



# TAKE THIRTY

## Introduction - Peter Baker

Welcome to our latest newsletter in an upgraded format, a platform where we share knowledge, good ideas and best practice from around the business.

This month we will discuss the safe use of Mobile Access Towers.

Though this is a regular & common activity, I believe the article will help us to rethink and therefore act proactively to avoid any work at height incidents in our workplace.

Read The “60 seconds with” section and see how one of our Charge hands, Mr. Ajay, took the lead to reduce the risk of a serious fire on site.

We spoke about Visible Leadership in the previous months edition, and Ajay’s intervention is a great example of someone taking the lead and helping to prevent what might have been far more serious.

Saravanan has included an article relating to Cape Town in South Africa, which should remind us of the importance of ensuring we manage water effectively.

Our From Around The World this month is relatively short, but one that sent a shiver down my spine when I first received it from Interserve in the UK.

Congratulations to the winner of last month’s puzzle winner, Aji Thankachan, and his decision to donate the prize money to Oman Autism Society.

## 60 Seconds with – Mr. Aksibar Nath (Ajay)

**Q. How long have you worked for Douglas OHI and what is your trade?**

A. I have worked for Douglas OHI for 16 years, and I am a Charge-hand.

**Q. What have been the biggest (HSE) changes you have noticed since you joined Douglas OHI?**

A. When I joined Douglas OHI, safety standards were already good, things are even better because HSE adviser numbers have increased and more importance is placed on Toolbox Talks.

**Q. You recently stopped a fire incident, what was it?**

A. An air compressor was on fire and we came to know it was due to overheating which was a result of mechanical failure.

**Q. What do you feel after doing this brave act?**

A. I felt proud that I have done something good for the company and my co-workers.

**Q. If we see something unsafe what should we do?**

A. We should intervene.

**Q. What should Douglas OHI should be proud of?**

A. Past work history of delivering a quality product on time.



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### Did you know ...

- The results of improvisation can go one of two ways, either well or devastatingly wrong.
- "I'm afraid we're at the 11th hour," says South African resource management expert Anthony Turton.
- "This would have ensured the lift was carried out in a safe manner".
- Be mindful - be more aware of the present moment, including your thoughts and feelings, your body and the world around you.

## Mobile Access Towers

Mobile access towers are widely used throughout our industry and if used properly can provide an effective and safe means of gaining access to work at height. They are generally quick and easy to erect and can be used in a multitude of situations to get the job done safely.

That said, inappropriate erection and misuse of mobile towers cause numerous accidents each year throughout the world.

Most people are aware that falls from height are the most common cause of fatality in the workplace, however many do not appreciate that the majority of people who fall do not fall from a great height, more often life changing injuries or much worse are as a result of relatively low-level falls (perhaps someone whose feet are around the average persons' head height i.e. working on a ceiling or similar)

Mobile towers can easily overturn if used incorrectly, they rely on all parts being in place to ensure adequate strength. They can collapse if sections are left out.

### Selecting work equipment

Before selecting or specifying a tower, you must be satisfied that it is the most suitable item of equipment for the job. This will include thinking about the type of work to be carried out, the duration, materials or equipment that will be used, the required platform height, location i.e. indoors outdoors, the foundation or the weather etc. There are a broad range of things to consider after which you may decide to use a tube and fitting or system scaffold or Mobile Elevating Work Platform. In other words, it requires a risk assessment.

When planning to use a tower, thought must be given beforehand to the required platform height and the components required to get, and keep, a person or people there safely. If the correct components are not available people will often "make do" or improvise.

The results of improvisation can go one of two ways, either well or devastatingly wrong.

Therefore, planning and supervision is an absolute requirement of any work activity and in particular when work is to be carried out at height.

### Erecting or dismantling a tower

Many types of mobile access towers are available. The manufacturer or supplier will provide an instruction manual which explains the erection sequence, including any bracing requirements. These things are often lost or misplaced but are important, the reality is if you ask 3 different people to erect a mobile tower, you are likely to get at least one incorrectly erected i.e. bracing missing or in the wrong place, handrails missing or more commonly a handrail that is too low.

The fitting of handrails is a problem with ceilings or other obstructions of a variable height, this is why planning is key. You may need longer or shorter end pieces to suit the specific working environment. Having thought about all these things, you may decide that a mobile tower isn't the most suitable piece of equipment, i.e. a MEWP or Push Around Vertical may be more suitable and efficient.

Dismantling is more often than not the reverse of the original erection process, however platforms must be cleared of tools and materials beforehand.

### Accessing the Tower

The safe way to get on or off a tower is from the inside, it's that simple. People climbing on the outside of the tower are at a significant risk and it is wrong. Difficulties arise when the tower is low in height or there are too many bracings in place. There are ways to access towers of a low height safely, it just needs to be thought about and discussed beforehand.

### Stopping people falling from the tower

By far the most effective way to achieve this is to erect the scaffold as it was designed to be erected, use outriggers if needed and have guardrails at a minimum of 950mm with no gap between guardrails exceeding 470mm. Tools & equipment can be prevented from falling by the use of Toe boards.

