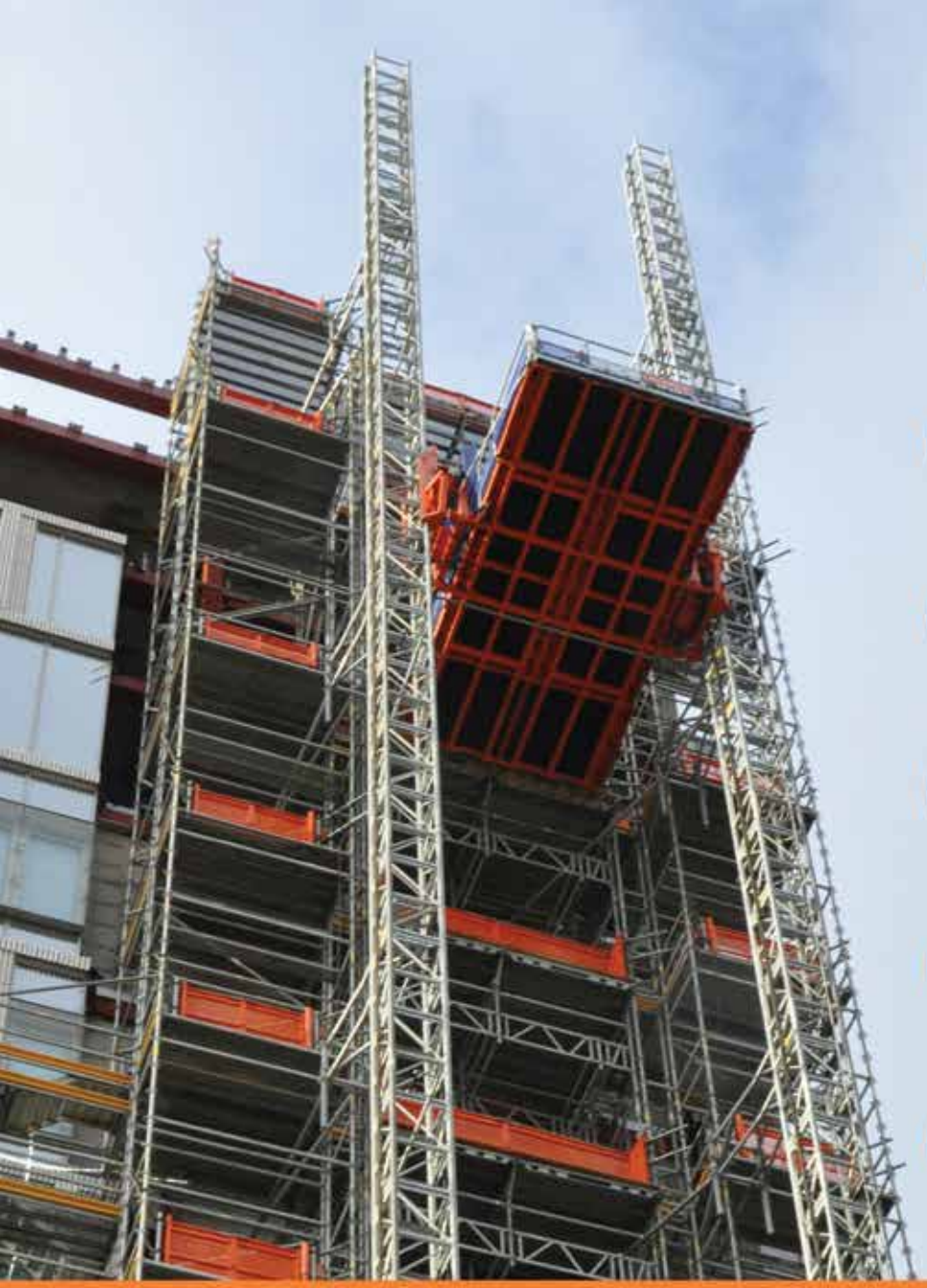

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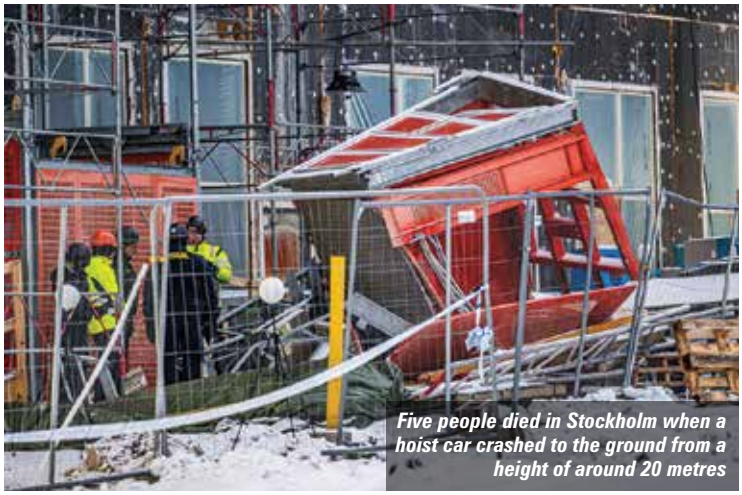
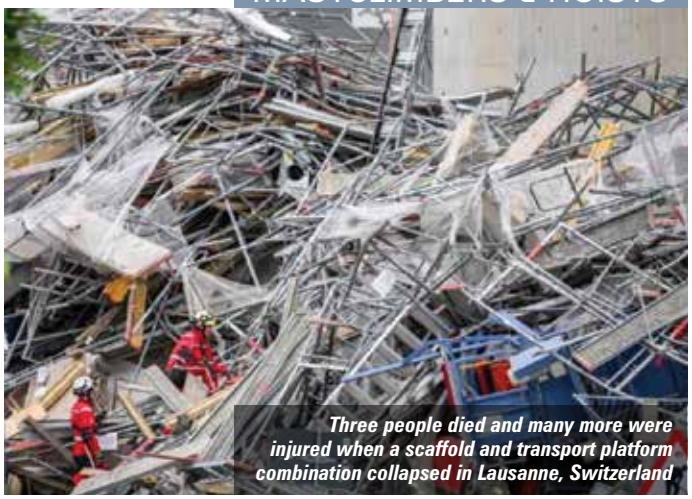


Five people died in Stockholm when a hoist car crashed to the ground from a height of around 20 metres



Three people died and many more were injured when a scaffold and transport platform combination collapsed in Lausanne, Switzerland

A CONSTRUCTION HOIST IS NOT A TRANSPORT PLATFORM

A number of experts have claimed that some suppliers are marketing what they refer to as 'Transport systems' that do not comply with European regulations in terms of speeds and safety systems. If such transport platforms exceed speeds of 0.2 metres a second or carry more than seven people, it places them outside of EN16719 - the relevant standard, while also failing to meet the passenger hoist regulation - EN12159 - due to the absence of certain mandatory safety features.

A few months ago, IPAF issued a statement regarding the misuse of such Transport Platforms and has recently followed it up with a virtual seminar to highlight the issues.

IPAF head of safety Brian Parker says: "In some parts of Europe, equipment that looks like a transport platform is being used beyond what the EN standards allow. This creates a gap between appearance and lawful operation. The IPAF statement tries to clarify the issue, sets out the risks and encourages a standard practical industry response. The message is aimed at everyone in the supply chain - manufacturers, rental providers, contractors, and duty holders - as decisions at any point can affect safety on site."

The seminar highlighted IPAF hoist and mastclimber incidents from 2021 to 2024, which includes 41 filed reports involving 47 people across six countries and 13 fatalities, six of which were caused by a Mechanical/Technical failure, three were falls from the platform, two falls from height (climbing in and out), one from entrapment and one from an overturn. Such reports are typically only the 'tip of the iceberg' the actual number of fatalities is likely to be far higher.

So far this year only five reports have been received from three countries. These involve six people, but four of them were fatalities - three falls from the platform and one electrocution.

