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Access Alert: PASMA and HSE to **Issue Joint Statement**

PASMA and the UK Health & Safety Executive (HSE) will soon be warning users of low level access products such as podium steps and folding room scaffolds to make sure that the equipment they have bought, or rented, meets at least the minimum standards of fall protection. The warning follows increased concern about cheap, inferior products now flooding the market, especially in the construction sector, which offer limited protection to users by not having an adequate guardrail system fitted as standard.

Since 2004, industry estimates suggest that some 50,000 of these work at height tools have been sold in the UK and Ireland alone, and nowhere more so than in the construction industry where they can be seen in use by a multitude of finishing trades. PASMA's managing director, Peter Bennett said: "In theory these products provide a compact, lightweight and protected work platform that represents a safe method of working at height,

especially at low heights of 2.5 metres and below."



"Unfortunately, whenever there is high demand for a product there is inevitably an opportunity for companies to offer deficient equipment which, in the absence of a minimum standard, can be marketed with impunity, thus exacerbating the already concerning accident statistics for low level work at height."

Against this background, PASMA's technical committee is seeking to set a minimum standard for quality and working with the British Standards Institution (BSI) to draft a publicly available specification (PAS). It has also developed an additional module in its widely recognised training scheme devoted solely to low level access, and produced a DVD/CD 'Accidents can happen even at low level'. echnical / Safety

ince Note

Forum (AIF), PASMA will again be

participating in the AIF Knowledge

Base and exhibiting in the main AIF

22-23 June 2011, Vertikal Days,

Haydock Park Racecourse

The Association is currently

next year's event.

considering proposals from the

organisers of Vertikal Days for the

introduction of a Tower Village at

vina

Mobile access towers should always be assembled in accordance with the appropriate and current manufacturer's instruction manual and should comply with current regulations. The instruction manual will indicate the maximum free standing height (both indoors and out) to which the tower can be safely assembled - under normal conditions - without the need to tie, or secure, the tower to an adjacent structure. PASMA provides guidance to users for cases where a tower needs to be tied in. It also recommends that

wherever possible towers should be tied in, as it is good practice to do so.

There are circumstances, however, when it is mandatory to tie in; for instance, when the desired height is greater than the maximum permitted free standing height of the tower; where it is not possible to fully deploy stabilisers or outriggers,

Existing Tying-In Safety/ Guidance Note.

or where other circumstances as indicated in the instruction manual are encountered - such as adverse weather conditions. PASMA identifies the most common tie arrangements for securing towers, including box ties, lip ties, through ties, expanding anchor ties and the use of girder couplers.

As part of its continuing programme of promoting best practice, the Association's technical committee is currently undertaking a review of its tying-in guidance in collaboration with the UK Construction Fixings Association

More information at www.pasma.co.uk or from jill.couttie@pasma.co.uk

Diary Dates

9-10 February 2011: Executive Hire Show, Ricoh Arena, Coventry

Billed as 'Building momentum into 2011', the Executive Hire Show is the only national show catering specifically for the tool hire market. PASMA will be occupying a central stand adjacent to Hire Association Europe (HAE).

15-16 March 2011: IOSH Conference and Exhibition, ExCel, London

PASMA will be delivering a paper in Seminar Theatre 2 on

the 15th and exhibiting on both days of the event. The annual IOSH Conference is the largest and most comprehensive safety conference in the UK. Themes for 2011 include 'staying legal' and 'maintaining core skills in safety'.

17-19 May 2011: Safety & Health Expo, NEC, Birmingham

As part of the Access Industry

PASMA Member Wins 'Best Achievement in Construction' Award

stand area.

Congratulations to Glasgow-based Turner Access on winning the 'Best Achievement in Construction' award at the SHP IOSH Awards 2010 with BetaGuard. The ceremony took place at London's Park Lane Hilton Hotel and guest of honour was Lord Young of Graffham.





Planet's lift-off kit for the aviation industry

PASMA member Planet Platforms has designed and installed a mobile work at height solution for the aviation industry to safely access various components in and around the landing gear of the aircraft. At just over three metres platform height, the bespoke access equipment is built with a combination of steel and aluminium, is robust enough to be towed, whilst not being too heavy to manually position and deploy the attached inclined ladder.

Mark Arnold from Planet Eastern explains more about the project: "Inspection of the landing gear is often a time-sensitive and space-restrictive task, as there might be a limited time frame to undertake all checks before the aircraft has to take off again. The inspection area is confined, and needed a narrow work platform. Pipes and hydraulic tanks also presented a requirement for an up-and-over reach."

The custom unit by Planet caters for all the work at height challenges posed by the inspection area. It can be quickly and easily towed into position and features adjustable ladders to cater for access to different heights of the inspection area. Sprung-loaded jacks are used to lock the unit off once it has been wheeled into position, as they are quicker to engage in comparison to wind-down jacks.

If other PASMA members have an interesting or unusual story to tell, please send details, with a picture, to jill.coutie@pasma.co.uk





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