



CALL TO ACTION

Graham Black looks forward to the second Plantworx show, this year at a larger venue with better facilities

The Plantworx machinery exhibition – organised by the Construction Equipment Association (CEA) – takes place on 2 to 4 June at Bruntingthorpe Aerodrome in Leicestershire, just off junction 20 of the M1. There are over 300 exhibitors on the 135,000-square-metre site who will be displaying a huge range of kit, from fuel browsers to the latest excavator technology. Our official preview will be in the next issue, but why not mark these dates in your diary today and register at www.plantworx.co.uk/ ticket for free entry?

Plantworx is not only an event for management to talk high finance, but it is also aimed at operators and service technicians. The cutting edge technology on display is probably more advanced than that found in the average on-road truck. It is therefore important that all those involved in making money from earthmoving kit have a better understanding of what they are dealing with.

There is not only a good business case for visiting Plantworx, but with working demonstrations, operator competitions and the opportunity to meet up with old friends, it also promises to be a good day out. But not just for adults, as Thursday afternoon of the show has been designed specifically for children and young adults.

The organisers of the event, in association with the Construction Plant-hire Association

(CPA) are inviting students and teachers from schools and colleges to visit the show. It is hoped that by seeing machinery working on the demo plots that it will encourage interest in the construction equipment industry, whether it be as a plant mechanic, an operator or an engineer.

The Training & Education Zone will also play a vital role in making the student afternoon a success. Hosted by the CPA, it is dedicated to colleges offering appropriate training and apprenticeships. The CPA will also be holding the 2015 'Stars of the Future' plant mechanic apprentice award on this day.

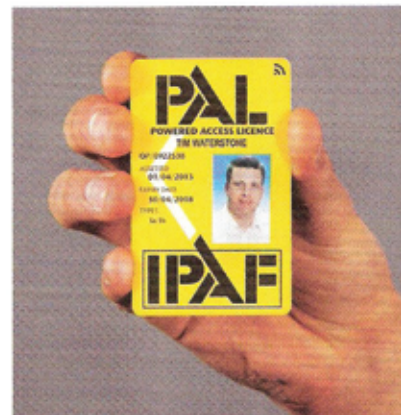
The show comes at a turning point for the UK construction equipment industry, not only as a result of a marked upturn in business activity, but also the introduction of Stage 4 emissions-compliant machinery. For a taste of what's coming our way, have a look at the latest version of Volvo's mid-range wheel loader and Caterpillar's hybrid excavator featured in this issue.

In addition, expect to see more types of hybrid-powered kit and the introduction of a range of new technologies impacting every aspect of a typical construction site. The broad scope of the products and technologies that will be on show is best illustrated by some of the pre-show innovation awards.



GOLD ELITE AWARD

Criminals are increasingly targeting diesel as an easy way to make money and fuel theft costs the industry millions of pounds a year. The overall winner of Plantworx 2015 innovation awards is Datatag's Venom system. This is a fuel additive that enables police to trace back the fuel to its rightful owner but, more importantly, acts as a significant deterrent.



SILVER ELITE AWARD

In a strong second place is the International Powered Access Federation (IPAF) with its smart card, designed to tackle the unacceptably high accident rate caused by untrained operators using such kit. This card has an embedded chip in it, which is read by a reader fitted to the machine. The system can be set up only to allow a qualified person to operate it.

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BRONZE ELITE AWARD

The judges identified Wacker Neuson's dual-fuel 803 mini-excavator as one of the most innovative entrants in this year's awards. It uses its diesel engine to travel across the site, before switching to electric drive to allow it to work in confined spaces or applications where any form of emissions cannot be tolerated.



HIGHLY COMMENDED: SAFETY

The safety category turned out to be one of the most hotly contested in the awards scheme. Entries ranged from a safer way to cut metal to a Brokk remote-controlled excavator. The glow-in-the-dark personal protective equipment (PPE) from GSS Elite was highly commended and earned the backing of several judges.



WINNER: EFFICIENCY

The Komatsu PC210i-10 excavator quite rightly won the award for efficiency. It features a new intelligent machine control system designed to work with digital mapping software. This makes the operator's work incredibly accurate first time around, saving time, minimising fuel consumption and avoiding the huge costs of over-digging.



HIGHLY COMMENDED: ENGINEERING

The engineering award was the broadest category in this year's awards and attracted a record number of entries from all corners of the industry. Well done to dealer Worsley Plant for a highly commended award for the Lehnhoff quick coupler, which allows powered attachments to be changed without the operator leaving the safety of the cab.

WINNER: ENGINEERING

The drive to meet Stage 4 engine emissions regulations, not surprisingly, continued to hog the environmental limelight. However, it was not the engines themselves that attracted the judges' attention, but rather the way in which clean power was harnessed. Against stiff competition, JCB's IntelliHybrid generator earned the plaudits in the engineering category.



HIGHLY COMMENDED: EFFICIENCY

With the new generation of Stage 4 machinery requiring a refill of AdBlue in addition to diesel, Western Global's new fuel bowser helps to overcome a specific on-site refuelling challenge. It stores and dispenses both fluids in a single easy-to-transport unit. Refilling with clean diesel and AdBlue is a pre-requisite to the long-term health of modern machinery.

BIM: VITAL TECHNOLOGY

Plantworx is the ideal opportunity to discuss the various machine guidance systems before the introduction of Building Information Modelling (BIM) for UK publicly-funded contracts. Under BIM earthworks contractors will be required to work from digital mapping files for major contracts, not from paper plans.