



In October last year, Kent Technology Transfer Centre in conjunction with Business Link Kent, organised a Workshop to address issues arising from the introduction of The Lift Regulations 1997. As a result of this delegates indicated that they would be interested in attending another Workshop relating to responsibilities relating to LG1 and Health & Safety (LOLER and PUWER).

Lift Industry Workshop – LG1 and Health & Safety

by Ish Buckingham

A well-attended Workshop took place on 4th April 2001, at The Historic Dockyard in Chatham, Kent.

John Miller of Kent Technology Transfer Centre welcomed delegates and explained the background to the Workshop. He then proceeded to introduce Richard Morgan, Technical Director (Lifts) for the Safety Assessment Federation (SAFed).

Richard explained how the Health and Safety Executive had issued a Plant and Machinery Guidance Note (PM7 entitled *Lifts: Thorough examination and testing*) in 1977, the purpose of which was to ensure the continued safety of lifts and hoists. This document was subsequently revised in 1982.

A working group comprising lift manufacturers, users and inspection bodies formulated the LG1 document; the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) chaired the group. LG1 was introduced on 15th December 1998 and superseded PM7, addressing additional requirements for hydraulic lifts and scenic lifts.

Richard went on to explain that the aim of the new document was to achieve consistency of examination and testing, establish agreed methods and reporting requirements, and to present periodicities for examinations and tests. Where variations in examination and test requirements do occur, these will reflect the results of risk assessments carried out on the equipment in question.

The new LG1 document was framed in the context of the requirements of *The Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (PUWER)* and *The Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 (LOLER)*.

The use of the LG1 document is commended by the HSE but has not in itself got any legal status.

The second presentation was given by Mark Walsh, HM Inspector (HSE) and dealt with *The Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (PUWER)* and *The Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 (LOLER)*.

Mark explained that both PUWER and LOLER also came into force on 5th December 1998, the Regulations being supported by individual Approved Codes of Practice (ACOP).

PUWER and LOLER both apply to work equipment used in all industry sectors. Their introduction maintained and improved the standards, which previously existed, e.g. the requirement under LOLER (Regulation 8) to carry out lifting operations safely did not previously exist.



In addition, they widen the range of parties with obligations (duty holders) to reflect the way the work equipment is used in industry, where there is not necessarily a direct employment relationship between users and persons who control its use, (e.g. where a sub-contractor carries out work on another person's premises with equipment provided by that person or a third party) or where persons control equipment but not its use, e.g. plant hire company.

In general terms, the PUWER regulations require that equipment provided for use at work be:

- suitable for the intended use;
- safe for use, maintained in a safe condition and, in certain circumstances, inspected to ensure this remains the case;
- used only by people who have received adequate information, instruction and training; and
- accompanied by suitable safety measures, e.g. protective devices, markings, warnings.

Work equipment includes **any equipment used by an employee at work.**

Generally, the LOLER regulations require that lifting equipment provided for use at work be:

- strong and stable enough for the particular use and marked to indicate safe working loads;
- positioned and installed to minimise any risks;
- used safely, i.e. the work is planned, organised and performed by competent people; and
- subject to ongoing thorough examination and, where appropriate, inspection by competent people.

Lifting equipment includes **any equipment used at work for lifting or lowering loads**, including attachments used for anchoring, fixing or supporting it.

The final presentation was given by Steve Piekos of

LG1

Eurogears Limited, and aimed to provide a company's approach to LG1.

Steve gave a step-by-step explanation of the work undertaken by his company when carrying out gear inspections. He showed a great passion for the way in which they approached this very important element of LG1.

Steve explained how the use of the EVA-625 Elevator Analysis system at each inspection provides a measure of the level of vibration and sound emanating from the equipment. This can quite often highlight problem areas before any inspection work even commences.

Steve stated that in his opinion, gear inspection requires the lift car and counterweight to be 'stumped' and the gearbox dismantled (as required) to enable adequate internal inspection. Measurements for bearing clearances and backlash should be recorded for future reference.

All three presentations produced lively debate; some of the issues raised are detailed below.

Lift Companies often find themselves faced with a 'commercial dilemma' when they are trying to get their clients to agree to LG1 Examinations – if LG1 was mandatory, clients would be more inclined to accept the Lift Companies advice.

Should Lift Companies switch lifts off if they consider them to have serious defects? Have they the right to do so?

If the Lift Company switches off lifts how can they be sure that the client is not going to switch them back on? Someone suggested that the lift engineer removes the fuses – gets the client to sign for them before handing them over.

HSE suggested that if the Lift Company is really concerned about a particular situation they should contact their local HSE.

There was some debate about the level of experience of some of the Inspectors carrying out Thorough Examinations. □



Mark Walsh (left) and Richard Morgan (right)



The audience



Steve Piekos