

cranes & access



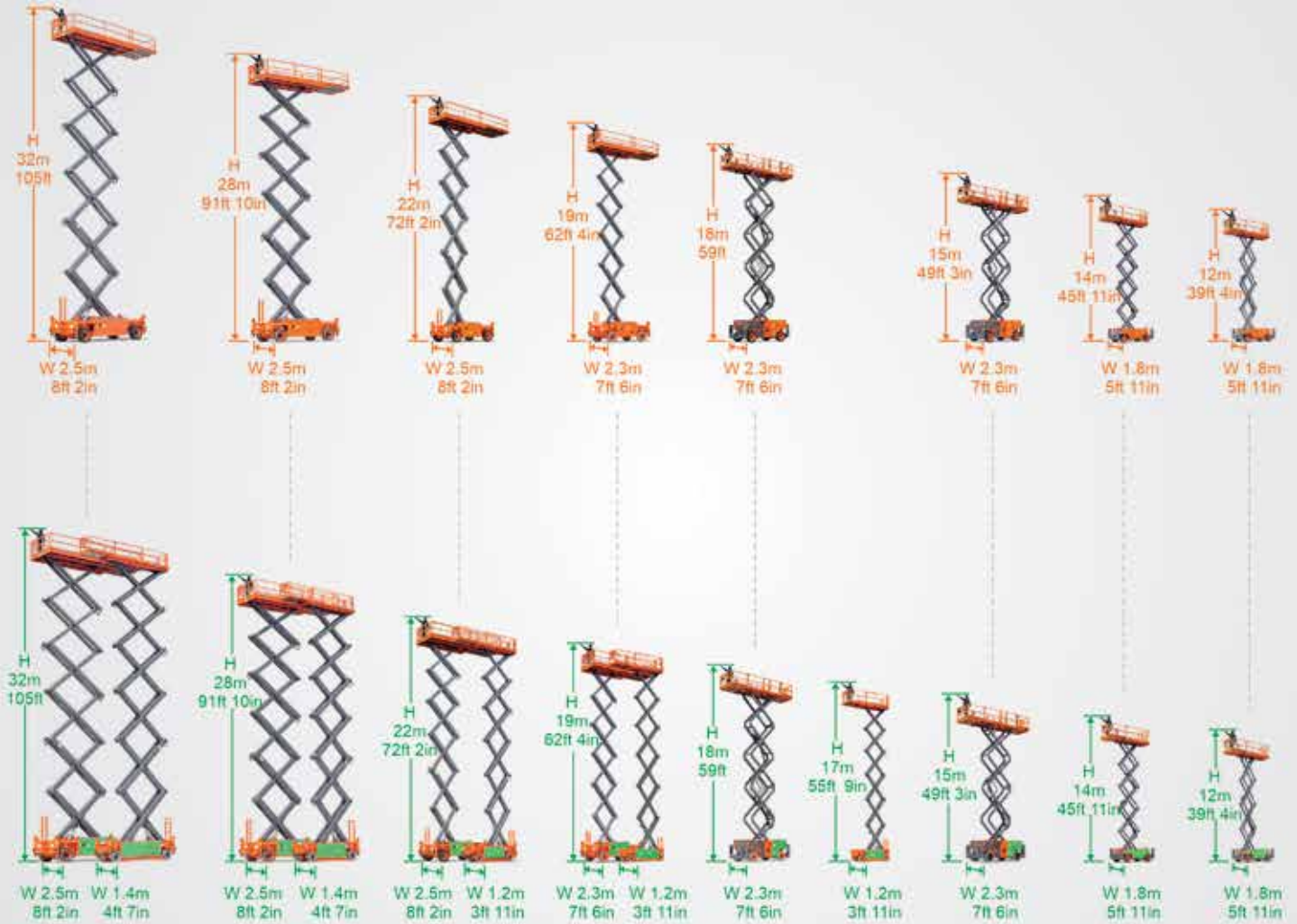
November/December 2024 Vol.26 issue 7

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MASTCLIMBERS
& HOISTS
OUTRIGGER MATS
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PICK & CARRY CRANES 17

In industries such as machinery moving, industrial maintenance and material handling, pick & carry cranes excel, having evolved over more than 80 years, albeit a little differently in each country. We take a look at the latest developments.

