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Fall avoidance report published

PASMA has published the long awaited review into recommended best practice for the avoidance of falls from height when using mobile access towers. The review, which took 16 months to complete, was carried out in collaboration with the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) and represents a significant milestone for the industry. The 20-page report, which includes a foreword by the HSE, brings clarity to the use of Through the Trap (3T) and Advance Guardrail (AGR) methods for assembling, altering and dismantling mobile access towers.

The report concludes that when used in accordance with manufacturers' instructions and guidance, both methods continue to provide an acceptable safe method of work, with AGR systems providing comprehensive fall protection and the 3T method using conventional components to minimise the risk of a fall.

The HSE foreword to the report states that "the principles regarding the use of both processes given in HSE guidance Tower scaffolds (CIS10) are still current. The AGR and 3T processes continue to provide recognised safe methods of work". It also adds the comment: "Contractors need to ensure that operatives have appropriate equipment, training and supervision to erect and dismantle mobile access towers safely. Operatives are also responsible for playing their part."

Independent study

As suggested by the HSE, part of the review included an ergonomic research study undertaken by the Health and Safety Laboratory (HSL) into various aspects of tower assembly using both methods. The research has confirmed that with correct manual handling techniques and body positioning, the risks are kept within tolerable limits in the AGR (Advance Guardrail) and 3T (Through The Trap) processes. The HSL research also examined the seated and standing positions used in the 3T method and confirmed that the seated position was found overall to be the preferable position.

No need to retrain

Significantly for the thousands of tower users in the UK and Ireland, having considered the outcome and

The 3T method remains a safe method of work.



The Advanced Guardrail method

implications of the review, the PASMA training committee has concluded that current PASMA cardholders do not have to re-train until their card has expired at the end of the normal five year period. It decided that the content of the current PASMA training course is sufficient to provide an acceptable working knowledge of the AGR process.

However, it did conclude that the Association's standard 'Towers for Users' course could be enhanced by extending the existing content to cover the latest developments in AGR systems, particularly integral

type products.

PASMA managing director Peter Bennett said: "This review process was commissioned by PASMA as a measured, impartial and prudent exercise five years after its first guidance was issued, and in response to representations from tower manufacturers in support of a new generation of integral AGRs. PASMA will now engage with duty holders to reassure them that, contrary to what they may have seen and read in the trade press, both 3T and AGR systems remain equally acceptable to the Association and HSE."

PASMA village grows

The first ever PASMA Village at Vertikal Days looks set to provide a strong display of the latest and best in mobile access towers. Taking exhibition space alongside PASMA to promote towers and tower training will be Euro Towers, Lyte Industries, Turner Access and OMS. Other PASMA members exhibiting at Vertikal Days include Youngman and Pop-Up. It's not too late - there is still room for any member wishing to take space in the Village.

The Association is also holding its 2011 Annual Members' Meeting (AMM) at Haydock Park Racecourse on Thursday, 23 June - the second day of the event - to give PASMA members the opportunity of visiting the showground after the formalities in the morning. [More details from jill.couttie@pasma.co.uk](mailto:jill.couttie@pasma.co.uk)



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