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Little and large!


Liebherr LTR 1220

The tracked undercarriage has transformed the manoeuvrability of all types of equipment since it was first introduced in 1908. In the crane sector it has spawned many variations with lifting capacities ranging from one tonne right up to 3,600 tonnes including lattice and telescopic boom crawlers, tracked spider and mini cranes and more recently tracked articulated boom cranes.

In the more traditional lattice boom crawler sector there has been a fair amount of development recently in the 'mid-range' machines with the launch of the 650 tonne Terex Superlift 3800 at the end of 2012 as well as a continued growth in the development of telescopic crawlers.

There also seems to be renewed interest in smaller mini crawler cranes - including those with an articulated boom - either specifically designed and manufactured, or those created by mounting a loader crane knuckle boom onto a tracked chassis. In our last feature on crawler cranes we concentrated on the larger lattice boomed models, in this issue we will look at the smaller end of the spectrum, including articulated boom crawler cranes and well as the latest telescopic crawler crane introductions.

No interest for the majors?

The major crawler crane manufacturers have never shown any interest in the tracked articulated boom sector, primarily because of its specialist nature and therefore relatively small number of sales, unable to justify the design, development and manufacturing costs or the distraction from updating existing products.

The performance potential of a small articulated boom crane was shown early in 2010 when German-based crane, access rental and engineering company Wemo-tec teamed up with Palfinger to produce a long-boomed specialist spider crane. The SMK320.67 special installation crane offers compact stowed dimensions of less than five metres long, 1.75 metres wide and less than two metres high, yet boasts a 32 metre hook height, a 6.7 tonne maximum lift capacity and a 29 metre maximum radius.


The 'mid-range' lattice crawler sector was boosted with the launch of the 650 tonne Terex Superlift 3800 at the end of 2012

The main advantage of this type of equipment is its small overall size compared to lifting performance and its ability to reach difficult areas - getting close into the work and thus allowing it to compete with much larger cranes. The Wemo-tec SMK was also fitted with a four axis manipulator arm integrated into the boom design for use with an RSJ beam grab or vacuum glass handler, allowing a 1,000kg glass pane or beam to be installed overhead or into tricky positions. The company now has three other models - all smaller than the SMK320 - starting with the SMK040.25 with a maximum hook height of four metres and capacity of 2.5 tonnes, followed by the SMK 190.40 with a 19 metre hook height and four tonne capacity and the SMK 220.42 with 22.15 metre maximum hook height and 4.2 tonnes capacity.

Whilst a good number of buyers expressed interest in this type of product at its launch, few manufacturers felt the need to join in. That is until Italian construction equipment manufacturer Cormidi surprised everyone by introducing its multi-purpose spider lift/crane KB range.

Cormidi creates a stir

Again based on a tracked spider chassis, Cormidi managed to produce a work platform, crane and tool handler using a single base model. The resulting performance of each was surprisingly good with working and lifting heights of between 19 and 22 metres. When fitted with a platform, the four section main boom and double articulated telescopic jib gives a working height of 22.5 metres, an outreach of nine metres and a platform capacity of 200kg, or 12 metres with 80kg. The lift also provides around seven metres of horizontal outreach at an up and over height of around 14 metres.


The SMK320.67 special installation crane offers compact stowed dimensions of less than five metres long, 1.75 metres wide and less than two metres high


The SMK320 was also fitted with a four axis manipulator arm integrated into the boom design

Cormidi managed to produce a work platform, crane and tool handler using a single base model


Cadman designed its own mid-sized crawler crane with articulated telescopic boom

Rather than using an 'off the shelf' undercarriage, the ACC 2050/1 has a specifically designed chassis with three position outriggers front and back

The benefit of the double articulation telescopic jib means that the unit also has some under-bridge capability - reaching four metres below ground level - with the ability to work directly under the machine itself. The double articulation also makes for a very compact machine. The unit is quickly converted to a spider crane weighing 2,885kg and with an 800kg lift capacity. Other attachments can be fitted to the boom, including those requiring hydraulic power, such as a glass panel handler, or hydraulic demolition breaker, making the unit even more versatile.

The interest in the Cormidi and the tracked articulated boom concept was apparent and there have been several recent introductions of tracked articulated cranes this year. However even before the Wemo-tec crane, Essex, UK, based crane rental company Cadman Cranes had already identified a gap in the market and decided to design and develop its own tracked articulated crane.

