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HOW WE ARE DEVELOPING OUR CUSTOMER SERVICES



**By Richard Saunders,
Managing Director**

As we move into 2008, I am delighted to report that AFI-Uplift is implementing a number of initiatives to further develop our service to you, our customers.

For example we will be continuing to increase our machine fleet, which has already expanded to over 4,300 units and is one of the most modern fleets in the industry.

Similarly, further investment will be made in our fleet of delivery vehicles, which is already one of the industry's largest transport fleets, providing us with increased flexibility to handle project work across the UK.

Depot Network

Our depot network grew substantially during 2007, both in terms of the numbers of depots and the relocation of individual depots to larger premises (Page 4), and further depot development is planned for the coming year. We have provided increased resources for our customers in the

North East and the East Midlands through our recent respective acquisitions of North East Access and Central Access (Page 4).

AFI Direct

We have also increased our focus on our AFI Direct operation, which services our major customers (Page 7). We will be establishing a blueprint for customer service best practice, which will then be rolled out throughout our depot network.

Although the general economic conditions are uncertain for 2008, we believe that through our continuing investment in new machines and services we are in a strong position to rise to the challenges that lie ahead.

SPECIAL OFFERS

Get four free harnesses worth £340 when you book four delegates on an AFI IPAF training course held in February 2008. **BOOK NOW** – places are limited! Call AFI Training on 08707 871511 and quote ref: FEB08.

Terms & Conditions: Only applicable to IPAF accredited courses held in February 2008. Four delegates must be booked on the same course (minimum total value £800 +VAT). Not to be used with any other offer.



AFI-UPLIFT

PROVIDING A LIFT FOR LIVERPOOL

Twelve AFI-Uplift scissor lifts helped to throw the spotlight on pop icons Ringo Starr and Dave Stewart during the UK's biggest ever show – the opening ceremony to mark the launch of Liverpool as the European capital of culture.

With maximum heights from 7.8m to 17.2m, the scissors carried lighting to illuminate the performers taking part in the spectacular show, which was attended by over 40,000 people.

Some of the machines took centre stage themselves when they provided an unusual platform for performers including singers, poets and choristers to work from. The units were raised and lowered during the performances to add to the spectacle.



IN AT THE DEEP END...

It almost appears as though this formidable looking shark is about to get its belly rubbed by the operator of this AFI-Uplift boom lift!

In fact the AFI machine was getting its teeth into a very different job – helping staff to carry out maintenance work to lighting outside 'The Deep', one of the world's most spectacular aquariums.

Jutting out into the Humber Estuary at Hull, 'The Deep' is home to over 3,500 fish and 40 sharks, including the Grey Reef shark, whose impressive sculpture dominates our photograph.

The Genie 45/25 boom, hired from AFI's Hull depot over a three week period, was used by staff at 'The Deep' to carry out repairs and to relamp approximately 50 ten metre high metal halide lamps sited all around the aquarium's exterior.

The AFI articulating boom hired for the work has a maximum height of 15.72m, giving it plenty of height and outreach for staff to work on the lamps.

'The Deep' is not only an extremely popular tourist attraction but also provides facilities for marine biologists to carry out vital research into the marine environment.

MACHINES IN ACTION



Supplied to event specialists Production Eye by AFI's Liverpool depot, the machines were positioned around the historic St George's Hall, with some being manoeuvred between the enormous columns at the entrance to the Hall.

Simon Barrington, Production Manager for the event, said: "The AFI scissor lifts were ideal for the lighting because they provided a clear line of sight between the lights and the areas being illuminated."



BOOM TAKES TO THE WATER

This AFI-Uplift boom lift took to the water to help contractors build a new bridge crossing the River Tees at Stockton on Tees.

Edmund Nuttall Ltd, main contractors for the Surtees Bridge project, said the Genie 60 stick boom was placed on a barge to provide access to the underside of the centre spans.