THREE HIGH PROFILE FATAL INCIDENTS

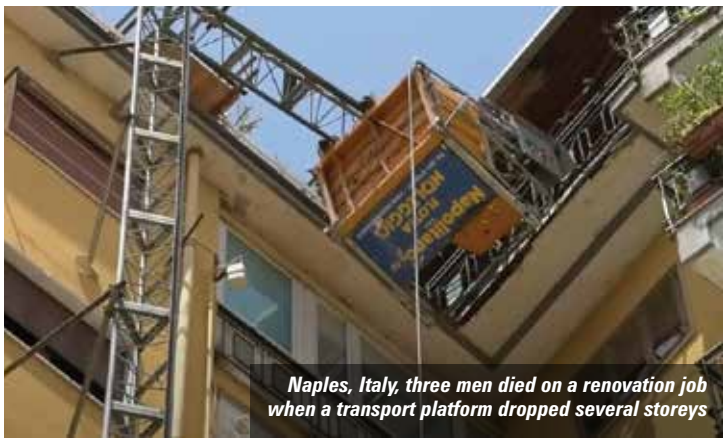
Within the statistics, there have been three major incidents over the past two years. In December 2023, five people died at a residential building in Sundbyberg on the north side of Stockholm. This was covered extensively in the last mastclimber & hoist feature in Cranes & Access 26.7 - November/December 2024.

The incident occurred on the construction site of a new 14 storey apartment building being built by local contractor and developer Andersson. An Alimak Scando 650 passenger hoist attached to the building became detached, causing the upper masts and hoist car to crash to the ground from a height of around 20 metres, instantly killing all five occupants.

"The investigation revealed that the bolts that should have connected one of the mast sections were missing, leaving them joined by friction alone," said Parker. "Inadequate safety checks and inspections highlight how very small omissions can lead to a catastrophic loss."

In Lausanne, Switzerland in July last year, three people died and many more were injured when a scaffold and transport platform combination collapsed on a 19 storey building. "Although the investigation is ongoing, lessons can be learned regarding the various interfaces - when a hoist or transport platform is tied to a scaffold, the loads, the anchorage, the sequencing and inspections must be designed, documented and verified - especially during alterations and when site conditions change."

"In Naples, Italy, this year, three men died on a renovation job when a transport platform dropped several storeys. Early reports suggest a possible overload scenario as there were three people and materials on the platform, followed by component failure or overturning. This incident highlights the strict control of rated loads in the platform, regular training and inspection etc."



Naples, Italy, three men died on a renovation job when a transport platform dropped several storeys

OFFICIAL IPAF STATEMENT

The official statement issued by IPAF regarding the selling by some construction hoist manufacturers of products labelled as Transport Platforms that do not comply with regulations was as follows:

Misuse of transport platforms outside en standards

"It has come to our attention that certain hoist manufacturers are marketing equipment, described as 'transport systems' or similar terminology, that look like transport platforms, but with operating speeds and passenger capacities that exceed the limits set for a transport platform in the European standard EN 16719."

"The EN 16719 standard specifies safety requirements for transport platforms used for lifting goods and passengers on construction sites, such as a maximum speed of 0.2 metres a second and a maximum of seven people."

"In contrast, EN 12159 applies to construction hoists designed to carry passengers and materials, which can operate at higher speeds and with more people, because they have stringent safety features, including fully enclosed cabins and automatic landing systems. Each standard aims to ensure equipment is used appropriately according to its intended purpose and risk profile."

"The suppliers of the aforementioned machines, which do not comply with the EN 16719 standard for transport platforms or the EN 12159 standard for passenger hoists, have stated that the products have been 'approved' and certified by a Third Party."

IPAF says this is a dangerous and unacceptable practice on the following basis:

Compromised safety

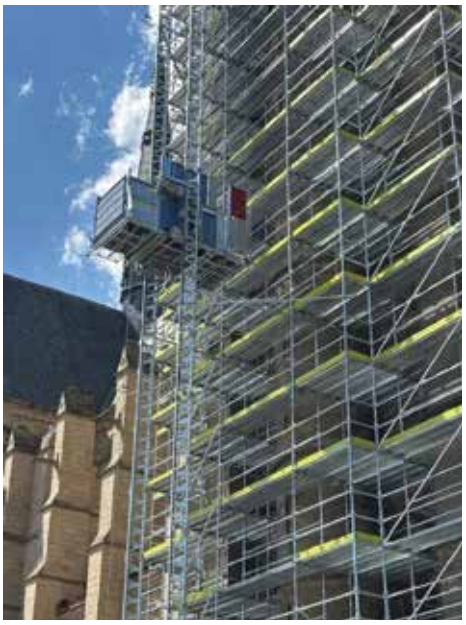
It puts users at significant risk. EN 16719 for Transport Platforms and EN 12159 for Passenger Hoists were developed precisely to define safe operating parameters for such equipment. Any machine operating outside of the standards, particularly in terms of speed and capacity, falls outside what is considered safe practice.

