

SKY

AERIAL PLATFORMS MOUNTED ON TRUCKS







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If one equipment sector has had to reinvent itself it is the 3.5 tonne truck mounted platform. Just when you thought it had reached its limit, the latest launches have surprised yet again with new designs and innovation producing improved performance yet still within the increasingly restrictive 3.5 tonne GVW limitations.

From a performance point of view, manufacturers of 3.5 tonne truck mounted platforms must keep advancing just to stand still - the introduction of each subsequent engine emission legislation has seen to that. As engines become cleaner they require more components and so become heavier. The increased chassis weight leaves less spare capacity for the platform superstructure, add this to tougher implementation of the weight rules and the result often requires a redesign using weight saving materials - plastics, lightweight high-strength steel etc - to produce a platform with improved performance yet light enough to fit onto the heavier truck, complete with driver (and possibly passenger), a tank of fuel, outrigger pads and - if possible - spare capacity for tools etc all within the 3,500kg GVW.

Demand for 3.5 tonne truck mounts is still growing, driven by the

increasing numbers of operators unable to drive larger class vehicles on a standard B-Class driving licence. However manufacturers have once again taken up the challenge to produce platforms with greater working heights, increased safety and new performance features in spite of the associated constraints. Recent exhibitions such as Apex and Vertikal Days have seen the launch of new models with improved performance mounted on 3.5 tonne vehicles, as well as some smaller, more compact platforms on lighter chassis aimed at inner city and urban applications.

Pausing for breath

Last year the introduction of platforms with working heights over 25 metres had calmed down with manufacturers concentrating on expanding the 'bread & butter' mid-range platforms particularly in the 20 to 25 metre range. However the increased availability and use of ultra-high strength steels and intelligent weight-saving designs

height table

and redesigns has resulted in lighter booms. These factors, along with dramatically improved load management systems, have resulted in a new wave of higher reach 3.5 tonne platforms. Several manufacturers have introduced lifts with working heights of 25 metres and above - all said to be absolutely road legal from an operational weight point of view.

Ruthmann currently tops the 'working height table' with its 29 metre TB 290 launched just before Palfinger's new 28 metre P 280 B last October. The TB 290 can now take its maximum 230kg to a

working height of 28.6 metres. This was initially available to 26 metres but was increased after Palfinger unveiled its full capacity P280 B. The straight telescopic 290 has evolved from Ruthmann's 27 metre TB 270+ and has a maximum outreach of 16.2 metres.

Palfinger's upgraded 28 metre P 280 B on a Mercedes Sprinter Euro 6 chassis was launched at the end of last year and uses an aluminium boom with a 230kg platform capacity which it can take to its full 27.6 metre working height. The Palfinger just manages to improve on Ruthmann's maximum outreach with 17 metres with the same 100kg in the platform. Palfinger says the aluminium boom is both light and stiff, thanks to its thicker side walls compared to the latest thinwall ultra-high tensile steel booms.

25 metre battle

Both Palfinger and Ruthmann have also recently launched 25 metre platforms. On the surface both look similar, but the main difference is the boom - the Ruthmann TBR 250 has a high tensile steel four section boom, while the Palfinger P 250 BK has a five section aluminium boom - now common on the Palfinger Italia platform range. Both feature 185 degrees of jib articulation and





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230kg platform capacity and both claim class-leading 16.5 metres of outreach with 100kg in the platform and 170 degrees of platform rotation.

The Palfinger is based on the 21 metre P 210 BK and offers below ground level reach. The company has also incorporated the premium outrigger system from its larger machines as standard, complete with auto-levelling, automated variable positioning and axis ground clearance monitoring. Ruthmann says its TBR 250 - which can set up on slopes of up to five degrees - is the ideal substitute for similar sized platforms mounted on 7.5 tonne chassis.

The Italian connection

A year after forming Ruthmann Italia - following the acquisition of a 60 percent stake in the Marti Group, owner of Italian spider and truck mounted lift manufacturer Bluelift/Ram - the company announced its first new model which is a joint collaboration between the companies. The 24 metre Ruthmann Ecoline RS240 is the largest platform in its new, more cost-effective Ecoline product line-up.