AFI's North East Depot also supplied six other 60-foot straight booms to help place the main steel framework into position. Once that aspect of the work had been completed, Cleveland Bridge then used the AFI machines for painting the bridge.

Peter Johnson, AFI-Uplift North East Account Manager, said: "Given the type of work required in building the Surtees Bridge, we had to look at how the booms would perform when placing such a significant amount of steel framework across the river, particularly when positioned on a barge."

AFI-UPLIFT DEPOT & TRAINING UPDATE

Depot network expanded through acquisition and relocations

AFI-Uplift has further expanded its depot base through the acquisition of another powered access rental business and through relocating some existing AFI depots to larger premises.

The acquisition of Central Access Ltd, based in Nottinghamshire, came just weeks after AFI had acquired North East Access Ltd.

With a fleet of 140 boom and scissor lifts, Central Access has a strong local customer base. The company was formed in 1998.

AFI Director Nick Selley said: "This acquisition will significantly strengthen our operations in the East Midlands and, as a result, will further boost our national depot network."

"Once again, it demonstrates how



AFI-Uplift Director Nick Higgins (left) is pictured with Central Access Managing Director Gary Fearon. Following the acquisition, Mr Fearon is working with AFI in a consultancy role.

we are able to move quickly and decisively when opportunities arise to expand our business. Central Access is a quality business which we have admired. It is well run, with quality equipment and staff. The acquisition will increase our presence in the East Midlands area and provide a combined fleet of over 400 units," he added.

"Existing AFI customers will gain from our now having a stronger presence in the East Midlands, and Central Access customers will benefit from having access to our national depot network and one of the most modern powered access rental fleets in the UK."

As one of the UK's fastest-growing powered access rental companies, AFI's turnover has grown significantly year on year – it exceeded £30 million in 2007, compared with £20m in 2006.

Depot moves

In response to growing customer demand, AFI has moved its Manchester and South Wales depots to new and larger premises.

Manchester

AFI has increased its presence in the North West by moving the Manchester depot to larger premises. The depot's relocation, from Irlam to Kearsley, has given it premises which are now double the size of its previous base, enabling its fleet to expand to over 400 machines.

The new, larger Manchester depot, along with our Liverpool site, are now serving all our customers in the North West since the recent closure of Haydock. However, AFI have further expansion plans and are due to open a brand new depot at Preston in Spring 2008.

South Wales

The South Wales depot has moved from Newport to Bridgend and now has premises which are three times larger. This will give the depot the capacity to expand its hire fleet in the next 18 months from 185 machines to 300 machines. AFI opened its South Wales depot three years ago with a fleet of 80 boom and scissor lifts.

PROVIDING COVERAGE THROUGHOUT THE UK

Birmingham

Tel: 0121 525 7226

Fax: 0121 525 5547

birmingham.depot@afi-uplift.co.uk

East Midlands

Tel: 01332 870113

Fax: 01332 874555

eastmidlands.depot@afi-uplift.co.uk

Hull

Tel: 01482 341799

Fax: 01482 345099

hull.depot@afi-uplift.co.uk

Liverpool

Tel: 0151 545 2190

Fax: 0151 545 2199

liverpool.depot@afi-uplift.co.uk

London East

Tel: 01277 812976

Fax: 01277 814568

londoneast.depot@afi-uplift.co.uk

London South

Tel: 01732 781034

Fax: 01732 887425

londonsouth.depot@afi-uplift.co.uk

London West

Tel: 01753 783744

Fax: 01753 650808

londonwest.depot@afi-uplift.co.uk

Manchester

Tel: 0161 707 7895

Fax: 0161 707 7896

manchester.depot@afi-uplift.co.uk

Milton Keynes

Tel: 01908 670237

Fax: 01908 669408

miltonkeynes.depot@afi-uplift.co.uk

North East

Tel: 0191 442 1503

Fax: 0191 483 9707

northeast.depot@afi-uplift.co.uk



Above: Star 10 mobile boom: CAT 3b.
Below: Pop-Up static vertical: CAT 1a.



