



# Lift Owner News

## HSE Health and Safety bulletin:

### **Vertical lifting platforms or lifts for people with impaired mobility - potential falls from height risks to employees and members of the public from over-riding door locking safety devices**

Following accidents, including a fatal accident, the HSE published a bulletin which can be found at: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/safetybulletins/liftingplatforms.htm>

We understand that, on the sites the HSE bulletin refers to, landing doors were opened with an unlocking key by persons not trained and competent to do so, and that this led to the accidents described. The further concern was that the use of the unlocking key by untrained people in this way had become routine and uncontrolled.

The HSE bulletin echoes LEIA's concerns in two areas:

- unlocking keys must be controlled by the responsible person in building; and
- unlocking keys should be used only by trained and authorized persons.

#### **Control of unlocking keys**

Unlocking keys should only be provided with warnings informing the responsible person in the building that the keys are only to be used by trained and authorised persons and warning against use by unauthorised or untrained persons. The release procedures provided by the installer, as part of the owner's documentation handed over with the product, should reflect the same warnings.

It is vital that the building owner or responsible person in the building has charge of the unlocking key and ensures that it is provided only to those trained and competent to use it safely. The unlocking key should never be given to those not trained and assessed as competent to use it. The unlocking key should never be mis-used as a way of accessing the lift well except for the release of trapped passengers as detailed in the manufacturer's instructions.

#### **Training in release procedures**

The training of individuals in the responsible person's organisation or in the building is appropriate only in exceptional circumstances where suitable competent and trained persons are available. In cases such as described in the HSE bulletin, it is most unlikely that suitable people would be available. Reference should be made to the guidance in BS 7255.

Where the building owner or responsible person arranges for training in release procedures for persons in the building, the building owner or responsible person should assess the competence of those being offered for training or re-training (to maintain competence). The building owner or responsible person should ensure that the training provider is competent on the equipment and in training. If in any doubt about the suitability or competence of persons in the building to undertake rescue procedures, our advice would be "Don't do it" and leave it for the trained and authorised maintenance provider.