Legal implications

Presenting such equipment as outside the scope of current standards using a Third-party certificate does not shield manufacturers, suppliers, rental companies or duty holders from potential legal consequences. In the event of an accident, the use of a machine not compliant with established European standards could lead to serious legal liability, including criminal prosecution or invalidation of insurance coverage.

Damage to the reputation of the industry

The improper use and classification of lifting equipment can have serious repercussions for the reputation of the entire construction hoist industry. One serious incident resulting from this type of practice could undermine decades of work to promote safety, responsibility, and professionalism across the sector.



IPAF has urged manufacturers, rental companies, and contractors to respect and comply with the applicable standards and to reject ambiguous or misleading classifications of equipment. Also, to use transport platforms in accordance with the speed and capacity limitations in the standards. If such practices persist, it will pursue formal measures to ensure compliance, including reporting specific cases of non-compliance to national safety authorities.

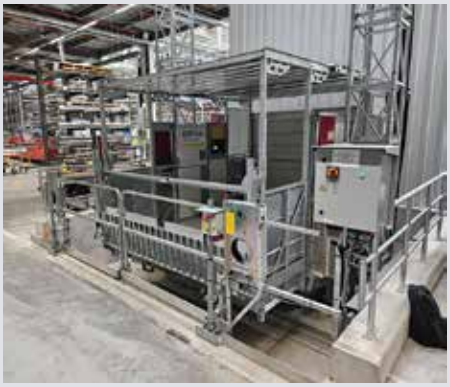
It also states that CE certificates can be faked, so it warns to check them carefully, especially when using a new supplier. They can be verified through the European Union website. Equipment should also include Certificates of Incorporation, along with Instructions for Use/Maintenance/Spare parts manuals in your language. ■

A TOUCH OF CLAAS?

German hoist manufacturer Geda has installed one of its 3700 ZP transport platforms at the Claas facility in Harsewinkel, North Rhine-Westphalia to transport bulky welding equipment between the ground and first floor levels.

The installation is permanent but the task was anything but routine as it will transport loads that while are physically large are not excessively heavy. The 3700 ZP platform is 2.9 metres by five metres and is ideal for loading bulky equipment with a fork lift or pallet truck.

One of its main features is the electric ramp which provides level access, it can also be quickly converted from transporting materials to transporting people. Although only a lift height of one floor was required, the smooth start and stop process was particularly appreciated, and given the low installation height no machine room was required for operation. The regular 3700 ZP offers a maximum lift height of 200 metres. ■



