



Contractors Mechanical Plant Engineers

NATIONAL NEWSLETTER



CMPE NEWS

Announcement:-

Members,

It now looks like CMPE is slowly getting back to being active, at least at National level, as the long awaited National Council meeting is scheduled to take place on Saturday 9th October 2021 at the Premier Inn, Trentham Gardens, Stoke-on-Trent.

There is a lot to talk about and some serious items have to be decided upon. In the meantime the National Officers have been quite busy during this pandemic lockdown period making sure all the necessary parts of our association were still running as smooth as possible. It can't have been easy whilst meetings were suspended at National and Branch level as most decisions had to be made by telephone. A full update will be given at the National Council meeting and conveyed back to the branches via your branch representative to National Council.

Editors Note:-

This first part of the newsletter is always reserved for any branch or member who wishes to contribute an article for circulation. So now the branches are starting to become active once again this space is reserved for you, be it just the advance notice of a branch meeting, what you did at your last meeting, or something you wish other members to know, this is where you can have your say. Just send your written article to the editor and we will do the rest.



MEMBERS COLUMN

The shortage of HGV drivers.

Reading about the crisis of empty supermarket shelves and closed filling stations I thought about my own driving career.

I passed my motorcycle test aged sixteen and car test at seventeen, since then I've owned and driven many different bikes and vehicles. Driven, like most plant people, Land Rovers, eight wheel tippers, box vans, artics and low loaders, double and single decker buses etc. Then came the requirement for an HGV licence. You could claim, under "grandfather rights" an HGV licence. At this time I was working for Mitchell Construction and applications were handled by the transport office. You were asked to provide details of when and what you were driving and all log books and log sheets were kept at that office. I was told that an HGV licence would be no problem, I was working on a site in Hertfordshire and a licence never happened. I wasn't too bothered as I never wanted to drive Lorries for a living.

Over many years we have all become used to the ever changing rules of the transport world. Drivers' hours, daily rest, weekly rest, night out money, lorry loader certificates, and vehicle maintenance and inspection. As a plant manager just trying to get equipment on site this is a nightmare. As a company we had contracted the inspections to the FTA and we received a first class service. The local FTA Engineer kept us in line and any repairs would be dealt with immediately. I remember a visit from the traffic officer when after checking the inspection and maintenance sheets and not picking up any problems he decided that I needed a wall-chart. I said that with one artic tractor and two trailers and a 7.5 tonne drop-side I didn't need a wall-chart. After a very heated discussion he left. I never bought a wall-chart!

The company had applied for an "Investors in People" award and I was interviewed by the assessor, she appeared to be surprised that I knew the people who worked for me and that I spoke to all of them on a daily basis. She suggested that I should occasionally check the actual work. I decided to spend a day with Dennis my HGV driver. Dennis had been with me for about 10 years and was used to the company's way of working. My only rule that he be on site for 8.00am. The destination would be on the delivery note and the route would be his choice.

We had a contract at Guys Hospital in London and for the first time a timed delivery slot. I met Dennis at the Plant Yard at some unearthly hour and off we set. We got to the A1 and we stopped, Dennis got out, checked the straps and lights and we continued on our way. The steady 56mph seemed to be so slow. We got to the outskirts and chaos reigned. No signals, cars and vans turning across us, stopping on the red lanes, but worse was to come.

Nearer to Guys, cyclists were everywhere, we moved over to the right preparing to make a left turn, I looked down and there were two cars alongside us and a cyclist hanging on to the trailer. Luckily Dennis had seen them and was waiting for them to get clear before completing the turn, this continued for the rest of the trip and on the way back to Peterborough. Talking to Dennis later, he said that it was just another driving day!

Today, with multi-drop timed delivery, it must be a real problem. Making the HGV driving test easier isn't the answer, nor temporary visas for foreign drivers. I cannot pretend to know the answer but I wouldn't be an HGV driver for anything.

Bob Nugent

Past National Chairman and Mid Shires Branch National Council Representative.

INDUSTRY NEWS

Akela expands into England.

Glasgow based civil engineering contractor Akela Group is opening its first English office.



Akela has set up a north of England base at Moorfield Business Park in Leeds as the first step of a UK-wide expansion plan.

Akela Group, founded in 2003, currently operates only in Scotland. It has 300 employees and in the year to August 2020 turned over £28m (down from £38m the previous year).

