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Letters



Dear Sirs,

I have just received your excellent publication (Vol 15.2) relating to rescue from height situations. I was drawn to the paragraph on 'Suspension trauma'. (Page 48)

I can tell you based upon other articles on this subject that there is no evidence to suggest your article is correct. Your article states that suspension trauma can result in death. This is incorrect.

Why would an employer give you a piece of equipment which if used properly can kill you and if you do not wear it a fall can kill you. So either way you will die. Firstly, harnesses should be seen as a last resort when working at height, and if worn the rescue plan should be in place to rescue the person as quickly as possible.

I can also draw to your attention that a report called (RR708) 'Evidence-based review of the current guidance on first aid measures for suspension trauma'. States that 'There is no evidence reporting the incidence of suspension trauma in industrial fall prevention'.

I have to ask why are these ideas and fear factors being peddled within construction?

Finally, have a search throughout all of your documents and see if there are any facts, either on the internet or in publications to try to ascertain the most recent person to die of suspension trauma or indeed the very first person.

As I say an excellent publication, but please read the research at RR708, a free pdf file easily downloaded for reading.

Thanks

Trevor Duggan BSc (Hons), Tech IOSH, PGCE
Safety and Supervisory Trainer

Mr Duggan makes a very valid point, although perhaps he sees things too much in terms of black and white? We are not convinced of the stated risks of suspension trauma, however there can be no question that some harnesses – and those that are badly adjusted can cause a shock in the groin area and then if left suspended for too long then potential circulation and clotting issues. It is no different from the threat of deep vein thrombosis caused by sitting for a long period in a fixed position.

The fact is that there should be a rescue plan in place and no-one should be left suspended for long periods of time, in which case there is little or no risk. However it is silly to pretend that a rescue plan is always in place, most often there is not – at least with powered access. And when using a boom lift harnesses are not a last resort, they are essential. Like many items when used properly they are perfect, when used improperly they can cause issues. Looking back over the article we stand by the view we put across BUT... we do think that Mr Duggan makes a very valid point, that should be noted. We very much appreciate his input and would encourage more letters like this as well as further discussion on this issue.

Ed

Dear Sir,

I am restoring an old "Selma Scissor Manlift" I am in need of some technical support and some parts. Can you help us out? If not, do you know of anybody who can here in the USA? Just so you know, back in the late 1980's I became a certified Grove mechanic working for a company that sold and rented the Grove product till the company sold out to another larger rental company.

Thank you,
Bill Williams
Hanover, Pennsylvania

We responded to Mr Williams requesting further information and received the following response below.

We passed a number of names on to Mr Williams, including parts suppliers and some individuals who had worked for Grove Manlift and who would know more about the popular SM31/42 ranges. He responded.

Dear Leigh,

I enjoy repairing machinery and engines that are a challenge. And, I am very good at it. I am a second generation mechanic and race car driver/builder. Well anyway - yes this is an early SM31 powered by a Wisconsin 1 cyl. AGND 12Hp air cooled engine. In my area there are several older Selma SM 31's mostly owned by private people in the electrical and plumbing fields. These people will call me for service from time to time.. all in all, 'good people'. If you would like me to, I can send you several pictures of several different SM31 machines from different years. I just have to get the permission from the owners.

Dear Leigh,

I want to thank you very much for reading my letter and returning to me a good response about my problem. I do indeed know a lot about where and when Selma Lifts were first built at. I even had the privilege of meeting Mr John Grove when I went to their technical school that was located in Blue Ridge Summit, Pa. I will try your suggestions.

If you want, I can even send you a picture of what I am working on.

Thank you very much,
Bill Williams



The following letter was in response to our Bauma pictorial review on www.vertikal.net A larger printed version can be found in this edition of the magazine. Ed

Dear Leigh,

Thank you for the good, daily snapshot coverage of Bauma - invaluable for those of us who could not attend. I guess that you will have had a good, rewarding show.

David B

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Letters



The following letter was sent in regarding an accident report we carried on March 20th on *vertikal.net* concerning an electric shock to a banksman during a lift next to some live overhead power lines in Trowbridge, Wiltshire, UK.

Dear Editor,

The 750 tonne Crane Overturn Incident in Pilling, Lancashire, UK last week reminded me of a recent discussion with a senior Crane Industry Executive on this very subject. Therefore may I offer this submission to the Crane Industry that we should consider adopting Pro-Active Crane Safety based upon the Crane Manufacturers Handbook as a Cost Effective Policy for the future. The reason being.....

