



Contractors Mechanical Plant Engineers

NATIONAL NEWSLETTER

New Year Message

A "new year" is a powerful occasion: It's a time when we reflect on our gratitude for the past and our hopes for the future. It's a chance to welcome a fresh start, to reinvigorate our enthusiasm for chasing goals and dreams. With so much pressure on at the moment, it can be hard to come up with just the right words to express new year wishes for friends, family, and cherished co-workers. 2020 is now behind us but the pandemic of Covid-19 is now worse than any of us could have imagined.

2021 is a "new year" - A "new beginning" - Covid-19 Vaccinations have started - Eventually things will and must change.

CMPE wishes you all an unprecedented, essential, socially-distanced, extraordinary, **happy & healthy New Year !**

Christmas Quiz



Our Christmas Quiz was won by Mrs Grace Robinson of Preston & Fylde Branch.

Grace elected for a £25 Marks & Spencer E-Voucher and was extremely surprised to be the winner. She asked for her thanks to be conveyed to all for this little bit of fun which cheered her up immensely.

Obituary

Ken B Handley - Recently **Staffs & Midlands Branch** reported the sad news that Coronavirus had taken the life of Ken Handley. A “Black Country” man, Ken was an active committee member of Staffs & Midlands Branch. Ever present at branch functions and a keen supporter of the “Midlander” magazine, advertising in all 72 issues.

Norman Leatherbarrow - A long serving member of **North West Branch** passed away just prior to Christmas. Norman, 92 years of age, was the very first recipient of the CMPE CoC Card.

Edward Foreshaw - Recently passed away. Ted was the last Chairman of **North West Branch** before the branch disbanded.

Jenny O'Connor - Wife of Les O'Connor formerly of **North West Branch** recently passed away. Jenny and Les were often seen at functions in and around the area.

Our condolences to all the families at these sad times.



Covid-19 Level 5 Restrictions

England is going into lockdown to try to prevent the NHS from becoming overwhelmed by a surge in coronavirus cases.

Primary and secondary schools will close to almost all pupils, and people will be instructed to stay at home.

Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales are also under lockdown, with schools in Scotland closed until at least the end of January.

What are England's new rules?

England

People in England will have to stay at home and only go out for essential reasons. Primary and secondary schools will move to online learning for all pupils apart from vulnerable and key-worker children.

Reasons to leave home include:

- Work or volunteering where it is "unreasonable" to work from home. This includes work in someone else's home, such as that carried out by social workers, nannies, cleaners and tradespeople
- Education, training, childcare and medical appointments and emergencies
- Exercise outdoors (limited to once a day). This includes meeting one other person from another household in an open public space to exercise
- Shopping for essentials such as food and medicine
- Communal religious worship
- Meeting your support or childcare bubble. Children can also move between separated parents
- Activities related to moving house
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Those who are clinically extremely vulnerable will be advised to limit the time they spend outside the home. They should only go out for medical appointments, for exercise, or if it is otherwise essential, the government says, and not for work or education purposes.

International travel, or travel around the UK is only permitted for essential reasons.

Hospitality businesses such as pubs and restaurants and non-essential shops must close, as must indoor and outdoor sports facilities including gyms and tennis courts.

Essential businesses and services can stay open to the public. These include:

- Supermarkets, food shops, pharmacies and garden centres
- Places of worship
- Petrol stations and MOT services
- Laundrettes
- Banks and post offices
- Doctors and dentists' surgeries and vets
- Car parks, public toilets and playgrounds

What are the restrictions in Scotland?

Scotland has its own restriction levels - from zero to four.

On Boxing Day, mainland Scotland went into a level four restrictions, while Orkney, Shetland, the Western Isles and other island communities are in level three.

From midnight on 4 January, the mainland will move to "enhanced level four restrictions" until at least the end of the month. During this time, schools will be closed to almost all pupils, First Minister Nicola Sturgeon says. The islands will stay in tier three.