SWEeping CHANGES TO IPAF CATEGORIES

The New Year heralded sweeping changes in the IPAF category system – IPAF has revised the categories in its training programme as it moves towards alignment with the British and International standards BSEN 280 and ISO DIS 16368 – standards that regulate the design and manufacture of access platforms worldwide.

From 1 January 2008, all IPAF courses now reflect these category changes. The changes do not affect the training received, and existing PAL Cards (Powered Access Licences) remain valid as specified. Existing PAL Card holders do not need to get their cards changed. The new IPAF categories are:

- Vertical personnel platforms (static): Static Vertical (1a)
- Self-propelled booms (outriggers), trailers/push-arounds, vehicle-mounted platforms: Static Boom (1b)
- Scissor lifts, vertical personnel platforms (mobile): Mobile Vertical (3a)
- Self-propelled booms: Mobile Boom (3b)
- Airport equipment: Special (SPECIAL):

The following courses continue unchanged:

- Mast Climbing Work Platforms (MC)
- Insulated Aerial Devices (IAD)
- Telehandler Platforms Integrated (TPI)
- Harness (H)
- Loading and Unloading (LOAD)
- MEWPs For Managers (MM)



Star 6 mobile vertical: CAT 3a.

Current PAL Card holders who need to replace lost cards will be issued duplicate cards with the original categories in which they have been trained. This is because the categories listed on the PAL Card reflect the training received. Those who re-train or do upgrades from 1 January 2008 onwards will be issued with the new categories.

Any AFI customers unsure of which category of machine they are entitled to operate may contact AFI Training on 08707 871 511.

New Preston depot opening Spring 2008

Peterborough

Tel: 01733 206 638

Fax: 01733 205 791

peterborough.depot@afi-uplift.co.uk

Scotland

Tel: 01698 844 655

Fax: 01698 748 036

scotland.depot@afi-uplift.co.uk

South Wales

Tel: 01656 767 456

Fax: 01656 657 361

southwales.depot@afi-uplift.co.uk

South West

Tel: 01278 446 580

Fax: 01278 445 951

southwest.depot@afi-uplift.co.uk

Southampton

Tel: 08701 126833

Fax: 08701 126844

southampton.depot@afi-uplift.co.uk

Wakefield

Tel: 01924 383833

Fax: 01924 383832

wakefield.depot@afi-uplift.co.uk

AFI staff celebrate at "Big Bash"

More than 330 AFI staff and their partners came together at Alton Towers for a "Big Bash" event laid on by the company to thank them for helping to achieve another record breaking year. The entertainment was headed up by ex-Spandau Ballet's Tony Hadley.



TRAINING: THE FACES BEHIND THE VOICES

Meet our Training Administration team (l-r) Charlotte Audsley, Mick Read and Kate England.

They are the faces behind the voices – the people who take your calls about training.

Charlotte, Mick and Kate have been particularly busy during the past year – our training grew by over 80 per cent, with over 6,000 people being trained on IPAF courses.

This has led to AFI being delighted to announce they are now the second largest IPAF training provider in the UK. Brian Parker, AFI's Training Manager, said staff had worked hard to ensure that customers understood their obligations for training.

"IPAF themselves and the industry have also made great gains into ensuring that employers and sites are more aware of the legalities for being correctly trained before using powered access machines," he added.

AFI currently has nine trainers and this number is expected to grow to 13 this year.

AFI's INITIATIVES TO BRING FURTHER IMPROVEMENT

As part of AFI-Uplift's recent restructuring, Nick Higgins has been appointed as Operations Director.

Nick, who was previously an AFI Regional Director, said: "I am delighted to have been given the opportunity to work on a national basis within AFI-Uplift. With the strength of the team around me I look forward to facing the challenges ahead. It is a team effort after all, and together we will achieve our goals as a team."

