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ZLT CRANES FILLS ITS 60-TON LIFTING GAP

WORKING AT HEIGHTS: Raising the bar of height safety

ACCESS EQUIPMENT: Safety and versatility – benchmarks for working at heights

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GLOBAL CONFLICT - LOCAL CONSEQUENCES FOR CAPEX



As tensions escalate in the Middle East, the ripple effects are being felt far beyond the immediate region. For South Africa's capital equipment (capex) market, the implications are complex, far-reaching, and in many ways, unavoidable. While conflict may seem geographically distant, its influence on energy prices, supply chains, investor sentiment, and infrastructure planning places it squarely within the concerns of local industry stakeholders.

One of the most immediate impacts is on energy costs. The Middle East remains central to global oil supply, and any instability typically drives volatility in crude oil prices. For South African businesses - already grappling with high logistics costs and energy insecurity - this adds another layer of financial pressure.

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Rising fuel prices increase the cost of transporting heavy equipment, importing components, and operating machinery. For capex-intensive sectors such as mining, construction, and manufacturing, these increases can quickly erode margins and delay investment decisions.

Supply chains are another critical pressure point. Even before the current conflict, global logistics networks were under strain from post-pandemic disruptions and geopolitical shifts. Heightened instability in key shipping routes, particularly those linked to the Middle East, risks further delays and cost escalations. South African importers of capital equipment - many of whom rely on European and Asian suppliers - may face longer lead times and reduced availability of critical components. This uncertainty often results in postponed procurement cycles or a shift toward more conservative capital allocation.

Investor confidence is also sensitive to geopolitical risk. Global investors tend to adopt a more cautious stance during periods of heightened conflict, often redirecting capital toward safer markets or delaying large-scale investments. For South Africa, which is actively seeking to attract infrastructure and industrial investment, this presents a challenge. Reduced foreign direct investment can slow down large projects, directly impacting demand for capital equipment across sectors.

However, it is not all negative. Periods

of global disruption often accelerate structural shifts and new opportunities. For example, sustained volatility in oil markets may strengthen the case for renewable energy investment in South Africa. This, in turn, could drive demand for specialised equipment in solar, wind, and battery storage projects. Companies may increasingly prioritise localisation strategies to mitigate supply chain risks, creating opportunities for local manufacturers and service providers within the capex ecosystem.

The mining sector, a cornerstone of South Africa's economy, may also see mixed effects. On one hand, higher commodity prices can boost revenues and support investment in new equipment. On the other, operational costs linked to fuel and imported inputs may offset some of these gains. The net effect will depend on how sustained the current conflict proves to be.

The situation underscores a broader reality: South Africa's capex market does not operate in isolation. Global events, particularly those affecting energy and trade, have a direct bearing on local investment cycles.

As the situation in the Middle East continues to evolve, so too will its impact on capital investment decisions. For South Africa, the challenge lies not only in navigating the risks, but in positioning itself to capture the opportunities that inevitably arise in times of global uncertainty.

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SCANIA



ZLT FILLS ITS 60-TON LIFTING GAP

Juanita Pienaar spoke with Mark Bates and Rob Cook, Directors of ZLT Cranes, about the introduction of the ZAT600V653G all-terrain crane and its implications for the local market.



The 60-ton class occupies a critical space in the lifting industry, particularly in regions where operational flexibility and mobility are essential.

Mark Bates and Rob Cook (right),
Directors of ZLT Cranes.

Expanding the range

The launch of a new crane model is rarely just about adding another machine to a catalogue. More often, it signals a strategic response to a clearly defined market need. This is precisely the case with ZLT Cranes' introduction of the ZAT600V653G all-terrain crane - a 60-ton class machine designed to fill a notable gap in the company's offering.

Historically, Zoomlion's all-terrain crane portfolio has been weighted towards higher-capacity machines. While this has positioned the brand strongly in heavy-lifting segments, it has left a gap in the mid-range category. As Bates explains, "Zoomlion has traditionally manufactured larger capacity all-terrain cranes, so ZLT cranes didn't currently have a 60-ton capacity all-terrain crane to quote for customers who specifically wanted a 60-ton capacity all-terrain crane."



QUICK TAKE



ZLT Cranes' ZAT600V653G all-terrain crane is a 60-ton class machine designed to fill a notable gap in the company's offering.



The introduction of the ZAT600V653G represents a deliberate move to align ZLT Cranes' offering with the evolving needs of its customers.



Reliability is not just about design; it is also about the strength of the support network behind the machine.



The inclusion of internationally recognised certifications further underscores the machine's adherence to global safety standards, offering reassurance to operators and fleet owners alike.

This absence meant that, in certain applications, ZLT could only offer rough terrain alternatives - a compromise that did not always align with customer requirements. The introduction of the ZAT600V653G effectively closes this gap, enabling ZLT to present a more comprehensive solution across a broader range of lifting scenarios.

Meeting a clear market demand

The 60-ton class occupies a critical space in the lifting industry, particularly in regions where operational flexibility and mobility are essential. In Southern Africa, this demand is especially pronounced in mining and construction environments.

Cook highlights that "the demand for the 60 ton range all terrain crane is mainly in the mining sector where all wheel drive and steer is important due to on site application and safety requirements, and on construction sites where space and movability are important considerations when getting the crane into position to perform the right lift required."

These environments often present a unique combination of constraints: limited space, uneven terrain, and stringent



safety requirements. In such conditions, the ability to manoeuvre efficiently while maintaining lifting performance becomes a decisive factor.

“For ZLT cranes, we could only previously offer a Rough Terrain crane for these applications,” Cook adds. “This now allows us to offer the full range.” This shift is significant, as it gives customers access to the road mobility of an all-terrain crane without sacrificing the compactness and agility required on site.

Engineering for local conditions

Designing a crane for the South African market involves more than simply meeting global performance benchmarks. Local regulations, particularly around road transport, play a critical role in shaping engineering decisions.

One of the noticeable features of the ZAT600V653G is its compact three-axle configuration. Bates notes that “the design of a 3 axle 60-ton capacity crane that is

short on overall length is a key factor. The fact that the crane complies with the maximum allowable axle loading of 12 tons per axle was a key engineering consideration for machines using South African roads.”

This balance between size, capacity, and compliance is no small feat. By keeping axle loads within the 12-ton limit, the crane can operate more freely on public roads, reducing logistical complexity and associated costs. At the same time, the shortened overall length enhances manoeuvrability, making it well-suited to confined job sites.

Performance where it matters

While regulatory compliance and mobility are essential, performance remains the cornerstone of any crane’s value proposition. The ZAT600V653G delivers in this regard, with a telescopic boom that can extend to 48 metres with a maximum lifting height of 64,5 metres when fitted

with a jib.

These figures translate directly into operational advantages. As Bates explains, “the lift height of 48 m out lifts or matches comparison products, and height and reach are important for any customer on site.”

In practical terms, this means fewer repositioning requirements, improved efficiency, and the ability to tackle a wider range of lifting tasks with a single machine. For contractors operating under tight timelines, these benefits can have a meaningful impact on productivity.

Mobility without compromise

The defining characteristic of an all-terrain crane is its ability to operate both on public roads and in challenging off-road environments. The ZAT600V653G has been designed with this dual capability firmly in mind.

“The main advantage of an all-terrain crane versus a rough terrain crane is its ability to drive to site on SA roads with a



All-terrain cranes are traditionally expensive investments, and in today's environment of high exchange rates and competitive project pricing, the cost of the asset becomes a key factor in any purchasing decision.

different projects.

Regional demand outlook

Looking ahead, the demand for 60-ton class all-terrain cranes is expected to remain strong, particularly in regions with active mining sectors.

"South Africa and all regions with mining," Cook notes, when asked where the strongest demand is likely to come from.

This aligns with broader industry trends, where resource-driven economies continue to invest in infrastructure and extraction activities. In such contexts, equipment that offers both flexibility and reliability is likely to see sustained demand.

A clear message to the market

Beyond the technical specifications and performance metrics, the launch of the ZAT600V653G carries a broader message about ZLT Cranes' positioning in the market.

Bates adds, "All-terrain cranes are traditionally expensive investments, and in today's environment of high exchange rates and competitive project pricing, the cost of the asset becomes a key factor in any purchasing decision. This is where Zoomlion stands out. With a 20-year history in South Africa proving long-term reliability, and pricing that is highly competitive against European and American brands, Zoomlion is one of the most affordable cranes to purchase, both now and over the long-term."

"ZLT Cranes, supplied by Zoomlion, have the full range of cranes to support all our customers' demands with design and technology of the highest quality standards and reliability at an affordable price," Bates concludes.