Enhanced Level 4 Rules

From midnight on 4 January, all of mainland Scotland is under enhanced level four, or lockdown:

- Nursery, primary and secondary schools will close to all but vulnerable pupils and the children of key workers until February. Learning will move online
- People should only leave home for essential reasons such as caring responsibilities, essential shopping, exercise or seeing their extended household
- Those who are shielding should not go into work, even if they cannot work from home
- A maximum of two people from up to two households can meet outdoors (under-11s are not included in the limit and can play together outside)
- Places of worship will close except for weddings (up to five people) and funeral services (up to 20 people). Wakes are not allowed.
- The definition of an essential business will be tightened with premises such as ski centres, large retail showrooms, and cosmetic clinics required to close

Level four rules

Indoors:

- No household mixing
- Exceptions include providing care to a "vulnerable person", or "extended households" to reduce loneliness
- Children can move between homes of separated parents

Outdoors:

- Up to two households - no more than six adults - can meet in a private garden or a public place like a park
- Children under 12 are not counted and don't need to social distance
- Young people aged 12 to 17 can meet in groups of up to six outdoors - they're not subject to the two-household limit, but need to be physically distanced

Pubs, cafes & holiday accommodation:

- Restaurants, cafes, pubs and bars must close - but takeaways can operate as normal
- Holiday accommodation must close - but hotels, B&Bs and self-catering can open for essential customers (such as people staying for work)
- Hotels and other accommodation providers can serve food up to 10pm to guests

Supermarkets, clothes shops & markets:

- Only essential shops can open, and must follow Covid-safe guidelines.
- Homeware stores and garden centres must close
- Click and collect, online services can open
- Hairdressers, nail salons and other close contact services must close

Sport, leisure & entertainment:

- Indoor sports facilities, including gyms, must close
- You can meet others outdoors for informal exercise or sport - outdoor gyms can remain open
- Outdoor non-contact sports are permitted
- Leisure and entertainment premises, including cinemas, must close
- Film and TV production can continue
- Public buildings, such as libraries, must close - but libraries can operate click and collect

Places of worship:

- Places of worship can open with social distancing and a maximum 20 people
- Wedding ceremonies and civil partnerships, are allowed with social distancing and a maximum 20 people
- Wedding receptions are not allowed
- Funerals and wakes can take place with a maximum of 20 guests

Education:

- Schools, colleges and universities can remain open
- Early learning and childcare can remain open
- Informal childcare is only allowed for parents or guardians employed in essential services



Industry News

Industry leaders add security to cards scheme.

Any card carrying the Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) logo will soon have to have an embedded smart chip to protect the integrity of the system.



CSCS cards are not a legal requirement but are accepted as an industry-standard requirement for all workers on most major construction sites.

There are various bodies that issue different trade-specific CSCS cards and most are already at some stage of integrating smart technology into their cards to improve security and efficiency.

The Construction Leadership Council (CLC) has updated its Industry Card Schemes Recommendation, which requires the use of cards carrying the CSCS logo, to increase the uptake of smart technology.

The Construction Leadership Council has set a deadline of 31st March 2022 for all card schemes to have smart technology. They must have the capability to electronically check agreed information relevant to a cardholder, using a common interface, without the need to manually enter data, the CLC says.

CLC task force member Mark Reynolds said: “The CLC is keen to see technology used across the industry to enable everyone to access and use the information we hold to make better decisions.”

Mark Reynolds also said: “The need to validate and verify the training, qualification, skills and competence of construction workers has been brought into sharp focus since the Grenfell Tower fire,” suggesting that somehow the Grenfell Tower fire was the fault of the low-grade construction workers who put the cladding up, and not the bosses, the architects, the clients, the designers, the manufacturers, the marketing people, the building standards officers and all the others that are the subjects of the official inquiry – the people that specified, made, sold, approved and sanctioned the use of inappropriate materials – none of whom are required to have CSCS cards.