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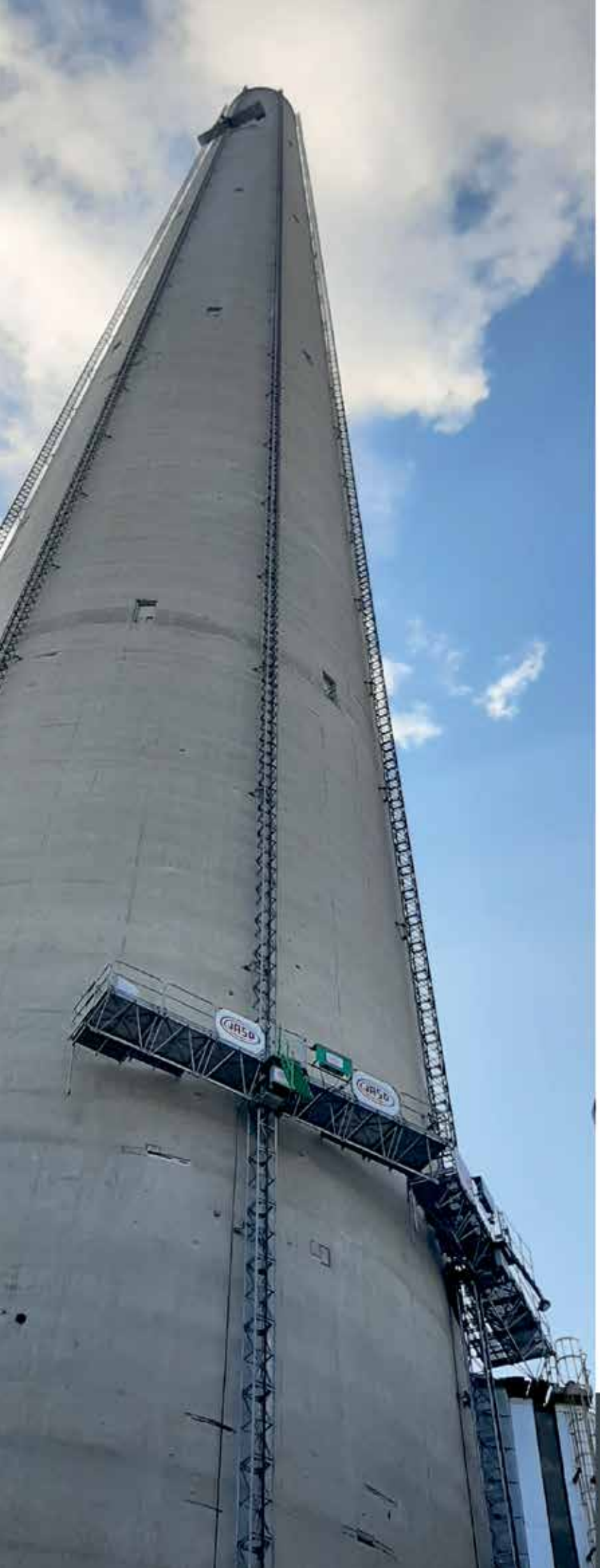

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BROGAN – GROWTH VIA ACQUISITION

UK mastclimber and hoist rental company Brogan has consolidated its market leading position in the UK hoist rental market with the acquisition of the UK hoist division of Sunbelt Rentals.

The deal includes Sunbelt's entire hoist inventory and all associated equipment, three dedicated locations in the Midlands and North of England and all Sunbelt staff associated with the hoist business, said to number around 100. It takes Brogan UK's hoist fleet to more than 900 units, while the number of employees now exceeds 1,000 worldwide - including 14 in-house design engineers.

The two companies have also signed an ongoing trading partnership, which makes Brogan the exclusive provider of hoists to Sunbelt UK and its customers, while also offering Brogan customers easier access to Sunbelt's other rental products.

INTERESTING PROJECTS AHEAD

Brogan chief executive James Brogan said: "This acquisition will allow us to provide a better service for projects in cities such as Liverpool, Manchester, Sheffield and Newcastle, where a number of interesting projects are due to get underway in 2026 and 2027. It will also help with coverage across Scotland, while strengthening the scale of projects we can handle. It has added to our skills base and almost doubled the number of hoist engineers in our team, helping us to support major projects internationally. Our long term trading partnership with Sunbelt should also unlock new opportunities that benefit both companies."

The Sunbelt deal builds on Brogan's acquisition of CAS, the common tower manufacturer last year, which has helped Brogan become a market leader in high rise building access in the UK, the Middle East and the rest of Europe.

UK NUMBERS

Brogan's UK hoist fleet includes numerous small units from 500kg to three tonnes and up to five tonne goods hoists and twin masted Alimak Mammoth hoists allowing the UK hub to support requirements further afield. At the same time Brogan's UK mastclimber fleet now exceeds 700 units, enabling it to handle numerous major projects concurrently. The company plans to add additional services to its three new depots while eying up further expansion in the industrial market.

A SUMMER JOB BECOMES PERMANENT

For founder James Brogan, working as a scaffolder was just a summer job, but went on for six years until in 1988 he decided to set up on his own. As his business began to grow, he persuaded friends and former colleagues to join him, enabling him to bid for larger jobs and win work from major contractors. As the business gathered momentum, revenues almost doubled every year, and now exceed £52 million, with a pre-tax profit of more than £11 million and total assets of £103 million.

