



ANNUAL REVIEW 2024

Construction Plant-hire Association
www.cpa.uk.net





WELCOME TO OUR ANNUAL REVIEW 2024

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OFFICE BEARERS



OFFICE BEARERS

PRESIDENT
BRIAN JONES

CHAIR
SIÔN MORGAN JONES

VICE CHAIR
KIRSTY ARCHBOLD-LAMING

Brian Jones was re-elected as President of the Association at the Annual General Meeting held in London EC1 on Tuesday 15 October 2024. Siôn Morgan Jones was elected Chair of the Council, and Kirsty Archbold-Laming was elected Vice Chair, at the Council Meeting held immediately following the AGM.

COUNCIL AS ELECTED AT THE AGM 15 OCTOBER 2024:

REGION

SOUTH WEST	Darren Blackburn	Plantforce Rentals Ltd
SOUTH EAST	Warren Wilkinson	Explore Plant & Transport Solutions
SOUTH EASTERN COUNTIES	Kirsty Archbold-Laming	Southern Hoist Services (Vice Chair)
SOUTHERN COUNTIES	Nadine Clark	The Hire Exchange Ltd
GREATER LONDON	Kevin Smith	SCCS Survey Equipment Ltd
WEST MIDLANDS	Aaron Davis	P. Flannery Plant Hire (Oval) Ltd
EAST MIDLANDS	David Simmons	Sinbad Plant Ltd
EAST ANGLIA	Bernie Chapman	W R Chapman & Son
NORTH WEST	Daniel Thompson	Speedy Hire Plc
YORKSHIRE	David Holder	HTC Wolffkran Ltd
NORTHERN COUNTIES	Mark Anderson	GAP Group
SCOTLAND	Garry Orr	Synergy Hire Ltd
WALES	Siôn Morgan Jones	ACOP Group Limited (Chair)

CO-OPTED

Chris Gill	L Lynch Plant & Haulage
Steve Wright	Sir Robert McAlpine
Paul McCormack	Blackwood Plant Hire Ltd

ASSOCIATION STAFF

Chief Executive Officer	Steve Mulholland
Director	Adam Godwin
Manager (Legal)	David Smith
Manager (Training & Safety)	Rob Squires
Manager (Technical Development)	Peter Brown
Manager (Office & Membership)	Lisa Godwin
Manager (Policy)	Chris Cassley
Manager (Decarbonisation & Sustainability)	Luis Bassett
Manager (Finance)	Siva Subramaniam
Technical Development Officer	Katie Kelleher
Membership Support	Karen Douglas and Jenny Lupton

LIFE MEMBERS

Colin Wood
Bill Law
Denis Morgan



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

There is no doubt that 2024 has been both a challenging as well as an interesting time for our Members and the overall rental industry in the UK. Last year if you recall the government decision to remove the rebate on red diesel from April 2022 had major effects for Members and the wider industry. Although it is acknowledged by many as being a valuable step on the road to zero carbon, there have been rumours about a potential further increase in fuel with financial implications which has not been welcomed by fuel users.

CPA worked closely with HMRC on the development of guidance on the transition. We also proposed to HM Treasury that a rebate be allowed for low-carbon renewable fuels, such as HVO. This would encourage wider take-up and be seen as a supportive move by the new government in a continuing period of energy price volatility. We have written to the Secretary of State for Business, the Construction Minister, Financial Secretary to the Treasury, as well as others in Parliament and have also met with officials in HM Treasury and HM Revenue and Customs. We have highlighted our concerns and showcased how the plant-hire industry is being unfairly penalised. We will continue to take this issue forwards as part of our wider efforts to raise the profile of the plant-hire industry in and amongst government and key stakeholders.

MEMBERSHIP

Following the trend of previous years, CPA membership has continued to grow steadily, although we remain cautious about the effects supply chain disruption and rapid increases in energy prices and the cost of doing business. Membership stood at 1934 at the end of December 2024 – a net increase of 41 over the previous year. We did lose some Members during the period, mainly due to retirements, acquisitions and unfortunately, some receiverships.

However, the number of new entrants more than offset those losses, and we welcome all these new Members to CPA.

CPA CONFERENCE 2024

Over 200 people gathered for the CPA Conference at the Heart of England Conference Centre near Coventry in November 2024. The theme of the Conference was **'Shaping the Future: Insights for the Plant-hire Sector'**. Delegates heard from a broad range of speakers on key topics such as innovation, decarbonisation, digitalisation, skills, business growth, succession planning and mental health and wellbeing in the construction sector.

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

The CPA Special Interest Groups have continued to work hard, despite the challenging conditions and the many other pressures on the Chairs' and the Members' time. I thank all the Chairs and the Members of all of our groups for their time and willingness to contribute their expertise in creating the industry leading authoritative technical guidance. That guidance is the hallmark of the Special Interest Groups and adds considerable value and influence in the industry. I also thank the companies from across the industry that allow their staff the time to contribute to this vitally important work.

Many of the groups have valuable input from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). We are very grateful for this liaison, as it helps add authority to our work, and also of course supports HSE's aims and objectives. This liaison is also crucial to the work of the Plant Safety Group, which is led and administered by CPA. There is more detailed information on the work of these groups later in this Annual Review.

The CPA-led Construction Industry Plant Safety Group (formerly known as the Strategic Forum PSG) continues to work with other industry stakeholders to bring about a continuous reduction in the rate of injuries and ill-health caused through the operation and installation of plant in the construction industry by the development and production of specific guidance documents, including a major revision of guidance on avoiding trapping and crushing injuries when working at height in MEWPs and other ongoing works, including the drafting of safety guidance and working with Industry on Human Form Recognition (HFR)/Human Detection Systems (HDS).



RAIL PLANT ASSOCIATION LIMITED (RPA)

I would also thank all of the members of the RPA Management Committee for their expertise and support over the year. The RPA continues to work to create the highest possible safety standards in the rail industry. The RPA took a major step forward in late 2022 by engaging Steve Featherstone of Sachle Consultants Ltd to fulfil the RPA Consultant role with the main objective to highlight the key issues and concerns of the RPA membership to Network Rail, the Department of Transport (DfT) and Government policy makers. As a former Director of IP Track at Network Rail, Steve is well placed to understand the principles of engagement and underlying economic and technical arguments that RPA needs to make in order to secure a better business environment in future.

In February 2024, our own Adam Godwin was appointed onto the RPA Board of Directors. In mid-2024, Bob Collins, CPA Immediate Past President and a long-standing RPA Director stood down from role after nearly 25 years. Bob has served on the RPA Board since the RPA's inception in 1999 and I wish to thank Bob for his outstanding contribution and support for both the CPA and RPA over the years. CPA CEO, Steven Mulholland was appointed an RPA Director to replace Bob Collins as one of three CPA representatives on the RPA Board.

Very sadly, at the beginning of April 2024, our CPA colleague Maria Reid passed away following a brave battle with a brain tumour. Maria joined CPA in August 2017 and was an extremely valued member of the CPA membership team. She was the first point of contact for many members when calling the CPA office. Our thoughts remain with Maria's family.



Maria Reid

NEW CPA APPOINTMENT – DECARBONISATION AND SUSTAINABILITY MANAGER

In October 2024, we were very pleased to welcome a new member of staff to the team: Luis Bassett, who has joined us as Decarbonisation and Sustainability Manager, and brings a wealth of practical knowledge, as well as wide range of industry experience. This appointment will not just strengthen our team, but will help support the membership to reach our goal with this issue that affects us all.



Luis Bassett

The appointment of Luis as the CPA's Decarbonisation and Sustainability Manager is the crucial next step in the development of the Association, as it helps the membership navigate the transition to net zero, whilst liaising closely with other industry stakeholders on future technologies and managing expectations within Government and local authorities on the timescales of what is possible in the short to medium term, i.e. the plant sector and NRMM in particular needs more time.

NEW CPA CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Throughout 2024 a recruitment panel drawn from the CPA Council were closely involved in the recruitment and appointment of a new Chief Executive Officer. After a thorough and intensive process, CPA Council were pleased to appoint our former Chair, Steve Mullholland to the position of Chief Executive Officer. Steve steps into the role with a strong knowledge and wealth of experience of the plant-hire



Steve Mullholland



industry after many years of running MPS (Mulholland Plant Services), having started his career with Vibroplant PLC (Vp PLC) and has experience of working with trade associations over many years.

I would like to extend my very best wishes to Steve and we are all looking forward to working with him. The CPA continues to have a strong team of staff, with professional support from our external consultants and advisors. CPA Council brings experience and authority to our decision and policy making, and the Special Interest Groups and other working groups are the vital engines that produce much of the output from CPA.

But the most important part of this team is you the Members. We can work together to help individual businesses and to improve the plant-hire sector collectively. Your contribution is welcome, and I, together with the CPA team, look forward to supporting your businesses and working with you.

**Thank you for your valued membership
of the Association.**



B Jones

Brian Jones
President





POLICY REVIEW

GOVERNMENT COMMITMENT TO EXTENDING THE FULL EXPENSING ALLOWANCE TO THE PLANT-HIRE INDUSTRY

The CPA has continued to lobby both the outgoing and new government, on the need to extend the Full Expensing Allowance to the plant-hire industry. The CPA, as a member of a Treasury and HMRC led working group looking at changing existing legislation on Full Expensing, joined several other trade associations in calling for our members in the rental and leasing industries, to claim the allowance. Across the Autumn of 2023, the CPA surveyed its Members as part of this research and found overwhelmingly, at least two thirds of respondents would invest in more machinery if the investment allowance regime was more favourable to the plant-hire industry.

As one of its last acts in government before the July general election, the then Chancellor Jeremy Hunt in the March Budget, confirmed the allowance would be extended to CPA Members, with the caveat of 'when fiscal conditions allow'. As part of our representations to the new Labour Government, and a key part of our submission to the October Budget, we reinstated

the need for clarity and certainty on what the fiscal conditions needed to be, allowing our members to plan in advance and make their investment decisions accordingly.