Although the Construction Leadership Council is run by the government's Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy, a spokesman clarified that the CLC was here addressing the issue of CSCS cards on behalf of the construction industry and not on behalf of the government. The government still has no formal position on the qualifications required to work on construction sites.

PAL cards move to virtual wallets.



Following on from December's news that construction skills card must all be smart cards by March 2022, the International Powered Access Federation (IPAF) is already well ahead of the game.

IPAF administers and accredits the PAL (Powered Access License, but not actually a license) card scheme, used as proof of competence for operators of mobile elevating work platforms (MEWPs).

From April 2021, IPAF's PAL cards will be available as a smart phone application rather than a physical card.

Replacing the established credit-card-style physical PAL cards, ePAL credentials will be delivered and stored on operators' mobile devices in a digital wallet, in much the same way that people store loyalty cards, boarding cards and tickets on their phones.

Since inception, IPAF has issued more than two million PAL cards worldwide, of which more than 800,000 are currently valid. Introducing ePAL creates a digital platform to manage current data and operator's training qualifications, as well as preventing license misuse which is an ongoing challenge for rental companies and contractors, IPAF said.

The technology has been developed by Trackunit, a Danish specialist in fleet management systems for connecting machines and operators.

In addition to enabling evidence of correct and in-date training associated with powered access equipment use, planned future updates to ePAL will support users to maintain a machine use log. Trackunit and IPAF are considering ways in which this process could be automated to create vendor-neutral capabilities in later versions of ePAL.

Trackunit chief executive Soeren Brogaard said: “Working with IPAF, we have created ePAL as an easy to use and update mobile app which fits better with the lifestyles of today’s tech savvy license holders. The platform developed to support ePAL offers the capability for open, industry-wide collaboration and data sharing – over time we expect to see benefits from enriching machine data with human data added by operators and other users.”

IPAF chief executive Peter Douglas said: “Our number one priority is to increase the effectiveness of our operator safety training capabilities – ePAL is a major step forward. Importantly, IPAF members include manufacturers of around 85% of powered access equipment on the market. By working with Trackunit, we have met the need for the new development to be vendor-neutral from the ground up, giving access to industry organisations to expand its capabilities as the system grows.”



Versatile Equipment replaces Bobcat of London.



Kent-based Versatile Equipment is the new Bobcat dealer for Greater London, Essex, West Sussex, East Sussex, Kent and Surrey.

From 1st January 2021 Versatile Equipment replaces Bobcat of London as the Bobcat dealer in these counties, which according to Bobcat account for around 20% of the total value of machinery sales in construction and related markets in the UK.

Ewen Gilchrist, network development manager at Doosan Bobcat EMEA, said: “Versatile Equipment is well established and offers a knowledge of the compact equipment and telehandler market that is second to none and is matched by a strong familiarity with the expanding Bobcat product range and an outstanding parts and service back-up for new and existing customers in the area.”

Versatile Equipment sales and marketing director Lee Chater said: “We have expanded our HQ on the Hornet Business Estate in Borough Green, with new customer reception, showroom, parts and service, warehouse, administration and sales departments for our Bobcat customers. We are also recruiting additional staff to expand our salesforce and customer support teams. We have made similar improvements at our East Grinstead location to provide an increased service for local customers in this part of our new territory.”

Bobcat of London had been the dealer for more than 10 years. It was formed in 2008 as a branch of Bobcat of New York.



Domis Construction buys battery-powered telehandler.



Manchester-based Domis Construction has become the first company in the northwest to put an order in for JCB’s new battery-powered telehandler.

Domis Construction already has 12 JCB Loadall telehandlers but was attracted by the ability of the 525-60E to work indoors without emissions.

The new electric machine is expected to arrive by March 2021.

Managing director Lee McCarren said: “As soon as we saw the significant benefits this electric JCB machine could bring to our operations we wanted to secure the first in the region. In the type of high-rise, city centre buildings we typically develop there is significant work underground in basements and in car parks.

