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Crane Interest Group Open Meeting 2016

This year's CPA Crane Interest Group meeting was slightly more subdued than normal with only around 50 or so attendees - roughly half the level of recent years - although they did represent most of the UK's major crane companies.

The meeting was chaired by the CPA chief executive Colin Wood as the previous chairman - Bill Frost from crane rental company Bronzeshield - has stepped down. A new chairman will hopefully be selected next February. As usual there was a full agenda dealing with many aspects of the industry with the main topics including road worthiness tests/MOTs for mobile cranes, the European Crane Operators' Licence (ECOL) as well as updates to BS 7121 Parts 1 and 3, mobile cranes working alongside railways, proposed engine emission regulations in London, preventing unintentional movement of equipment functions, lifting guidance for excavators and insurance issues.

Crane road tests

The first topic on the agenda was the continuing saga of crane MOTs, a subject which has been at the 'in consultation' stage with the Department of Transport since 2009/10. What has emerged

recently is that cranes mounted on commercial chassis - such as the Böcker aluminium cranes - will definitely require a heavy goods MOT test, probably sometime next year.

Wood outlined the facts saying the topic was 'not going to go away' and after further discussion and a show of hands from the members present, it was decided that the best way forward was to introduce a voluntary inspection scheme rather than wait for one to be imposed. A few days after the meeting the CPA wrote to the Department of Transport announcing that its members were ready to move ahead with a voluntary programme to inspect and test the road worthiness of mobile cranes on bespoke chassis, along the lines already proposed to the ministry.

The scheme will initially cover CPA members, but should it be accepted as a government backed scheme, then it will ultimately oblige all mobile crane companies/



owners to adopt it, or risk even heavier penalties if they chose to ignore it. While this is obviously a step in the right direction, the main problem will be that the current persistent offenders are hardly likely to follow a voluntary system. However highlighting those that do not comply may make a difference and provide added incentive to become a CPA member.

European Crane Operators Licence

Haydn Steele of the CPA outlined the latest developments with the European Crane Operators' Licence for mobile cranes stating that work on the project is now about 95 percent complete. Over past 12 months various countries and training organisations have been visited and...surprise, surprise... everyone is basically doing the same thing. A big concern from last year's meeting was that ECOL may have been a Level 3 qualification but Steele confirmed that it will be Level 2 "because it is impossible to start something at a higher level than some of those taking part". Moving forward, the Licence has to be mapped against the European Qualifications Framework (EQF), then a training plan has to be

produced followed by occupational standards. This work will take a further nine months and then it has go through the certification process appointing a certification body that will cover the whole of Europe. Because more than €210,000 of funding was given for the project it has to be approved and up and running before the final instalment is paid in September 2018.

Steele said that ECOL will allow operator mobility across Europe without additional licence costs, result in a higher standard of training and make the crane industry more efficient. This certification will work in parallel with and be equivalent to the existing CPCS card in the UK.

Insurance

Ian Edmondson of Towergate Insurance pointed out that crane hire companies should have a chat with their existing insurance brokers regarding the Insurance Act 2016. He said that companies now have to be 'upfront and honest' about any declarations such as the proportion of jobs they carry out under CPA model conditions compared to contract lifts, as insurance companies can now refuse to pay a claim and keep the premium if they are not truthful. He said that the precise split between the two were not as important as declaring the rough proportion in the first place. (Further information on this will be in the December/January issue of Cranes & Access).

Preventing unintended movement of equipment functions

Tim Watson gave a presentation on the current safety project to prevent inadvertent movements of a machine, which can easily result in serious injury or death. See the CPA update on this subject on page 63.



Colin Wood



Haydn Steele

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