PRIORITIES FOR THE NEW GOVERNMENT

Ahead of the general election in July, the CPA set out its main priorities for the next government, citing the issues facing the plant-hire sector and how the government can work with our members in addressing them.

These were:

Reinforce business investment and future house building programmes

- Establish a credible timetable for the extension of the Full Expensing Allowance to every aspect of the construction plant-hire industry. When 'fiscal conditions allow' is too vague and undermines confidence in business investment decisions;
- Reforms to the planning system must be realistic and proportionate. Learning from past failures at both central and local levels are important if we are to build the future homes we need.



Decarbonisation of construction plant

- Have one single government department responsible for decarbonisation of construction plant. Current policies and roles are split between at least three government departments;
- Temporarily reintroduce the rebate for Hydrogenated Vegetable Oil (HVO) to the construction industry for at least the next two years;
- Develop a trial scrappage scheme for NRMM (Non-Road Mobile Machinery) businesses operating in Freeport zones, with a view to widening the scheme on a national basis;
- Publish the Low Carbon Fuels Strategy as soon as possible and develop a road map for the decarbonisation of NRMM.

Supporting the construction industry

- The position of Construction Minister must be solely dedicated to the sector and not split amongst a range of different ministerial responsibilities across different industrial sectors;
- The current approach by the police on abnormal loads and embargo times are having an adverse effect on the efficient movement of construction plant – especially mobile cranes. Some companies are facing an existential threat. The next government must get the Home Office and Department for Transport to work with the industry and police chief constables to outline concerns and ensure the current lack of flexibility amongst police forces, is addressed;

- Build on current work with the construction industry to grow the domestic skills base, improving both apprenticeship funding and retention rates amongst apprentices, while also making the industry an attractive career option for people already in the workforce. Realism is needed in recruiting from overseas, with the Migration Advisory Committee working with the construction sector in addressing current skills gaps;
- The legislative impasse on the creation of Great British Railways (GBR) must be resolved as soon as possible. A growing rail plant and rail maintenance industry is at the heart of a successful rail sector. The current delays have undermined progress, with the supply of future work bank visibility fragile.

“THE CREATION OF GREAT BRITISH RAILWAYS MUST BE A KEY LEGISLATIVE PART OF THE KING’S SPEECH, HELPING PROVIDE CERTAINTY FOR PLANNING AND BUSINESS INVESTMENT IN THE RAIL PLANT SECTOR.”



DECARBONISATION AND NET-ZERO

At the turn of the year, the CPA responded to the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero/ Department for Business and Trade consultation on NRMM decarbonisation. Our consultation response was formed by a series of in-depth interviews with members and a survey outlining their concerns on the current approach and why realism was needed from government on what could be achieved within existing timeframes. Members continue to do their best in minimising their impact on the environment and meet their net zero commitments, however our response highlighted the continued high cost of electric construction plant, and the lack of return on the second-hand market. We called for the government to recognise the unique challenges facing the plant-hire sector in this regard, and work with our members to reach the 2050 net zero target. A balance must be struck for the sector to remain commercially viable and competitive, while also meeting its net zero obligations.

In addition, as part of our membership of the European Rental Association (ERA), the CPA is a member of the Sustainability Committee, where this message is amplified towards our European colleagues, both in pan-European trade associations, and member companies.

ENGAGEMENT WITH STAKEHOLDERS

As part of its work, the CPA has continued to work closely with stakeholders from across construction and the wider business community, either through the Confederation of British Industry (CBI), ERA, and as a member of the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) Prescribed Organisation Leaders Forum.





LOBBYING FOCUS

Following the October Budget and the announcement on changes to Business Property Relief and the impact on inheritance tax and family run businesses, plus the National Insurance contributions (NICs) increase, the CPA has been working with other trade associations and stakeholders in highlighting the impact of this short-sighted policy, and what it will mean for the plant-hire sector. This has included:

- CPA members taking part in a wide ranging economic impact survey in conjunction with Family Business UK and the CBI Economic Impact Analysis team, the results of which were widely reported in the national press.
- Producing a Policy Briefing which explains in more detail the unfairness of this move and the ramifications for both family run plant-hire firms and the wider plant-hire sector.
- Attending a meeting of the Business and Trade Select Committee research roundtable with senior MPs, and a meeting directly with James Murray, Exchequer Secretary to the Treasury, highlighting the issue.
- A call for CPA members to write directly to the Prime Minister with first-hand examples of how the change in policy towards Business Property Relief will impact their businesses.
- In addition, the CPA also wrote to the Prime Minister outlining our concerns, this was followed by an interview on Times Radio which Steve Mulholland took part in just before Christmas.

We are now working with a political consultancy and communications team to take this work forwards into 2025 to further outline on a high profile stage, the real concerns of our members on what is a highly controversial move that will have real ramifications for family businesses in the plant-hire sector. At the very least, we are calling for a full consultation on the Treasury's plans and what alternatives might be looked at. The announcement in the Budget came without warning and threatens to undermine confidence in the future viability of many long-established firms operating in our sector.



In addition, the CPA will be taking part in the Spending Review scheduled for later this year, as well as looking to work with the opposition and the newly elected Business and Trade Select Committee, and Treasury Select Committee to press our concerns further.

The CPA continues to work with colleagues as part of the Abnormal Loads Working Group, highlighting to policy makers, police constabularies and stakeholders on the need for consistency and flexibility in policing abnormal loads, as well as reform towards embargo times. It is over 18 months since we first received reports that the movement of construction equipment was being unfairly targeted by certain police forces. Since then, we have met with representatives from the police, including regional Police Chiefs, and Deputy Prime Minister Angela Raynor to highlight these concerns further, stressing the need for action and reform.

We have also written to the Secretary of State for Business and Trade, the Home Secretary and the Secretary of State for Transport. Following correspondence with the Business Secretary Jonathan Reynolds, the Department for Business agreed with our calls for a cross government approach with officials from both Business and Transport departments, working together on the abnormal loads issue. In addition, on behalf directly of affected members, we have written to MPs representing affected constituencies, calling directly for action and highlighting the issue.

Following this work, we are now waiting for the National Police Chiefs' Council updated review into abnormal loads guidance to be published at some point in the first quarter of 2025. We are hopeful this leads to greater consistency and flexibility from constabularies that allows plant-hire equipment to be moved across the country, in line with previous protocols.

“THE ANNOUNCEMENT IN THE BUDGET CAME WITHOUT WARNING AND THREATENS TO UNDERMINE CONFIDENCE IN THE FUTURE VIABILITY OF MANY LONG-ESTABLISHED FIRMS OPERATING IN OUR SECTOR.”



ECONOMIC IMPACT OF THE PLANT-HIRE SECTOR

In November at the CPA Conference the first fully comprehensive study of the UK's plant-hire sector was launched.

The CPA commissioned Oxford Economics to research and write a report into the size and scope of the plant-hire sector in the UK. It makes a compelling read for both those employed in the sector, but also for policymakers and stakeholders. It also helps put into perspective the breadth and scope of the sector and why it remains a key destination for highly skilled jobs and roles. It shows the significance of plant-hire and its true value to the UK economy, both in GDP, productivity, and the number of jobs it supports.

Key findings of the CPA/Oxford Economics report entitled 'The Economic Impact of the UK Construction Plant-hire Sector' include:

- The construction plant-hire sector contributes £14 billion annually to the UK economy
- Construction plant-hire contributes 191,500 jobs* to the UK economy
- For every £100 contributed to GDP directly by construction plant-hire, the sector supports a total of £218 around the economy



- Construction plant-hire workers are 25% more productive than the average UK worker, with a higher share being company managers or directors
- For every 100 people directly employed by construction plant-hire, the sector supports a total of 216 jobs around the economy
- * The UK construction plant-hire sector employs an estimated 88,600 workers, including those who work for plant-hire firms and plant operators hired in on a temporary basis. The sector also supports 44,800 jobs around the economy and the effect of workers spending their wages supports an estimated 58,200 jobs.

The construction sector is an important component of the UK economy, employing 7% of the UK workforce, and making activity in all other sectors of the economy possible through the infrastructure, offices, and factories that it builds. The construction plant-hire industry is an enabling sector that sits behind construction and allows it to function in an efficient way.

Steve Mulholland, CPA Chief Executive Officer commented: *"This research was carried out over many months and we were excited to share the findings for the first time at the CPA Conference. While the report is an opportunity to showcase the plant-hire sector, it also acts as a chance to review the progress made over recent years and the contribution CPA members make to the wider UK economy."*

"Over the last few years, plant-hire businesses have had to adapt and evolve in order to survive. As we look to the future, it is one full of opportunities, growth, new technologies and innovations. Decarbonisation and the move to a net zero economy has been at the forefront of policymakers' plans – it is important that our sector plays its part in this process, as the move away from diesel and fossil fuels gathers pace. This, alongside the rise of AI and digitalisation, will all have a profound impact on plant-hire companies in the coming decades."

"The role of the CPA will also evolve as we meet these future challenges and opportunities, working hand in hand with our members in supporting them. This economic impact study helps set the foundations for moving forward for the CPA across every facet of our work and engagement and celebrating almost 85 years of supporting the UK's construction plant-hire sector. It has only been possible because of the contribution our members have made to our continuing success," he continued.

A digital copy of the CPA/ Oxford Economics report can be downloaded from www.cpa.uk.net/news/cpa-oxford-economics-report-available-to-download. Hard copies are also available on request by emailing enquiries@cpa.uk.net



£14.0 billion

GVA contribution of the construction plant-hire sector to the UK economy in 2022.



191,500

Employment contribution of the construction plant-hire sector to the UK economy in 2022.



£218

added to the UK economy for every £100 directly generated by the construction plant-hire sector.



25%

Construction plant-hire workers were 25% more productive than the UK average in 2022.



216 jobs

supported across the UK economy for every 100 people directly employed by the construction plant-hire sector.





STARS OF THE FUTURE AWARDS 2024



The future of the construction plant industry is in safe hands judging by the outstanding quality of the entrants at this year's CPA Stars of the Future Awards.