“Traditionally we would need to fit expensive carbon filters onto our machines in order to operate safely in those areas. Now we have a high performance, low emissions and ultra-quiet machine that is perfect for our inner city operations. “

As previously reported, the JCB Loadall 525-60E is a direct equivalent of the existing diesel-powered 525-60 model. The new version has two electric motors – one for driveline, the other for lifting operations – powered by a 96-volt lithium-ion battery. Both versions – diesel or electric – can lift a 2,000kg load to six metres height (or 2,500kg maximum capacity on retracted boom).



First HS2 tunnel boring machines arrive on site.

The first two tunnel boring machines (TBMs) for the HS2 project have now arrived in the UK, ready to start work.



The TBMs have been made by Herrenknecht in southwest Germany. At 2,000 tonnes and 170 metres long, they were transported to the UK in more than 300 separate shipments over the course of two months.

The parts are now at the Chiltern tunnel southern portal site in west London ready to be reassembled, tested and commissioned.

The two machines – named Florence and Cecilia – will be digging the two bores of the 10-mile-long Chiltern tunnel. This is the longest tunnel on the HS2 project and the first to start construction. The TBMS are expected to take three years to complete their journeys through the mix of chalk and flint, progressing at an average of 15 metres a day.

Each tunnel will require 56,000 segments – which will all be made on site. A crew of 17 people will operate each TBM, working in shifts to keep the machines running 24/7. They will be supported by over 100 people on the surface, managing the logistics.

These first two TBMs will be operated by HS2 central section contractor, Align – a joint venture of Bouygues Travaux Publics, Sir Robert McAlpine, and VolkerFitzpatrick.

Align project director Daniel Altier said: “Now that the parts have arrived the detailed job of assembling and commissioning the machines has begun. There are also considerable other activities continuing on our site to prepare for the launch of Florence and Cecilia next year. This includes the construction of a factory that will manufacture the concrete segments to be used to line the tunnel and a slurry treatment plant that will process material from the tunnels.”

HS2 Ltd chief executive Mark Thurston said: “The launch of our first tunnelling machines will be a defining moment in the history of HS2 – and our work to deliver a high speed railway that will offer a low-carbon alternative for journeys across the UK.

“Construction is now well underway, with more than 13,000 jobs supported by the project, both directly and in our UK-wide supply chain. The arrival of Florence and Cecilia is a major step forward and our expert team will now work to assemble, test and commission them before their launch next year.”



Tarmac call for law change to protect roadworkers.

Company wants highways workers to get same level of protection against abuse as emergency workers.



IT may be the season of goodwill, but festive cheer, it seems, does not extend to UK roads, as one in three British drivers admits to speeding through roadworks, risking the safety of highways workers.

New research commissioned by Tarmac reveals that drivers aged 18–24 confess to being the biggest speeders through roadworks with 41% admitting they do.

For those at the wheel in Yorkshire and Humberside, London and the West Midlands, it does not matter whether they have just passed tests or have been driving for decades, as motorists in these regions are the worst offenders for speeding through temporary roadworks.

Despite highways workers delivering essential maintenance of roads, often at night, only 42% of Brits consider them to be key workers. Significantly, motorists did not appreciate the level of vital roadworks that take place overnight.

Half of all motorists polled believe drivers today are less considerate towards those repairing and maintaining roads than they were 10 years ago.

The research comes at a time when rates of abuse by members of the public towards highways workers are alarmingly high. More than 750 cases of aggression or verbal abuse – equivalent to one every other day – and more than 150 threats of violence or actual attacks with a weapon – equivalent to almost one a week – have occurred since 2017, and such incidents are on the rise.

Despite these alarming industry statistics, 83% of drivers say they have never seen an altercation between a roadworker and a member of the public.

Tarmac are now calling on the Government to change the law to ensure highways workers are afforded the same level of protection against abuse as emergency workers.

Rachel Heaps, who is leading Tarmac's support for Stamp it Out, an industry taskforce collaborating to protect employees from roadworker abuse, said: "Our research reflects a long-term and underlying lack of respect for highways workers who help to keep Britain moving with a significant amount of activity taking place at night.