This statement encapsulates the strategic intent behind the new model. By addressing a previously unmet need within its portfolio, ZLT is reinforcing its commitment to providing comprehensive lifting solutions tailored to the realities of the Southern African market.

Closing the gap

The introduction of the ZAT600V653G represents a deliberate move to align ZLT Cranes' offering with the evolving needs of its customers. By combining compact design, strong lifting performance, and on-road mobility, the crane is well-suited to the demands of mining, construction, and plant hire operations.

With the addition of the 60-ton class all-terrain crane, ZLT Cranes has taken a meaningful step towards strengthening its position as a full-spectrum provider in the lifting industry. 🌟

real-time data and improved visibility, enabling more informed decision-making during lifts. In environments where conditions can change rapidly – particularly with regard to wind – such features are invaluable.

The inclusion of internationally recognised certifications further underscores the machine's adherence to global safety standards, offering reassurance to operators and fleet owners alike.

Reliability backed by support

Reliability is not just about design; it is also about the strength of the support network behind the machine. Downtime can be costly, and access to parts and technical expertise is critical.

ZLT Cranes brings two decades of experience in supporting Zoomlion equipment across Southern Africa. Bates emphasises this point: "ZLT Cranes has sold and supported the Zoomlion brand of cranes in Southern Africa for the last 20 years. We provide full aftermarket support and back up with qualified on-road technicians and spare parts readily available from our main technical facility in Midrand, Gauteng."

This established infrastructure ensures that customers have access to timely maintenance and repairs, minimising disruptions to operations. The availability of trained technicians and readily accessible spare parts further enhances the overall ownership experience.

Target industries and applications

Given its combination of mobility, compact design, and lifting capability, the ZAT600V653G is well-positioned to serve a range of industries.

"Main customers are mining, crane hire, and construction," says Cook.

In mining, the crane's ability to navigate challenging terrain while maintaining lifting performance makes it particularly valuable. In construction, its compact footprint and reach allow it to operate effectively in urban and confined environments. For crane hire companies, the versatility of the machine translates into broader utilisation across

licence and AV permit," says Cook.

This capability eliminates the need for additional transport equipment, streamlining logistics and reducing costs. Once on site, the crane's all-wheel drive and steering systems ensure that it can navigate difficult terrain with ease - a critical requirement in mining and construction applications.

Prioritising operator safety and control

As crane technology continues to evolve, there is an increasing emphasis on operator safety and ease of use. The ZAT600V653G incorporates several features aimed at enhancing both.

"Apart from the standard safety LMI systems required on all cranes today, this crane has a built-in wind meter and camera system to allow the operator visibility from both lower and upper cab," Cook explains. "The crane complies with both CE and ANSI certifications."

These systems provide operators with



CAPITAL EQUIPMENT DEALERS **IN THE COMPLIANCE** **CROSSHAIRS**

Construction equipment dealers and capital equipment suppliers have not suddenly become targets for money laundering in South Africa. According to Hawken McEwan, Director of Risk & Compliance at nCino KYC, they have always been in criminals' sights - the difference now is that the spotlight is firmly on them. *Wilhelm du Plessis* reports

TALKING POINT



"Why would a criminal want a drilling rig or an excavator? But once you start thinking about money laundering not just as cash in a suitcase, but as the movement of value, it becomes clearer."

Hawken McEwan, Director of Risk & Compliance at nCino KYC.

"The risk might not be obvious at first," McEwan explains. "Why would a criminal want a drilling rig or an excavator? But once you start thinking about money laundering not just as cash in a suitcase, but as the movement of value, it becomes clearer."

High-value machinery provides exactly what launderers need: a mechanism to move large sums of money and change



Trade-based money laundering is another risk in this sector due to the high value of machinery.



One common method involves purchasing equipment with questionable funds, using it briefly or not at all, and then reselling it.



Trade-based money laundering is another risk in this sector due to the high value of machinery.



Compliance done properly doesn't have to slow you down.

QUICK TAKE



Trade-based money laundering is another risk in this sector due to the high value of machinery. A South African front company might purchase a fleet of vehicles and sell them to an overseas buyer at an inflated price.

its form. A single excavator, drilling rig or generator can be worth hundreds of thousands - or millions - of rand. By converting illicit cash into tangible assets, and then reselling those assets, criminals can create the appearance of legitimate business activity while obscuring the original source of funds.

In sectors such as construction and mining - where cash transactions, particularly at the smaller end of the market, are not unusual - distinguishing between legitimate and illicit behaviour can be challenging. Add to this the fact that capital equipment tends to retain value and can be resold locally or across borders, and the sector becomes an attractive vehicle for laundering.

How the schemes work

McEwan outlines several patterns that have emerged. One common method involves purchasing equipment with questionable funds, using it briefly or not at all, and then reselling it - often at a loss. On paper, it may look like a poor business decision. In reality, the criminal has converted dirty cash into clean funds backed by legitimate sale documentation.

In some cases, the equipment itself is almost incidental - the invoice is the true instrument. An overpayment followed by a refund request can effectively "wash" illicit money through a respected supplier's bank account, creating a paper trail that appears legitimate.

Trade-based money laundering is another risk in this sector due to the high value of machinery. A South African front company might purchase a fleet of vehicles and sell them to an overseas buyer at an inflated price. The excess payment, disguised as part of a commercial transaction, is in fact laundered money moving across borders.



In more elaborate scenarios, criminals may equip a factory floor with machinery bought using illicit funds, then sell the entire “ready-to-operate” business. The proceeds of the property sale effectively legitimise the original dirty cash.

“The creativity is remarkable,” McEwan notes. “And often, innocent companies are being abused without realising it.”

Red flags dealers should not ignore

Cash payments remain an obvious warning sign, particularly where large sums are involved. But McEwan cautions that the danger is not always blatant.

Dealers should be wary of customers who are vague about their business activities or unable to clearly explain why

they need specific equipment. A buyer who appears indifferent to price, specifications or warranties should also raise concern. “Legitimate buyers tend to care about the detail,” he says.

Other red flags include newly formed companies making substantial purchases without apparent funding constraints, multiple high-value transactions in a short period, and third-party payments - especially where funds originate from unrelated individuals or foreign entities.

“If something feels off, there’s a good chance it is,” McEwan advises.

The impact of the 2022 FICA amendments

The December 2022 amendments to the

Financial Intelligence Centre Act (FICA) significantly altered the compliance landscape. Previously, many vehicle dealers fell into the category of reporting institutions with limited obligations. The amendments introduced a dedicated “high-value goods” schedule.

Under the revised framework, any business that sells any single physical good valued at R100 000 or more - including vehicles, machinery, artwork or electronics - qualifies as a High-Value Goods Dealer (HVGDD) and is subject to full FICA obligations.

That means verifying customer identities, understanding the source of funds, screening for politically exposed persons (PEPs) and sanctions, maintaining detailed records, and reporting suspicious transactions.

“It was a game changer,” McEwan says. “And with the level of fines now in place, compliance is not optional.”

Common compliance mistakes

The biggest mistake, he argues, is inaction. Some HVGDDs still do not realise the law applies to them. Others treat compliance as a tick-box exercise.

FICA compliance is layered and detailed, supported by extensive guidance notes



Compliance done properly doesn't have to slow you down,” he concludes. “In fact, when it's built into your processes from the start, it can make your business stronger, safer and more efficient.



and directives with the same force as the Act itself. Dealers often fail to conduct proper sanctions screening or check for political exposure. Where screening is done, it may only be performed once - despite requirements to rescreen whenever sanctions lists are updated.

Another recurring weakness is failing to understand what a suspicious transaction looks like within their specific business context.

"If you've never had to think about this before, how do you know what untoward looks like?" McEwan asks.

Practical steps to mitigate risk

For equipment suppliers, the starting point is straightforward: verify customers properly for every transaction involving a single item priced at R100 000 or more.

This includes collecting and verifying identity documents, CIPC registration details and proof of address. Importantly, documents must be verified against reliable sources - such as Home Affairs or credit databases - rather than simply copied.

Dealers should also assess the source of funds, check for sanctions and political exposure, train staff to recognise red flags, appoint an internal compliance officer

with authority to halt transactions where necessary, and maintain robust record-keeping and reporting processes.

"You can't just do one thing and be compliant," McEwan emphasises. "It has to be holistic."

The danger of complex payment structures

Third-party payments, overpayments followed by refunds, and split invoicing across entities or jurisdictions can all expose dealers to regulatory risk. These structures are frequently used in laundering schemes. If a dealer cannot reasonably explain why a Mauritian company is paying for equipment purchased by a Johannesburg contractor, the Financial Intelligence Centre may view the transaction as facilitated laundering or inadequate due diligence.