A total of 80 nominations were received for the CPA Stars of the Future apprentice and trainee awards 2024. The awards identify some of the industry's brightest up-and-coming talent and its future leaders across various occupations including Plant



Mechanics, Plant Technicians, Hire Controllers, Lifting Technicians, Plant Installers, Plant Operatives and Young Plant Operatives, as well as those who mentor the apprentices.

Almost 300 people attended the awards ceremony which was hosted at the Heart of England Conference and Events Centre in Fillongley, near Coventry, by former TV newsreader, presenter and journalist Merryn Myatt. This

was the 12th year of the acclaimed apprentice awards and this year's nominations were judged by a total of 13 judges from the CPA and across the industry.

The awards ceremony was held in association with event sponsors GAP Group and L Lynch Plant Hire & Haulage, and award sponsors and supporters ACOP Group, JCB, Liebherr, L Lynch Plant Hire & Haulage, M O'Brien Plant Hire, NOCN Group, Plant Planet, Southern

Hoist Services, Sunbelt Rentals and Wolffkran.

On the day, the winners of each national category were as follows:

- **National Plant Mechanic of the Year (Level 2)**
Bethan Whittaker of KJ Services and Bridgend College
- **National Plant Technician of the Year (Level 3)**
Morgan Wardle of Banks Plant Solutions and Askham Bryan College
- **Hire Controller of the Year**
Millie Scott-Young of Sunbelt Rentals
- **Young Plant Operative of the Year**
Josh Jones of L Lynch Plant Hire & Haulage
- **Plant Operative of the Year**
Reece Stray of L Lynch Plant Hire & Haulage
- **Lifting Technician of the Year**
Zac Bradshaw of Commhoist
- **Plant Installer of the Year**
Hayden Chappell of Southern Hoist Services
- **Individual Apprentice Mentor of the Year**
Steve Gwynn of Sunbelt Rentals
- **Group Apprentice Mentor of the Year**
Dave Rogers of L Lynch Plant Hire & Haulage
- **Best Personal Statement Award**
Shannon Weiss of Finning UK and Finning Academy
- **Judges' Special Award**
Tom Williams of CBL and Bridgend College



Stars of the Future was originally introduced to recognise outstanding Apprentice Plant Mechanics and Plant Technicians, but the scope of the event has been extended over the years to reward other job roles in the construction plant sector. It is now widely acknowledged as the sector's premier event for recognising and rewarding trainees and apprentices who are earmarked as future leaders of the industry.

CPA President Brian Jones said: "Stars of the Future is one of the CPA's flagship events and one that we're very proud of. We'd like to congratulate all the nominees and winners - it's a tremendous achievement in itself for

apprentices to be nominated by their employer or training provider for a Star of the Future award. Testimony to the success of the awards is that many previous Stars of the Future award winners have gone on to secure senior positions in the construction plant industry.

"We would like to thank all our sponsors, without whom we simply could not stage such an event or reward our winners so considerably. Award winners received some fabulous prizes, including tool kits, machine training courses, iPads, an overseas trip to visit a Liebherr crane manufacturing plant in Germany, another overseas trip to one of Wolffkran's manufacturing facilities in Luckau, Germany, and a VIP day

A BIG THANK YOU

TO OUR SPONSORS AND SUPPORTERS OF CPA STARS OF THE FUTURE 2024

Event Sponsors  	Sponsor of the Plant Mechanic of the Year Award 	Joint Sponsors of the Plant Operative of the Year Award  		Joint Sponsors of the Young Plant Operative of the Year Award  		
	Sponsor of the Hire Controller of the Year Award 	Sponsor of the Lifting Technician of the Year Award 	Sponsor of the Plant Installer of the Year Award 	Provider of Additional Plant Operative and Young Plant Operative Prizes 		
	Sponsor of the Apprentice Mentor of the Year Award 	Sponsor of the Judges' Special Award 	Sponsor of the Best Personal Statement Award 	Lunch Sponsor 	Provider of Crystal Awards 	

courtesy of JCB. Special thanks also go to each and every one of our 13 judges for the time they took in going through all the nominations so thoroughly," he continued.

Stars of the Future had a two-tier judging process – the CPA selection panel and a panel of external judges who decided the eventual winners of each category. The external judging panel included Arran Willis of Liebherr-GB, Siôn Morgan Jones of ACOP Group, Kirsty Archbold-Laming of Southern Hoist Services, Leigh Sparrow of Vertical Press, Graham Black of Earthmovers Magazine, Tim Brownbridge of BAM Nuttall, independent judge Rob Allen, Georgina Williams of JCB and Sean Scarah of Balfour Beatty.

Graham Black, Editor of Earthmovers Magazine, who was part of the external judging panel, said: "It was a genuine honour to be asked to be a CPA Stars of the Future judge once again and the quality of the candidates was exceptional this year. Our job as judges was to identify the mega stars of the future and what often separates these high-achieving individuals is their video submission that they submit as part of their nomination.

"One of the reasons for this long-standing event is to attract more Plant Mechanics, Plant Technicians, Plant Operators and other occupations into our industry. Stars of the Future has been a

great success and it was fantastic to see so many outstanding individuals in the room during the awards ceremony," he continued.

The complete list of Stars of the Future 2024 category winners and those who were highly commended is on the CPA website at www.cpa.uk.net



THE SEARCH IS ON FOR THE UK'S MOST PROMISING PLANT APPRENTICES

**Entries are now open for the
Construction Plant-hire Association's
(CPA) Stars of the Future Awards 2025:**

- Plant Mechanic of the Year (Level 2)
- Plant Technician of the Year (Level 3)
- Young Plant Operative of the Year
- Plant Operative of the Year
- Lifting Technician of the Year
- Hire Controller of the Year
- Plant Installer of the Year
- Technical Support Person of the Year **NEW!**

Award for employers:

- Apprentice Mentor of the Year

**Special awards are also
available for all nominees**

**FREE TO
ENTER**
and open to both
CPA members
and non CPA
members

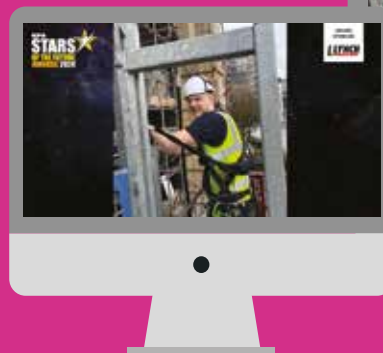


ACT NOW!

Download the nomination forms from www.cpa.uk.net and make your nominations by 21st March 2025

SAVE THE DATE:

Awards ceremony on 10th July 2025





CPA CONFERENCE 2024

From making work sites more sustainable to recruiting and retaining tomorrow's workforce, the CPA's 9th Annual Conference held on 7th November 2024 at the Heart of England Conference and Events Centre near Coventry discussed future trends and challenges facing hire firms.

The Conference attracted a record number of participants with approximately 200 delegates and 26 sponsoring exhibitors.

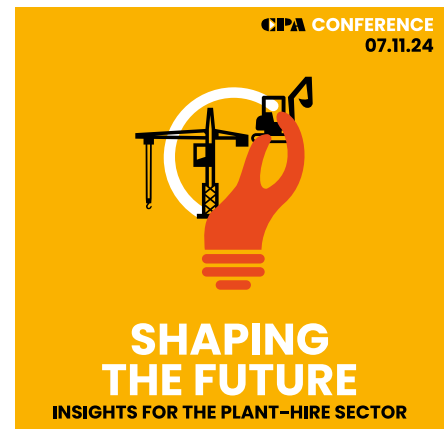
Under the overall theme of **'Shaping the Future: Insights for the Plant-Hire Sector'**, five separate panel discussions brought industry experts together to share opinions and solutions, chaired by co-hosts Merryn Myatt, a former BBC news presenter, and construction industry journalist and vlogger Peter Haddock.

Setting the scene in the opening Conference keynote speech, Steve Mulholland, CPA's Chief Executive Officer, emphasised the need to

combine evolution with revolution. Companies had to find new ways to attract school leavers into the industry and an ageing workforce meant people were often retiring and taking their skills with them, creating a knowledge gap.

Implementing new technology and techniques to meet Net Zero obligations also required care and understanding. Steve argued strongly for a more pragmatic, commonsense approach from governments and regulatory bodies, especially *"with our politicians and some Tier 1 contractors and their clients racing to mandate policies too quickly to outdo one another, and as manufacturers race to gain commercial advantages over one another, so plant hirers then have little option but to conform to these mandates. Ultimately it is the end buyer, us the hirer, who feels the pain at the sharp end,"* he said.

Steve said CPA members, end users, hirers and suppliers must



be able to continue producing and using fossil-fuel powered equipment while alternatives were sensibly phased in that could genuinely give the same performance as diesel equivalents, with an infrastructure capable of supplying the future fuels required. *"Evolving to get there without these ridiculous targets is how we will do it, not by panic and knee-jerk reactions to meet impossible political targets which suit their own agendas and that of the noisy minorities."*

In the first Conference panel session entitled **'The Plant-hire Sector in 2024 - Where the Industry Currently Sits in the Wider Economic and Political Context'**, Chris Cassley, CPA Policy Manager, and Jamie Charles, Lead Economist with Oxford Economics discussed the just-published report commissioned by CPA into the size and significance of the industry.

The report's headline conclusions include that the GVA (gross value added) contribution of the sector to the UK economy is estimated at £14.0 billion and that it is responsible for 191,500 jobs. And £218 is added to the economy for every £100 directly generated by the plant-hire industry.

Jamie suggested that approximately 90% of CPA members are SMEs (small to medium enterprises). As such, they are likely to be impacted by fiscal measures such as the recently announced rise in employer National Insurance contributions. Chris Cassley said the data in the report would be invaluable in future CPA representations to government and regulatory bodies.

In the second Conference panel session, themes under the title **'The Innovative Plant-hire Company - Insights into Current and Future Developments and Innovations in the Sector'** were discussed by four panellists: Brian Jones, CPA President; Asif Latief, Chief Commercial Officer with Speedy Hire; Kathryn Adams, Commercial Director at Prolectric Services; and Mat Llewellyn, MD of MHM Group.

