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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.



David Catanach (left) receives his IPAF 3a and 3b certificate from EPL Skylift's John Tominay.

Sign association recommends IPAF training

The director of the British Sign and Graphics Association (BSGA), David Catanach has urged industry colleagues to invest in work at height training following his completion of the IPAF 3a/3b boom and scissor lift course and qualifying for a Powered Access Licence (PAL).

Catanach received his training at the Lavendon Academy, IPAF's largest approved training centre. He said: "Training of this kind is extremely important, if not essential. The safety element of the training is crucial for businesses, but it's also a real investment to understand how to operate this kind of machinery. No organisation wants its employees to be injured

whilst at work and every business wants to deliver quality, proper training can help."

Lavendon/EPL Skylift key account manager for signage, John Tominay added: "Many larger projects insist on contractors having this kind of qualification. When you complete your IPAF training you've got your licence for five years, so it is an excellent investment."

Deutz adds 46 new apprentices

Engine manufacture Deutz added 46 new apprentices in September, spread over four plants and six different career routes. 17 of the trainees, aged from 16 to 21, chose industrial technology while 16 will study as production engineers, eight as cutting machine operators, three as industrial electronics engineers, one as a materials tester and one as a warehouse operative.

The apprentices, which included at least five women are based at the company's plants in Cologne, Ulm, Übersee and Herschbach. The apprenticeships will last between two and three and a half years.



Roof cleaners ignore warnings

An HSE inspector making a routine visit spotted two men from Rainsafe Protect Ltd of Liverpool pressure washing the pitched roof of a house in Bebington with no safety barriers or scaffolding in place to stop them from falling. Wirral magistrates' court was told that the company had received advice about working at height from the HSE on four separate occasions during the previous month, but still allowed the roof to be recoated without safety measures in place. The company was fined £2,000 plus costs of £2,069.

Fall costs £25,000

Two Sheffield companies have been fined a total of more than £25,000 after a man fell from a flat roof while removing asbestos at the City's now-demolished college. Nikitas Coulson, 40, from Middlesbrough, broke his arm after falling three and a half metres from the roof to the ground below and needed surgery to insert a plate into his arm. He was part of a team stripping asbestos from Sheffield College before its planned demolition and re-build.

HSE prosecuted both Coulson's employer Lilquest Asbestos Management and the principal contractor JF Finnegan Ltd, which was responsible for access to the roof. Lilquest was fined £3,000 with £2,000 costs, while Finnegan was fined £15,000 with £5,179.90 costs for failing to provide suitable protection for any fragile surfaces on the roof.

Dangerous roofers caught red handed

Two roofers were caught working on a roof in Swadlincote, Derbyshire, without safety equipment. Passing HSE inspectors noticed the men cleaning the roof of the property without appropriate equipment or safety devices. Aquacoat Ltd, of Derby, was found guilty of breaching the Work at Height Regulations and fined £10,000 with £4,177.65 costs.

In a similar case a roofing company in Lincolnshire was prosecuted after two of its employees were spotted working unsafely on a seven metre high roof by two passing HSE inspectors. The inspectors, shocked by the obvious dangers took photographs and issued a prohibition notice to immediately stop work.



Caught red handed two men working on a roof without suitable equipment

The HSE said the company had failed to provide suitable equipment to prevent a fall from the roof, such as an aerial lift or mobile tower. There was also nothing in place, such as netting or a boarded platform underneath the roof, which would have caught anyone falling. Brigg and

Humberside Roofing Services Ltd, of Brigg, North Lincolnshire, pleaded guilty to breaching the Work at Height Regulations 2005 and was fined £5,000 with £1,887 in costs.

£35,000 for unsafe scaffold

Totalscaff (GB) Ltd, trading as Total Service Group (TSG) has been prosecuted for handing over a scaffold that was not adequately tied in, meaning it was unstable. By law, all scaffolding must be inspected by a competent person before it can be used.

Hastings Magistrates' Court was told that the person who undertook safety checks, Christian Ball, had previously been advised of the need to adequately tie scaffolding in but had overlooked the advice. Totalscaff was fined £20,000 plus £10,000 in costs, while Ball was fined £2,500 and ordered to pay £2,274 costs.



Who trained him then?

Spotted in Reading UK, a man with all the safety gear, including gloves – but no safe form of working at height. The gloves, hard hat and day-glo vest will not help if he falls.

Telehandler fall costs £26,000+

A Shetland engineering company has been fined after a worker was severely injured by a fall while dismantling a mast. David Thomson, 22, and his colleagues were working from inside the mast, unbolting lengths of metal and wood and loading them into a bucket attachment of a telehandler. Unable to reach a piece of metal from inside the mast they used the telehandler bucket as a platform to access the metal from the outside. They then balanced the four metre long piece of metal, on the bucket as they were lowered to the ground. But at around 2.5 to three metres from the ground, the metal slipped and caught the back of Thomson's boiler suit, catapulting him out of the bucket.

An HSE investigation found that although Ness Engineering Ltd had carried out a risk assessment for the dismantling operation, the plan did not include the use of the telehandler bucket or accessing the mast from

the outside. The company from Virkie, Shetland was fined £26,700, plus costs. HSE inspector Alan MacKinnon said: "The bucket attachment on the telehandler was not suitable for transporting people and as soon as Ness Engineering allowed employees to be lifted up in it, the risk assessment it had carried out became meaningless. It was entirely foreseeable that there was a risk of either the men or the metal falling from the bucket, yet the company did nothing to ensure they had the right equipment on site to allow Thomson and his colleague to carry out their work safely."



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