The Oxford English Dictionary in my office defines the word 'Accident' as an 'Unforeseen event, or one which was not Foreseeable'. Therefore, this can best be explained with an example, so if I rig my 84 tonne Gross Weight Truck Mounted Crane with 140 tonnes of Extra Ballast and a Luffing Fly Jib, then elevate the 15 metre Main Boom to 82 degree, keeping the Long Luffer Horizontal. Then drive this top Heavy Crane on a Dirt Road, it is highly likely to Tip over due to its High Centre of Gravity being circa five metres above ground level. In such a scenario as this, I could never claim this dangerous incident to be an 'Accident' as it was not accidental, but was entirely foreseeable that my Crane would indeed overturn. All due to the fact that my crane had an Axle weight of 32 tonnes per axle and an abnormally high Centre of Gravity (CoG).

Should this negligent incident occur in the UK with Fatality(s) arising, then it is highly likely that I personally would face Criminal Charge(s) Charges of Manslaughter or Negligence. This quite rightly would result in me being Prosecuted and possibly Jailed for Killing some Innocent. Moreover it would also be perfectly reasonable that a Journalist would write a Report about my Negligent and Dangerous behaviour.

Furthermore, given that 173 men and women were killed at work in the UK during 2010/2011, with 18 incidents involving cranes (See HSE Published figures). It is my further submission to the Crane Industry that Pro-actively Managing Crane Safety is far more Cost Effective than not doing it, for as the CEO of British Petroleum plc (BP) will now confirm, the Cost of Crane Repairs, Personal Injury Claims and Prosecution Fines far outweighs the cost of Pro-actively Managing Safety. (See \$4.5 Billion USD Fine imposed by US Dept of Justice on BP on 15/11/12, for Breach(s) of Safety Regulations on the Deepwater Horizon Oil Rig, Tuesday 20th April 2010.)



Therefore, it is my final submission to the entire EC Crane Industry that we should reject all use of the word 'Accident' and instead produce our own Approved Code of Practice on Crane Safety based upon the Crane Manufacturers Handbooks. The fact that an incident is unwanted, does not make it accidental and as such it not an 'Accident', but simply an Incident. If you concur with this submission, then the ACoP could be entitled:- Best Practice Guidelines for Crane Safety.

Should you have any doubts about my submission, then here are 12 good reasons why we should consider adoption of this resolution, for Crane Safety must always be Pro-Actively Managed with all Lifts Pre-Planned, Drawn-to-Scale and Written-Up in advance with a detailed Method Statement by an Appointed Person, all of which is covered by The Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 and Section 4.7 of British Standard BS 7121.

Because if we don't drive-up Crane Safety Standards, who will ?

Yours Sincerely,

Mike Ponsoy BA

PS. Crane Safety Benefits everyone, not just you and me.

Hi Mark/Leigh

I'd just like to respond to the interesting and reasonable comment Mark made in the March 2013 issue of C&A.

I recently delivered a presentation or Professional Development Session as we call it, to our crane hire employees on lifting capacity. I appreciate that what I say is open to differences in personal and/or company opinion as to what works, and possibly even some factual correction by manufacturers.

The crane manufacturers will clearly try to market a crane in the most effective way possible to attract buyers, and I think it is difficult for them to not sacrifice some 'saleability' by standardising model numbers. E.g. producing the model number for all cranes as the maximum lifting capacity at a set particular radius may not always reflect the crane's true performance very well too buyers and buyers' customers.

Although many people may not always associate the term 'load moment' with mobile cranes (probably due to the myriad configurations available on most mobiles), I feel that it is a term that could be useful in marketing the cranes to buyers and their customers.

Anyone planning a lift will know that you cannot select a crane for a job based on its model number or maximum capacity, and it would be impossible to create a model number that was truly indicative of the crane's performance. Using the rated capacity is certainly not an option due to the widely varying nature.

Lorry loaders and tower cranes can usually be identified by their maximum load moment (or 'tonne/metre' rating) and it gives a loose indication of the machine's performance which can be used as an estimate of rated capacity, prior to referring to capacity charts.

This could possibly also be applied to mobile and crawler cranes. Manufacturers already tuck the maximum load moment away in most of the crane specification brochures, but we tend not to refer to them much in our sector of the industry; possibly because of lack of familiarity with the term.

I have attached three slides from the presentation that I delivered to illustrate that using the maximum capacity to market this machine would perhaps do it some injustice.

The crane is a Terex-Demag TC2800-1. The maximum capacity is 600 tonnes at a radius of six metres giving a load moment of 3600 tonne/metres. It actually performs best at a radius of 22 metres, producing the marketed load moment of 7,546 tonne/metres.

Another example is the Liebherr LTM1250-6.1. Load moment at three metres is 750 tonne/metres. At 10 metres it is 830 tonne/metres.