The risk is far from theoretical.

Financial and reputational fallout

Non-compliance carries severe consequences. Administrative penalties can reach millions of rand. In serious cases, criminal prosecution may result in fines of up to R100-million or imprisonment.

Yet reputational damage can be even

more destructive. Public association with money laundering can prompt banks to close accounts, customers to withdraw, and manufacturers to terminate supply agreements. Directors may also face personal liability.

"Your assets and your freedom are ultimately on the line," McEwan warns.

Balancing compliance with deal velocity

In a market where speed matters, many dealers fear compliance will slow sales. McEwan disagrees. When embedded early in the sales cycle - during lead qualification, site visits and demos - customer due diligence becomes part of normal business practice rather than a last-minute hurdle.

Technology, he adds, is a critical enabler. Automated identity verification, biometric checks, digital record-keeping and real-time sanctions screening can all occur in the background while sales teams focus on closing deals.

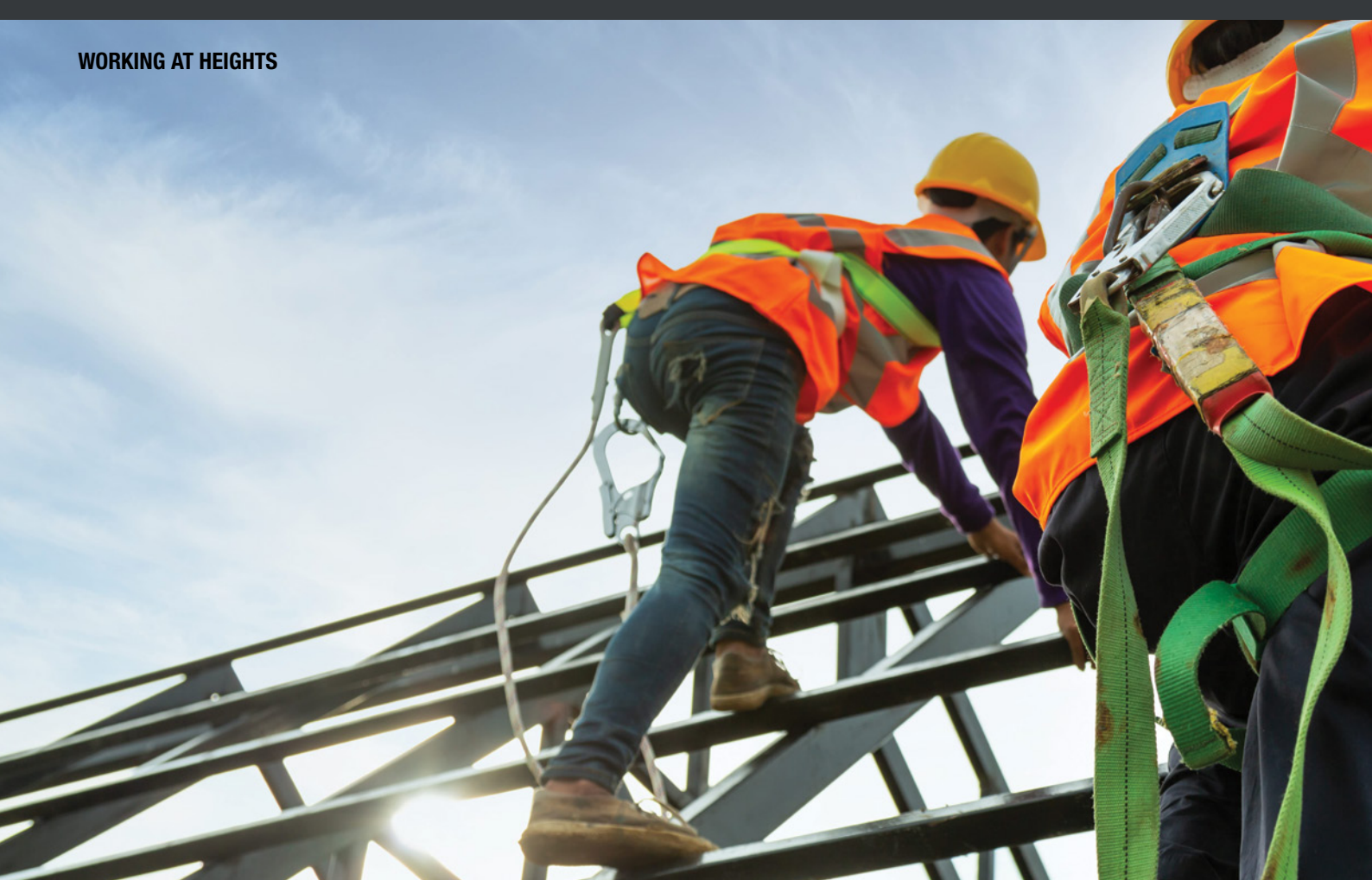
"Compliance done properly doesn't have to slow you down," he concludes. "In fact, when it's built into your processes from the start, it can make your business stronger, safer and more efficient." 🌐



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RAISING THE BAR ON HEIGHT SAFETY

Juanita Pienaar spoke with An-Lie Mostert, Trade Manager at the Institute for Work at Height (IWH), Brian Randall, CEO of the IWH, and Dr Alti Kriel, IWH Consultant, about the latest regulatory developments in work-at-height safety and what they mean for contractors, operators, and equipment suppliers across South Africa.

A shifting regulatory landscape

Work at height has long been recognised as one of the most hazardous aspects of construction, maintenance, and industrial operations. Recent regulatory developments, however, signal a decisive shift towards stricter compliance, enhanced accountability, and a stronger emphasis on prevention.

According to the IWH, the foundation remains the Construction Regulations of

2014 under the Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA). These regulations continue to require that all work at height be governed by a documented fall protection plan prepared by a competent person, alongside baseline risk assessments provided by clients.

“What we are seeing now is not a replacement of the existing framework, but a reinforcement of it,” explains Brian Randall. “The Construction Regulations

remain fundamental, but the expectations around how they are implemented have increased significantly.”

Key updates include the November 2024 amendment to the Driven Machinery Regulations, which introduces a formal training accreditation code, and the publication of the new SANS 10085-1:2024 scaffolding standard. Together, these developments tighten requirements around training, equipment design, and operational safety.

“The introduction of the SANS 10085-1:2024 standard is particularly important,” notes Dr. Alti Kriel. “While it is not legislation in itself, compliance is effectively expected under Section 44 of the OHSA. It strengthens requirements for scaffolding design, erection, inspection, and use, which directly impacts how work at height is executed.”

In parallel, a draft revision of the Construction Regulations was published in APRIL 2025 for public comment, reinforcing existing duties such as risk assessments



The regulations are increasingly pushing for built-in safety features. The focus is on prevention rather than reaction.

Dr Alti Kriel, IWH Consultant.



and the use of trained supervisors.

The cost of complacency

Despite regulatory progress, falls from height remain a leading cause of workplace incidents. Statistics from the Federated Employers Mutual (FEM) underline the scale of the issue.

Falls onto different levels accounted for over 10% of accidents in 2024, with hundreds of incidents recorded annually and multiple fatalities each year. Even falls on the same level, often underestimated, continue to contribute significantly to lost workdays and financial costs.

“These figures highlight why enforcement authorities continue to prioritise fall-related hazards,” says An-Lie Mostert. “The data shows that incidents are not decreasing at the rate we would expect, which means there is still a gap between compliance on paper and what happens on site.”

The financial implications are equally stark, with average costs per accident reaching well over R150 000 in some cases. Beyond the numbers, the human cost remains the most pressing concern.

From compliance to competence

One of the most significant shifts in the regulatory environment is the move towards demonstrable competence rather than simple box-ticking.



The data shows that incidents are not decreasing at the rate we would expect, which means there is still a gap between compliance on paper and what happens on site.

An-Lie Mostert, Trade Manager at the IWH.

TALKING POINT



Historically, training was largely governed by TETA. Now, there is a clear transition towards QCTO-accredited programmes, and companies need to prepare for that shift well in advance.

Brian Randall, CEO of the IWH.

TALKING POINT

QUICK TAKE



The Construction Regulations remain fundamental, but the expectations around how they are implemented have increased significantly.



Falls onto different levels accounted for over 10% of accidents in 2024, with hundreds of incidents recorded annually and multiple fatalities each year.



IWS is advocating for a system where workers are registered, assessed, and re-licensed periodically.



Despite clear regulatory requirements, the IWH continues to observe recurring compliance gaps across the industry.

“Legally, the requirement is for a ‘competent person’, not a specific certificate,” explains Kriel. “However, in practice, competence must be proven through structured training, assessment, and ongoing development.”