The Leeds team is led by construction manager Martin Leahy, who has joined from Roberston Group and has previously worked for Laing O'Rourke and Kier in Leeds.

Group company Akela Ground Engineering has completed its first contract in the region – in Knaresborough – and is now tendering for a variety of new housing and commercial build contracts throughout Yorkshire.

Akela Group managing director Mark Markey said: “We are seeing increased levels of demand for the wide range of ground engineering and civil engineering services, particularly in the north of England and we are well placed to meet that growing demand. The opening of the Leeds hub presents an excellent growth opportunity for the Akela Group and it will bring an abundance of employment opportunities and economic benefits to the region and beyond.”



Robinson first with Hyundai's slimmed 20-tonner.

Darlington-based contractor CG Robinson has taken delivery of the first Hyundai HX210A crawler excavator in the UK.



The HX210A is the new 20-tonne excavator from Hyundai Construction Equipment Europe.

It is a slimmed-down version of the HX220A, with the upper structure's overall width reduced by 240mm. There is also a 40mm reduction in the rear overhang, which adds to stability and helps for working on confined construction sites or alongside roads.

Hyundai says the HX210A is not so much a replacement for the HX220A but rather an alternative option aimed at the general hire market.

The first HX220A in the UK has been sold by dealer Taylor & Braithwaite to CG Robinson, a 30-year family business based in Darlington offering plant hire, agricultural and grounds maintenance, among other services.

CG Robinson runs a mixed fleet of excavators, which already includes a number of Hyundai machines in the popular eight- and 14-tonne categories.

Its new HX210A is currently working on hire to a large residential development in Stockton on Tees. The 20-tonner was drafted in to move a large volume of stockpiled soil, which had not been sealed and was therefore very wet and heavy.

“It had its work cut out and it did so without complaint,” says operator Ray Wallace.



Taylor & Braithwaite managing director Ian Burton explains some of the benefits of the HX210A, aside from its size. “Where the HX220A is powered by a Cummins B6.7 engine at Stage 5, the HX210A has a B4.5 unit, also meeting Stage V regulations. The smaller engine carries Cummins’ innovative all-in-one exhaust after-treatment package which reduces emissions but also reduces maintenance time and costs. The smaller engine also does away with the requirement for EGR [exhaust gas recirculation]. Again, this offers a cost-saving when it comes to maintenance, increases fuel economy and also increases service intervals.”

Reduced fuel consumption is aided by a new electronic pump fuel control (EPFC) system, which improves the fine control of the excavator and also allows the operator to tailor the machine for the job being undertaken. The full colour monitor in the cab will show the operator real-time and average fuel consumption figures, allowing him or her to alter their operating style to achieve the best fuel figures. Hyundai claims the smaller engine can reduce daily fuel burn figures by up to 24% over the six-cylinder HX220X model without EPFC.

Ian Burton says: “The HX210A is an ideal solution for those wanting a more fuel-efficient and lower-cost excavator and as a hire market machine, Hyundai has hit the spot. It’s a tough machine that can do exactly what someone will buy it for, move earth, and it will do it very well indeed.”



Takeuchi offers Engcon Ready option

Japanese excavator manufacturer Takeuchi has begun collaborating with Swedish quick-hitch and tiltrotator manufacturer Engcon to offer factory-installed and integrated solutions.



Takeuchi has introduced an 'Engcon Ready' option for its 10-tonne TB295W excavator as a first step in the collaboration.

The Engcon Ready option has the components of the Engcon control system fully integrated as a part of the machine, enabling plug and play installations and so reducing installation times for Engcon products.

"The only thing missing when the machine reaches the dealer's workshop is an Engcon machine hitch and a tiltrotator for the configuration to be complete", said Fredrik Eklind, product manager at Engcon Control Systems.

The TB295W is delivered with Takeuchi-labelled Engcon handles, machine-adapted cable gland and a hydraulic locking solution that is adapted for Engcon's automatic machine hitches that connect tools, hydraulics and electronics without the driver having to leave the cab.



Raw graphene being trialled on the A1.

A new way of using graphene in road surfacing is being trialled by National Highways.



Graphene-enhanced asphalt will be laid this month on a three-mile stretch of the A1 in Northumberland to see if the wonder material makes the surface last longer.

National Highways is claiming the application as ‘a world first’. It is and isn’t. Gipave graphene-enhanced asphalt has been used several times over the past three years, including trials in Oxfordshire and Kent, as well as numerous sites in Italy, where it is made.

