

Letters



Trailer cranes vs ATs

Leigh,

I was truly surprised at the way you suggested that trailers are a significant competitor to small ATs in the article Tough Times for Small ATs. Your comparison of load charts certainly doesn't support this - so why do it? It reads more like a promotion for trailers than anything else. So why single out ATs with no mention of knuckle booms, minis or truck cranes? Not balanced or well conceived.

Stuart Anderson

Chortsey Barr Associates

We wrote back to Mr Anderson pointing out that we had mentioned other forms such as loader and spider cranes in the article, which was intended to highlight the shrinking number of small AT sales and how the jobs they used to do are being taken over by other types of cranes and lifting equipment and that we had covered loader cranes in this sector a few months back and are due to look at spider cranes next month. He responded.....

Dear Leigh

By all means use my note. You may wish to

add that I do understand that European demand for small ATs has been declining for several years. This is due to crane hirers shifting upwards as has always happened not only in ATs but also in RTs and truck cranes in overseas markets. Traditionally demand for small cranes only recovers when the market and economics justify it or when a manufacturer changes the game - as happened in the 1990s in North America when Terex Cranes, under Fil Filipov, dramatically reduced the market price of small RTs and truck cranes. There is no sign of similar dynamics in the AT sector - but when the Chinese get their act together (Note:when, not if) then that will be a game changer.

Of course, at least in the developed countries, the trend in crane hire owning and operating 'fixed costs' i.e. labour, fuel, etc., is constantly upwards and these costs are very similar for cranes of all small to medium classes. These costs have always had the effect of narrowing the total owning and operating costs of cranes of different sizes.

Regards,

Stuart

Dinner in the Sky

Dear Sir,

I have read several articles on Vertical.net concerning the question of when it is appropriate to lift persons by crane instead of other working at height solutions.

While there are certainly applications where a crane supported work platform may be the safest way of working at height,

I am curious if you are familiar with this little business venture:

www.dinnerintheskyevents.com

I prefer to remain anonymous.

We responded that we were aware and had covered Dinner in the Sky several times, and in particular when it managed to change the FEM guidance on the issue of lifting people for fun. Ed

Window cleaner fall

Dear Leigh,

I saw your comment about the fatality in Manhattan. While I agree with everything you said, I would respectfully suggest you missed an important point. Had the operator received adequate training (as opposed to a cursory familiarisation)? A well trained operator would have found it easy and logical to move the boom into the correct position as opposed to simply using it as a way of accessing the window ledge. Operators who receive minimal training often don't feel confident moving booms into position and prefer to get out. Did his company simply provide him with a lift and tell him to "get on with it"?

Did his company provide him with sufficient training to use the machine in this way?

I don't want to send this as an attributed comment as some people might interpret it as a bad taste way of advertising our training services. Also I don't know the details of this tragic accident but it clearly should not have happened and may not be a simple case of operator stupidity.

Yours sincerely

This letter came in as a response to a story we carried about a 29 year old window cleaner in Manhattan, who had climbed out of the platform of the 66ft telescopic self-propelled boom lift that he was using to stand on a ledge in order to clean the large windows on the third floor of a Park Avenue building, rather than moving the platform closer. The man then slipped and fell around 12 metres of so to his death. While the writer was quite clear that he did not send the letter for publication we felt that the point he makes was very valid indeed and not something that we had considered when writing up the report. In the interests of sending an important message we are therefore publishing it anonymously.



cranes & access
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Following a telephone call from Paul Adorian, the founding managing director of IPAF and the founder of the notified body PAC we received the following letter along with the announcement of a new association that he and his wife Ruth have established to campaign for better access and facilities for the seriously disabled. This follows challenges that the two have constantly come up against whenever they travel or try to stay in hotels - even those that advertise disabled friendly facilities - as many simply pay 'lip-service' to meeting disabled requirements. Any help and support of any kind would be much appreciated.

Dear Leigh

Further to our telephone conversation earlier in the week, please find attached the press release and a couple of recent pictures of Ruth. I am grateful to you for agreeing to put it in a future *Cranes & Access* as I feel there is a very useful link, as disability does require access.

It would be marvellous if you could put forward the idea of some access companies promoting our new association, as that sort of publicity never does any harm to companies and of course they could, if they wished, have a two-way link to our web site

www.disabledday.org and who knows, it might bring benefit to both of us.

Best Regards,

Paul Adorian.



Ruth Adorian

New charity to provide more independence for disabled

A mother of three suffering from Motor Neurone Disease, a progressive disease which attacks the nerves of the brain and spinal cord, has founded a brand new charity to tackle the ever growing need for better facilities for the physically disabled in the UK. The association for the Independence of Disabled People (AID) aims to improve the life of the disabled with better access in public buildings and on transport and, there are plans to launch an annual 'Disabled Day' to raise national awareness.

Founder and chairman Mrs Ruth Adorian from Windermere, Cumbria has led an incredibly active and varied life, travelling the world as an Army officer's wife and working tirelessly as a successful business director, up until six years ago when she was diagnosed with this tragic disease, leaving her unable to walk or speak.

Now requiring round the clock care, Ruth fought to retain as much independence as possible, but has experienced first-hand the lack of facilities available to the disabled in hotels, restaurants and on transport. Speaking through a voice-enabling computer, she said: "I found easy access to be a major problem, which is dreadful when, according to the Department of Work & Pensions, there are over 11 million living with physical disability in the UK. My family and I have had issues with hotel websites offering 'disabled bathrooms' which are entirely unsuitable for a disabled person requiring two carers. The problem persists all too often across all grades of hotels and there needs to be enforcement of proper standards for disabled bathrooms and toilets in hotels and public buildings. A few misplaced handles or an emergency pull cord shouldn't constitute a disabled bathroom".

Rather than accept the situation, she decided to do something about it with the support of family and a network of friends, many from her days of supporting other worthwhile charities. She continues: "I woke up one day and wondered why I was still here, having long outlasted the initial three year life expectancy given to me by neurologists. And then the idea came to me - we need a lobbying association and a dedicated Disabled Day to draw much more attention to people's needs.

I want to see a day in the calendar each year where people in every town and village take part in activities to recognise the needs of the disabled and hopefully to bring changes".

Membership of AID will be offered to individuals and businesses for a fee which will help towards funding the awareness and education of those providing public facilities, press Government and Local Authorities for stricter controls, and work directly with hotel and restaurant proprietors. An 'Inspectorate of Disabled Facilities' and a recognisable symbol scheme are also being proposed to make it clear which establishments' really do meet the needs of the disabled.

"Even if this charity makes just a small difference initially it will be worth it. However, with the right level of support we believe it will grow quickly, helping to greatly improve the quality of life of those who are currently confined to their home because facilities elsewhere are woefully inadequate".

Details of individual and business membership of AID can be obtained from the website

www.disabledday.org or by contacting Paul Adorian, on 015394 48459.