The November 2024 amendment to the Driven Machinery Regulations marks a turning point in this regard. Training providers for lifting machines, including mobile elevating work



We strongly advise companies to verify that their training partners are either QCTO accredited or recognised by the IWH as Professional Development Providers.

platforms (MEWPs), must now be accredited by the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO), with a licensing body to be established by May 2027.

"This is a major change for the industry," says Randall. "Historically, training was largely governed by TETA. Now, there is a clear transition towards QCTO-accredited programmes, and companies need to prepare for that shift well in advance."

Importantly, this transition comes with firm deadlines. By mid-2027, all lifting-machine training must be conducted through QCTO-accredited providers.

"We strongly advise companies to verify that their training partners are either QCTO-accredited or recognised by the IWH as Professional Development Providers," adds Mostert. "This is not something that can be left to the last minute."

Bridging the training gap

Complicating the transition is the phasing out of several South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) unit standards related to work at height, which have been extended only until June 2026.

"In the absence of fully developed QCTO skills programmes for all work-at-height disciplines, the IWH has taken the initiative to develop regulatory professional development programmes," explains Mostert. "These will be available from 1 July 2026 and will provide a structured pathway for continuing professional development."

The emphasis on continuous learning is central to the IWH's approach. "Training is not a once-off event," says Randall. "We are advocating for a system where workers are registered, assessed, and re-licensed periodically. This ensures that competence is maintained and aligned with evolving standards."

Common compliance gaps

Despite clear regulatory requirements, the IWH continues to observe recurring compliance gaps across the industry.

"Risk assessments are one of the most common shortcomings," notes Kriel. "Companies often have generic

assessments or fail to update them for specific tasks, which is a direct violation of Construction Regulation 9."

Training documentation is another area of concern. "It is not uncommon to find workers on site without proper records of training," says Mostert. "Yet the regulations explicitly require that all workers be trained by a competent person and that this training be documented."

Equipment inspection is also frequently neglected. Fall-arrest systems, including harnesses and lanyards, are sometimes used without proper inspection logs or maintenance records.

"Construction Regulation 10 is very clear on this," Kriel emphasises. "Equipment must be inspected and tested regularly. There is no room for compromise."

Perhaps most concerning is the lack of rescue planning. "Many sites still do not have a written rescue plan," says Randall. "This is alarming, because the regulations explicitly require not only a plan but also the capability to execute it."

Equipment designed for safety

As regulatory expectations rise, so too does the importance of equipment selection and design. "The regulations are increasingly pushing for built-in safety features," explains Kriel. "The focus is on prevention rather than reaction."

This shift is evident in the recommendations for scaffolding and access equipment. The SANS 10085-1:2024 standard, for example, introduces stricter requirements for guardrails, load capacities, and platform design.

"We should be selecting scaffolds with non-removable guardrails and compliant configurations as a baseline," says Mostert. "Similarly, MEWPs should incorporate features such as self-levelling platforms and integrated fall protection systems."

Anchorage systems are another critical consideration. "Installing certified anchor points or permanent lifeline systems enables workers to tie off quickly and safely," Kriel notes. "This aligns directly with the regulatory emphasis on fall prevention."

The need for rescue-ready equipment is also gaining prominence. "If a fall occurs, the ability to recover a worker quickly is essential," says Randall. "Equipment that facilitates controlled descent or retrieval can make a significant difference in an emergency."

A roadmap for compliance

In response to these developments, the IWH has outlined a series of practical recommendations for industry stakeholders. "First and foremost, every project must have a competent person responsible for the fall protection plan," says Mostert. "This is non-negotiable."

Procurement processes must also be updated to reflect new requirements. "Companies should only engage with suppliers who can demonstrate compliance with relevant standards and training accreditation," Randall advises. "If a supplier cannot verify this, they should not be considered."

Training remains a top priority. "Within the next 12 months, companies should ensure that all employees are trained or reassessed through accredited providers," says Mostert. "This includes aligning with QCTO requirements and engaging with IWH-recognised professional development partners."

Regular audits and inspections are equally critical. "We recommend monthly audits of risk assessments and daily pre-use checks of equipment," Kriel explains. "Formal inspections should be conducted at least monthly, with proper documentation."

Finally, rescue preparedness must be addressed. "Conducting rescue drills every six months ensures that teams are ready to respond effectively," says Randall. "This is not just about compliance, it is about saving lives."

From Compliance to Proactive Safety

As the regulatory environment continues to evolve, the message from the IWH is clear: compliance is no longer sufficient on its own. The focus must shift towards competence, accountability, and proactive risk management.

"The bar has been raised," concludes Randall. "Companies that take a proactive approach will not only meet regulatory requirements but also create safer, more efficient working environments."

For an industry where the margin for error is minimal, these changes represent both a challenge and an opportunity. By embracing higher standards in training, equipment, and operational practices, South Africa's work-at-height sector can move closer to its ultimate goal: zero harm. 🌐

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SAFETY AND VERSATILITY: BENCHMARKS FOR WORKING AT HEIGHTS

In the demanding landscape of Southern African heavy industry, from the sprawling mines of the Northern Cape to the rapid infrastructure developments in Gauteng, the phrase “working at heights” has evolved. It is no longer just about reaching a point; it is about what you can do once you get there, and how safely you can return.

For fleet managers and site supervisors, the challenge is twofold: maximising the return on investment (ROI) of every machine on-site while ensuring that every operator works within a “zero-harm” environment. Manitou believes the answer lies in three pillars: Versatility, Simplicity, and Safety.

Versatility with telehandlers

In traditional site management, “working at heights” often required a fleet of single-purpose machines. A crane for lifting suspended loads, a telehandler for picking and placing loads, and an access platform for personnel. This approach is not only capital-intensive but leads to congested, high-risk work sites.

Manitou’s MXT and MT-X ranges are



designed to challenge this status quo. It provides more than just a lifting machine, but a versatile tool carrier. By utilising a wide array of available quick-change attachments, including jibs, winches, buckets, and dedicated man-baskets, a single telehandler can transition from a rough-terrain loader to a high-reach access solution in minutes.

Why does versatility matter for your bottom line? When a machine can perform various roles, your Total Cost of Ownership (TCO) drops significantly. You aren't just saving on the initial purchase price; you are reducing maintenance schedules, transport costs to site, and the logistical headache of managing multiple operators for different machine types. In the current economic climate, simplicity in fleet management is a competitive advantage.



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When a machine can perform various roles, your Total Cost of Ownership (TCO) drops significantly.



Working at heights will always carry inherent risks, but with the right partner, those risks can be minimised, and the rewards can be maximised.



Safety is often discussed in terms of "compliance," but Manitou believes safety as more than just "ticking the boxes".



Safe and Simple: Designing for the Operator

Safety is often discussed in terms of “compliance,” but Manitou believes safety as more than just “ticking the boxes”. By listening to those who spend eight hours a day in a cab, Manitou has learned that a safer machine is a more productive machine.

When working in a demanding environment, operator fatigue can set in. On average, an operator will go in and out of the cab 10 to 30 times per day. This generates back fatigue for cab entry and a safety risk when exiting the cab (non-visible step). This is why its MT-X and MXT ranges feature the Easy Step footboard. By lowering the entry point and providing a clear, ergonomic path into the cab, Manitou reduces the physical strain on the operator’s knees and back.

Furthermore, 360-degree visibility is a big advantage. Whether you are manoeuvring a 4-ton load on an MXT 1740 or positioning an access platform, the ability to see the entire environment without blind spots reduces the potential of on-site accidents. Manitou’s



When working in a demanding environment, operator fatigue can set in. On average, an operator will go in and out of the cab 10 to 30 times per day. This generates back fatigue for cab entry and a safety risk when exiting the cab (non-visible step).



high-visibility cabs ensure that the operator always has line of sight, so that they can confidently carry out their tasks in a simple, safe manner.

Precision at height: access platforms

While telehandlers offer incredible reach and capacity, dedicated Aerial Work Platforms (AWP) remain the standard for intricate maintenance and construction tasks. In Southern Africa's industrial sectors, the demand for stable, precise, and rugged platforms is high.

From the compact electric models for indoor warehousing to the heavy-duty electric and diesel booms, Manitou's range of platforms are built on the principle of fluidity. When an operator is 20 metres in the air, they need controls that are intuitive and movements that are smooth. Jerky movements at height cause stress and can easily lead to errors. Manitou's proportional controls allow for precise movements, ensuring that the platform moves exactly where the operator intends, every time.