Gipave is a polymeric supermodifier containing graphene and a selected type of hard plastic. It takes the form of pellets, which are added to surfacing in hot mix asphalt plants then transported to sites.

National Highways is not using Gipave in Northumberland. It is adding ‘raw’ graphene directly to a recycled asphalt mix on site in a single pass operation at the time of recycling to improve the end product of the recycled material.

The novel resurfacing will take place along three miles of the northbound carriageway between Newton on the Moor and West Cawledge, south of Alnwick, from Sunday 19th September to Monday 1st November 2021.

The trials are being conducted with the Graphene Engineering Innovation Centre (GEIC) at the University of Manchester and Pavement Testing Services (PTS).

National Highways asset needs manager Graeme Watt said: “Laboratory trials have been a success and the on-site trials in Northumberland will be a world first use of graphene in road production, which enforces our commitment to innovation and helps to push the industry towards more carbon-friendly maintenance with longer-lasting solutions which we all benefit from.

“Graphene’s benefits are industry-changing. It’s stronger than steel and adding it to other materials can turn them into super materials. From what we’ve seen so far, it could make some of our assets last significantly longer.”



Winvic opens Mercia Park training centre.

Winvic Construction has opened a training centre on one of its biggest live sites.



The Future of Construction training centre is at Mercia Park in Leicestershire, courtesy of Winvic’s client IM Properties, which owns the site.

The training centre comprises an onsite construction training facility with outdoor space, which is not only available for Winvic and its subcontractors but also for colleges, universities and specialist training providers.

Developer IM Properties has provided the land at its Mercia Park site while Winvic has funded the on-site training centre as part of its social value commitments.

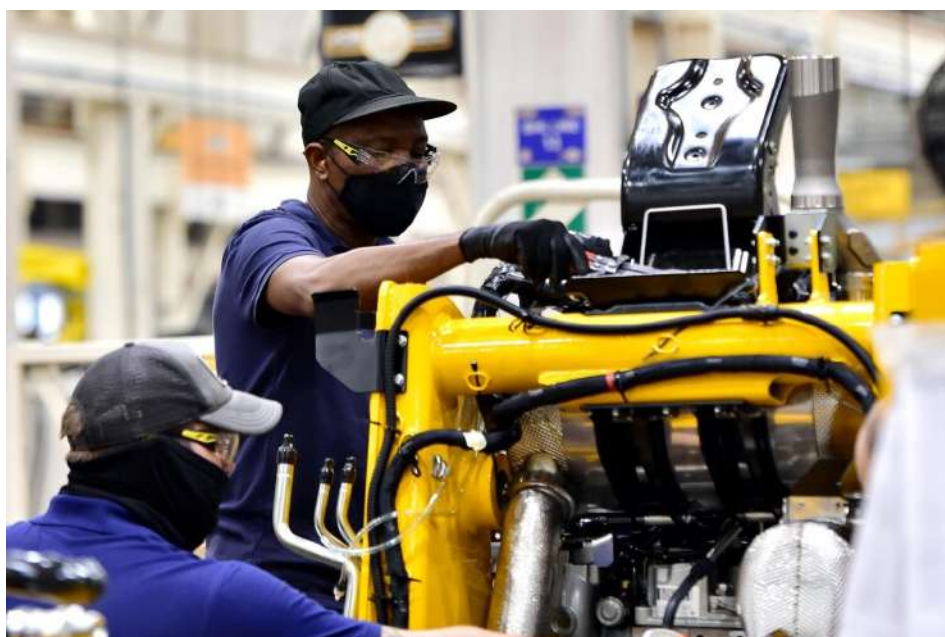
The first course, on traffic management, led to jobs for all seven participants.

Kerry Amory, IM Properties’ social value manager, said: “We know the difference a bespoke facility will make, having witnessed the positive results on our other Leicestershire scheme, Hinckley Park. We’ve drawn on our experience from Hinckley to enhance the employment and skills opportunities at Mercia, which is crucial to us as a business and industry and integral to the delivery of Mercia Park.”

Winvic delivered the enabling civils and infrastructure works for the 238-acre employment park and is now constructing a 2.94 million sq ft logistics centre for Jaguar Land Rover and 550,000 sq ft facility for transport and logistics company DSV.

JCB creates 100 jobs to meet soaring demand.

JCB has begun the recruitment of 100 welders for its Staffordshire factories to cope with soaring demand for its products, which are mostly sold out until next year.