Cadman Cranes

The Cadman family has been in the rental industry for more than 50 years. The company started trading in 1959 when the elder of two brothers - Brian Cadman - started supplying operated earthmoving machinery to local authorities and the private sector. Operating from his father's farm just outside Colchester the business grew, moving premises to cope with the expansion. Cadman's younger brother Geoff and a cousin joined in the mid-1960's. However in 1976 they decided to enter the crane hire sector, the first crane purchased was a 16 tonne Coles telescopic then within a year it added a seven tonner followed by two more 25 tonne Coles.

Further expansion meant moving to its current three acre site in Stanway, Colchester with its custom built workshop covering 14,000 square metres, able to cope with the further investment in larger All-Terrain cranes up to 100 tonnes from a wide variety of manufacturers including Grove, Kato, Tadano and Krupp.

In 2005 it was decided to separate the crane operation from the other equipment and Cadman Cranes was born. A couple of years later the company purchased its first mini crawler crane - a five tonne Maeda LC785 with 16.3 metre main boom and 20.3 metres lift height with fly jib - followed by a similar capacity Kobelco CR9UR. With good demand for these cranes the next step was to invest in a slightly larger eight tonne Hitachi or Maeda. However with insufficient gains in boom length or lifting duties Cadman decided not to go down this route, and recognising a gap in the market took the unusual step to design and build its own mid-sized crawler crane with an articulated telescopic boom. Over a 12 month period it developed the ACC 2050/1 midi crawler crane which entered its fleet in the summer of 2010.


Cadman invested in a Maeda LC785 and a Kobelco CR9UR but then built its own midi crawler crane

"When we designed the ACC 2050 its performance was expected to be streets ahead of the competition, but once completed not only were they reached but exceeded in every respect," says Geoff Cadman. "It is in a class of its own and has been an enormous success as a cost effective alternative to using larger capacity cranes or expensive ground support systems."

Rather than using an 'off the shelf' undercarriage, the ACC 2050/1 has a specifically designed chassis with three position outriggers front and back. The unit is driven into the work position from the cab and then the outriggers set from the chassis controls at either the front or the back of the machine. Crane boom movement is by remote control giving the operator a much better view of the load being lifted and placed. Cadman used an Amco-Veba loader crane with a six section main boom which gives a working radius - with or without the fully hydraulic rotating rehandling grab - of 16.2 metres. There is an optional quick fit, four section hydraulic luffing jib which extends the radius to 26 metres at which it can handle a 650kg load.


The ACC 2050 working with the fully hydraulic rotating rehandling grab

Maximum lift height is 20 metres on main boom or 30 metres with the luffing jib, and it has the ability to telescope the load horizontally with the remote LED screen providing the percentage of maximum permissable load to be moved. Following the success of the first tracked crane, a second ACC 2050 - the /2 - was built. This has a nine section base boom giving up to 22.8 metre radius at which it can handle just over a tonne. When fitted with a grab it has a 20.6 metre radius and a capacity of 1,370kg.

Using steel reinforced, 500mm wide rubber track pads, the overall width of the machine is 2.5 metres, while

Maximum capacity of the ACC 2050 on the main boom is 8.9 tonnes at a radius of 4.6 metres, 2,170kg at 16.2 metres and 1,120kg at 22.8 metres (ACC 2050/2)

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the overall length is just five metres. Both models of the ACC 2050 can work with the outriggers deployed within the width of the chassis, half extended at 3.6 metres or fully extended at five metres. Maximum capacity on the main boom is 8.9 tonnes at a radius of 4.6 metres, 2,170kg at 16.2 metres and 1,120kg at 22.8 metres (ACC 2050/2). Pick & carry performance through 360 degrees is seven tonnes at two metres, 3.5 tonnes at 4.2 metres and 2.7 tonnes at 5.5 metres.

The ACC 2050 has a weight of just less than 20 tonnes, giving a ground pressure on the standard 500mm pads of 0.46 kg per square centimetre, this can be further reduced with the larger 700mm wide steel pad option. Overall height of the machine is 3.5 metres and the crane has specific storage places for outrigger pads and lifting tackle. Optional equipment includes two fall hoist rope and fully rotating re-handling grabs which are easily fitted to the main boom using quick release couplings. At the moment the company has two ACC 2050 cranes although it plans on building up the fleet to around a dozen machines over the longer term.