The "oxygen" perspective

As the global and local markets shift toward sustainable practices, working at heights is also becoming "greener." Manitou's commitment to innovation is evidenced by its Oxygen range. Low-emission or zero-emission electric platforms allow

companies to work in confined, indoor spaces or noise-sensitive environments without compromising on power or reach.

This is more than just being "eco-friendly"; it's about expanding where and when you can work. Night-time maintenance in a retail centre or working inside a food-grade manufacturing facility, without the risk of exhaust fumes, is now obtainable. That is the kind of versatility that changes a business's capability.

Manitou's ATJ e range of articulated booms brings electric power to challenging environments. These 100% electric machines carry the same rugged DNA as our diesel models, featuring four-wheel drive, active oscillating axles, and generous ground clearance to navigate the harshest South African construction sites. By eliminating exhaust fumes and significantly reducing noise, this range provides a high-performance, low-TCO solution that proves sustainability and "rough terrain" power can coexist without compromise.

Handling your world

Working at heights will always carry inherent risks, but with the right partner, those risks can be minimised, and the rewards can be maximised. Whether you are utilising the rugged power of the MT-X range, the cost-effective versatility of the MXT range, or the pinpoint precision of its Access Platforms, Manitou is dedicated to making your operations safe and easy.

Manitou doesn't just sell machines; it provides solutions that reflect its values: it listens to your needs, it challenge the limits of what a machine can do, and it keeps its technology simple enough to be used effectively every single day. In the world of capital equipment, don't just reach for new heights, stay there with confidence. 🌍



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NEXT-GEN ACCESS EQUIPMENT DRIVES SAFETY, EFFICIENCY, AND PERFORMANCE

Juanita Pienaar spoke with John Damant, CEO of Bud Rental Services, to explore the latest access equipment entering the market, the technologies redefining safety, and the trends shaping the future of working at height in South Africa.

TALKING POINT



The industries currently driving demand for access equipment include construction, mining, warehousing, manufacturing, hospitality, and aviation, with construction remaining a consistent leader.

John Damant, CEO of Bud Rental Services.

Smarter machines, greater capability

One of the most notable developments in the access equipment sector is the introduction of next-generation machines designed to deliver greater reach, improved load capacity, and enhanced operational flexibility.

“Our portfolio includes the latest Next-Gen scissor lifts and 3rd generation hybrid lifts, including the new S-85XC FE (28 m, Xtra capacity),



which offers 28 metres of reach with extra capacity for heavier loads,” explains Damant.

This evolution in machine capability is not just about reaching higher - it is about doing more at height. Increased platform capacity allows operators to carry additional tools and materials, reducing the need for repeated trips and ultimately improving efficiency on site. For contractors working in sectors where time and productivity are critical, such as construction and industrial maintenance, these gains can translate directly into cost savings.

At the same time, hybrid and electric models are gaining traction, reflecting a broader industry shift towards more sustainable and fuel-efficient solutions. Machines that can operate both indoors and outdoors, with reduced emissions and noise levels, are becoming essential in environments such as warehousing, manufacturing facilities, and hospitality settings.

Technology reshaping safety and efficiency

While machine performance continues to improve, it is the integration of technology that is truly transforming the sector. Telematics, in particular, is emerging as a powerful tool for fleet management and operational oversight.

“Telematics is increasingly being adopted to monitor machine usage and improve fleet efficiency,” says Damant.

Through real-time data collection, telematics systems enable fleet managers to track utilisation rates, monitor maintenance schedules, and identify inefficiencies. This level of visibility not only helps to optimise equipment deployment but also reduces downtime by ensuring that machines are serviced proactively.

In parallel, safety innovations are becoming more sophisticated, addressing some of the most critical risks associated with working at height. Anti-crush systems, for example, are now standard on many modern machines.

“Regarding safety systems, all Genie boom lifts are equipped with the Lift Guard Contact Alarm, an anti-crush system that enhances operator protection,” Damant notes.

These systems are designed to detect contact or pressure against the operator and automatically stop machine movement, significantly reducing the risk of injury. In high-risk environments where operators often work in confined spaces or near overhead structures, such features are becoming indispensable.



These machines not only reduce operating costs but also align with global sustainability goals, making them an attractive option for companies looking to reduce their environmental footprint.



All Genie boom lifts are equipped with the Lift Guard Contact Alarm, an anti-crush system that enhances operator protection.



Higher platform capacities, such as the XC and J series, are enhancing productivity.



As the working at height sector continues to evolve, it is clear that equipment innovation, technological integration, and a stronger focus on safety are raising the standard across the industry.

QUICK TAKE



who may not use access equipment regularly. “Our goal is to educate smaller contractors, who may not use MEWPs regularly but face the same operational risks, to ensure they meet these standards,” Damant explains. “Ultimately, adapting to regulatory and safety requirements starts with us.”

Broad-based demand across industries

The demand for access equipment in South Africa is being driven by a diverse range of industries, each with its own set of requirements and challenges.

“The industries currently driving demand for access equipment include construction, mining, warehousing, manufacturing, hospitality, and aviation, with construction remaining a consistent leader,” says Damant.

In construction, the need for reliable and versatile equipment is constant, particularly as projects become more complex and timelines more compressed. In mining, access equipment plays a critical role in maintenance and infrastructure development, often in harsh and remote environments.

Warehousing and manufacturing facilities, on the other hand, are increasingly turning to electric and hybrid machines that can operate efficiently indoors without producing emissions. Meanwhile, sectors such as hospitality and aviation require equipment that combines precision, safety, and minimal disruption to ongoing operations.

This broad-based demand underscores the importance of having a diverse equipment portfolio that can cater to different applications. It also highlights the growing need for machines that can adapt to multiple environments, offering both flexibility and performance.



This broad-based demand underscores the importance of having a diverse equipment portfolio that can cater to different applications.

A shift in contractor behaviour

As equipment becomes more advanced, contractors are also changing how they approach safety and compliance. The days of treating safety as an afterthought are rapidly fading, replaced by a more integrated and proactive mindset.

“We are finding that contractors across all sectors are increasingly integrating safety requirements when using Mobile Elevating Work Platforms (MEWPs) on site,” says Damant. “This includes accredited training, compliance with MEWP operating conditions, and pre-inspection of site conditions.”

This shift is being driven not only by regulatory pressure but also by a growing recognition of the operational and financial risks associated with non-compliance. Proper training ensures that operators understand both the capabilities

and limitations of the equipment, while thorough site inspections help to identify potential hazards before work begins.

Maintenance practices are also becoming more rigorous. “At Concord Access Solutions, our Reman facility ensures that machines get a second lease on life through maintenance and rework. Equipment is regularly inspected according to service intervals, including brake checks and load test validation,” Damant adds.

These measures are essential for ensuring that machines perform reliably under demanding conditions. For rental companies and contractors alike, maintaining high standards of equipment integrity is key to minimising downtime and avoiding costly incidents.

However, challenges remain - particularly among smaller contractors

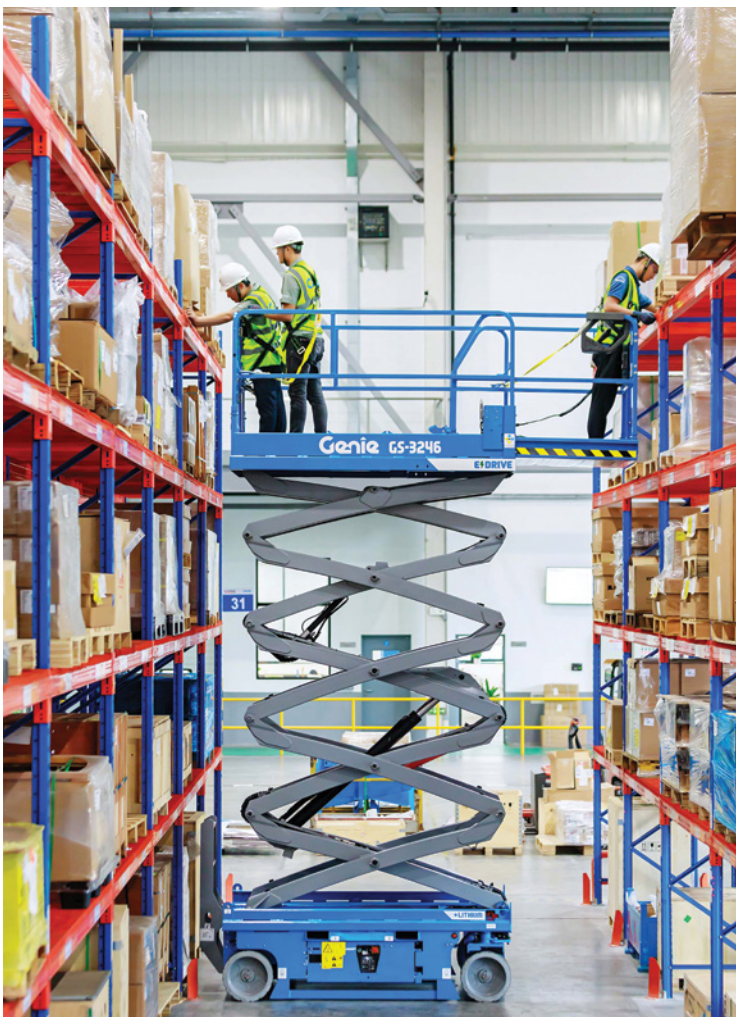
Efficiency, electrification, and enhanced performance

Looking ahead, several key trends are expected to shape the future of working at height equipment in South Africa. Chief among these is the continued push towards greater fuel efficiency and electrification.