In comparison the Terex-Demag AC250 can only lift 197 tonnes at three metres, (it's a 250 tonne - 'capacity class' machine) but this is a poor indicator, as the maximum load moment of this machine is 884.4 tonne/metres (at 12 metres radius) while at 10 metres it offers a 866 tonne/metres.

So which is the better crane? The model number indicates they are the same, yet at three metres the Liebherr is best, while the maximum load moment favours the Terex. Blimey, getting that message on the tin correct doesn't seem very straight forward after all!

I think I'll leave it to the manufacturer, as it seems to be a bit of a 'can of worms'!

Kind Regards,

Kevin Bennison,

Training director -
Emerson Crane Hire, (UK)

Model	Capacity (tonnes)	Radius (metres)	Load Moment (tonne/m)
Terex-Demag TC2800-1	600	6	3600
Liebherr LTM1250-6.1	750	3	750
Liebherr LTM1250-6.1	830	10	830
Terex-Demag AC250	197	3	884.4
Terex-Demag AC250	866	10	866

To the Editor

We are writing to you concerning the Incident which occurred in Trowbridge last week on Wednesday 20th March, in which one of our employees was injured on site. Please see attached a statement outlining the facts as we know them.

I would be grateful if you would publish at the earliest opportunity in order to quash the speculation and discussion that has been taking place.

Yours Sincerely

Lee Sadler

Sparrow Crane Hire Ltd

Sparrow Crane Hire Ltd would like to make a statement as to the background to the incident that occurred at the Ashford Homes site in Trowbridge on Wednesday 20th March.

- It was carried out under Contract Lift conditions
- A method statement and lift plan were produced
- The two employees were both experienced and CPCS card holders in their relevant roles
- For some yet unexplained reason they deviated from the method statement.

As the incident is now under investigation by the HSE there is nothing more to add to this.

Most importantly the lift supervisor is making a remarkable recovery and is improving all the time.

There is not much to say to this apart from it shouldn't have happened but did. What is hard to understand is why at least two people seemed oblivious to the fact that they were operating very close to overhead power lines. We believe that the operator should have seen the cables and been quite firm in refusing to set the crane up anywhere close, regardless of what the method statement or Lift Plan said. It is our belief that crane operators - particularly of smaller cranes - are not given sufficient responsibility over how the crane that they are responsible for is used - not that this is likely to have been a factor in this particular case. Perhaps this is a subject that we should cover in more detail? We would appreciate hearing from any of you who have something to say on this subject.
Ed

The following correspondence was prompted by a previous editorial entitled Poor credit control bad for all, which is still available, as with all of our material, online. Mr Anderson is one of over 5,000 Cranes & Access readers in North America, the vast majority choosing the free digital version to a paid subscription.

Dear Sir,

I have thrice read your 2011 November editorial on credit control and collection. My career and education has been in business but the scale of business was typically small in restaurant and hotel management. I served a six year apprenticeship in arboriculture and was amazed at equipment costs and investment. In 1996 I began buying equipment and tools. Through prudence, wisdom, cost ROI calculations and careful shopping my tree service has \$50,000 in working stock and most of the large items were bought on short term credit with nary a default. I have served 628 customers since 1999 and a few are repeat business accounts.

As the crane and access industry has grown so much and improvements have been made, I wonder if a better trend has developed, through the efforts of your web site, to effect better credit and collection practices.

Sincerely,

Sherman "Sherm" Anderson

Best Tree Service

Mountain View, Arkansas USA

We responded.

managed to raise awareness a little and through repeated efforts helped shake things up a little? The industry is maturing however and good business practices beginning to cre, in even with smaller less organised operations.

Stupid things continue to occur but it is definitely better and this during an economic downturn is a good sign. IF you are in agreement I would like to publish your letter in the next magazine, but only if you agree of course.

Just to flag the issue again

Many thanks for contacting us

Best wishes

Leigh

He then sent the following response

Dear Leigh,

Yes, feel free to publish my letter. Perhaps it will help one or more people in the industry to be prudent in their investment decisions. For two years I have been tempted to invest in a new Niftylift telescoping boom lift to take me to 70' (23 meters). My ten year old TM40 rig runs so well and selling it in this region might be difficult. I bought it for \$12K from the third owner, on eBay in 2008 and drove 280 miles west to get it. Until that time my experience in lift operations was a short seven years with a 50/50 partner in his Work Force lift at a part time pace. I bought the Niftylift so I could end the partnership and serve my clients sooner and more effectively.

Today while removing a dead 55ft 36" diameter oak tree I thought about the rental industry segment of Work At Height and how competitive their business must be. I have observed that some of the equipment manufacturers buy, sell and merge quickly and often. So it's no wonder there are many financial difficulties among their lot.

I appreciated the trial copy of Cranes and Access reading every article with a highlighter in hand. I support your team and wish you continued success.

Sherman Anderson