Panellists agreed that AI (artificial intelligence) would be adopted more widely and that having accurate real-time data via telematics and energy management systems is becoming essential in identifying sustainable equipment solutions that are also cost-effective.



The specific challenge of **'Expanding the Skills Base'** and of attracting, training and retaining people in the construction industry - and particularly women - was addressed in the third Conference panel session by four panellists: Katie Kelleher, CPA Technical and Development Officer; Deb Madden, Executive Director with CITB; Carl Hassell, Chief Operating Officer at training standards organisation NOCN Group; and Beth Doel, Advanced Technical Trainer at Reaseheath College.

While there were clearly no easy answers to problems like making construction appeal to a generation largely focused on 'living to work' rather than 'working to live', suggestions included using carefully selected influencers on

popular platforms like TikTok to promote career opportunities, as well as supporting awards schemes recognising women achievers as role models.

In the fourth Conference panel session entitled **'What Next? The Challenge of Growth and Succession Planning'**, participants discussed how a business might consider a transfer of ownership. Speakers included David Graham and Chris Harvey, two Co-Founders and Directors of The Hire Exchange, set up to connect buyers and sellers of hire companies; Dani Saveker, Global CEO and Founder of the GLAS Group consultancy which supports entrepreneurs; and Ian McMillan, Head of Business Development at Thomas Group which has grown by acquisition

beyond its original plant-hire activity to serve other related markets.

Panellists agreed that skilled entrepreneurs might lack abilities to objectively evaluate corporate strengths and weaknesses. And many family businesses found it difficult to discuss succession strategies at all, yet it was important not to leave exit plan development too late. Expert outside help could identify possibilities and smooth negotiations between a keen seller and a willing buyer.



The final panel session considered **'Mental Health and Wellbeing in the Construction Sector'** with participants comprising Steve Kerslake, Trustee and Founder of Construction Sport which enables industry workers to participate in rugby tournaments and other group activities to promote camaraderie and wellbeing; Gary Higgerson, a Charity Advocate with the Lighthouse construction charity; and Matt Hartill, Head of Wellbeing and Mental Health Support at Lyndon SGB, who told Conference delegates movingly about overcoming his own serious mental health challenges in a male-dominated, macho work culture.



The conversation showed the immense value of training people as mental health first aiders and also suicide first aiders, because they know what to look for and how to elicit meaningful responses so they can coordinate help. It also showed the ongoing importance of human interaction and intervention in a more AI-driven world.



Headline Sponsor:



The Headline Conference Sponsor was MHM Group, which provides energy solutions to reduce costs and environmental impact. Exhibitors at the event also included ACOP Group, Acrow Bridge, CESAR Powered by Datatag, CITB, Capja, Conquip, Explore Plant and Transport Solutions, GGR Group, Groundhog, NOCN Group, Parksafe Group, Plant Parts, Plant Planet, Plantworx, Point of Rental Software, Proelectric Services, Record360, Rouse Services, Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA), Spartan Digital Operations, Supply Chain Sustainability School, Thomas Group, Tranzaura, VUE Group and WOLFF Onsite.



LEGAL ISSUES, TAXATION, INSURANCE, INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS AND PLANT THEFT

LEGAL ISSUES

ADJUDICATION

In the last twelve months, there has been two occasions where a member has had to contact the CPA to assist with the appointment of an adjudicator to deal with a dispute. We believe that this confirms that the updated CPA Model Conditions, together with the other conditions continue to clearly define the obligations and responsibilities of both parties. However, some disputes do instead go straight to court.

LEGAL ADVICE

The CPA continues to advise and assist the Membership on their day-to-day issues predominately on: Employment Issues, Road Transport matters, Contractual Issues – particularly the CPA terms and conditions, Insurance, Taxation and Plant Theft matters.

RPA'S 2023 CONDITIONS

The RPA's 2023 conditions were launched in October 2023.

The terms were created from drawing certain clauses from the CPA's Model Conditions, the RPA Supplementary Conditions, and the RPA's POS Conditions into a single amalgamated document.

From comments received, the document has been well-received by both Members and their customers.

WELSH POLICE TEMPORARILY LIFTED MOBILE CRANE EMBARGO TIMES

In late June 2024, Gwent Police, after listening to industry representatives, implemented the temporary removal of Embargo Times for smaller-sized mobile cranes, in an effort to assist the industry.

The three-month trial began on Monday 15th July, and had a strict criterion for mobile cranes of up to 80-tonnes GVW, a maximum width of 3m, and a maximum length of 25.9m.

The main routes covered by the embargo were:

M4	between J28 and J22
A40	
A48	between J24 and J28
A449	
A465	

From early reports received, the trial was very successful, with police observing improved compliance with legislation by operators; and where operators obtained improved efficiency in their operations.

The original three-month trial which began in July 2024, has been extended by the police beyond that original trial period. At the time of writing, it still remains in place.

STAFFORDSHIRE POLICE TEMPORARILY LIFTS EMBARGO TIMES

From 1st November 2024 – 31st January 2025, Staffordshire Police had lifted a blanket embargo for Category A mobile cranes, and for Category 1 lorries. It was suggested at that time, that subject to the success of this trial, the trial may be extended, and include larger mobile cranes (category B) and lorries (Category 2).

CHANGES TO 'SPENT' CONVICTION FOR EX-OFFENDERS

From October 2023, the government introduced new timeframes for certain criminal convictions to become 'spent'. (The rehabilitation period is the period following a conviction when an individual is treated as rehabilitated, and their conviction becomes 'spent'.)

Under previous rules, any custodial sentence of more than four years was never 'spent', but under the new regime, this has changed – where after seven years from the end of the sentence, the conviction will now be 'spent'.

Although there are exceptions to certain convictions, 'spent' convictions do not need to be declared to a prospective employer.

Shorter rehabilitation periods will apply to those who are under 18.

These changes apply to England and Wales, and in Scotland, the government has produced a guidance document: **'Self-disclosure of previous convictions and alternatives to prosecution'**.

POLICE TRIAL MOBILE CAMERAS

Ten police forces have begun trialling new mobile camera system in an effort to tackle those drivers who fail to wear a seat belt or use a mobile phone whilst driving.

The police forces taking part in the trial are Durham, Greater Manchester, Humberside, Norfolk, Northamptonshire, Staffordshire, Sussex, Thames Valley, West Mercia, and Wiltshire. The trial began in mid-February 2024 and will run until March 2025.

The new camera system can be mounted to a vehicle or trailer and has multiple cameras giving differing views of the driver and their passengers. The images are then processed with the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) to establish whether the driver could be using a handheld mobile phone, or the driver (and/or their passengers) may not be wearing a seatbelt. This information is then passed on to police for their decision to take any action against the driver.

Currently, drivers can be fined up to £500 for not wearing a seatbelt in addition to penalty points and using a mobile phone while driving can result in a fine of up to £1,000 and six penalty points.

NEW SENTENCING FOR DRIVING OFFENCES

As a result of the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 (PCSC Act), the courts have had increased sentencing powers to impose on offenders convicted of motoring offences in England and Wales.

Offences which result in a fatality as a result of dangerous driving, or as a result of careless driving when under the influence of alcohol or drugs, now receives a life sentence, which was increased from the pre-existing maximum sentence of 14 years.

Those convicted of causing serious injury by dangerous driving, causing serious injury by driving while disqualified, and the recently introduced offence of causing serious injury by careless driving have a range of a maximum sentence from two to five years imprisonment.

The courts have had these powers since the 1st of July 2023.

LONDON'S DIRECT VISION STANDARD (DVS) – PHASE 2

As part of Transport for London's (TfL's) progress with their Direct Vision Standard (DVS) – for vehicles over 12 tonnes Gross Vehicle Weight (GVW), TfL have begun accepting applications for HGV's safety permits to ensure vehicles are compliant, with them either meeting the 'three-star' rating threshold or has been fitted with a Progressive Safe System (PSS). [For vehicles rated as 'Three', 'Four' or 'Five' stars, the PSS does not need to be installed, and the safety permit will continue to be valid until its expiry date.]

Companies could have applied for these permits online through the TfL website since the 24th of June. From 28th October 2024, phase 2 of the DVS will take effect, where these new safety thresholds will be required on vehicles entering London.

If the owner of a Zero-rated vehicle already holds a HGV safety permit for that vehicle, then the owner will only need to supply TfL with evidence that the vehicle has been fitted with a 'Moving Off Information System' (MOIS) and a 'Blind Spot Information' System (BSIS), and that these are working correctly. TfL have advised that before doing this, they recommend that the owner's contact details are up to date and the existing permit number is to hand.

New vehicles rated three stars or above will still need to apply for a safety permit.

To discover what needs to be installed for the PSS, and its technical specifications, then owners should visit TfL's website – Progressive Safe System – Transport for London ([tfl.gov.uk](https://www.tfl.gov.uk)) or otherwise go to the TfL website for other information on this subject – www.tfl.gov.uk

LOAD SECURITY

In the summer, the Government produced new guidance for load security for England, Wales, and Scotland.

A copy of the document can be found within the Transport section of the CPA's website, or from the Gov UK website at www.gov.uk/guidance/securing-loads-on-hgvs-and-goods-vehicles

Section 6 refers to carrying different types of loads including the transport of plant.

CAR LICENCE FLEXIBILITY FOR ALTERNATIVELY FUELLED VEHICLES

At the time of writing, the Government is still reviewing their consultation on the flexibility in allowing 'B' / car licence holders to drive vehicles powered by alternative fuel – electricity, natural gas, biogas, hydrogen, and hydrogen/electricity (hybrid) – without the need for additional training – as stipulated within the Motor Vehicles (Driving Licences) (Amendment) Regulations 2018.

Under those regulations, a category 'B' licence holder must undertake 5 hours of additional training before they are permitted to drive an alternatively fuelled vehicle along the public highway which weighs between 3.5 and 4.25 tonnes. (A petrol/diesel powered engine falls below the 3.5 tonne threshold, and so the 5-hour training requirement does not apply.)

