

**Press release – FINAL – February 3, 2012
FOR IMMEDIATE PUBLICATION**

World first Telescopic Handler Association formed

In a world first, the Telescopic Handler Association of Australia (TSHA) has been formed to manage all aspects of the versatile telescopic handler and address market confusion about compliance and safety issues.

Officially convened in December 2011, the TSHA, a separate division of the Elevating Work Platform Association (EWPA), has now set its mission statement, parameters of operation and jurisdiction and has elected its first executive and operating committees.

When first launched in the early 1990s, telescopic handlers (telehandlers) were designed as a variable reach forklift. While they have been available for over 20 years, the popularity of telehandlers only began to rapidly increase in Australia six to seven years ago. This increase in popularity stemmed largely from the machine's very versatile nature and ability to manage many different jobs with a simple attachment change.

The EWPA recognised the risks associated with telehandler changes once different attachments were fitted to the machine. In response, the EWPA formed the EWPA Telescopic Handler Committee in the mid naughties. This committee has now been formalised as the TSHA, a separate sub division of the EWPA.

The inaugural President of the TSHA, Stuart Walker, Managing Director at Manitou Australia, officially elected in December said: "Australia has a long history of being a global leader in safety and innovation and we are again showing that leadership in the establishment of the Telescopic Handler Association of Australia.

"Major telehandler manufacturers, including Manitou, Dieci, Genie, Haulotte, JLG, and Merlo have played an important role in the establishment of the TSHA.

"As the use of Telescopic Handlers gained acceptance in the Australia and Pacific region it became clear an industry body was required to act as a conduit for information on the benefits and safe use of telescopic handlers to industry, customer/users, government regulators and other stakeholders.

"Because telehandlers are such versatile tools, it is vital end users are educated in its safe and efficient use and it is equally important the industry monitors safety standards."

Objectives of the TSHA formalised at last December's meeting include:

- To be the principle reference for lifting and materials handling in the Australian community.
- To gain recognition and educate Australian industry in the safe and effective use of the telescopic handler concept.
- To provide the tools to develop and educate industry in the safe and effective use of the telescopic handler in the interests of improving safety and productivity in the workplace.
- To be the resource for industry, construction and agricultural industries in the safe use and maintenance of telescopic handlers in Australia.
- Represent member interests in the pursuit of a self-regulated, safe and unified telescopic handler industry throughout Australia.

"The TSHA has been working to educate potential buyers of their obligations under Australian Standards, AS1418.19 and AS2550.19 which pertain to telehandlers," Mr Walker said.

Since the publication of Australian Standards AS1418.19 and AS2550.19 relating to the design and use of Telescopic Handlers in early 2008, the EWPA has taken an active interest in the development of the Australian Standard relating to telehandlers, making numerous submissions on behalf of its industry members and end users.

“Much of the market’s confusion stemmed from the different technologies being utilised to achieve compliance with the Standards, and also from the different compliance requirements for the various attachments that can be fitted to a telehandler,” Mr Walker said.

“In the end, the Australian Standard for telehandlers recognised when there is a requirement for a crane application on a telehandler, crane standards needed to be incorporated.

“Now the Telehandler Standard offers as much safety as the Crane Standard for freely suspended loads,” Mr Walker said.

“We see great benefits in working with manufacturers, suppliers and stakeholders to get our message across with a common voice.

“We face some big challenges to ensure people know their obligations, especially under Standards such as AS2550.19 Safe Use and Maintenance of Telescopic Handlers. This Standard applies to owners of machines so manufacturers have an obligation and duty of care to ensure people understand their obligations,” Mr Walker said.

The TSHA now states all EWPA member telehandler manufacturers offer Australian Standard compliant machines. Ultimately, the message from the TSHA is one of safety.

“Our aim is to ensure a common message to the end user so we can ensure telescopic handlers are used for their intended purposes, ensuring complete safety,” Mr Walker said.

A new TSHA website has been launched featuring public domain access. This site provides current information on telehandlers as well as recent meeting notes from the TSHA.

For more information or to join the TSHA, telehandler operators and end-users can contact the TSHA on 1800 015 166 or visit: www.tsha.com.au or contact: Stuart Walker, TSHA President: s.walker@manitou.com

Ends.

Caption: The new logo of the Telescopic Handler Association of Australia.

**Authorised and released by the Elevating Work Platform Association of Australia.
PO Box 1304 Mona Vale NSW 1660. Ph: 02 9998 2222 web: www.ewpa.com.au**

For more information about this release, contact:
Allison Leo – The Leo Partnership – ph: 02 6687 2607
email: allieleo@bigpond.net.au