“We expect more fuel-efficient machines, such as electric and hybrid models like our DC and FE variants, to become increasingly prevalent,” says Damant.

These machines not only reduce operating costs but also align with global sustainability goals, making them an attractive option for companies looking to reduce their environmental footprint.

Another important trend is the move



towards higher platform capacities. “Higher platform capacities, such as the XC and J series, are enhancing productivity,” Damant notes.

By enabling operators to carry more equipment and materials, these machines reduce the need for additional lifts, streamlining workflows, and improving overall efficiency.

Battery technology is also playing a crucial role in this evolution. “The adoption of lithium-ion batteries in electric machines, featured in our Next-Gen scissor lifts and hybrids, enables faster, opportunistic charging and reliable operation even in extreme temperatures,” Damant explains.

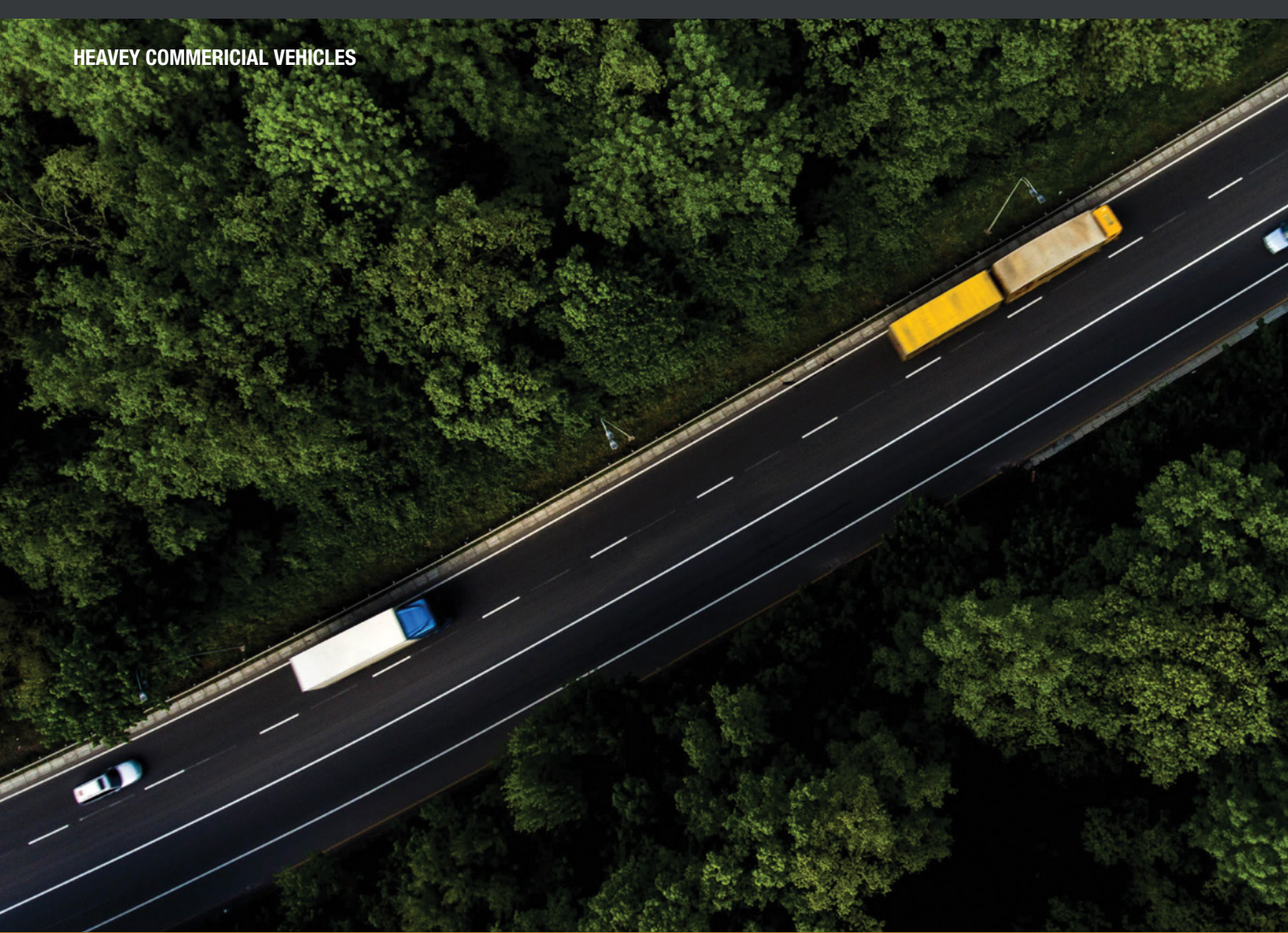
Lithium-ion technology offers several advantages over traditional lead-acid batteries, including longer lifespan, reduced maintenance, and the ability to charge quickly during short breaks in operation. This makes it particularly well-suited to demanding work environments where downtime must be kept to a minimum.

Raising the standard

As the working at height sector continues to evolve, it is clear that equipment innovation, technological integration, and a stronger focus on safety are raising the standard across the industry.

For contractors, this means greater access to machines that are not only more capable but also safer and more efficient. For equipment providers, it presents an opportunity to lead the way in education, support, and innovation, ensuring that all users, regardless of their experience level, can operate at the highest standards.

“Ultimately, adapting to regulatory and safety requirements starts with us,” Damant concludes. 🌱



SOUTH AFRICA'S TRUCK SECTOR NAVIGATES COST, COMPETITION, AND A CAUTIOUS ELECTRIC FUTURE

Capital Equipment News' Juanita Pienaar spoke with Philip Kalil-Zackey, Head of Truck Sales & Product at MAN Truck & Bus South Africa; Itumeleng Segage, General Manager of Hino Sales; and Olaf Petersen, Vice President: Sales & Marketing at Daimler Truck Southern Africa, to unpack the shifting landscape of heavy commercial vehicles in the country. Their combined insights paint a picture of an industry balancing rising operational strain with rapid technological advancement and a measured transition towards alternative powertrains.

Mounting pressure on operators

Across South Africa, heavy commercial vehicle operators are navigating a tightening operating environment, where costs are rising, and reliability is becoming harder to maintain.

At the core of these pressures is fuel. "Fleet operators are under mounting pressure from fuel pricing, which affects operating costs of their businesses," says Philip Kalil-Zackey

of MAN. Compounding this are quality concerns. "Fuel quality inconsistencies increase maintenance needs such as fuel decontamination and more frequent filter replacements."

Infrastructure adds another layer of complexity. "Poor road conditions accelerate wear and tear, impacting uptime and repair costs," he explains, highlighting a challenge echoed across the sector.

Hino's Itumeleng Segage expands on the breadth of these issues. "The pressure on operators is coming from several places at once," he says. "Fuel remains one of the biggest cost drivers, and diesel increased again in March 2026, which immediately squeezes margins."

Operational risk is also increasing. "Operators are dealing with cargo hijackings and theft, more complex



Segage emphasises the importance of aligning vehicles to operational needs. The first question is always fitness for purpose. The truck must match the load, route, body application, and duty cycle.

criminal tactics, and ongoing admin and regulatory hurdles around licensing, permits, and enforcement,” Segage notes. Infrastructure, once again, remains a critical concern. “Road deterioration, congestion, and broader freight logistics bottlenecks all raise operating costs and reduce reliability.”

From Daimler Truck Southern Africa’s perspective, these pressures are influencing buying behaviour. “We saw the HDT market decline begin in 2024, with many customers delaying fleet renewals as economic pressures intensified,” says Olaf Petersen.

This shift has had broader consequences. “Lower-priced new entrants gained traction, disrupting not only the new-truck segment but also reshaping the used-truck market,” he explains. “This shift has fundamentally altered the competitive landscape and

accelerated price pressure across the industry.”

