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Contact Us

Messe München GmbH
Tel: +49 89 949-11478 | Email: info@bauma-network.com

Messe Muenchen Shanghai Co., Ltd.
Tel: +86-21 2020 5500 | Email: baumachina@mm-sh.com

For further information, please visit:

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YOUNGEST IPAF INSTRUCTOR

Lawrence Latham, 19, has become the youngest person to achieve the IPAF aerial work platform instructors' qualification, having completed a level three lift truck and powered access engineering technician apprenticeship at North Warwickshire and South Leicestershire College in March.

Latham decided to become a service engineer while still at school and by 2024, had already gained experience with aerial lifts, training and site work. He then managed to overcome the age barrier - with help from older mentors - to set up his own company, Lathams Plant Hire, Repairs and Sales, which he hopes to build into a multi depot operation.

As an IPAF instructor, he will deliver theoretical and practical training and assess operator competence. He has also qualified as a CAP - Competent Assessed Person - engineer, allowing him to carry out statutory inspections of aerial work platforms, mastclimbers and hoists.

Latham said: "To become one of the youngest IPAF instructors in the world was a proud moment, but it comes with a strong sense of responsibility, and proved to me that age isn't a barrier if you're willing to put the work in."

"A key challenge has been gaining credibility within the industry. Being younger, you have to work harder to prove yourself. However, this has pushed me to stay focused and build resilience."



IPAF FORMS PARTNERSHIP WITH ESiNet

IPAF and UK/Irish inspection network ESiNet, whose members include small and medium sized independent engineering inspection companies involved in the examination, inspection and certification of lifting machinery, have agreed to join forces in a partnership to promote safety, competence and professional development across the access industry in Ireland and the UK. IPAF also highlighted its Competent Assessed Person (CAP) programme to ESiNet.

The agreement was formed at ESiNet's annual general meeting in Dublin at the end of May, when representatives from each organisation met to discuss challenges within the lifting and access sectors.

IPAF's Irish country manager Damien O'Connor said: "We are very pleased to be working more closely with ESiNet and its members. Partnerships like this make a real difference, by sharing knowledge and experience, we can help raise safety standards and support the people working across our industry every day."

John Ashpole of ESiNet added: "This agreement recognises the important role that both organisations play in supporting those who work within our sectors. By sharing expertise and encouraging closer cooperation, we can help ensure that safety, competence and professionalism remain at the forefront of industry practice, ultimately benefiting employers, practitioners and the wider industry alike."



POST MAINTENANCE VERIFICATION ALERT

IPAF has issued an industry alert after a 76ft Zoomlion ZT23J telescopic boom lift descended uncontrollably while working at a Winvic UK site with the almost fully extended boom coming to rest on the chassis of a fully elevated heavy duty scissor lift, which was working nearby at the time. The boom lift operator suffered minor bruising and was given the all clear.

Winvic initially suspended all Zoomlion booms on its sites, but a follow up investigation quickly found that the cause was a transportation seal left in place on a replacement primary boom lift cylinder, which had been fitted before the machine arrived on site and had passed its pre-use inspections. The stop notice was quickly rescinded.

IPAF said: "This case highlights that component replacement carries risks that standard inspections won't always catch and we urge clearer tagging of parts with transportation seals fitted, strict adherence to manufacturer instructions, and robust post-maintenance verification before machines return to service."



VERTIKAL DAYS 2026

Vertikal Days, Europe's largest dedicated lifting event, takes place this year on the 9th and 10th of September at Newark Showground. IPAF will be exhibiting and will also host a series of member meetings over the two days. The stand will focus on IPAF's 2026 Global Safety Campaign, Check It!, highlighting the importance of inspecting equipment.

A live demonstration will underline the risks and run through the checks that should be carried out, while a dedicated area will spotlight IPAF's new Spotter Training Course, along with MCWP and Hoist training courses.