The RS240 has a working height of 23.6 metres and when mounted on a 3.5 tonne Nissan Cabstar for example, is less than seven metres long and 2.56 metres high. Platform capacity is 250kg with which it can manage 8.3 metres of outreach. This increases to 9.1 metres with 200kg and 11.4 metres with just 100kg in the platform. One of its main features is a new, patented easy to set-up three lever levelling system which always gives equal weight on each of the outriggers negating any torsion in the chassis.



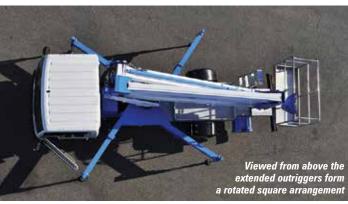
Socage 28 metre

Socage launched a 28 metre platform about three years ago but freely admitted that it was too heavy for road use in most European countries, with Italy being more 'flexible' on these things. It has gone back to the drawing board and launched a new weight compliant 28 metre platform - the forSte 28D E with X chassis. Viewed from above the extended outriggers form almost an X arrangement, however the four outrigger beams are all joined to each other in a reinforced rotated square arrangement with each outrigger forming one side of the square around the boom turret. This strong structure is attached directly to the chassis and does away with any cross bracing and reinforcement resulting in weight and cost savings.

The E (electric) series of platforms - which includes articulated and telescopic platforms with or without a jib - use electric controls, mounted on the new X-shaped chassis. Socage says that nearly all the structural components now use lightweight high tensile steel. Socage also has a new Series 4 range of articulated and telescopic models, with working heights from 15 to 24 metres. These also feature the X-shaped chassis with manually extendable outriggers to keep weight down, reduced height and longer outrigger extensions resulting in a better balanced platform.







Unusual and different

Of course there will always be new products that are a little different - most recently this has been seen in the mega platform MS100 truck mount from Multitel Pagliero developed in partnership with Skyworker Trade of Switzerland - imagine a big scissor lift platform on the end of a boom, mounted on a 3.5 tonne chassis and you won't be far wrong.

Although unusual it is far from being a new idea, there are already a few of these 'large deck' truck mounted platforms in regular production, such as the Sky Aces Tunlift (now a Palfinger Italia product) and the Comet Solar which prove invaluable for certain applications such as tunnel work, street lighting maintenance and tree trimming. The Multitel MS100 is based on the company's existing lift mechanism with a large profile, two-section

telescopic boom topped by a 3.3 metre long, 1.85 metre wide platform giving a working height of 10 metres with a platform capacity of 400kg. The work platform can also move laterally by up to 500mm either side, reaching around 450mm beyond the width of the chassis, which is 1.9 metres wide including stabilisers. This allows the operator to get closer to the point of work. The lift is mounted on a 3.5 tonne Nissan NT400 Euro 6 chassis and can work up to six metres without setting the stabilisers. An optional hydraulic friction drive allows it to travel at speeds of up to five kph at this height.



truck mounts

The growth of the pick-up

When the end of the Land Rover Defender was announced a couple of years ago, there were many who wondered in what form the 4x4 based aerial lift would continue. By the time Land Rover production finally ceased in January 2016, a few alternatives had already emerged, but the sector has since bloomed with numerous manufacturers now offering platforms on 4x4/pick-up chassis, growing the market by building on the popularity of the 4x4 pick-ups in general.

The UK has been one of leading markets for this type of platform although its popularity is now spreading over a number of countries. One of the first companies to move away from the Land Rover was Cumberland Platforms (CPL) which launched the 13.2 metre Socage A314 on a 3.5 tonne Isuzu D Max 4x4 chassis. The fully hydraulic A314 boom was previously mounted on the Land Rover Defender, Toyota Hilux, Unimog and Transit 4x4. At the end of 2015 the company achieved National Small Series Type approval on its 4x4 Toyota Hilux A314 platform which covered both the platform conversion and the vehicle being uprated to 3,500kg with offroad tyres.

Earlier this year CPL was appointed **UK dealer for Palfinger Platforms** Italy which included truck mounted lifts on chassis up to 3.5 tonnes. At the launch, the company unveiled a new platform - the Isuzu P130A using a Palfinger boom. The 13.1 metre P130A with up to six metres of outreach on the Isuzu D-Max chassis. Using four A frame stabilisers with a 2.23 metre wide footprint, the platform has a 240kg capacity and five degrees of off-road levelling.

