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All training centres above offer IPAF/PASMA approved and audited courses. European directives require that all staff are fully and adequately trained in the safe use of the equipment they operate.

Crane operator's fall costs \$30,000

Maritime Constructions Pty of Osborne, South Australia was fined \$30,000 for an accident in which a 49 year-old crane operator suffered a fractured vertebrae, two broken ribs, a broken wrist and severe bruising, following a five metre fall from the jetty he was working.

The company pleaded guilty in the South Australian Industrial Court to breaching occupational health and safety laws by failing to ensure the health and safety of an employee at

work. The man was operating a truck crane on the Rapid Bay jetty repair project in October 2008, when he fell while climbing over one of the crane's outriggers. SafeWork SA told the court that there was little in the way of fall protection set up around the worksite or any safe system of work in place, despite the obvious and foreseeable danger. The company did address all the necessary safety deficiencies immediately following the accident.



The crane and jetty a month after the accident

Fall costs £6,000

A Nottinghamshire-based welding company IFT Services has been fined £4,000 plus £2,000 costs and faces a personal injury claim, after one of its employees fell from a roof, in November 2008, after having climbed out of a platform attached to a telehandler.

The man fell four metres onto a grain bucket at a farm near Mansfield, while removing roofing sheets from below. The man, 42, broke five vertebrae, fractured his skull and suffered internal. The court was told that the appropriate safety equipment was not used putting the man at risk, the company also admitted breaching the Health and Safety at Work Act. In mitigation it had no previous convictions and had invested in new equipment.



Who trained him then?

A man carrying out structural safety checks on the Southwest Airlines Boeing 737-300 fleet, seems to be lacking some safety training.



A-Plant NVQ programme a success

Last year UK-based rental company A-Plant introduced its 'Skilled and Qualified Workforce Programme', offering its employees the opportunity to gain a formal qualification in three areas - NVQ Level 2 in Carry and Deliver Goods for Drivers, NVQ Level 2 in Hire and Rental Operations for Rental Managers and NVQ Level 2 in Plant Maintenance for Fitters. So far 180 employees have gained NVQs through an On Site Assessment and Training programme. A further 400 are registered. So far 50 percent of the company's drivers have qualified, along with 80 percent of rental managers and almost half of the company's mechanics.

A-Plant's talent and organisational culture manager Gráinne Patterson said: "Feedback indicates that participants are very positive about having the opportunity to develop their skills and gain a nationally recognised qualification. Our focus has been on certifying demonstrable practical skills, rather than adopting a purely theoretical or academic approach and our efforts are designed to deliver improved levels of performance in both the current and future roles.

Scaffolder fined for lack of a harness

A Hastings scaffolder was fined in May for endangering himself and others by not wearing a harness while erecting a four storey scaffold. Gareth Roser was spotted by a passing Health and Safety Executive inspector in October last year. Roser, who was working for Giant Scaffolding Ltd of Whatlington Road, Battle, was balancing on scaffold tubes at a height of around eight metres. It turned out that harnesses were available in the scaffolder's van. Industry guidance requires scaffolders to use a fall arrest harness when more than four metres above ground without a safe platform to stand on and edge protection in place. Roser was fined £750 plus £643 in costs.

Giant Scaffolding pleaded guilty to a breach of the Work at Height Regulations 2005 and the Health and Safety at Work Act and was fined £15,000 with costs of £5,000.

The company had repeatedly failed to reply to written questions put to them by the inspector in spite of a number of warnings.

HSE Inspector, Melvyn Stancliffe, said: "The simple measure of wearing a harness can save scaffolders from death or serious injury. A basic common sense approach to work is all that's needed to prevent a possible tragedy. In many cases, harnesses are available but some workmen just cannot be bothered to wear them. They should take a moment to think about the consequences. It was reckless for Mr Roser to be working in this way. He was exposing himself and members of the public walking below to unnecessary risk. He was seen working in 2008 in similar circumstances and was warned then about his future conduct. Giant Scaffolding has also been warned about the dangerous working practices of those working for it."



The practice is not uncommon - photo provided by NASC