

# Shepherd Group's solution to working at height

## Reducing falls from vehicles case study 8

*This case study is part of a series, which give examples of good practice to reduce injuries due to falls from vehicles through sensible management of health and safety risks in the workplace.*

### The challenge

Shepherd Group Ltd has its own fleet of jackleg portable cabins that are used by their construction business as site accommodation. They are used as site cabins, offices and welfare facilities, or temporary accommodation at schools, hospitals, factories and many other premises.

When they are delivered they are usually craned from the back of the delivery vehicle by a mobile crane or lorry-mounted crane, fitted on the back of the lorry loader. Operatives had to mount the roof of the cabin to attach the lifting chains/slings at each of the four corners. This posed a dangerous risk of the operative falling from height.

### The answer

By working with their employees, they identified a solution to reduce work at height. The designed solution uses brackets, retrofitted to the bottom and top of each cabin jackleg. Four slings are then attached (one per leg)..



**Figure 1** Brackets, retrofitted to the bottom and top of each cabin jackleg.

### The results

The cabins can now be offloaded from the delivery vehicle using the lorry loader crane by attaching these slings to the new brackets on the bottom and top of the jacklegs, swinging the sling into place using a guide rope. The lift can take place once all four are in place. With practice, the slings are relatively easy to position from the ground. The cabin can be loaded and unloaded by the operator alone. It is a relatively quick method once the operator is familiar with swinging the slings into place over the brackets.



**Figure 2** A successful lift with slings in place

The only work at height that is necessary is when the cabins are required to be double or triple stacked. The connections that need to be secured when carrying out this work are at cabin height so a ladder is needed. Shepherds have designed a ladder that fixes securely to the cabin jackleg.



*Figure 3 Double stacked cabins*



*Figure 4 Specially designed ladder, fitted onto the cabin.*

Shepherd Group Ltd's solution has removed the need for work at height. The new system is fitted to the cabin so no extra equipment needs to be carried by the haulier. It was developed in consultation with the workforce, therefore co-operation from operatives has been positive.



*Figure 5 Lifting jackleg cabins from the base, removing the need for people to access the roof of the cabin or vehicle.*

Shepherd Group Ltd has also modified their equipment cages, using the same principle, allowing them to be unloaded from vehicles without operatives needing to access the bed of the vehicle and work at height.