CPL says that the switch to the Palfinger boom has resulted in a stronger, smoother and more stable platform. Working height and outreach are similar and the controls are identical making it easier for operators to switch between the two platforms. Other improvements include moving the lower controls to just behind the cab on the passenger side which is beneficial in an emergency. The boom has been relocated to the right hand



side of the truck giving UK operators access from the kerbside to enter the platform at deck level.

Of the 175 platforms CPL delivered in 2016 most were mounted on the Isuzu D-Max chassis, although the company recently become the first access company to be certified in the new Toyota Converter programme for the P130A Hi-Lux platforms.

With CPL taking on the Palfinger Italia distributorship, Socage appointed Access Platform Sales (APS) as its UK dealer. APS - which also builds and distributes the Aldercote van mounts - will offer the 13.2 metre Socage A314 pickup mounted platform with 7.2 metres outreach as well as four truck

mounted booms mounted on the 3.5 tonne Nissan Cabstar chassis - the 19.5 metre Socage 20TJ, the 20.5 metre Socage 21DJ, the 24.5 metre Socage 25D and the 28 metre Socage 28D.

New pick-up from CTE

CTE has also launched a new pickup mounted platform - the 14.7 metre Zed 15.2 - which can be mounted on either the Isuzu D-Max 4x4 or the Toyota Hylux 4x4 pick-up chassis. The platform has 6.3 metres of outreach and a platform capacity of 230kg with an outrigger footprint of 2.76 metres square. Gross Vehicle Weight is said to be three tonnes. The patented H-stabilisation system employs connecting rods to extend the beam and jack in a single





motion. Slew is 360 degrees, while the 1.4 metre wide platform has 120 degrees of rotation.

All electrics and hydraulic hoses are routed on the inside of the boom to protect from falling objects or snagging on obstacles. An optional fiberglass bucket platform with 200kg capacity is also available. CTE has also been busy with its truck mounted platforms, launching its all electric 16.6 metre B-Lift 17E with 11.3 metres of outreach and 250kg platform capacity and heavyduty battery pack that recharges while travelling. At the higher level it unveiled a new larger MP 7.5



tonne truck mount - the 32 metre MP 32.19 with twin telescopic booms with slew ring between the two, plus a two section telescopic jib with almost 180 degrees of articulation. The unit offers a 300kg platform capacity, and up to 19 metres outreach at an up and over height of over 12 metres.

First Klubb pick-up

French van mounted lift manufacturer Klubb has also entered the market with the 13.8 metre articulated boom lift mounted on a Renault Alaskan pick-up with two or four wheel drive options. The all-new KAT 42 was unveiled in September and offers up to 6.4 metres of outreach at an up & over height of five metres with a 200kg platform capacity and 360 degree

slew. The new model uses a single parallelogram riser and telescopic aluminium boom with a fibreglass basket/bucket. Simple hydraulic controls with internal hoses, wiring and protected components to help cope with extreme climatic

conditions and tough work

applications.

Versalift compact

truck mounts

Another company with a wide range of platforms on 3.5 tonnes or less is Versalift. Its latest is a compact platform - the nine metre LT-23-90-TB - mounted on a two wheel drive Fiat Doblo WorkUp chassis which has an overall weight of just 2.5 tonnes it manages up to 4.2 metres of outreach with its 120kg/one-man fibreglass platform without the need for outriggers. Aimed at mainland Europe - particularly France -Versalift says that a capacity upgrade and optional detachable





truck mounts





tow bar will also be available.

The WorkUp has compact dimensions with an overall length of less than five metres with 250kg of spare cargo capacity after allowing for driver, passenger, aluminium lockers and fuel etc.

Versalift has also introduced a new 13.3 metre LAT135-H Low Voltage platform mounted on either the Euro 6 Toyota Hilux or Isuzu D-Max pickups. Both are uprated to 3.5 tonnes GVW and incorporate a system that keeps the rear suspension airbags at optimum pressure. The new double A frame stabiliser system, allows narrow setup making it ideal for working in restricted areas or within the single lane of a road. Being uprated the unit has an improved payload and adequate space for lockers on the deck of the vehicle. The LAT135-H Low Voltage offers up to 6.1 metres of outreach, and a platform capacity of 230kg. Technology within the platform's boom structure, bucket controls and fittings, enables dielectric flashtesting whilst the bucket is mounted to the platform.