Petersen believes adaptation will be key moving forward. “The biggest challenge for 2026 will be to reset and fully adapt to these new market dynamics.”

Technology driving efficiency

While external pressures mount, innovation in the HCV sector continues to accelerate, with a clear emphasis on efficiency, safety, and connectivity.

At Daimler Truck Southern Africa, these developments are framed within a broader strategic goal. “The main trends in the commercial vehicle market always all ladder back to reducing Total Cost of Ownership and driving long-term sustainability,” Petersen explains.

This includes “cleaner, more efficient engines with lower fuel consumption and maintenance costs” and “advanced telematics that enhance fleet visibility and reduce downtime”. He also highlights “increasingly connected and digital fleet tools that optimise routing and servicing” alongside “the early adoption of automation and Advanced Driver Assistance Systems to improve safety and operational efficiency.”

MAN’s latest developments also reflect this trajectory. “Vehicles themselves are becoming more intelligent with more driver and safety assistance systems to assist with safety and vehicle performance,” says Kalil-Zackey.

The recently launched TGX 26.520 exemplifies this shift. “This vehicle gives more uninterrupted torque at lower RPMs,” he explains. “The new driveline gives operators significant fuel savings through the engine’s improved thermal efficiencies and lighter weight axles.”

Digital intelligence is playing a growing role. “EfficientCruise uses a topography-based gearshift strategy to determine the correct gear according to the predicted terrain,” he adds. “These new technologies, along with improved aerodynamics of the cab, improve the overall efficiency of the vehicle.”

Safety enhancements are equally prominent. “New safety features like EBA Plus with pedestrian detection and VSC keep cargo and road users safe.”

Hino is seeing similar trends across its customer base. “The sector is moving toward smarter, safer, and more connected trucks,” says Segage. “Telematics is becoming standard because operators want real-time visibility on fuel use, driver behaviour, maintenance, and uptime.”



Across South Africa, heavy commercial vehicle operators are navigating a tightening operating environment, where costs are rising, and reliability is becoming harder to maintain.



While external pressures mount, innovation in the HCV sector continues to accelerate, with a clear emphasis on efficiency, safety, and connectivity.



Poor road conditions accelerate wear and tear, impacting uptime and repair costs and highlights a challenge echoed across the sector.



For the transition to alternative powertrains to succeed, structural enablers must fall into place.

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It is realistic in some applications, but not yet across the board. Electric trucks are currently best suited to urban, depot-based and predictable route operations.

Itumeleng Segage, General Manager of Hino Sales.

TALKING POINT



The most critical development needed is faster policy progression, especially around fuel standards and new emissions regulations.

Philip Kalil-Zackey, Head of Truck Sales & Product at MAN Truck & Bus South Africa.

TALKING POINT



The main trends in the commercial vehicle market always all ladder back to reducing Total Cost of Ownership and driving long-term sustainability.

Olaf Petersen, Vice President: Sales & Marketing at Daimler Truck Southern Africa.

Advanced safety systems are becoming a key differentiator within extra heavy vehicles such as the Hino 700. "On the vehicle side, advanced driver assistance systems are becoming more important," he notes. "Features such as a pre-collision safety system, adaptive cruise control, and lane departure warning show where the market is heading."

Rethinking value in fleet investment

With margins under pressure, operators are becoming more discerning in how they evaluate new vehicle investments. The focus is shifting from upfront price to long-term value.

Segage emphasises the importance of aligning vehicles to operational needs. "The first question is always fitness for purpose. The truck must match the load,

route, body application, and duty cycle," he says.

From there, total cost of ownership becomes central. "Fuel consumption, service intervals, parts pricing, warranty, uptime support, and resale value all matter," he explains. Safety technology is increasingly important. "Telematics has become a serious investment factor because it helps operators manage utilisation, maintenance, and fuel more effectively."

Support infrastructure can ultimately determine a fleet's success. "In South Africa, dealer support and parts availability are critical," Segage adds. "A cheaper truck is not a better truck if it stands still."

MAN is responding with a broadened aftersales approach. "MAN is continually

expanding its parts and support ecosystem to improve uptime and manage costs," says Kalil-Zackey.

This includes a diversified parts strategy. "Alongside OEM original components, MAN now offers remanufactured parts, locally sourced Line 360 components, and even certified used parts from dismantled trucks," he explains. This helps operators "absorb currency volatility and supply chain disruptions."

The reality of electrification

As global momentum builds around electric mobility, South Africa's HCV sector is taking a pragmatic approach to adoption.

"At MAN, electric propulsion will grow, but uptake will differ by application," says Kalil-Zackey. Diesel, he notes, remains essential. "In the short to medium term, diesel will remain dominant, especially for long-haul operations, where charging networks and vehicle range are still limiting factors."

However, certain segments show promise. "Urban buses and local distribution fleets present strong near-term opportunities," he says. "These vehicles typically return to a single depot, making charging infrastructure affordable."

South Africa's energy profile could even offer advantages. "The country's abundant daytime solar potential makes depot charging both viable and cost efficient."

From Daimler Truck Southern Africa's perspective, electrification is inevitable but dependent on collaboration. "Battery-electric vehicles will play an important and growing role in the future commercial vehicle landscape," says Petersen.

Yet, he cautions against oversimplification. "Electric trucks are not a single, universal solution for every application." Their success depends on broader system readiness. "The successful introduction of electric heavy vehicles depends heavily on the development of suitable charging infrastructure, energy availability, and grid stability."

Crucially, this is not an isolated effort. "It requires coordinated effort across OEMs, policymakers, energy providers, fleet operators, and industry associations," Petersen adds.

Hino shares a similarly measured outlook. "It is realistic in some applications, but not yet across the board," says Segage. Electric trucks are currently best suited to "urban, depot-

based and predictable route operations”.

Barriers remain significant. “Electricity constraints, policy and regulatory uncertainty, limited availability of fit-for-purpose products, high upfront pricing, and even weight and length regulations” all slow adoption. As a result, “the transition is happening, but it will be gradual and application specific rather than a sudden full market shift.”

Building the road ahead

For the transition to alternative powertrains to succeed, structural enablers must fall into place.

Policy reform is a priority. “The most critical development needed is faster policy progression, especially around fuel standards and new emissions regulations,” says Kalil-Zackey. With cleaner fuels expected from 2027, South Africa could “realistically adopt Euro 5 or Euro 6 technology without major barriers.”

Infrastructure investment is equally vital. “Significant investment in charging infrastructure, especially along long-distance corridors, is essential,” he notes.

There is also a broader call to support local industry. “A more level competitive playing field, prioritising locally produced vehicles for public-sector procurement, would help ensure OEMs can continue investing in advancing technology and more R&D for the local market.”

Petersen reinforces the importance of collective action. “Unlocking the potential of battery-electric trucks will demand collaboration, investment, and long-term planning across all stakeholders,” he says.

A sector defined by adaptation

South Africa’s heavy commercial vehicle sector is undergoing a period of recalibration. Operators are contending with rising costs, infrastructure decline, and evolving risks, while OEMs continue to push the boundaries of efficiency, safety, and connectivity.

At the same time, the path towards electrification is becoming clearer, albeit slower and more nuanced than in other markets.

What emerges is an industry defined not by disruption alone, but by adaptation. Success will hinge on the ability to balance immediate operational realities with long-term strategic shifts, ensuring that every investment, whether in diesel or electric, delivers measurable value in an increasingly complex landscape. 🌐





USED EQUIPMENT IS RESHAPING BUYING DECISIONS

Juanita Pienaar spoke with David Lawry, Owner of Machinery for Africa, to explore how contractors are navigating the shifting economics of equipment procurement in a constrained and uncertain market.

Why used makes sense

Across Southern Africa and beyond, the rising cost of capital equipment is fundamentally reshaping procurement strategies. For many contractors and mining operators, the decision is no longer simply about acquiring the latest machine; it is about survival, cash flow, and return on investment.

"The main factor on equipment is price," says David Lawry. "This equipment is expensive, and especially when mines or contractors are trying to purchase a fleet of equipment, the barriers to entry are high."

The high upfront costs are compounded by long lead times for new machinery, particularly in the mining sector. Lawry notes that for large-scale assets such as "150-ton-plus excavators or big mining trucks, lead times can stretch to up to two years or so to get a machine."

In a volatile global environment, this delay introduces significant risk. "Waiting for two years for a machine to come through, with currency and mineral price fluctuations and the political landscape, causes uncertainty and instability," he explains.





Waiting for two years for a machine to come through, with currency and mineral price fluctuations and the political landscape, causes uncertainty and instability.