The new permanent jobs will be at JCB's world headquarters and its plants in Cheadle and Uttoxeter.

This month, JCB will also take on an additional 15 new recruits on to its fabrication and welding apprenticeship. In the past three years, almost 70 welding apprentices have passed their courses and all gained permanent JCB jobs.

JCB said that demand for its machines has reached historic highs with most products now sold out until next year. The new recruitment drive comes in a year when JCB has recruited 1,350 new shop floor employees and handed permanent JCB contracts to 1,000 agency employees.

JCB chief operating officer Mark Turner said: "Over the past five years the number of welders in the UK has shrunk, which presents businesses with a big challenge at times of high demand. JCB has been working very hard over the past few years to tackle this shortage and attract new entrants to this highly-skilled job with its apprenticeship and training programmes, which have been very successful. We are delighted to be building on that success with the creation of 100 permanent new welders' jobs. We offer some of the best conditions and pay rates in the region and with opportunities for nightshift work and overtime, this is great news for welders in the area looking to join a successful global company."

Terex Trucks rebrand as Rokbak.

Rokbak revealed as new name for Terex Trucks in company's vision for exciting new future.



ARTICULATED hauler specialists Terex Trucks have rebranded as Rokbak and announced their 'vision for an exciting new future'. The Scottish manufacturer unveiled the new brand at a digital launch event on 1 September, attended by dealers, customers, media, and Volvo Group colleagues from around the world.

Throughout the last four decades, the company says it has never wavered in its promise to customers to deliver powerful and reliable articulated haulers – and that legacy remains front and centre within the new brand.

At the same time, the launch of the Rokbak name is said to represent an exciting new future and reflects the significant advances the organisation has made in recent years as well as its new strategic priorities.

'Our company has an incredible history and a proud heritage,' said managing director Paul Douglas. 'Seven years ago, we became a member of the Volvo Group, which allowed us to make major improvements in every part of our business.'

‘Millions of pounds have been invested in improving our products, modernising our facilities, expanding our network, and developing our people. It has been a process of continual evolution.

‘That’s why we feel it’s right to recognize this evolution with a new brand name to launch an exciting new chapter in our history. And we’ll keep investing to further improve our machines for our customers.’

Rokbak say the significant investments and improvements in the company’s articulated haulers in recent times have ensured they remain among the most robust and reliable machines around.

Now, with their foundation in the predecessor models from Terex Trucks, the 28-tonne payload RA30 and 38-tonne payload RA40 from Rokbak are said to be the most productive and efficient articulated haulers the company has ever made.

Delivering better fuel economy, lower emissions, improved safety, and greater durability, the machines also now come in Rokbak colours and livery.

‘We’re very excited to reveal our new brand, and of course our haulers are the shop window,’ continued Mr Douglas. ‘Rokbak stands for power, performance and reliability. We already have a very healthy order book for the new brand, and we want to further expand our reputation, dealer network and market share.

‘We’re still the same skilled, experienced, and passionate team, committed to making rock-solid haulers every day, but we also have a clear vision for where we want to go and who we want to be.’

As part of the Volvo Group, Rokbak have experienced steady evolution over the past seven years. While this has taken place across the board, they say it is particularly prominent in four key areas: product design, sustainability, safety, and people.

In product design, the company has introduced Stage V engines for better fuel efficiency and operation for customers. Other improvements include a new transmission on the 28-tonne machine, the introduction of Haul Track telematics, and a stronger focus on operator well-being and safety.

In terms of sustainability, the company’s manufacturing plant has shifted to 100% renewable energy and is operating within Science-Based Targets and ISO standards, as well as targeting CO2 emission reductions.

The focus on safety has been emphasised in all areas, but particularly on its employees. Changes in processes at the factory have seen a stronger concentration on maintaining employee safety while simultaneously delivering high standards and low downtime.

For the company's people at the heart of Rokbak, there is a continual focus on professional development, keeping the team at the forefront of skills and expertise. Similarly, dealer operating standards and training ensure the expanded dealer network continues to deliver the highest levels of service.

'We are proud and excited to have the modernised Rokbak brand continue as a fundamental part of our organisation,' said Melker Jernberg, president of Volvo Construction Equipment and executive vice-president of Volvo Group.

'We believe in a sustainable future, innovation, and the power of our people, and we see that all encapsulated in Rokbak. At the same time, the company has its own personality, heritage, and loyal customer base and it will be exciting to see the brand evolve further as it sets out on this new stage of its journey.'

