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Here could lie the answer to recent questions put forward by IOSH and the Health and Safety Executive: ‘How can we cut the number of deaths and serious injuries in the construction sector?’

The staggering 28 per cent rise last year of worker fatalities in construction has led to many high profile health and safety names calling for urgent action.

The ‘Eazi Lifter’, designed and manufactured by Norwich based Harnser Solutions Inc. could effectively eliminate all deaths associated with falls from height when fitting windows, whether it be the worker falling or an object hitting a bystander.

The innovative hand carried 11kg hoist allows a fitter to work from the safety of inside the building, completely eliminating the need for dangerous and potentially hazardous ladders.

The hoist is primarily manufactured to lift fully glazed and de-glazed windows up the outside of a building and into the window reveal, the fitter winding up and fitting from the safety of inside the room.

The time saving, money saving and most importantly life saving portable lifting device could revolutionise the way frames are installed and uninstalled on new build and refurb installation projects, a number of which projects nationwide are currently under enforcement notices for failure to comply with health and safety regulations.

In the South East, for example, 173 sites were visited by the HSE resulting in enforcement action in 33 cases – halting construction work immediately.

Stephen Williams, head of construction at the HSE, said: "Our inspectors were appalled at the apparent willingness to ignore basic safety precautions. It is completely unacceptable that so many lives have been put at risk."

Every month over 100 people fall off a ladder at work and suffer serious injury. There are 1200 fatal and major injuries as a result of falling off a ladder at work each year, costing the worker endless days away from the workplace when they could be earning, and losing the economy £60 million per annum.

Not only does the Eazi Lifter take away the strain on workers that carry heavy materials up ladders, it would ease that £60 million strain on the economy that results each year from worker injuries in the construction sector.

Harnser Solutions’ Managing Director and inventor of the Eazi Lifter Hoist, Jeff Crowder, believes the Eazi Lifter’s beauty lies in its simplicity of use.

“It takes a matter of seconds to fit the hoist into the window opening. Suction pads are

then attached to the fully glazed frame, or a sling to a de-glazed frame, then all that's left to do is wind up the window from the safety of inside the building and fix it into place", he said.

The portable lifting device has a safe working load rating of 125 kg (five times the 25 kg hand lifting limit recommended by the Health and Safety Executive) allowing for fitting of larger windows with minimal effort.

The Eazi Lifter can vertically extend to seven feet meaning that it can lift larger windows or doors for balconies, in fact any object, up to window level and comprises 50 feet of extendible rope allowing for lifting up to the fourth story.

If the object doesn't have glazing for suction pads to attach, then a sling device can be implemented to lift the load.

One of the Eazi Lifter's most intelligent components is its pivoting and rotating head facility allowing fully glazed frames to be fitted into raked head or sloping window reveals.

At only 11 kg the hoist rates as one of the lightest portable lifting devices on the market.

Jeff Crowder says: "Its dimensions are so compact that it could even fit behind the driver's seat of a vehicle were you pushed for space. It's simply a matter of carrying it from reveal to reveal within a building; it can even be used to fit windows as high as the fourth story of a building."

Jeff believes one of the major advantages of the Eazi Lifter over scaffolding and towers is the limited man power it takes to operate and install windows using the device.

"One man alone could complete the whole process of getting to a job, installing a number of windows and heading off to the next one before scaffolding was even erected for a normal two to four story project", he said.

Even in the case of scaffolding, the fitter still has the cumbersome and potentially dangerous job of struggling with a frame up a ladder, making it difficult to keep to the three points of contact rule set by the Health and Safety Executive.

Studies of window fitting practise have revealed that it is commonplace for a fitter to climb a ladder carrying a 25 kg frame using only two rungs for feet support while fitting with both hands.

Health and Safety guidelines set out in the Work at Height Regulations 2005 indicate that a ladder should only be used for access purposes and not to carry out work on.

But when working alone, to carry the recommended limit of 25 kg up a ladder requires both hands, therefore making it difficult to comply with the three points of contact rule.

The Eazi Lifter completely eliminates that dilemma by removing the need for ladders and having the power to lift five times the maximum load set by the 2005 Regulations.

With one fitter alone being able to lift and fit up to a 125 kg frame, productivity would almost certainly be increased as many more projects could be carried out per day.

This is only furthered by the fact that the Eazi Lifter allows for working in all weather conditions.

“Whether it’s sunny, raining or snowing a fitter can still carry out their jobs as they work from inside the building. The use of ladders in wet conditions is extremely dangerous, not only to the fitter but to those surrounding. With this device you’re not putting your life at risk every time you climb a ladder or work from a platform in wet or windy conditions”, says Jeff.

But it’s not only productivity that would be increased using an Eazi Lifter; profitability would correspond to the extra work the Eazi Lifter affords. Even a fitter’s vehicle longevity would be maximised due to the Eazi Lifter bringing with it only a 11 kg payload as opposed to the strain heavy access equipment puts a van under.

For awkward jobs such as fitting windows over conservatories, garages or porches for example, guide ropes are simply attached to the frame and wound up as normal with a second member of the team guiding the frame over the conservatory from the ground.

Price starts at £1495 the standard Eazi Lifter and provides a very cost effective solution to improving productivity and Health and Safety compliance.

Once bought it can be used on virtually all installation and refurb projects without having to purchase or hire in scaffolding or other access equipment. This can amount to many thousands of pounds saved every year in access equipment rentals.

Not only can the window hoist provide for a safer and more profitable business, Jeff Crowder believes it can provide a better quality of life for a fitter and their family.

“By using the Eazi Lifter, fitters are not as tired at the end of the day as they have not had to lug heavy frames up ladders or carry them up through buildings, meaning evenings and weekends can be used to spend quality time with the family or catch up with friends rather than having to recuperate ready for another strenuous week ahead. “With this a fitter vastly reduces the chance of injury because the work is far less strenuous lessening the chance of losing days to injury when they could be earning. It also opens up the possibility of a fitter working for longer in life, not having to retire early through injury or years of over exertion”, says Jeff.

Jeff Crowder and the Harnser team have also made it one of their priorities to use “green materials” such as stainless steel to manufacture the hoist from. Not only is the steel highly durable in use, it can be more readily recyclable at the end of its working life.

Although the Eazi Lifter has recently won significant orders from America and interest from various Europe countries, with adaptations being made to the hoist to fit the window styles of various markets, the company is determined to make a significant contribution to better health and safety practise first and foremost in this country.

The Eazi Lifter’s creator said: “It’s nice to have interest from around the globe but we really want to bring the device into the British public’s eye to let them know that there is a completely safe and economical way to fit windows that’s going to save money, save time and save lives”.