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On the cover:

A Genie GS2632 owned by Hampshire plant Ltd of Winchester on hire to contractors, Watson & Haig. The narrow lift was used to rewire a church in Wherewell near Andover.



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Arcomet target the UK; UpRight to consolidate into Ireland; Manitou launch new MT14; Tadano restructure production in Japan...and take over Chinese joint venture; Grove launch new 80 tonne All Terrain crane; Aerial makes a comeback; MEC take over Volvo's telehandler product line; Easi-uplift to open in London; Catinot opens Riwal France; New Heila mini crane; Terex Telehandlers come under Genie in Europe; Spierings to build seven axle crane; Skyjack launch new compact RT scissors; Lavendon invest in the UK; Terex to launch AC55-1 at Intermat; Company owner receives 18 month prison sentence.

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Aerial platforms



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C&A comment

Bitter and twisted



Towards the end of last year most UK crane hirers are likely to have let out a cheer when the Chancellor and Treasury stated that it intends to retain the current exemption for mobile cranes from paying

the full duty on fuel. However at the same time it stated in strong terms that no matter what happens, it will not allow aerial work platforms to continue to use this "rebated fuel".

Who advises these people? Rarely has a government statement appeared so transparently vindictive and nasty. Clearly the strong CPA crane hire lobby has done a good job in changing the Treasury's mind for cranes or perhaps it has just flushed out an underlying reason behind the attempt to remove the exemption?

Anyone who knows the history will understand that the Treasury, along with HM Customs and Revenue, were seeking revenge for the defeat they suffered in the courts at the hands of Nationwide and PTP. These two firms, along with IPAF, managed to have truck-mounted aerial lifts' right to use the rebated fuel, re-instated.

British government from local councils to the Treasury, passionately detest being trumped by the common man. They have an arrogance rarely seen elsewhere and are happy to squander millions of taxpayers' pounds fighting any mere mortal who dares to question their decisions, no matter how misguided they may be. They fail to understand or accept the true meaning of the term "public servant".

There are several views on the use of rebated fuel in road-going construction equipment, such as cranes and truck-mounted aerial lifts, with merit on both sides of the debate. A clear case can be made to end it and a case can be made to maintain it. The one thing that cannot be defended is that mobile cranes and truck mounted aerial lifts should be treated differently!

It strikes us that the Treasury risks setting itself up for a further defeat, unless it believes that in a challenge, the courts will uphold the withdrawal of rebated fuel for lifts and rule that it is unfair to treat cranes differently. Thus opening the way to end it for cranes.

Perhaps the Treasury could better employ its time in banning the production of high-sulphur red diesel (initially on road vehicles and then on all vehicles) insisting that the oil industry introduce low-sulphur red diesel far sooner than is currently planned.

Please do email, fax, write or call and give us your views on this issue.

Leigh W Sparrow

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