"The ACC2050 has the performance of a 25 tonne mobile but has so many other advantages particularly when working on confined sites and with restricted headroom," says Cadman. "We currently have 22 mobile cranes up to 100 tonnes including our latest addition - a new Liebherr LTC1045 with elevating cab. The ACC 2050 was designed and built purely for our own use and we have no intention producing machines to sell. The ACC 2050 allows us to offer a more cost effective solution than our All Terrain cranes for certain contracts and we will build more for our own fleet when demand allows."

New Reedyk

For many years several Dutch manufacturers - Reedyk, Hoeflon and Van Bouwel - have been producing articulated mini cranes to satisfy local market demand. With the growth of spider and small tracked telescopic cranes from global manufacturers such as Maeda and Unic, demand for their cranes also appears to be growing.

Reedyk in particular has been expanding its range of articulated cranes and refining them for series production. However its latest development is different in several ways, it has a straight telescopic boom rather than articulated and


Maximum lift height is 20 metres on main boom or 30 metres with the luffing jib

has been designed for working in hazardous environments. *(See story on p32)*

Maeda variation

The growth in the articulated boom mini crane revealed itself earlier this year when Maeda's European master dealer - Kranlyft - unveiled the all-new MK1033C at Bauma. The MK1033C is the first articulated boom mini crane from Maeda and features a three section main boom plus three section articulated jib. The main reason behind its introduction is its improved ability - compared to straight boom models - to install glass in window frames, lift up and over in narrow spaces and to place loads onto roofs. Maximum capacity is 995kg and maximum lift height 11.4 metres at which it can lift 630kg, while it can lift to a maximum radius of nearly 10 metres.

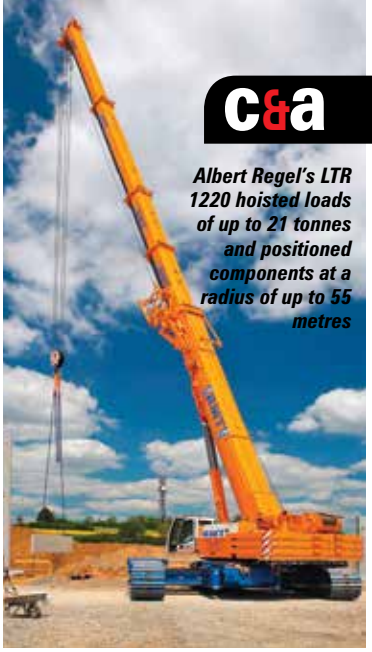
Like the rest of the Maeda MC spider crane range the MK1033C - at just 750mm wide and less than two metres high - is compact enough to fit through a standard doorway. The overall length is just over 2.7 metres and weighs two tonnes in order to be able to ride in construction elevators. The crane has multi outrigger positions with each outrigger able to be placed in seven different horizontal positions and six different lengths. Whatever the position the crane will automatically calculate the maximum lift for each configuration.

The basic model has a diesel engine and a fixed hook on the end of the


The new model MK1033C has six section boom with articulation in the middle giving good 'up and over' capability

The 60 tonne capacity Liebherr LTR 1060 is the smallest of the LTR range

The 110 tonne Liebherr LTR 1100



Albert Regel's LTR 1220 hoisted loads of up to 21 tonnes and positioned components at a radius of up to 55 metres

boom, beneficial when working in confined spaces. An optional winch is also available as well as petrol, petrol/LPG or 380-400 volt electric motor power options.

Larger telescopic crawlers

The growth in the smaller articulated crawler cranes mirrors the expansion in the larger telescopic crawlers with an increasing number of customers now realising the benefits of short set-up time, easier transportation and greater manoeuvrability. Most telescopic crawlers have a capacity less than about 80 tonnes. There are numerous manufacturers offering crawler telescopics but none with a range as broad - in capacity terms - as Liebherr. Its four model LTR range starts at with the 60 tonne LTR 1060 and ends with the 1,200 tonne LTR 11200 with its narrow crawler undercarriage making it ideal for wind turbine erection.

Its most recent addition is the 220 tonne LTR 1220 first seen at Liebherr customer days last year prior to its official unveiling at Bauma earlier this year. The LTR 1220 has a 60 metre telescopic boom derived from the LTM 1220-5.2 All Terrain, and can telescope heavy loads. The main boom can be extended with two seven metre lattice sections fitted between the telescopic boom and the swingaway extension which can luff by up to 45 degrees mechanically or - as an option - hydraulically under full load.