The company has also launched an upgraded version of its largest platform on a 3.5 tonne chassis - the 24.2 metre articulated twin telescopic VTX-240 - available on either the Iveco Daily or Renault Maxity Euro 6 chassis. A Mercedes-Benz Sprinter version should be



available soon. Performance of all three is very similar with its maximum 220kg platform capacity available at full height and the maximum outreach of 12.5 metres with 80kg. The unit has advanced electro-hydraulic FPC controls with variable outreach, auto set-up and stowage and on-board diagnostics in the platform. Versalift says that all units feature enough spare payload to accommodate a driver, passenger and a full tank of fuel, while remaining well within the 3.5 tonne GVW limit.

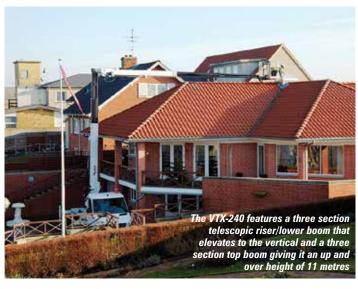
The unit has also been very successful in the Netherlands with Rotterdam-based rental company Doornbos a lead customer. The VTX-240 features a three section telescopic riser/lower boom that elevates to the vertical and a three section top boom giving it an up and over height of 11 metres. It also has a useful 3.5 metres reach below ground level.

New GSR models

Other new platforms include the 24 metre GSR B240PX - a Euro 6 articulated truck mounted lift which is now in production and ready to ship. Featuring a dual sigma-type riser and three section telescopic boom it offers 12.3 metres of outreach and an up and over clearance of around eight metres. Maximum platform capacity is 250kg with 140 degrees of platform rotation. The new addition to the company's PX range includes inline vertical stabilisers which are said to be extremely simple to operate, service and maintain. Chassis available include the Nissan NT400 or Mercedes Sprinter MB311 chassis.

New CMC telescopic

CMC has launched a new 22 metre telescopic truck mount on a 3.5



tonne Euro 6 Nissan chassis - the PLA220 - which uses an innovative open frame superstructure design. Maximum outreach is 15 metres with 80kg in the platform, although maximum capacity is 220kg. Jacking can be inboard or with front outriggers extended to provide the maximum performance though 360 degrees. A 25 metre version - the PLA 250 which has a very similar design - should be launched later in the year and features 24.8 metres

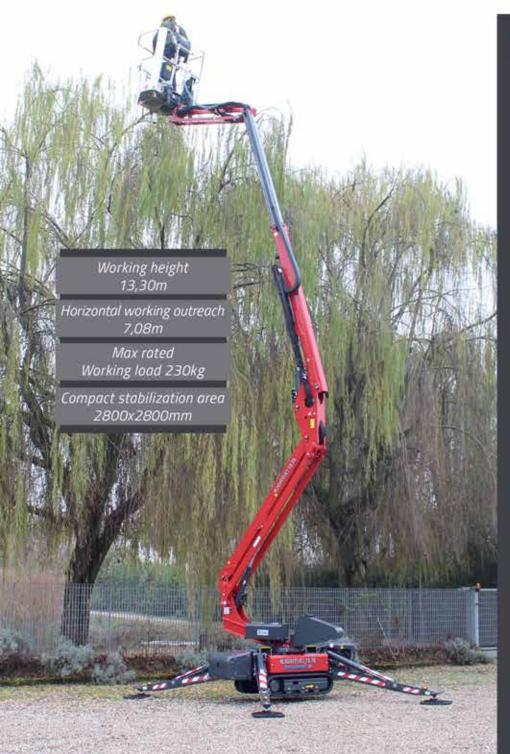
working height and similar outreach. And finally Oil&Steel has two new truck mounts - the 21 metre Scorpion 2112 J with a maximum outreach of 12 metres with 120kg platform capacity, or 10 metres with its 230kg maximum. The other new model is the 20 metre Snake 2010 Plus H on a short wheelbase chassis, resulting in an overall length of 6.9 metres. Maximum outreach is 10.2 metres with 120kg, while maximum capacity is 230kg.





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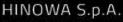
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