The review will also consider whether a trailer being towed by an alternatively fuelled vehicle, driven by someone who passed their test after January 1st, 1997, should now be permitted.

The membership will be informed of any developments on this issue.



TAXATION AND INSURANCE

COMPANY LAW CHANGES – SMALL COMPANY ACCOUNTS

The Economic Crime and Corporate Transparency Act became law in October 2023, which meant that micro and small companies would be required to file more in-depth financial information on the public register at Companies House.

If a company meets two of the following three criteria it is classed as a 'micro company':

- with a turnover less than £632,000
- balance sheet of less than £316,000
- with fewer than 10 employees.

Micro companies currently only need to file a very simple balance sheet and the number of employees.

However, if a company meets two of the following three criteria it is classed as a 'small company':

- with a turnover of less than £10.2m
- balance sheet of less than £5.1m
- with fewer than 50 employees.

Small companies currently only need to file a simple balance sheet and the number of employees.

Going forwards, both micro and small companies will have to file information from their 'Profit and Loss' account. Small companies will also have to file a directors' report.

Members may wish to speak with their accountants/ auditors for further information on this subject, or visit the Gov UK website, where further information can be found at <https://changestoukcompanylaw.campaign.gov.uk/changes-to-accounts/>

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

GOVERNMENT ENHANCED EMPLOYEE REDUNDANCY PROTECTION.

From 6th April, the Government introduced new protection rights for employees taking parental leave, under the Protection from Redundancy (Pregnancy and Family) Leave Act 2023.

The Act now covers all employees already on leave - due to maternity, adoption, or shared parental leave, and will also include employees who have recently returned to work from maternity leave - up to 18 months after the birth of their child. It also covers those who are pregnant, or who have notified their employer of their pregnancy on or after 6th April 2024, as well as for any statutory family leave ending on or after 6th April 2024.

What this now means is if the employee's role is made redundant, then their employer must give them the first option on whether to accept or reject any other vacancy. However, the employee can still be made redundant if no appropriate vacancy is available.

FLEXIBLE WORKING REQUESTS

From 6th April 2024, the Employment Relations (Flexible Working) Act took effect, which gave all workers, including agency staff, a 'Day-1' right, i.e., the right to claim this from the first day they work for a new company.

This change now allows an employee to make two requests for flexible working in any 12-month period, from the previous one; and the employee will no longer be required to provide any explanation as to the proposed effect their request to flexible working will have on the employer. The employer must now consider that request, and respond within two months, from the previous three; and if agreed to the change, the employee's contract terms will be altered.

Further information on this can be found on the ACAS website.

MORE FLEXIBILITY FOR PATERNITY LEAVE

The Paternity Leave (Amendment) Regulations 2024, which took effect from 6th April 2024, now allows employees taking statutory paternity leave to separate their two-week entitlement into two separate one-week entitlements. In addition, the employee may take their leave at any time within the first year of the child's birth.

Employees now only have to give their employer 28 days' notice for each week of leave they intend to take. However, they still need to give notice of their upcoming entitlement 15 weeks before the expected date of birth.

UNPAID LEAVE FOR CARERS

As part of the Carer's Leave Act, any employee who has caring responsibilities for a dependent with long-term care needs, is entitled to one week's statutory leave right in any 12-month window. This leave will be unpaid. This right took effect from 6th April 2024.

STATUTORY PAY ENTITLEMENTS

The weekly rate for Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP), Statutory Paternity Pay (SPP), Statutory Adoption Pay (SAP), and Statutory Shared Parental Pay (SSPP) increased to £184.03 and took effect in April.

The Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) rate increased to £116.75 per week and also took effect in April.

The various National Minimum and Living rates increased in April:

Worker's Age	April 1st 2023	April 1st 2024
21 and over	-	£11.44
23 and over	£10.42	-
21 - 22	£10.18	-
18 - 20	£7.49	£8.60
Under 18	£5.28	£6.40
Apprentice	£5.28	£6.40

REDUNDANCY PAYMENTS

In April, the government had increased the maximum redundancy payment for a 'week's pay' from £643 to £700.

TRAVELLING AND SUBSISTENCE LETTER

There were no changes to HMRC's mileage allowance announced in the Chancellor's Budget, and HMRC had not announced any changes to the Subsistence rate.

CPA'S EMPLOYMENT REFERENCE DOCUMENT (ERD)

The latest version of the CPA's Employment Reference Document (ERD) - April 2024 - can be found on the website at www.cpa.uk.net/legal-insurance-plant-theft/legal/employment



PLANT THEFT

NCATT

In January 2024, the CPA made a three-year commitment to fund the National Construction Agriculture Theft Team (NCATT) police unit in its effort to tackle plant equipment theft and fraud, by organised criminal groups (OCGs) which is costing the construction plant industry millions every year.



The unit is made up of a team of five personnel led by a Superintendent. Between January and June 2024, NCATT recovered 78 items of plant valued at £1,106,000, and 12 construction attachments valued at £153,000. In that time, they were involved with the arrest of 18 individuals.

On a separate point, NCATT informed the CPA of 9 fraudsters, and/or Organised Criminal Groups, targeting plant hire companies. This information was circulated to the membership at that time.

EQUIPMENT THEFT (PREVENTION) ACT - SECONDARY LEGISLATION

The secondary legislation is still in the process of being drafted, which was delayed due to the General Election.

There had been a meeting between representatives of the power tool companies and the Home Office, to discuss how the secondary legislation would be drafted, and the implications to the manufacturers on how the security features would be fitted to their equipment. At the time of writing, no further meetings are planned.

MEMBERS REPORTING THEFTS AND FRAUDS

Opposite is the table detailing the thefts and frauds reported by members between July 1st, 2023, and June 30th, 2024. This compares the reports to the previous year.

Region	Number of Frauds/Attempted Frauds		Number of Thefts	
	2022/23	2023/24	2022/23	2023/24
Berkshire	1			
Buckinghamshire	1			
Cambridgeshire		1		
Cheshire	2		1	
Cumbria			1	
Essex	2			
Gloucestershire		1		
Hampshire	2	1		
Kent	2	2	1	
Lancashire	1	2	6	3
Leicestershire		1		
London		1	1	
Norfolk		1	1	
Northern Ireland				1
Oxfordshire			1	
Shropshire			2	1
Somerset		1	1	
Suffolk	1		1	
Surrey		1	1	
Sussex		1		
Wales			1	1
West Midlands		1		
Wiltshire		1		
Worcestershire			1	
Yorkshire	3	4	4	2
Total	15	19	23	8

The above table does not include the spate of attempted frauds that were perpetrated by fraudsters, and/or Organised Criminal Groups between 8th May and 3rd July. The fraudsters claimed to work for Bespoke Europe, Buxted Construction, C S Mason, D S Watson Civil Engineering, E G Group, E J Taylor & Son, GKL Group, HH Construction, Harringtons Builders, Jagger Construction, Maypine Construction, MBS, MDS Civil Engineering, Mead Construction, Munnings Construction, NEG Services, RC Civils, Spencer British Engineering, or Wagama Estates.

The names used were Arthur Fitzpatrick, Barry Taylor, David Taylor, Edward Taylor, George Wright, Mark Nannery, Robert Larson, Sam Broughton, Samantha Taylor, Sarah Marsh or Wimpiest, Sharon Cullen, Simon Rogers, Stuart Ray and Raymond Trav.

The site addresses given were in Basildon, Benfleet (Essex), Bishops Stortford (Hertfordshire), Bradford, Castlevale (Birmingham), Corby, Crowland (Lincolnshire), Gateshead, Keston (Bromley), Orpington, Tilbury, or Wakefield.

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

BRITISH CONCRETE PUMPING GROUP (BCPG)

The British Concrete Pumping Group (BCPG) have held Steering Committee and Open Meetings during this reporting period with the meeting focusing on the following topics:

- Blockages/FPS
- Driving Licence Requirements
- Safe Use of Concrete Pumps – Review
- CPA Model and Supplementary Conditions Review

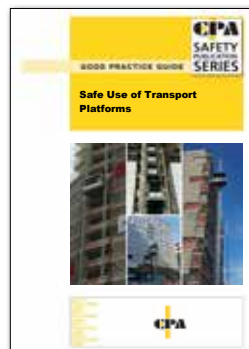


- Rescue from Height on Hoists
- MHE6 Update & Future Plans
- IPAF Hoist Operator Course
- CAP Course
- MCWP/Hoists for Managers Course
- Hoist Installer Course
- CHIG Code of Conduct
- CHIG Levy

CONSTRUCTION HOIST INTEREST GROUP (CHIG)

The Construction Hoist Interest Group (CHIG) have held Steering Committee and Open Meetings during this reporting period with the meetings focusing on the following topics:

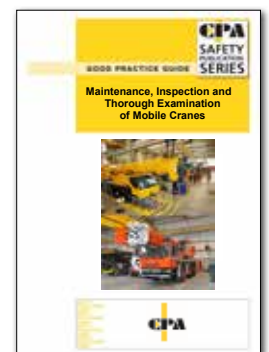
- CHIG 1101 Maintenance and Thorough Examination of Hoists
- CHIG 0901 Work at Height on Construction Hoists
- CHIG 0401 Safeguarding of Landing Gates (Goods Only)
- CHIG 1901 Guidance on Tying Construction Hoists and Mast Climbing Work Platforms to Supporting Structures
- CHIG 0201 Safe Use of Transport Platforms
- CHIG 0501 Transporting Scaffolding in Construction Hoists
- Revision of BS 7212
- NASC Update on Guidance for Scaffolders Using Lifting Equipment
- Non-Road Mobile Machinery (NRMM) Requirements Update
- Tackling the Skill Shortage
- Late Payments – How to Tackle the Trickiest Clients With Caveats
- Electrical Supply Issues
- EN12158-1 and EN12159 Revision
- Hoist Guidance for Selection



CRANE INTEREST GROUP (CIG)

The Crane Interest Group (CIG) has held Steering Committee and Open Meetings during this reporting period with the meetings focusing on the following topics:

- TIN & Publications – Review Programme and Priorities
- Minimum Standards for the Procurement of a Mobile Crane Guidance
- CAP 1096
- ILLAPG Update
- CIG1801/CIV0063 – Mobile Cranes Alongside Railways Update
- ESTA Activity Update and Publications Access
- Handover of Cranes Guidance – Update
- Guidance on When a Lifting Operation Should be Winded Off
- CIG 2308 – Tendering, Management and Operation of Cranes – Update
- Apprenticeship and Skills Update
- Metswift Presentation
- CIG Members Survey – Operators Hours Update
- Handover of Cranes Guidance – Update
- Abnormal Loads/Embargo/Police Enforcement Challenges Update



SHORING TECHNOLOGY INTEREST GROUP (STIG)

The Shoring Technology Interest Group (STIG) have held Technical and Steering Committee and online virtual meetings during this reporting period with the meetings focusing on the following topics:

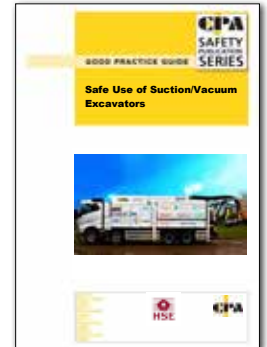
- Recent Safety Issues
- STIG 0206 Revision Update
- CITB Update
- STIG Guidance Documents and TINs Review Update



SUCTION AND VACUUM EXCAVATOR INTEREST GROUP (SAVE)

The Suction and Vacuum Excavator Interest Group (SAVE) has held a Steering Committee Meeting during this reporting period with the meeting focusing on the following topics:

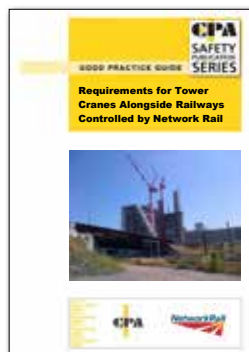
- SAVE Interest Group – Chair
- Recent Safety and Operational Issues Updates
- Apprenticeship Potential
- Standardisation of Manufacturer's Instructions
- Safe Use of Suction Vacuum Excavators – Good Practice Guide



TOWER CRANE INTEREST GROUP (TCIG)

The Tower Crane Interest Group (TCIG) has held Steering Committee and Open Meetings during this reporting period with the meetings focusing on the following topics:

- Recent Safety Issues
- Apprenticeship and Stars of the Future 2024 Update
- TINs and Publications Update
- Industry Lifting Lead AP Group Update
- Cranes Alongside Railways Update
- Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) Fire Safety Guidance
- Weather Research – Metswift
- Potential Electrocution Hazard
- TCIG Rules and Chair Election Criteria
- Inspection/Examination by Drone
- Abnormal Loads/Embargo/Police Enforcement Challenges Update



VERTIKAL DAYS SHOW – JOINT CRANE INTEREST GROUP (CIG) AND TOWER CRANE INTEREST GROUP (TCIG) OPEN MEETING EVENT

A joint CIG/TCIG Open Meeting Event was held during the Vertikal Days Show at the Newark Showground in September with the meeting focusing on the following topics:

- Tower Crane Electrical Supply Issues – RCD's
- Tendering, Management and Operations of Tower Cranes Update
- Network Rail Guidance for Mobile and Tower Cranes Alongside Railways Update
- Guidance for Assessing the Correct Rigging of Mobile and Crawler Cranes Update
- Abnormal Loads/Embargo/Police Enforcement Challenges



As a reminder, all CPA publications are available as a free of charge download at www.cpa.uk.net





TRAINING, EDUCATION AND PARTNERSHIPS

STANDARDS-BASED APPRENTICESHIPS

CPA have been at the forefront of developing plant-based apprenticeships including Construction Plant Operative, Hire Controller and Construction Equipment Maintenance Mechanic and currently developing the apprenticeship for Construction Equipment Maintenance Technicians. CPA also led the technical development for the Lifting Technician trailblazer. 2024 was the year for each of the following apprenticeships to be reviewed.

CONSTRUCTION EQUIPMENT MAINTENANCE TECHNICIAN

Work on this new apprenticeship commenced in early 2023 and is aimed at those who maintain plant and equipment at a technician level 3. A similar apprenticeship for those at mechanic level 2 was launched in late 2019. An industry-led working group, managed by CPA, have devised the required skills, knowledge and behaviour (KSB) requirements for this apprenticeship.

They were approved by the apprenticeship institute (IfATE) in early 2024 and the group subsequently devised the end point assessment - the 'end-testing' process that assures that the required skills, knowledge and behaviours have been met. It has been a complex process as the extent and depth of the

final assessment needed to be balanced between a comprehensive assessment criteria - able to measure effectively three years of learning - but also able to be delivered whilst taking into account cost restrictions.

The final piece of work has been working with the colleges and training providers in order to ascertain training and assessment costs so that a suitable funding band, which is the maximum amount the employer can spend - if an apprenticeship levy payer or claim from the Government if not - on the apprenticeship.

Following the costings submission, the group accepted a funding band allocation of £19k for this 3-year apprenticeship. CITB levy payers can claim an extra (at current rates) £11k in CITB grant. As with all apprenticeships, 20% of the apprenticeship needs to be delivered through 'off-the-job' training, although it can still be carried out in the workplace e.g. projects, working alongside experienced staff, etc. Employers will agree with their chosen training provider on how the apprenticeship should be delivered. This apprenticeship should be available for employers to sign-on apprentices from late Spring 2025. The Trailblazer group will next review the Level 2 mechanic version, with one key aim of increasing the originally low funding band of £10k for this 2-year apprenticeship.



LIFTING TECHNICIAN, HIRE CONTROLLER AND CONSTRUCTION PLANT OPERATIVE APPRENTICESHIP REVIEWS

Each of these apprenticeships have or are undergoing their three-yearly review process. In essence, most are considered as requiring minimal content changes but need to be re-written, particularly the end point assessment, to meet the latest IfATE criteria.

The hire controller apprenticeship has been reviewed and needed minimal changes but with increasing delivery costs, there has been an increase in the funding band from £5k to £6k for this 12 month apprenticeship. CITB levy payers may further claim an extra (at current rates) £6k in CITB grant. This revised apprenticeship is now live and details of the apprenticeship and a list of training providers can be found on the apprenticeship webpage of the CPA website.

The lifting technician apprenticeship – led by Laing o'Rourke, has undergone a reasonably extensive alteration. This was one of the first plant-based apprenticeships, devised back in 2015 for those that operate cranes and undertake slinging/signalling duties. It was felt at the time by the industry working group that it needed to be comprehensive to reflect the safety-critical nature of the work. However the depth and complexity meant that costs and timescales were hampering the ability of apprentices to complete the programme and although the training standards are unaltered, the assessment process has been streamlined to avoid duplication and costs. The category of overhead crane has further been added as an option in addition to tower, mobile and crawler crane.

The plant operative apprenticeship has added additional categories to the existing set of 360 excavator, forklift, dumper/dump truck and ride-on roller. The additional categories, including dozer, backhoe loader etc. is also supplemented by specialist equipment such as vacuum excavators and concrete pumps, but means an enlarged end point assessment process which the steering group are in the process of devising.



PLANT SECTOR REPRESENTATIVE ORGANISATION (PSRO)

The Plant Sector Representative Organisation (PSRO) was set up by CPA in 2020 in partnership with Build UK, the Civil Engineering Contractors Association (CECA), the Home Builders Federation (HBF), The Scottish Plant Owners Association (SPOA), the Federation of Piling Specialists (FPS) and the National Federation Demolition Contractors (NFDC) as a sector representative organisation under the Construction Leadership Council (CLC). The aim of the PSRO was to ensure consistency and compliance for certifying bodies/CSCS Alliance schemes offering plant skills cards as well as setting industry-based education and training standards.

At the PSRO Board meeting held in February 2024, CSCS announced the implementation of a re-licencing programme for their existing alliance card schemes, which included the popular CPCS and NPORS schemes and for which PSRO support would be a requirement for the re-licencing programme. This meant that the current plant card schemes needed to provide evidence that they meet the requirements of the PSRO Competency Framework.

The approval process was undertaken by the PSRO's Technical Review Group (TRG), whereby schemes have been asked to map themselves against elements of the framework and provide evidence of their operational processes. The TRG also mapped each scheme's training and assessment standards for selected categories against the CITB short duration training standards. Each scheme was subjected to an interview by the TRG to cross-map the evidence supplied. The TRG met in early September 2024 to collate their findings and provided their recommendations to the PSRO Board for their September 2024 meeting. Approvals for the mapped card schemes were made but on the proviso that a number of recommendations provided by the TRG were to be enacted and a condition for CSCS re-licencing of each of the schemes.

Following the retirement of Kevin Minton from CPA and who was the original PSRO Chair, Alasdair Reisner of the Civil Engineering Contractors Association (CECA) becomes Chair whilst Steve Mullholland, as the new CPA CEO, and Aaron Davies, as a CPA Council Member, become the CPA representatives on the Board. CPA continue to act in the Secretariat role.

The PSRO and CITB held a series of joint meetings in order to discuss and promote training and competency, as well as supporting the CITB plant operations short duration training standards, as the uptake by industry being minimal, with many employers willing to forgo CITB grant and go for shorter training durations. The meetings were held in late January and early February 2025 with CPA Members and industry invited to attend each venue.



CLC SUPER SECTOR COMPETENCY FRAMEWORKS PROGRAMME

Following the tragic fire of Grenfell Tower a number of years ago, the issue of industry competence was identified by the investigation report, with a lack of competence a cited factor of the tragedy. This has led to legislation such as the Building Safety Regulations 2023 that imposes minimum requirements of those involved in building works, with a particular focus on competence.

The Construction Leadership Council (CLC) have advocated competence frameworks for all construction occupations, not just those involved with buildings and through their WG2 Competence Steering Group, competency frameworks are being devised that ultimately will identify the skills, knowledge, experience and behaviours (SKEBs) required for each sector and their relevant occupations. The relevant SKEBs will be devised by 'Super Sector' groups, with various specialist federations and organisations acting as a lead organisation and who will provide the required content and entry routes etc. for each occupational SKEB.