"Abuse and reckless driving is going unnoticed and it's a case of out of sight and out of mind. Everyone should feel safe at work and it's only right that we do everything to support the physical and mental well-being of highway teams who work round the clock to build and maintain our roads.

"2020 has rightly been a celebration of many other key workers' contributions to society and we must also recognise the outstanding efforts of the UK's unsung highways workers. While there might be less traffic this Christmas, we'd like to call on motorists to take extra care through roadworks as well as always being respectful to the workforce."

Stamp it Out is aiming to provide greater protection for people working on the UK's road network by raising awareness of the risks of entering roadworks and clamping down on abuse by making it a specific criminal offence to assault highways workers.

To change the law and ensure highways workers are afforded the same level of protection against abuse as other key workers, visit: <https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/548480>



Construction organisations welcome Brexit trade deal.

There has been a broad welcome from the construction industry that 2021 began with the UK having secured some sort of trading agreement with the European Union, its largest trade partner.



The UK and the European Union have agreed a wide-ranging free trade agreement, avoiding the risks associated with a no-deal and delivering continuity in cost and availability of construction products and materials.

The deal will mean market access across the English Channel, with no tariffs, quotas or customs duties.

The UK and the EU have also agreed trusted trader schemes and co-operation in customs at the border, to explore exchange of import and export information and aide 'roll-on roll-off' flow at ports – reducing administrative burdens on business and possible delays. Mutual agreement was also made in the collection of VAT and debt recovery, building on existing international agreements while recognising the UK as a tax-sovereign nation, able to set and control its own tax regime.

James Butcher, head of policy at the National Federation of Builders and chair of the Construction Leadership Council's Brexit working group, said: "The UK and EU's announcement of a trade deal will come as welcome relief, not just to the construction industry but to the global economy. The agreements reached will enable construction companies to continue to reliably forecast the cost and availability of products and materials imported from the EU or comprising components made in the EU. The mutual co-operation in respect of reducing technical trade barriers and co-operation at the border will also undoubtedly help to avoid some of the risks of delay and disruption. What this means is that in January we will not see the inflationary shock of tariff and quota introductions or the expected currency depreciation associated with a no-deal. This deal delivers certainty at a time when it is needed most and represents a good day for British construction."

The Builders Merchants Federation (BMF) also welcomed the deal being reached saying that it provided the construction sector with much needed reassurance regarding the cost and availability of building products and materials.

BMF chief executive John Newcomb, who also co-chairs the Construction Leadership Council’s movement of goods and materials working group said “While we still have to study the detail, the conclusion of a trade deal should avoid unnecessary tariffs on building products and materials moving between the EU and the UK and the price rises that would inevitably follow. This has always been our favoured outcome. Every day of uncertainty made it harder for our members to plan and those who trade with the EU will be relieved that they will not have to deal with a host of additional procedures as well as additional costs.

“Builders and other local tradespeople continued to work to improve people’s home throughout the pandemic and are set to play a key role in the UK’s post-Covid economic recovery. We now have the assurance of the continued free flow of materials needed to fulfil the government’s promise to build back better, improve the energy efficiency of our homes and create the many thousands of jobs required to do so.

“However, we remain concerned over the capacity problems at UK container ports, which in recent weeks have demonstrated how quickly shortages and consequential price increases can occur. We are continuing to press for action to resolve these issues as soon as possible, so the construction industry’s new year return to work is not slowed by the lack of key products.”

Federation of Master Builders chief executive Brian Berry said: “After the toughest of years, Britain’s builders will welcome the certainty that this deal appears to offer. Unfortunately, however, the deal will have come too late for many already feeling the effects of prolonged indecision.”

He concluded: “Nine in 10 builders already face rising costs due to supply chain disruptions and higher product demand. We will wait to digest the detail, but this trade deal must deliver for builders by removing the barriers in their path to building back better and greener, be those access to products or skilled labour.”



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