Above all, you must ensure that the person erecting the tower is trained and competent to do so, without the provision of a competent person, all of the above will be meaningless.



From the web : <http://www.hse.gov.uk/construction/safetytopics/scaffold.htm>

# SustainAbilities™

## Lesson from Cape Town—Time to act

City of four million people in Cape Town—one of Africa's most affluent metropolises with its dusty streets and dilapidated buildings; at present the military patrols are guarding water distribution points and barking orders over the PA; the long lines of despondent citizens carrying jerry cans waiting to be filled.

It's a depressing scene largely unimaginable in real life - until now?

Population growth and a record drought, perhaps exacerbated by climate change, is sparking one of the world's most dramatic urban water crises, as South African leaders warn that residents are increasingly likely to face "Day Zero." That's the day, now projected for mid-June, when the city says it will be forced to shut off taps to homes and businesses because reservoirs have become perilously low—a possibility, officials now consider almost inevitable.

For months, citizens have been urged to consume less, but more than half of residents ignored those volunteer restrictions. So earlier in January, the city requested even steeper cuts, asking residents to consume just 50 litres per day less than one-sixth of what the average American uses. If consumption doesn't drop steeply and quickly, city officials warned this week, everyone will be forced into Day Zero, where all will have to live on far less—about 25 litres a day, less than typically used in four minutes of showering.

Although the causes of Cape Town's crisis are multifarious and complex, the link to global climate change is unmistakable. As climate scientists at NASA and around the world have been warning us for decades, our unfettered addiction to climate-changing fossil fuels has produced a rate global warming not seen in human history. Sixteen of the 17 hottest years ever recorded occurred since 2001, with 2017 coming in second behind a sweltering 2016. Droughts are but one of a multitude of deadly impacts - from hurricanes and floods to forest fires and famines - which now affect every corner of the globe.

According to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, recent droughts in Southern as well as Eastern Africa have destroyed crops and left tens of millions of people food insecure, including almost 580,000 children suffering severe acute malnutrition in Southern Africa alone. Globally, drought-induced desertification now threatens the livelihoods of nearly one billion people in some 100 countries, according to the UN.

And even as the whole country of South Africa prays for rain, the South African Weather Service is not making any predictions, saying previous forecasting models have proved useless in the era of climate change.

The good news is that just as humans being created this situation, we can fix it too - if we act now.

As individuals, we can harness breakthrough technologies for our homes and businesses like solar photovoltaics, LED lighting, solar-powered heat pumps and electric cars to live free of fossil fuels and save money in the process. By saying no to plastic bags at the grocery store, buying from (local) companies, we can lower our carbon footprint even further.

These changes won't come easy. But as Capetonians are now demonstrating in their "fight against Day Zero," change is possible and it often takes a crisis to concentrate the mind. Here's hoping the rest of us will act against climate change before it's too late - [start acting to save water](#).

Your innovative suggestion to reduce our water consumption are most welcome - please contact us via [hsse@douglasohi.com](mailto:hsse@douglasohi.com).



"I'm afraid we're at the 11th hour," says South African resource-management expert Anthony Turton.

## From around the World (UK): Member of the public seriously injured by falling objects.

A woman is in critical condition after she was struck by debris that fell from a crane in East London.

Police said they were called to the site after the woman was apparently struck by falling debris from a crane on the Mile End site. A second person was also taken to hospital.

Pictures from the scene show bricks scattered across the floor at Higgins Homes' Bow Corner development between Burdett Road and St Paul's Way.

"We treated a woman at the scene for serious injuries and took her as a priority to a major trauma centre. We also took a second person to hospital."

Douglas OHI rarely work in such situations, however this incident should serve as a timely reminder of the danger posed by falling objects. Imagine if this happened to a friend or loved one?



## Questions

Who should erect a Mobile Access Tower? (pick one of the below)

1. A trained and competent person.
2. The person with the instructions.
3. The most experienced person on site.

Don't forget a donation of 10 OMR will be made to a charity of your choice. Write your name & employee No., scan and email to HSSE Department at [hsse@douglasohi.com](mailto:hsse@douglasohi.com).

## And Finally...

Our Joinery and Interiors team is working hard to complete their work in the new Muscat International Airport.

During the month of February, the team completed over 100,000 man hours and did so without recording a serious accident.

Neil Robson said "I am very proud of the efforts all our staff and employees are making to complete the work as safely as possible and to the standards expected by our clients. I recognize the challenges that they are overcoming on a day to day basis so I would like to thank them all for their dedication and commitment so far".

Contact HSSE Department:

We appreciate your feedback on our newsletter, and would welcome any articles, photos or questions. Simply email us at [hsse@douglasohi.com](mailto:hsse@douglasohi.com)

## Winner contributes to Cancer Charity

The HSSE department announced a cash prize donation which will be made to the charity of choice for every winner in the Take Thirty - HSSE bulletin puzzle context. The winner of January month issue Ms. Redha Mubarak working in project site at Sohar, cheerfully donated the cash prize she received to a cancer charity.