Plant occupations are in-scope and placed as a distinct footprint within the Civils Super Sector programme. The Plant Sector Representative Organisation (PSRO) are the lead organisation for the plant occupations work stream but it will be project-managed by the CPA. As the PSRO have already devised a competency framework for the requirements of card schemes, this will be used as the basis of the super-sector plant framework and will

be devised by a cross-sector working group who will identify the range of relevant occupations, routes of entry, accepted qualifications and SKEB's relating to the plant.

Plant operators will be the priority occupation followed by plant installers, particularly hoist and tower crane installers, given their proximity to working near to or with high-rise buildings. It is acknowledged however that it is a large piece of work and for which will unlikely to be completed before mid-2025. However, once the plant operations framework is in place, the PSRO will work with CITB and the existing plant card schemes to adopt and adjust their standards and delivery content to meet the framework requirements.



SUPPLY CHAIN SUSTAINABILITY SCHOOL

CPA are a partner member of the Supply Chain Sustainability School (SCSS) and an active member of their Plant Group. As an SCSS partner, this allows CPA Members to access the school's training workshops and other support packages. Through a number of discussions with School staff, it was felt that CPA should facilitate a series of supporting programmes for their members, particularly the smaller members who may have limited resources to effectively engage with this subject, making them aware of what and how they can access the Schools many sustainability workshops and support packages. Therefore, it was agreed to hold a joint webinar to provide a clearer understanding of what the School has to offer, and how it can help CPA members to deliver their business priorities and objectives.

In June 2024, a joint webinar conducted by Lynne Good and Sam Walker from the School, took participants through a number of subjects and included how the School and their Partners work to support and upskill everyone in the Construction and Built Environment industry, as well as events, networking and collaboration opportunities. It also covered the aims, topics and initiatives undertaken by the School's Plant Group and an introduction to the PSRO and SCSS Eco-operating Framework. There was an opportunity to discuss and gather feedback on what the members

would like help with going forward, what they were interested in knowing more about or being involved in, plus ways to engage and collaborate.

The School aims to help everyone in the industry become ready and knowledgeable on sustainability and commercial future-fitness relating to it from which the CPA and the School will continue to work together to further support CPA members.

In continuing CPA support and involvement with the Supply Chain Sustainability School (SCSS), CPA also sponsored one of the categories at the School's seminar on Net Zero Collaboration, held in early September with some five hundred delegates in attendance. CPA sponsored the 'Future of Energy and Fuels' session.

CPA Members may register with the School and access many of their support and learning materials at www.supplychainschool.co.uk



ESTA

The Crane Interest Group through the CPA are members of ESTA, the leading European association for the abnormal road transport and mobile crane rental industry and represents national trade associations whose members are mobile crane and access platform, rental and abnormal road transport companies.

ESTA has also introduced a European Crane Operator Licence (ECOL), which had much input from CPA Technical Staff. It was introduced in 2019 to overcome the issue of each European member state having its own rules for the professional competence and certification of crane operators.

ESTA ANNUAL SPRING MEETING AND AWARDS

CPA staff attended the April meeting of the ESTA Crane Group and the Members meetings, held in Paris to coincide with Intermat 2024. The key topic of discussion at the crane meeting were the issues of ad-blue, which appears to be causing engine malfunctions from which ESTA were carrying out an European-wide survey with crane owners to seek the extent of the problem. Also discussed were CE-marking conflicts with accessories produced in non-European countries and the introduction of new guidance on crane winch gearboxes - reported further below.

ESTA also hosts an Awards of Excellence programme for 2024, for which Ainscough Crane Hire had entered a number of categories and out of seventy entries across ten categories, were shortlisted for three category awards: Telescopic Cranes >120t; Crane Lattice Boom; and the Training category. At the evening awards event, they were announced as European winners of both the telescopic category and the lattice boom category. To crown their achievements, Ainscough were the only double award winners of the event.

In winning the Telescopic category, the ESTA judging panel recognised what Ainscough carried out to complete the exchange of a kiln installation during the largest shutdown in the history of the CEMEX Rugby Cement Plant. They had carried out several complex lifting operations and completing the work over a six-day period of 24-hour shifts. For the Lattice Boom category, they were recognised for their work on Liverpool Football Club's Anfield Stadium renovation in increasing the capacity of the ground's main stand by removing an existing stand structure using a tandem lift operation by two crawler cranes.

With this double win, it is hoped to act as an incentive for other CPA lifting sector members to enter the 2025 ESTA awards, next being held in April 2025 at BAUMA in Munich.



MOBILE CRANE WINCH GEARBOX MAINTENANCE

ESTA has published the first edition of a new guide along with a special calculation tool that will help crane owners calculate the remaining hours of usage for the winch, based on its usage and the related wear and tear. ESTA hopes that the sector will enact the guidance and take the opportunity to improve the operation and maintenance of crane winches and which may as a result, increase their life and reduce costs. It may further minimise oil changes and ESTA feel there is a better way of judging the state of the gearbox. The requirement to calculate the remaining life of a winch was initially introduced in Germany in the 1990s and is a crucial safety consideration because if the crane winch gearbox fails, the crane's load can become uncontrollable.

The current maintenance regime generally involves a major overhaul at around ten years to check that the winch gearbox is still in good condition, but many experts argue that the ten-year threshold is an arbitrary deadline and does not reflect the equipment's actual usage. ESTA's expert group has produced a maintenance regime that is based on technical analysis, for example by implementing regular oil analyses, that will provide detailed information for other inspections. This could both improve safety by catching unexpected problems earlier and, in some cases, might save costs by prolonging the use of the winches beyond current time frames.

ESTA stresses that the publication and calculation tool is only for guidance. It is not a regulation or standard and should not be treated as such, and it cannot replace the user's own knowledge of relevant directives, laws and regulations. The winch maintenance publication can be downloaded via a link at the Crane Interest Group (CIG) section of the CPA website.



ILLAPG PARTNERSHIP

The Industry Lifting Lead AP Group (ILLAPG), supported and administered by CPA, has made significant advancements over the past year. The ILLAPG website is now fully operational (www.illapg.com), serving as a key platform for hosting information on meetings, documents, and other relevant resources. This has greatly enhanced communication and resource-sharing capabilities within the group.

Meetings throughout the year have been well attended, both in person and online, demonstrating the group's continued engagement across the industry. A notable initiative has been the Hands Off, Step Away, Safe Space (HOSASS) campaign, aimed at improving safety practices for slinger/signallers. The video for this campaign, filmed onsite at HS2, has been well-received, with strong interest from tier-one contractors.

In addition to the HOSASS initiative, the ILLAPG has made progress on several key documents, including the Common Lifts document, which is undergoing review. The Piling Lift Schedule has been reviewed by the Federation of Piling Specialists, and the Fit Out Lift and Shift document is expected to be completed by late 2024. The group has also developed a guidance document for lifting with excavators, marking another important step toward enhancing operational safety and efficiency.

New initiatives in development include guidance for the use of taglines, an anti-collision standard, and a slinger/signaller grading system, all aimed at standardising safety practices and fostering continuous improvement across the lifting industry.

EVENT PARTNERSHIPS

INTERMAT 2024

From 25th to 27th April, CPA participated in Intermat in Paris, where a presentation was delivered on Influence Serving the Building and Civil Engineering Professions. The session focused on strategies for engaging the next generation in the construction industry and was well received by attendees. The presentation also gained coverage on BFM Business, a prominent Parisian media outlet. The session was supported by French influencer Anthony Goubert, who provided additional insights into industry engagement.

UK CONSTRUCTION WEEK

On 7th May, CPA contributed to a panel discussion at UK Construction Week on the Culture Hub Stage. The panel, which included key industry figures such as Richard Smith (Pre-Construction Director - Keltbray), Lucy Boreham (Director - BeyNel), and Donna Howard (Head of Social Sustainability - Kier), explored strategies for attracting and retaining future talent in the construction sector. The session was well attended and sparked productive discussions on how the industry can inspire and engage the workforce of tomorrow.

LONDON CONSTRUCTION AWARDS 2024/ CONSTRUCTION NEWS SPECIALIST AWARDS

CPA has also been involved in the 2024 London Construction Awards and Construction News Specialist Awards, with a representative serving as a judge. These prestigious awards, celebrate major achievements, innovations, and developments across the UK construction industry. This involvement enhances CPA's visibility and reinforces its commitment to industry leadership and excellence.

GLOBAL LIFTING AWARENESS DAY (GLAD) 2024

On July 18th, the industry celebrated the fifth anniversary of Global Lifting Awareness Day (GLAD), a global initiative dedicated to promoting safety and excellence within the lifting sector. Organized by the Lifting Equipment Engineers Association (LEEA), GLAD2024 featured a full day of videos, presentations, and contributions from LEEA members, manufacturers, and suppliers, all sharing materials that highlight the importance of high-quality load lifting practices.

CPA participated in the event by contributing to LEEA's GLAD film festival, which showcased professionals from across the industry discussing their experiences in lifting operations. As part of this initiative, a CPA representative shared insights into the construction industry and how pathways into crane operations can lead to a successful career in lifting. This contribution emphasized CPA's ongoing commitment to promoting safety and skill development in the lifting industry.

The event also highlighted the global collaboration within the sector, with participants from across various industries-including construction, oil and gas, and scientific research-discussing the vital role of lifting in their respective fields. GLAD2024 provided an opportunity for CPA to engage with a broad audience, reinforcing its commitment to safety and innovation in lifting operations.





RAIL PLANT ASSOCIATION (RPA) CHAIR'S REPORT

The past 12–18 months has seen the rail plant sector go through another very challenging period, with the continuation of the ‘perfect storm’ conditions of higher operating costs, higher interest payments and the national rail strikes/industrial action impacting the supply chain. To further compound this ‘perfect storm’ of events, during the summer of 2023 Network Rail announced that they were putting the emergency brakes on infrastructure spending for the remainder of CP6, which effectively saw an 25% reduction in expenditure and the planned work-bank. This reduction in the planned work-bank has left the OTP Supply Chain in the precarious position, with significantly increased overheads and less utilisation for plant and equipment.