Rokbak-branded RA30 and RA40 haulers are available in Europe and North America from today and will be available in Asia and Oceania from October.

CONTRACTS AWARDED

VolkerStevin to build £31m Wear footbridge.

VolkerStevin has won a contract to build a 'smart' footbridge over the River Wear for Sunderland City Council.



The £31m pedestrian and cyclist crossing will connect the former Vaux Brewery site to Sheepfolds, providing improved links to the Stadium of Light, the two University of Sunderland campuses in the city centre, and residential areas to the north of the river.

It will feature creative lighting and augmented reality, enabling users to access virtual displays on their smart phones.

Councillor Graeme Miller, leader of Sunderland City Council, said: “This street bridge represents a hugely significant piece of infrastructure that will bring together both sides of the river, something that is critical to our vision of creating a vibrant mixed-use community spanning the north and south of the Wear.

“However, we’re determined to create a bridge that brings to life the ambition of the city, so integrating light, smart technology and excellent design will make this a really experience-led crossing, that will deliver a visual treat for people using it.

“The city was named Smart City 2020, so it is apt that we integrate this into our developments to enrich our spaces and create a place that is future-focused and dynamic. That is exactly what this bridge will be.”

There are two main stages of work, the first involving a detailed rehearsal of the build process. Construction of the bridge will start in summer 2022, with completion expected in summer 2024.

VolkerStevin managing director Jonathan Suckling said: “We have assembled a great team of designers and supply chain who will help us deliver this significant project and further build on our legacy of delivering major infrastructure schemes in the North East – which include other iconic bridges, such as the Gateshead Millennium Bridge and Northumbria University’s Intersite Bridge.”

Wear Bridge was one of the first contracts to be procured through the new NEPO civil engineering and infrastructure framework.

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Contractors shortlisted for £1.9bn Lower Thames Crossing approach roads.

National Highways has shortlisted five companies shortlisted for £1.9bn of work to design and build roads north and south of the River Thames on the proposed Lower Thames Crossing.

Kier Eiffage JV is the only bidder to be shortlisted for both contracts.

The successful bidders will design and build a total of 14.3 miles of new roads that will connect the longest road tunnel in the UK to the strategic road network, assuming the project is given the green light – which remains uncertain.



Above: CGI of the Kent side approach roads to the proposed Lower Thames Crossing

The following construction and engineering companies will be invited to tender:

Kent Roads (Lot 1)

- BFV JV (BAM Nuttall, Ferrovial Construction (UK) and Vinci Construction Grands Projets)
- Costain
- Kier Eiffage JV (Kier Highways and Eiffage Génie Civil)
- Skanska Construction UK

Roads North of the Thames (Lot 2)

- Balfour Beatty Civil Engineering
- Kier Eiffage JV

Matt Palmer, Lower Thames Crossing executive director, said: “Our roads connect us – we rely on them, and they are a critical part of our economic recovery and low-carbon future. The Lower Thames Crossing is the most ambitious road project this country has seen since the M25 was completed 35 years ago. These contracts show our commitment

to this project, which will support 22,000 jobs during its construction and provide a huge economic boost to the UK economy when it opens for traffic.

“Our challenge is to build a new crossing that not only supports the next generation of low carbon vehicles but also allows us to enhance the natural environment and leave a positive legacy for generations to come. We look forward to this next stage of the procurement process with the five shortlisted companies and hope the final bids match our aspirations.”

The tender process is for two roads contracts:

- The £600m Kent Roads contract, which is a two-stage design and build contract for the part of the route from the A2/M2 corridor to 1km south of the southern tunnel entrance, with strategic utilities and environmental interfaces.
- The £1.3bn Roads North of the Thames contract, is also a two-stage design and build contract delivering the route from 1km north of the northern tunnel entrance to Junction 29 of the M25. New link roads are required to connect the route with the M25, A13 and A1089.

Total project cost is estimated at £8bn.

In April Highways England (as it then was) shortlisted three bidders for the £2.3bn tunnels package:

- BFV Joint Venture; BAM Nuttall, Ferrovial and Vinci, supported by Atkins, Tecnica y Proyectos (TYPESA) and Stantec
- Bouygues Murphy Joint Venture (BMJV), supported by Mott McDonald and Ove Arup & Partners
- Dragados-Hochtief Joint Venture (DH JV).

US consulting engineer Jacobs has a £162.5m contract to oversee construction.



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