David Lawry, Owner of Machinery for Africa.

This combination of high capital outlay, long procurement cycles, and economic uncertainty is pushing buyers toward late-model used equipment - machines that offer immediate availability and significantly lower investment requirements.

Balancing cost and productivity

One of the central considerations in the used-versus-new debate is whether older machines can deliver comparable productivity. Increasingly, the answer is yes, particularly when buyers target low-hour or well-maintained units.

Lawry points out that the market offers a wide spectrum of used equipment options, from "really low-hour machines that have come out of rental fleets to machines that have been completely rebuilt and fitted with new components from the original manufacturers."

These options allow contractors to match their operational needs and financial capacity. Larger, well-established companies may still favour new equipment, while mid-tier contractors often opt for premium used machines.

"Because of their expertise, their knowledge, and their cash flows, they can afford to buy the better quality used equipment, either low-hour ex-rental fleet machines or completely rebuilt machines and they operate very successfully with that equipment," he explains.

At the entry level, smaller contractors and artisanal miners prioritise affordability above all else. "They need cheap, and they just want to get in," says Lawry. "They don't want to spend a lot of money on equipment and often, they don't have the resources to."

Understanding "low hours" and lifecycle value

A critical factor in assessing used equipment is the concept of machine hours, which varies significantly depending on the size and type of equipment.

"For a 20-ton excavator, 3 000 to 5 000 hours is a low-hour machine," Lawry explains. "But on a 100-ton + dumper, 15 000 hours is not a lot; those machines are designed to work for 80 000 to 100 000 hours."

This highlights an important point: the true value of a used machine lies not just in its age, but in its remaining lifecycle and maintenance history.

Component replacement also plays a key role. "If a final drive was replaced 2 000 hours ago, you know you've got at least another 10 000 hours left on that component," he says.

Such insights allow buyers to make informed decisions based on long-term performance rather than headline price alone.

Assuring quality from inspection to certification

As demand for used equipment grows, so too does the emphasis on quality assurance. Buyers are increasingly seeking transparency and reliability, particularly for high-value assets.

Lawry outlines a comprehensive approach to machine evaluation, including physical inspections, service record analysis, and oil sampling. "You check for oil leaks, smoke from the engine, and the general condition of the machine," he says. "Then you check the service records, because these machines should have proper histories."

Advanced diagnostics, such as oil analysis, can reveal internal wear. "If anything is breaking down, you're going to have metal particles in the oil; it's a telltale sign," he explains.

For more detailed assessments, Technical Analysis (TA) reports are used. "A TA2 is a comprehensive technical analysis of the machine."

This level of scrutiny is particularly valuable for cross-border transactions, where physical inspection may not be feasible.



Unlocking access to equipment through financing

While used equipment reduces upfront costs, financing remains a key enabler, particularly in markets where access to capital is limited.

Lawry notes that financing options for used equipment are expanding. “We’ve got some companies on board that are prepared to offer finance on this equipment in South Africa and Namibia,” he says.

Digital platforms are also streamlining the process. “Clients can complete their applications electronically, and the finance house can give an in-principle answer quickly.”

However, challenges remain in certain regions. “It’s difficult to get finance facilities in Mozambique, Zambia, and Congo,” he admits, adding that expanding access to finance will be critical for future growth.

Market dynamics and regional demand

Demand for used equipment is closely tied to broader economic and commodity trends. In the mining sector, rising prices for gold, copper, and lithium are driving increased activity.

“The surge in gold and copper prices has definitely boosted mining activities,” says Lawry. “Especially among smaller operators who can mobilise quickly.”

Geographically, this activity is concentrated outside South Africa. “There’s a lot of activity in Zimbabwe, Zambia, Congo,” he notes.

At the same time, infrastructure investment is supporting demand in the construction sector. “The road construction sector in Southern Africa is doing pretty well,” he says. “There’s a lot of money being spent on roads, and demand for pavers, milling machines, rollers, and recyclers is strong.”

However, global uncertainties continue to influence the market. Currency

fluctuations, fuel prices, and geopolitical tensions all play a role in shaping purchasing decisions.

“If diesel prices surge, it’s definitely going to impact the mining sector, particularly the small-scale miners,” Lawry warns.

Competition and changing market structures

Another notable trend is the growing presence of lower-cost equipment from emerging manufacturers, particularly from China.

“Chinese equipment is cheaper than the traditional OEMs,” Lawry observes. “Owners are under pressure to get the job done; they just want a machine, they don’t care what they’re going to get for it in five years’ time.”

While this introduces new competition, it also reinforces the value proposition of high-quality used equipment from established brands, which offer proven reliability and better long-term performance.

What this means for the market

As economic pressures persist and project



pipelines remain uncertain, the appeal of used equipment is set to grow even further.

For contractors, the equation is clear: maximise productivity, minimise capital

outlay, and manage risk. Late-model used machines, particularly those backed by robust inspection, certification, and financing, are increasingly ticking all the right boxes. 🌱



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RESILIENT LEADERSHIP IN UNCERTAIN MARKETS

Sub header: Uncertainty has become a defining feature of modern leadership. From global supply chain disruption to economic volatility and rapid technological change, leaders are increasingly required to make decisions without perfect information. *By Brian Andrew, Managing Director, RS South Africa*

Research from McKinsey shows that more than 83% of executives believe their organisations are not fully prepared for future disruption. This reality places resilience at the centre of effective leadership.

Resilience is often misunderstood as simple endurance or the ability to push through pressure. Over time I have come to see it differently. Resilient leadership is about clarity, discipline and the ability to adapt while remaining anchored to a long-term strategy.

Interestingly, many of the lessons that shaped my perspective did not come from the boardroom but from endurance sport.

Lessons from endurance sport

Endurance sports provide a powerful parallel to leadership in uncertain markets.

Preparation is essential but control is limited. You can train carefully and plan your strategy yet once the race begins conditions inevitably change. Weather shifts. Mechanical issues arise. Your body responds differently on different days.

Business operates in much the same way. Markets shift, competitors respond and external pressures emerge.

What separates strong competitors from the rest is not the absence of problems but how quickly they regain composure and move forward.

Leaders who remain calm and focused when circumstances change create stability for the people around them.

Leading through uncertainty

Periods of uncertainty often tempt leaders



Brian Andrew, Managing Director, RS South Africa

into reactive decision-making. When pressure increases, it becomes easy to focus on short-term fixes rather than long-term direction. One of the most important disciplines in leadership is the ability to pause before reacting.

When the environment shifts rapidly, I often return to three guiding principles: clarity of purpose, ownership, and simplicity in execution. Clarity ensures leaders remain anchored to long-term strategy.

Clarity emerges when complexity is

reduced and decisions are guided by purpose rather than panic.

Building resilient teams

Resilience is not only an individual capability. It must also exist across the organisation. Resilient teams are built on trust, clarity, and shared responsibility. Trust allows people to speak openly about challenges and mistakes. Clarity ensures the team understands its mission. Leaders must also model resilience..

Discipline creates stability

Endurance sport also reinforces the value of discipline. Performance comes not from motivation alone, but from routines, preparation, and showing up consistently. Structured habits such as planning, reflection, and communication reduce uncertainty and allow teams to focus their energy effectively. Over time, disciplined leadership builds confidence and trust.

A perspective for South African leaders

South African business leaders operate in a uniquely dynamic environment. Economic pressures, infrastructure constraints, and global shifts require organisations to remain adaptable while maintaining long-term focus. Yet uncertainty also creates opportunity. Organisations that invest in strong leadership, healthy cultures, and disciplined execution are better positioned to navigate disruption.

Leadership is about how you show up

Resilience is not about having all the answers. It is about showing up consistently, taking responsibility and helping teams move forward when the path ahead is unclear.

Leadership, much like endurance sport, is rarely defined by perfect conditions. It is defined by preparation mindset and the ability to keep moving forward.

In uncertain markets the organisations that succeed will not necessarily be those that predict the future perfectly. They will be the ones that remain disciplined, adaptable and focused on long term value creation. 🌱



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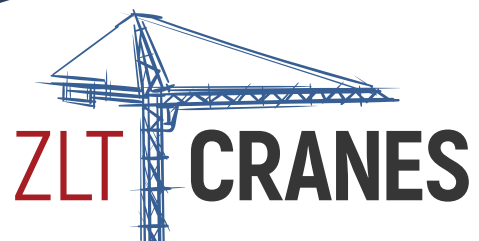
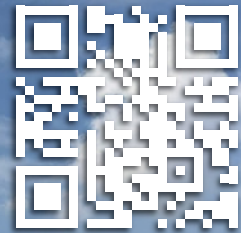
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