The undercarriage of the LTR 1220 can be extended from the stowed width of 4.5 metres to an intermediate width of 5.88 metres or a maximum of 7.25 metres, with full load charts for all three widths. The LTR 1220 can also cope with side slopes of up to four degrees - something that is not always suited to the thoroughbred All Terrain booms installed on some crawler models. In basic trim with one metre wide tracks the unit weights around 90 tonnes and is capable of assembling itself without the need for an auxiliary crane.

One main area of use for the LTR 1220 telescopic crawler crane is the installation of prefabricated components. With an erection jib 3.4 metres long and the auxiliary hoist, installation work can be carried out in two-hook operation. As well as this, it is ideally suited as an auxiliary crane for the installation of wind turbines for handling components. The LTR 1220 also proving useful on long-term construction sites in the energy sector or on infrastructure projects.

The first LTR 1220 was delivered to German crane and transport company Albert Regel and was used to construction of a prefabricated concrete building in Villingen-Schwenningen, where it turned out to be a popular crane choice. The LTR 1220 hoisted loads of up to 21 tonnes and positioned components at a radius of up to 55 metres. Albert Regel was also one of the first companies to take delivery of a 100 tonne LTR 1100 following its launch in 2005.

Link-Belt updates TCC-750

Link-Belt has launched an updated version of its 70 tonne TCC-750 telescopic crawler crane. The new version has a Tier 4 Final engine, guardrails for safe working at height on the superstructure and improved lift capacities at short radii from the four section full power 35.2 metre boom, it also features a completely new operator's cab. The updated crane should be available from the second quarter next year.

The TCC-750's big brother is the 100 tonne TCC-1100 which features a 45.7 metre, five section main boom fabricated from ultra-high strength steel and formed at Link-Belt's own production facility in Lexington, Kentucky. The bi fold swingaway offers an additional 9.4 or 16.7 metres and incorporates a three metre heavy-lift extension with an 18.1 tonne capacity. The TCC-1100 can work with three different track widths - 5.8 metres fully extended, 4.4 metres and 3.7 metres when fully retracted.

Earlier this year Sennebogen added the 70 tonne heavy duty 673 R-HD telescopic crawler - the first model in a new E-Series

20 years of Sennebogen telescopics

German crane and material handling manufacturer Sennebogen has been producing telescopic crawler cranes for more than 20 years. The Bavarian company launched the 613 M in 1992 and followed it up with the 630 in 1995 which has now been superseded by the current 40 tonne capacity 643. In 2004 the company introduced the 80 tonne 683 and earlier this year added the 70 tonne heavy duty 673 R-HD telescopic crawler - the first model in a new E-Series.

The new 673 R-HD features a four section 36 metre main boom and an eight to 15 metre bi-fold swingaway extension which can offset by up to 40 degrees. The heavy duty boom is designed to handle side loadings and rugged use and is not just a simple lift crane. Complying with the Tier 3b/4i emission standards, it is powered by a Deutz engine with a particulate filter and exhaust after treatment system. Additional features include peripheral cameras and a 2.7 metre hydraulically elevated cabin which can tilt up to 30 degrees.

The 673 R-HD has been designed to easy transport and to be ready for use as soon as it is unloaded on site. The tracks retract to three metres and can be easily removed and installed when required. The crane has been designed to work on slopes of up to four degrees and can also be equipped with a work platform with 1,000kg capacity.

Link-Belt has upgraded its 70 tonne TCC750.

Marchetti for AGD

UK based AGD Rental has been offering telescopic crawler cranes from more than 15 years, starting with a 30 tonne IHI CCH300T. The concept and the crane proved popular and as a result it now has nine CCH300T in its fleet as well as the larger 50 tonne IHI CCH500T.

Latest additions include the recently introduced 25 tonne capacity Marchetti Sherpina CW25.35 and two 70 tonne Marchetti Sherpa CW70.42L. These have been added to cope with the increased demand for telescopic crawlers. The CW25.35 has a 25.1 metre main boom with an 8.1 metre three stage telescopic extension for a maximum lift height of around 34 metres. The overall width with retracted undercarriage is 2.5 metres which extends to 3.9 metres. Overall length with the boom fully retracted is 7.13 metres and height is 2.7 metres with a total weight of 25 tonnes. With standard 500mm wide pads it has a ground pressure of 0.57 kg per square centimetre.

