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Working Well Together

Throughout 2015 the association will be collaborating with Working Well Together (WWT) - the Health and Safety Executive's construction industry initiative - which holds Safety and Health Awareness Days on specific topics. The latest event focusing on working at height was held in March at Pontefract Racecourse, West Yorkshire, where PASMA chairman, Chris Blantern, was on hand to discuss the benefits of mobile access towers.

Blantern took the opportunity to explain the importance of only buying or renting a tower that conforms to European standard EN 1004. 'Not on your life!' - an ongoing PASMA campaign backed by the HSE - warns of the dangers of using incomplete and unsafe tower scaffolds that do not comply with the standard.

It follows in the wake of HSE's growing concern about the number of incidents involving the use of sub-standard, poorly constructed and, in some cases, downright dangerous towers. There are numerous examples of people whose falls could have been prevented by using a safe tower, which is why PASMA has published its 'Choosing a safe mobile tower' information leaflet, which is available from: www.pasma.co.uk



PASMA has published a free leaflet on the benefits of EN 1004



PAS 250: The next step

PAS 250 is the publicly available specification sponsored by PASMA and developed in collaboration with the British Standards Institution (BSI). It specifies minimum safety and performance criteria for low level work platforms, commonly referred to as podiums or pulpits. First published in 2012, PASMA has now submitted a business case to BSI for it to be developed into a full British standard.

PAS 250 is important because up until now designs for this type of equipment had been introduced in the absence of any formal standard. Without specific design criteria it was clear that some products were inherently unsafe and open to misuse and abuse. The importance that the association attaches to PAS 250 is reflected in the fact that PASMA members must only supply PAS 250 compliant equipment, and starting this year, manufacturing members must have their podiums certified as compliant by a recognised independent inspection body.

The standard covers, amongst other things, strength and stability requirements and material specifications, together with the design requirements for the working platform, side protection, access, mobility, labels and user guides.

PASMA technical director Don Aers said: "PAS 250 addresses all these issues in a pragmatic, practical way and users should be aware of the risks they run by specifying non-compliant equipment. It really is the first thing they should check, and that's why all PASMA members now comply with its requirements."

PASMA diary dates

- Safety & Health Expo, 16-18 June, ExCeL, London
- IOSH Conference, 16 June, ExCeL, London
- PASMA AMM, 3 July, Coombe Abbey, Warwickshire
- HAE Convention, 22-23 September, Loughborough University

Maarten de Vries joins PASMA

PASMA has appointed Maarten de Vries to the newly created post of head of operations, communication and innovation. Based in Glasgow, and reporting directly to managing director, Peter Bennett, he will be responsible for managing the key projects required to deliver the association's development plans - both in the UK and overseas - and ensuring that members enjoy the highest levels of service and support.



Maarten de Vries

No stranger to the mobile access tower industry, Maarten was employed by PASMA member Turner Access in the late 1990's where he was directly involved in tower manufacture and the design, development and marketing of new tower products. For the last 12 years he has been a consultant and management trainer and tutor involved in a wide variety of projects. These have ranged from website design to the development of complete back-office applications.

A fellow of the Institute of Consulting and a member of the Association for Project Management, de Vries has considerable experience of project and programme management. He is also a PRINCE2 and APMP accredited trainer, and a programme tutor for a CMI diploma course in project management, and holds an undergraduate certificate in engineering and a degree in business computing.

He said: "Designing a successful tower product was already a career highlight. I'm therefore delighted to be back at the heart and nerve centre of the industry where I look forward to applying my experience for the benefit of PASMA members and the tower sector at large."



For details of PASMA standards, guidance and training, including free PocketCards and posters, visit: www.pasma.co.uk