An area of key focus for Nick will be customer service and satisfaction levels. He said: "By continuing to develop a "yes" culture right throughout the business we will strive to further enhance our reputation with all of our customers. Doing the basic things well is important and this requires innovation, clear thinking, investment, the right attitude and commitment."

Nick said there will also be an increasing focus on the company's transport fleet: "We have one of the largest and most modern truck fleets of any powered access company in the UK. It is vitally important that this key asset is utilised to the full in order to fully benefit not only our business but also our customers' businesses."

Nick has over 20 years' experience in the powered access industry. He formed Uplift Power Platforms in 2001 and joined AFI when the two companies merged in September 2006.



Both Nick Higgins and the AFI D emphasize on further enhancing c



MARKETING UPDATE...MARKETING UPD

AFI-Uplift has strengthened its Marketing Department by appointing Sarah Farrand as Marketing Manager.

Sarah will be working closely with Sales Support (Telesales Team) and the Field Sales team as part of AFI's plans to further raise its profile.

Commenting on her new role, she said: "AFI-Uplift has a strong customer base and a strong presence in the industry, and we now plan to further develop awareness of the company and drive the business forward in 2008."

Sarah has extensive marketing experience and has joined AFI after being Marketing Manager of a Nottingham firm of solicitors.

IMPROVEMENTS IN CUSTOMER SERVICE



An increased focus is to be placed on AFI Direct – the operation for customers who hire nationally and put all their hire requirements through one central point.

The AFI Direct team will be working closely with Managing Director Richard Saunders and the Regional Managers to increase customer service standards, not only for AFI Direct customers but also throughout the AFI network.

Richard Saunders said: "The clear objective is to fully utilise AFI Direct as the driving force to ensure continuous improvement in our levels of service to all our customers. The AFI Direct team will actively strive to exceed expectations and identify areas where we can perform even better.

Direct team will be placing great customer service levels.

DATE...MARKETING UPDATE

Look out for AFI at the following exhibitions where our hire, Resale and training operations will all have a presence:

MAINTEC:

- NEC, Birmingham, March 11-13. Stand A43.

ELEX 2008:

- Scottish Exhibition & Conference Centre, Glasgow, June 12-13.
- Ricoh Arena, Coventry, Sept 18-19.
- Sandown Park, Esher, Surrey, Dec 2-3.

"In partnership with the regional operational teams and actively seeking the views of our customers, we intend to ensure best practice is achieved across the whole company. This will provide both new and existing customers with a consistently high level of service performance."

"We are committed to continually training our highly experienced staff through the Investors in People programme, and we will be implementing initiatives to help our employees develop new skills so they achieve even greater job satisfaction. This, in turn, will increase productivity and ultimately benefit you, our customer," he added.

■ **AFI Direct team members pictured above are (l-r) Kirsty Hindle, Dave Wilde (Manager), Natalie Wilde and Andrea Whiting.**

AFI Direct
Working together in Partnership



AUDIT PASSED WITH FLYING COLOURS

AFI has passed an NQA Tri-Annual Audit with flying colours to retain its accreditation under BS EN ISO 9001:2000.

The major audit involved independent inspections of all the audits carried out by AFI's auditing team at all of its depots. AFI Director Austin Baker commented: "We are delighted with the result, but as always, we will be pushing to achieve even greater performance levels in 2008."

AFI SUPPORTS HSE SAFETY DRIVE

AFI is offering a 10 per cent discount* on all PASMA training courses from 1 February to 31 March.

The move is in support of a major Health and Safety Executive initiative designed to drive home the importance of safety and training when working at height.

Targeted at the building and plant maintenance sectors, the campaign will highlight the clear connection between training and competency.

*The AFI discount cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer.

TRAINING COURSES AVAILABLE

Through AFI Training we offer a range of training courses:

IPAF Operator

Based on IPAF's Operator Safety Guide and all relevant national and international safety standards, these courses cover Mobile Elevating Work Platforms (MEWP's) such as scissor lifts, self propelled booms, trailer mounted booms, personnel lifts, van and truck mounted and some special categories.