The tracked telescopic cane looks to be gaining an increasing following among end users, putting pressure on rental companies. It is almost certainly going to be one of the major growth areas in the crane sector over the next decade and given the operational benefits it is not hard to see why. This year has seen more manufacturers launching products. Now all that is needed is for more rental companies to become enthusiastic in order to offer end users a wider choice of equipment.

The Marchetti CW25.35 has a 25.1 metre main boom with an 8.1 metre three stage telescopic extension for a maximum lift height of around 34 metres

Explosion proof mini crawler

Dutch material handling manufacturer Reedyk has launched a new ATEX certified dual power mini crawler crane for work in hazardous environments, including refineries and other oil & gas applications. The crane has been developed in partnership with Dutch crane and access rental company Peinemann and Royal Dutch Shell, which have placed an initial order for six units.

The new crane - the three tonne compact PC4405EX - is built from scratch to comply with ATEX-3G IIBTS, allowing it to work in hazardous areas to Zone two levels. The main power source is DC electric from a large lithium-ion battery pack that is, according to the manufacturer, good for a full day's work. However just in case, a small two cylinder diesel is included as part of the package, which tops up the batteries while running and can also be used for remote recharging.

The new crane features a five section 7.3 metre boom, providing a maximum tip height of nine metres and a maximum radius with the boom horizontal of 5.7 metres at which it can lift 320kg. The crane can also pick and carry up to 2.5 tonnes and has a slewing range of 15 degrees either side of centre although this is purely intended for final positioning of the load. The boom uses a Reedyk manufactured base section and standard Amco Veba internal sections and telescope system, a formula that Reedyk uses on most of its cranes, saving on design time and benefiting from standard components and readily available replacement parts.

The crane also has a very low ground bearing pressure. It is lightweight at just 2,800kg and it has long rubber tracks which run almost its full 2.4 metres overall length. Additionally the tracks have been specially designed with 14 bottom rollers, in addition to the drive and idler sprockets. This prevents any chance of increased spot loading that can occur with rubber tracks that feature only a few widely spaced rollers. Overall width of the crane is one metre, while the overall height is just 1.8 metres. The machine is normally operated by Hetronic Nova radio remote controls, which of course had to be modified for the ATEX certification to include twin antennae with full proportional control for all functions.

In summary this little crane 'looks right', always a good sign, and is expected to be a very popular unit for maintenance duties in the Shell refinery. Its compact dimensions will allow it to get close-in to replace valves and other components and offering a substantial saving over more traditional methods. Depending on the impact that the ATEX modifications have on the overall cost of this crane, we would expect it to prove popular in many other sensitive and even regular applications.

The Reedyk compact PC4450EX demonstrates its ability to slew off centre


The crane includes several handy slide out storage lockers for slings etc


The PC4450EX has a tough rubberised carry deck


In case there is ever a problem with the remote controls, the PC4450 EX has regular manual override levers for all four functions hidden under a heavy-duty protective lid


The special rubber tracks run the full length of the machine and include 15 idler rollers to help maintain a low ground bearing pressure

The five section fully hydraulic boom uses standard Amco Veba telescope sections and hydraulics with a Reedyk base section

New pylon installation method

One of the first Sennebogen 673 R-HD to be delivered went to German contractor Himmel und Papesch (HuP), of Bebra, for work on a new high voltage line between the Lower-Saxony town of Hemmoor and the regional capital, Cuxhaven.

The 35km long 110 kV line employs new solid-wall steel pylons which are driven into the ground using a new installation method. First the existing lattice pylons are removed and the foundation is prepared for the new pylons. The crane is then used with a Junttan hydraulic hammer, to drive the existing foundations deeper into the ground - using a six tonne drop weight - to create space for the new foundation. A two metre diameter steel guide/pile frame developed by HuP is then placed around the existing foundation hole and a new 15 metre high foundation pile is driven vertically into the ground. In total it takes about two to three days per pylon with this new procedure, a substantial time saving compared to other methods. The foundation can be subjected to load immediately and there is minimal damage to the existing landscape.

"If you can't afford it, don't buy it!"

G. H. Johnson Crane Hire is the largest UK crawler crane rental company... to have been left out of this year's Cranes & Access Top 30 guide! Unfortunately the company was inexplicably omitted so Ed Darwin pays a visit to find out more about this low profile operation.

