



Lift & Escalator Industry Association

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To: ALL MEMBERS

Dear Member,

Following discussions with the HSE in relation to an accident on a paternoster in the Netherlands, the HSE have shared a summary of the incident with us for circulation to members. Please see this below.

Please be guided accordingly.

Regards

Nick Mellor

LEIA Technical Director



EMTA Awards Limited
Approved Assessment Centre

ELA Member of the
European Lift Association



Registered in England N° 3851206.
Registered office as above.



Summary of the Incident involving Paternoster Lift in the Netherlands

An elderly gentleman used the lift as part of attending a social function for retired employees. As an ex-employee he was familiar with the machine and its features. He was travelling in the downward direction with a colleague who stepped out first at the lower level. His colleague did not witness the entire event but was aware there was a problem and was able to activate the emergency stop. Unfortunately the deceased was found in the void area between the cage and lift shaft pit. The bearing supports of the moving safety step and its shielding plate were later found to have been severely damaged.

An important aspect highlighted by the investigation is the condition of the steps in the whole installation, in particular the conditions of steel fixings and the wooden step materials. It appears likely that many years of routine cleaning with water may have led to corrosion and general deterioration of the materials. Dutch colleagues have highlighted the potential for the corrosion to lead to accidents similar to this.

Implications and actions for Paternoster Operators within Great Britain

The small number of similar machines in GB are installed within non-domestic premises and as such the owners / operators of the lifts will be subject to the general requirements of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 "the Act". Where the lift is provided for use by employees then it is likely the same dutyholders will also be subject to the requirements of the Provision of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (PUWER) and the Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 (LOLER).

The legislation noted above place demands on dutyholders to carry out regular inspections and maintenance and, where appropriate, Thorough Examinations, to ensure continuing safe operation.

HSE would encourage operators of paternoster lifts to take into account the matters above, in particular the potential for cleaning chemicals to cause deterioration of steps and their bearing surfaces. Informed by an appropriate assessment of the risk they should review and where necessary modify the arrangements for maintenance and inspection of the devices. Any Thorough Examinations undertaken should take into account the prevailing condition of the lift and its suitability for continued use given its past use and maintenance arrangements. The matter should also be brought to the attention of any Competent Person carrying out Thorough Examinations.

We would like to state HSE is not attempting to restrict the use of these machines, merely to promote effective arrangements to ensure continued safe use.