Late entrant into the market is JLG



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