

No favours for MCG

by Paul Howard

CTA-only stance will backfire, claims Readypower Rentals

The Major Contractors Group (MCG) "has shot itself in the foot" by only allowing general plant operators holding a Certificate of Training Achievement (CTA) card on site, said Rick

Frost, general manager of Bracknell-based Readypower Rentals.

Readypower has over 100 non-CTA accredited competent opera-

tors and has already had employees turned away from sites.

"I think this decision will rebound in the spring when contractors will find a shortage of

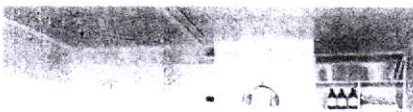

operators," said Frost. "In the meantime we'll have machines and kit tied up for re-assessment or sitting idle in the yard," he added.

Frost said the deadline should have been better publicised: "We are approved suppliers to some MCG members, but we didn't find out about the requirement until October. With more warning, even if we didn't like the decision, we could have made plans to deal with this requirement."

Frost said: "It's unclear whether or not local site managers are willing to let our experienced operators onto site while we have them assessed for a CTA card." The company aims for complete transferral to the CTA scheme by April.

● For operators of specific machines several cards, in addition to the CTA scheme, remain acceptable to the MCG. Most prominent is the PAL card from IPAF for operators of powered access machinery, as well as several cards covering fork-lift truck drivers.

LOADING UP: Volvo has scooped a £1.6m order for mobile plant from Lafarge Aggregates. The deal covers 10 wheeled loaders (four L180Ds, four L150Ds and two L120Ds), a 36t excavator (EC360) and a 40t ADT (A40D). All the machines are fitted with Groeneveld automatic greasing systems and an all-round visibility system, including EM/IR VT68 colour cameras and monitors from Vision Techniques. Both these packages are available as options from Volvo. Sporting the white Lafarge livery, most of the equipment will be deployed on sand and gravel extraction. Meanwhile, M&S Plant Hire has taken five 14t and one 21t excavators from Volvo. Previously M&S ran a mixed fleet and decided on Volvo following good experience with cross-hired machines.



BUNK-A-BIN



ITEM NO: 2000-014

PAUL

E Card crackdown

The Major Contractor's Group (MCG) has confirmed that plant operator card schemes not meeting its health and safety charter criteria will not be accepted on its sites from 1 January 2002.

Currently the only acceptable general plant scheme is the Certificate of Training Assessment (CTA). John Bradshaw, implementation manager for the charter, said that

Problems loom as MCG insists on N/SVQ based plant operators cards on its sites

the door for other schemes was not closed. But he added that operators currently working on MCG sites and holding other competency cards such as the Contractors Mechanical Plant Engineers

(CMPE) could be turned away. CMPE national secretary Tony Wood said that he was aware of the deadline. "We could see the ludicrous situation of competent operators being turned away at the

gate. Some of our members will adopt CTA just to keep the work, but it doesn't mean that we're not going to continue to fight on their behalf. We are also willing to take the lead for other specialist organisations and take whatever action is appropriate," he added.

Peter Griffiths of the Construction Industry Training Board said the CTA scheme had made provisions for extra applicants, although people who have not yet been trained would find it very difficult to meet the deadline.

Bovis Lend Lease has already expressed concerns it will fail to meet MCG deadlines unless it becomes easier to take the health and safety theory tests (CJ 31 October).

Bradshaw added that the number of overall assessors is also a matter of concern.



TAKING CARE: A mobile

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