Sadly, in late 2023 and early 2024, three significant OTP Suppliers ceased trading, all for differing reasons, but the factors of the ‘perfect storm’ would not have helped their cause. Our thoughts go out to all of those who have been affected by those business closures. Whilst fortunately, in many cases, their people and plant have found new roles in the supply chain, the situation provided a stark warning of current plight and the fragility of the sector at the end of CP6 and into the start of CP7 in April 2024, with overall spending levels significantly below historic levels.

ENGAGEMENT NETWORK RAIL/DFT

Throughout 2023–24, the RPA has made great progress in the terms of the support that we provide to our members. We are now regularly involved in discussions with Network Rail, the Department for Transport and other trade bodies as we seek to continually represent the views and concerns of the Membership. With over £1billion of plant and over 5,000 employees, the railway plant community is a sizeable part of the overall railway supply chain and over the past 12–18 months it feels like the RPA’s views are now being listened to, even if they are not always acted upon.

The RPA has consistently over many years called for the need for better planning and management of the work-bank pipeline, to help smooth the peaks and troughs to more consistent and sustainable levels and avoid the feast and famine nature of the sector, with the famines becoming increasingly challenging and lasting longer.

LATE CANCELLATIONS

Late cancellations have unfortunately been an issue for many years now, and cause plant suppliers no end of headaches trying to ensure that plant movements orders are submitted in time, that the staffing resources are allocated and in place, the correct pre-planning, site walk-outs and planning meetings are carried out etc, basically every aspect of the operation is primed and ready action, only for the client to cancel all of the works within the 48-hour notice period, with no financial liability or consequence to their business.

We highlighted our concerns to Network Rail representatives, who acknowledged these issues and agreed to look at what could be improved within their own systems and processes to address some of the inherent cultural and behavioural factors at play during the work planning stages. We are very pleased to report that in mid-2024 Network Rail introduced benchmarking/performance tables across the regions to measure plant cancellation trends across the Routes/Regions, with the aim highlighting potential areas for improvement.

RPA TERMS & CONDITIONS 2023

We are pleased to report that in October 2023, and a few months ahead of schedule, the RPA published and circulated the new Rail Plant Association (RPA) Terms & Conditions 2023 to the membership. We urge all RPA Members to adopt and utilise the new RPA Terms and Conditions 2023 across their businesses wherever possible (The RPA Terms and Conditions 2023 include a Late Cancellation Clause).

PRODUCT ACCEPTANCE CERTIFICATES FOR OLDER PLANT AND EQUIPMENT

Throughout 2023/2024, the RPA Management Committee has continued to support the work carried out by Jordan Skey, Network Rail’s Technical Head of Plant regarding the ongoing issues with Product Acceptance Certificates (PAC) for older plant and equipment. This issue has impacted many RPA members in certain regional areas, as older plant and equipment is being ordered and then subsequently turned away from site or cancelled at short notice due to it not having Product Acceptance Certificates.

GREAT BRITISH RAILWAY (GBR) – BACK ON TRACK

In all of our engagement with Network Rail and DfT, RPA has for many years been banging the drum for the sector to get better visibility of the enhancement work-bank pipeline to enable the supply chain to make informed capital investment decisions in the medium/long-term, and to smooth out the peaks and troughs to help create a robust and sustainable supply chain, which is able to invest in greener technologies and innovations for the future.

However, it is acknowledged by all stakeholders that the current economic factors, changes in the political landscape with an outgoing and new incoming Government, has meant that the industry has been in a long-term state of flux, with little meaningful change in the current working-bank planning practices. The political situation had meant that legislation for Great British Railways (GBR) had stalled during the change of Government, but early indications from the new Labour Government are positive, with the legislation process to bring GBR into fruition having restarted in earnest.

GBR goals for the railway are, that it is:

- Easier and better to use
- Lower cost to taxpayers
- Better at supporting local and national ambitions
- A simpler sector to work in and do business with

The RPA is supportive of the GBR goals and the ambition to bring train and track back together.

RPA LEADERSHIP MEETINGS

Chaired by RPA Consultant, Steve Featherstone, the RPA held three RPA Leadership meetings throughout the year – February, July and November. These meetings have now created a regular forum for the RPA Membership and wider supply chain to hear from and directly liaise with senior Network Rail and key industry representatives on a wide range of industry topics and initiatives.

Improved communication and collaboration between the stakeholders is the key to delivering a sustained cultural change that benefits the industry. By developing and encouraging better trading conditions and working practices across the sector, this could bring about the necessary efficiencies, reduction in waste/duplication and ultimately provide additional value to the taxpayer. I would like to remind Members that these meetings are an important opportunity for the industry stakeholders to come together listen and learn from each other.

RPA MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

The RPA Management Committee continues to hold regular meetings, to discuss the problems that are being faced by the member companies. The committee are all senior within their organisations and bring with them a diverse wealth of experience and expertise.

The following RPA representatives were elected to serve on the Management Committee at the AGM in February 2024:

Jim Allenden
Trevor Bidwell-Ford
Andy Crago
Paul Helks
Liam Ledger
Ian Morgan
Jim Nabarro
Richard Romaszko
Andrew Shipley
Florin Stanciu

As Chair I wish to acknowledge with sincere thanks, the huge amount of time and energy the Management Committee spends trying to improve the conditions for all our members. I would also like to especially thank Paul Helks as previous chair for his commitment and contribution to the work of the Committee.

Members of the Committee currently represent the RPA on various industry working groups. We are privileged to have seats on:

- Infrastructure Safety Leadership Group (ISLG)
- Mechanical & Electrical Engineering (M&E) Networking Group
- Network Rail HSE collaboration group
- Network Rail's Capability Development Group (CDG)

- Network Rail's Fatigue Risk Management Working Group
- Railway Infrastructure Supplier Qualification Scheme (RISQS) Group
- Ballast Dust Working Group (BDWG)

AND FINALLY...

Despite the 'perfect storm' conditions that the industry continues to face, it remains in all of the stakeholder's interests to continue to work more collaboratively and critical that the supply chain has a long-term visibility of the work-bank pipeline. As all businesses continue to face cost increases across the board, full visibility of the long-term work-bank remains the key driver to give suppliers the confidence to make the correct capital investment on which plant and machinery will be required going forward.

Sustainable and continuous industry investment remains the key to developing and maintaining a supply chain that is robust, adequately staffed with the right skillsets, innovative and ultimately fit for purpose, to meet the challenges of Control Period 7 and beyond.

There also is a real industry concern currently that unless there are some fundamental changes to the existing Client/Supplier trading environment, the investment climate conditions necessary to develop and purchase future cleaner/greener plant simply isn't present at the moment (or at least not at the required level), in spite of the best intentions of the supply chain, who are committed to continually supporting the industry.

It is more important than ever that the RPA continues to have a strong voice to represent the views of our members and the overall railway plant sector.



Andy Crago
RPA Management Committee Chair

FOCUS ON 2025



STARS OF THE FUTURE 2025

The CPA Stars of the Future Awards 2025 are now open for entries and employers across the industry are invited to recognise and reward their construction plant apprentices and trainees.

The awards are free to enter and nominations are welcome from all employers including plant-hire companies, manufacturers, contractors, suppliers and others operating in the construction plant sector with apprentices and trainees in their workforce. Nominees need to be on an approved apprenticeship scheme or an employer in-house learning programme.

To make a nomination, employers can download a nomination form from the CPA website at www.cpa.uk.net/skills-training/stars-of-the-future and complete and return it to the CPA by the nomination deadline of **21st March 2025**.

The winners will be announced at a prestigious awards ceremony at the Heart of England Conference and Events Centre in Fillongley, near Coventry, on 10th July 2025. The event will be hosted by construction industry journalist and vlogger Peter Haddock.

Awards will be made for the well-established categories of Plant Mechanic of the Year (Level 2), Plant Technician of the Year (Level 3), Young Plant Operative of the Year, Plant Operative of the Year, Plant Installer of the Year, Lifting Technician of the Year, Hire Controller of the Year, Apprentice Mentor of the Year and College of the Year. All nominees are also eligible for special awards including the Judges' Special Award and the Best Personal Statement Award.

In recognition of the growth of the awards over the last 12 years, a new awards category has been added for 2025 for Technical Support Person of the Year. This award is for apprentices or trainees who are in a role that has a plant technical focus and who are supporting other plant-focused operations of their business such as data handling and supply, hiring

activities, sales and marketing activities, parts and/or resources/equipment supply, machine/equipment systems programming/maintenance, site operational planning, supporting external customers, etc.

Steve Mulholland, CPA Chief Executive Officer said: "We urge employees – both small and large – to nominate apprentices and trainees who they see as being the industry's future leaders, as it means the world to them to be nominated for an award. The awards are open to all employers across the industry, so nominating organisations needn't be a CPA member to put someone forward.

"Stars of the Future is becoming more high profile every single year and last year's winners received national recognition and won some fabulous prizes, including tool kits, machine training courses, iPads, an overseas trip to visit a Liebherr crane manufacturing plant in Germany, another overseas trip to one of Wolffkran's manufacturing facilities in Luckau, Germany, and a VIP day courtesy of JCB. We know that many previous Stars of the Future winners have been fast-tracked to supervisory and management positions.

"At the CPA, one of our primary objectives is to encourage new blood into the construction plant sector, and Stars of the Future helps us to achieve this. The standard of entries gets higher every year and last year we received 80 nominations from across the industry. We anticipate even more this year," he added.

TRADE SHOWS

During 2025, the CPA will also be exhibiting at a number of trade shows. The first will be at the Executive Hire Show in Coventry in February, where the team can be found at stand H20. In June the team will be at Rail Live at Long Marston Rail Innovation Centre and in September at Newark Showground for both Vertikal Days and PlantWorx.

NEW CPA WEBSITE

Other developments in 2025 will include the introduction of a brand new CPA website. This is designed to be dynamic, engaging and content rich, serving CPA members well and also helping to attract new members to the association.



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