GOING INTERNATIONAL

Brogan was one of the first companies in the UK to drop traditional tube and fitting scaffolding in favour of system scaffold, which is quicker and easier to install and dismantle. In 2001, it opened its first overseas operation in Dublin, Ireland, followed by a depot in Vilnius, Lithuania the following year. In 2005, it introduced mastclimbers to its range, followed by hoists in 2006. A major step came in 2009 when it opened in the Middle East with offices in Dubai and Abu Dhabi. Business in the region is now an increasingly important part of the group's overall business. ■

RENOVATING HISTORY

The Wenner-Gren Center in Stockholm is one of the city's most iconic landmarks and 63 years after it opened it is undergoing a facelift. Built between 1959 and 1961, it opened the following year. The centre comprises three buildings - the Helicon, a semicircular building around the tower, the Tetragon, a square box of a building and the Pylon, a 74 metre, 25 floor landmark tower building, Sweden's first high rise building and for a while the tallest steel framed building in Europe.

The centre is named after businessman Axel Wenner-Gren, who had the idea that vacuum cleaners had a domestic application and persuaded Lux to do it. He became chief executive of Electrolux and became very wealthy in the 1920s from selling vacuum cleaners and later refrigerators in the USA. In 1955, he donated SEK8 million ($1.6 million back then, but around $1 billion in today's money) to create an international centre for visiting scientists in Stockholm.

Alimak construction hoists, played a crucial role in the original construction, and 63 years later, Alimak hoists have been chosen for the renovation project. This time, four Alimak Scando 650 construction hoists have been installed, for both people and materials. Each hoist car is 1.5 metres wide, 3.2 metres long and 2.3 metres high, and can handle up to 2,400kg, allowing large items to be taken to their required floors at a maximum speed of 42 metres a minute.

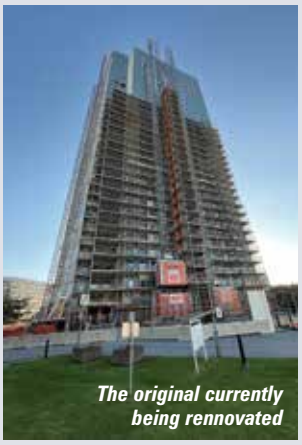
Alimak has also supplied and installed two twin legacy MSHF mastclimbers with 19.2 metre wide platforms for the installation of the new façade panels. The MSHF is a heavy-duty mastclimber designed for applications where anchoring is not possible. It has a free standing height of up to 20 metres outside or 30 metres inside on its mobile chassis. When anchored, it can reach heights of up to 200 metres and be installed by just two people. It has a capacity of up to four tonnes and can be assembled in single or twin mast configurations.

To ensure the renovation project stayed on schedule, the project team needed maximum access to the building façade. Therefore, an access tower between each pair of hoists provided access to every floor via the Alimak hoists.

Alimak said: "The installation of our hoists and mastclimbers at the Wenner-Gren Center for a second time, not only highlights their reliability and efficiency but also reinforces our commitment to providing innovative vertical access solutions for the construction industry."

The Helicon contains housing for visiting scientists in the Stockholm area and is still owned by the Wenner-Gren Foundation. The rest of the complex now consists of commercial rental space, although some of it is still used by scientific organisations. ■

The original Pylon construction began in 1959



The original currently being rennovated

BELGIAN HOSPITAL GOES WITH GEDA

Belgian contractor Verhelst is building a large hospital complex in Tournai, Belgium - the Centre Hospitalier de Wallonie Picarde - where it is using two 2.5 tonne Geda 2500 Z/ZP transport platforms to handle materials and personnel transport.

The Geda 2500 Z/ZP is designed as a combined material and passenger hoist and features a 1.45 by 3.55 metre loading platform with a lift capacity of 2,500kg or seven people. Maximum lift speed is 12 metres a minute. When only materials are being transported, the 'materials mode' allows speeds of up to 40 metres a minute.

The platforms are located at different points on the site to support tower cranes during façade installation, while also transporting those working on the project. The platforms proved particularly effective during interior construction, transporting palletised building materials. The hospital's design prevented direct anchoring to the façade, so they used a steel anchoring structure extending through window openings.

The €416 million development covers 150,000 square metres and will provide 800 hospital beds and 1,000 parking spaces across two triangular building blocks. It will combine four regional hospitals and medical centres under one roof and serve a local population of 330,000. Completion is scheduled for next year.