(l-r) Richard Johnson, Glyn Johnson, Rob Jensen and Paul Johnson

Located just off junction 28 of the M1 in Alfreton, Derbyshire - the same small town in which a Weldex crawler depot can be found - the crawler crane specialist has more than 20 years' experience in the construction industry. Family owned and run, it has a fleet of around 30 Kobelco, Hitachi and IHI cranes topped by a new 250 tonne Kobelco CKE2500G - the first to be delivered in Europe.

The company was founded by Glyn Johnson who served his apprenticeship as a pressure vessel welder for International Combustion. He entered the rental and contracting business after purchasing a CAT D8 dozer in the early 1970s. After a few years of building up the business, it almost prematurely ended when a developer he was working for went bust forcing Johnson to sell off a number of machines to cover his obligations. Fortunately he had followed the advice of one of his father's expressions - "if you can't afford it, don't buy it" - and adopted a policy of always paying for its equipment in full and never being in debt to anyone.

It was at this point and as a way of making sure he was never again in the position of being owed a large sum of money that Johnson began dealing in plant - buying and selling a wide variety of equipment. The recession of the early nineties saw the number of crawler cranes for sale in the UK increase and although mechanical cranes - such as the NCK Andes or Ajax - were the mainstay it was at this time that Johnson became one of the first companies in the UK to buy a hydraulic crawler crane - an IHI CH500.

It was not until 2001 with the appointment of Keith Salmon, then a 40 year crane veteran having spent his working life with Bowmer & Kirkland Crane Hire (later Grayston, White and Sparrow), that the company decided to expand its crane fleet. Perhaps 'decided to expand it' isn't quite the correct term as Salmon would often rent out the crane sales inventory before Johnson was able to sell them! With Salmon's knowledge and experience Johnson Crane Hire quickly built its fleet from about six or seven cranes to around 25 units. Tragically, in 2009 Salmon suffered a heart attack and passed away, although Johnson says that the company is forever indebted to him for helping make the company what it is today.

Two of Johnson's CKE1350's working on a project in Whitechapel, London

Declining rates

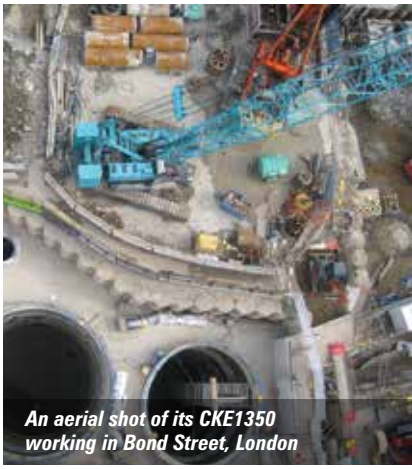
A perennial concern of most rental companies is that of declining rental rates. As a result of buying its equipment outright however Johnson says it is in the fortunate position of being able to hold out for acceptable rates.

"We don't believe in taking money from the drivers or scrimping on maintenance in order to lower the rate for a crane," says Johnson. "We will only send cranes out at sustainable rates - rates at which we can afford to reinvest without the added worry of taking out finance on our cranes or a mortgage on our depot."

"If rates ever stand a chance of improving it is important for hirers and contractors to appreciate that constant and high levels of maintenance and reinvestment must be paid for. We recently declined to cross-hire the Kobelco CKE2500G for a job in London as the rate they had agreed undervalued the crane. There are only a very few cranes in the UK fitted with low-emission Euro IIIB compliant engines able to work in London's low-emission zones so why reduce the price?"

Talking about the company's fleet, operators and general upkeep Johnson adds: "We are incredibly proud of the reliability of our cranes and have to give a great deal of credit to our drivers and engineers for this. We try our best to look after them and, as a result, they look after the cranes, making sure they are well-maintained. As well as continuing to pay our drivers when the cranes are in the yard, we also pay them greasing time - something that used to be standard practice but has been eroded over time. We also make sure that the cranes are serviced every 250 hours - it's a costly and time consuming practice but it ensures our cranes are very rarely out of action."

"Today's level of reliability would have been unbelievable when I first started - one of our first 135 tonne Kobelco CKE1350-1F cranes, for example, went 11,500 hours before needing its first - and so far only - engineer call-out. In the end it turned out to be a minor crack in the fuel line which took a few minutes to fix!"



An aerial shot of its CKE1350 working in Bond Street, London

The company's CKE2500G and CKE2500-2