TRUCK MOUNTED LIFTS 27

The truck mounted lift market is wide ranging and varied, extending from sub two tonne all electric chassis all the way up to Bronto's seven axle, 112 metre working height S112HLA weighing around 75 tonnes...and everything in between. But has the recent launch of Ruthmann's 100 metre T1000 HF refocused manufacturer's attention back onto big truck mounts?

MASTCLIMBERS & HOISTS 37

Two major incidents involving a mastclimber and a hoist in which seven people lost their lives has highlighted the difference in the way national safety authorities investigate such events. We look at both in greater detail as well as rounding up other news in the sector.

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We take a more in depth view on the current discussions regarding the suitability of certain mat and pad materials to spread load correctly.

BAUMA CHINA REVIEW 54

Publisher Leigh Sparrow has recently returned from a visit to Bauma China in Shanghai. Here are some of the highlights.

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ON THE COVER

One of six 500kg capacity Geda SH1000 US service hoists installed on container cranes in the deep water Port of New Orleans on the Mississippi River. Two of the hoists have a lift height of 37 metres while the others have lift heights of 45 metres.



IN THE NEXT ISSUE Scheduled for publication in mid-January 2025, the next issue of Cranes & Access will include features on Truck mounted and aluminium cranes, Vertical lifts and mast booms, The UK and Ireland Rental rate guide and a Look Back at a very eventful 2024. If you have any contributions or suggestions to make or are interested in advertising in this issue, please contact our editorial or sales teams.



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COMMENT

SELECTIVE TORTURE

Having a potential prosecution hang over you for years has been likened to a long drawn-out torture. The UK government certainly recognises this with its policy of not extraditing suspected criminals to states in the USA with the death penalty for the crimes of which they are accused. It apparently has nothing to do with an objection to the death penalty itself, but to the years they will spend on Death Row with the penalty hanging over them after the verdict is handed down. Year after year of waiting in the hope of clemency, a successful appeal or stroke of luck is considered to be cruel to the point of torture.

Unfortunately, some UK government agencies - the Health & Safety Executive and the Police for example - do not appear to subscribe to this principle when related to serious workplace incidents. The HSE often takes years and years and years before even deciding whether it will prosecute or not, with a further wait until it reaches court. And then a last-minute plea bargain is often offered! For those brave, confident and flush enough to plead not guilty, a judge may well dismiss the case for lack of evidence.

This month's feature on mastclimbers and hoists deals with two incidents - one in the UK and one in Sweden - that between them resulted in seven fatalities. However, the way each incident was dealt with by the authorities could not be further apart.

In a nutshell, the investigation into the incident in Stockholm, Sweden was dealt with efficiently and quickly with the cause identified and announced within a couple of days. This was followed by the publication of a full and extremely comprehensive report five months later. All of which helped others learn from what happened while product and

procedural changes were quickly implemented. In Liverpool, UK, little to nothing was widely communicated about the cause of the incident and the lessons that might be learnt until the inquest almost four years later, and even then, it was poor at best.

This is not the first time this has happened in the UK. In 2013 a new boom lift overturned onto the M25 motorway during a routine pre-delivery inspection at a Kimberley Access depot taking the depot foreman's life. It was nine years before Kimberley and its directors were told that they would not be prosecuted as there was no case to answer, while a plea bargain was accepted from the manufacturer. Nine years of torture for those connected to the incident.

In 2020 an 85 year old lady was killed when a tower crane collapsed onto the family home in London. After waiting more than three years with no answers or offer of permanent rehousing, the surviving residents sued the developer and engineering firm that designed the crane's foundation. At this point the Police had not completed its investigation and therefore not handed the case to the HSE or disclosed details. The legal case did at least uncover what went wrong.

Those years in limbo, not knowing what will happen are certainly a form of torture. The government does not inflict this on murderers facing a potential death sentence - so why do so on those who are not criminals while holding back valuable information?

Taking years to 'investigate' or rule on 'accidents' does not work on any level at all. Information should be shared openly as early as possible, as in aviation, rather than focusing on blame and prosecution. Let the legal system follow, not lead.

Mark Darwin

Comment and feedback is most welcome via post, email or phone stating if we may publish them or not: editor@vertikal.net