

Are your staff properly trained?

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All training centres above offer IPAF approved and audited courses for Operators of Mobile aerial work platforms, European directives require that all staff are fully and adequately trained in the safe use of the equipment they operate.

See www.ipaf.org for full listing

New National Plant Training Adviser is keen to learn and keen to help

c&a

training

We have in the past been highly critical of the CITB construction skills, CSCS and CPCS etc... and received negligible feedback or input from them. It was a breath of fresh air therefore to meet Steve Bird who was appointed as national plant training adviser, with CITB Construction Skills, in October 2005. He is now keen to gain experience with cranes and access equipment and to help any of our readers with obtaining grants and financial support for training.

Even if you are not good with names or faces, you cannot miss Steve Bird, he is wheelchair bound, a rarity in the crane and access world.

To demonstrate this Bird recently visited Bronzeshield Lifting's training centre in Crayford, Kent, where he was instructed in the safe operation

only way forward and commissioned a feasibility study to determine whether a company training and assessment centre was feasible or even viable. After receiving positive feedback, a building was constructed to accommodate the training centre and the process of gaining CITB/City & Guilds Accreditation started. It was important to the company that the centre delivered quality training and that the course material and handouts were of an equal standard, so after developing the course content, all of the support material was produced by a specialist publisher. The Centre was accredited in January 2005 to deliver NVQs, ICC and CPCS categories and can deliver training and assessment for all training associated with lifting operations, as well as level 2 in SPMO and Level 2 & 3 in Plant Maintenance. In the first year of operation 25 percent of the Bronzeshield workforce achieved an NVQ and by the end of the second year the figure had risen to 75 percent.

After ironing out any glitches in-house, the centre now offers external courses for which it is experiencing strong demand. Courses currently on offer include: Appointed Person, Crane Supervisor, Lorry Loader, Lift Truck, Slinger Signaller, Experienced

Worker Assessment, Foundation Training, Mobile Cranes – all duties and Mobile Tower Crane. To assist with the cost of training Bronzeshield submitted a training plan and claim to the CITB which included almost 1400 training days in the first year. This went some way to help with the heavy cost of training required at the outset. The company also has a plant maintenance apprentice who is grant aided by CITB.

Meet the man at SED

Bird has an in-depth knowledge of the CITB Grants Scheme and is keen to assist any crane or access company with any grant issues that they may have. If you are visiting SED he will be available on both the CPA and IPAF stands to discuss how he can help you. Alternatively he can be emailed at steve.bird@citb.co.uk or called on **07739 437 608**



Set up was relatively easy from the comfort of his wheel chair



Finally in the cab, Steve Bird gets a feel for tower crane operation

It was not always so, the wheelchair came after he narrowly escaped death in a sporting accident in 2002. After 23 years of experience in the Plant Hire Industry he was determined that his mobility problem would not turn him away from working with construction equipment.

When it comes to lifting equipment though he freely admits that his knowledge is limited. To overcome this shortfall he has engaged in a programme of training and familiarisation to gain a better understanding. He is quick to point out that his wheelchair does not affect his ability to do the job and does not prevent him from experiencing, first hand the problems encountered by operators on site.

of a Liebherr self erecting tower crane. Under the watchful eye of safety training manager, Mark Lambourne and crane operator Terry McBride, Bird assisted with the erection process and then climbed into the cab and operated it. Afterwards he said "having mainly operated boat, pier and gantry cranes my knowledge of mobile cranes is limited but the training I have received here has given me a good insight into some of the issues concerning mobile cranes."

A good example

Bronzeshield is a good example of what can be achieved in the training area. In November 2004 managing director, William Frost felt that a fully qualified workforce was the



This was a bit tougher, the secret is in the arms

National



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