IPAF Harness

Approved by the Major Contractors Group (MCG) this course covers the safe and appropriate use of harnesses.

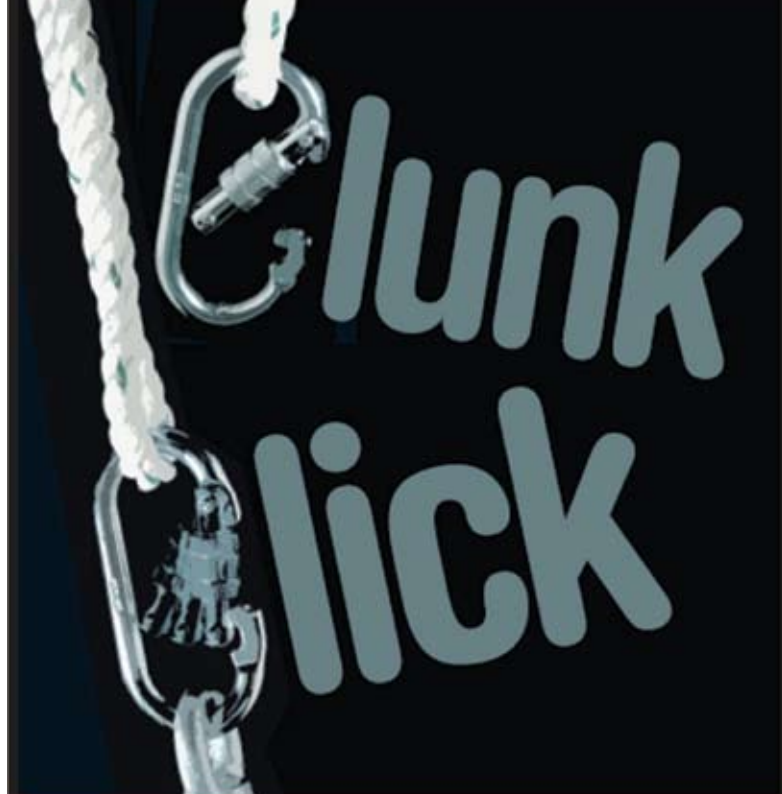
IPAF Safe Loading and Unloading

This course covers the correct safety procedures for the transport of access and plant machinery to obtain an IPAF transportation licence involving loading/unloading and securing.

PASMA Mobile Access Tower Training

The PASMA training is a one day course. Upon successful completion, candidates are issued with a PASMA identity card and certificate which is accepted and recognised by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and is valid for a period of five years.

We also offer our own recognised versions of these courses.



**Wear a full body harness
with a short lanyard
in boom type platforms**

To find out more about the correct use of harnesses in boom type platforms and the wide range of training courses offered by AFI call:

08707 871511

or email: training@afi-uplift.co.uk



BIRMINGHAM ...
Tel: 0121 525 7226

EAST MIDLANDS ...
Tel: 01332 870 113

HULL ...
Tel: 01482 341 799

LIVERPOOL ...
Tel: 0151 545 2190

LONDON EAST ...
Tel: 01277 812 976

LONDON SOUTH ...
Tel: 01732 781 034

LONDON WEST ...
Tel: 01753 783 744

MANCHESTER ...
Tel: 0161 707 7895

MILTON KEYNES ...
Tel: 01908 670 237

NORTH EAST ...
Tel: 0191 442 1503

PETERBOROUGH ...
Tel: 01733 206 638

PRESTON ...
Opening Spring 2008

SCOTLAND ...
Tel: 01698 844 655

SOUTHAMPTON ...
Tel: 08701 126 833

SOUTH WEST ...
Tel: 01278 446 580

SOUTH WALES ...
Tel: 01656 767 456

WAKEFIELD ...
Tel: 01924 383 833