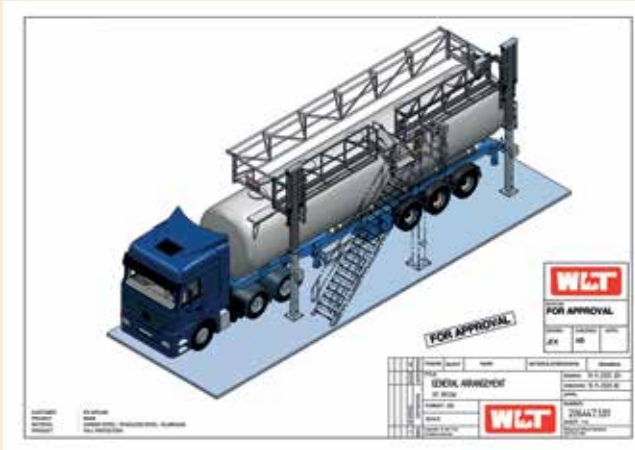




21033 Truck gantry for safe working at height

Imerys Aluminates Limited > West Thurrock **3**



DESCRIPTION

In 2020, at Imerys Aluminates' West Thurrock site there was an incident where migrants were discovered inside one of their raw material tankers arriving from continental Europe. The police were called and thankfully, all were safe and well.

This event highlighted the need to inspect all incoming tankers for illegal migrants before pumping off. It also highlighted that while there was a safe system for accessing tankers and opening ports at the loading stations, it relied on drivers using their single handrail, this still exposed them to a work at height risk.

To mitigate this risk, a harness gantry system was considered. Imerys recognised that this type of system would require drivers being trained to use a harness. Many of the drivers using the site were first time visitors, did not speak English, and were unlikely to be registered on some of the existing card systems used within the industry to check what training they had. Checking whether a driver was harness trained would be very difficult. A rescue system would still be required if someone fell with a harness gantry system.

Based on the hierarchy of control, it was decided that engineering out the problem was the answer. A site project team, working with a supplier, designed and installed a pneumatic gantry that lowers around the top of the truck creating a hand railed box for the driver to work safely in. The height can be adjusted to accommodate different tanks and has a pneumatic gate at the back to allow adjustments to the length of the box for shorter tankers.

The gantry is located under a camera which allows it to be watched in the front office at all times. The system is interlocked, to ensure that the gantry is returned to the start position before exiting, avoiding the possibility of a driver attempting to leave whilst the gantry is still lowered.

Tankers can be safely accessed to inspect them, and, if any migrants were to be discovered they can be safely rescued. Drivers can install security lines safely.

The system and controls are very basic and easy to use. Drivers are escorted by one of the Imerys team to use the gantry. Training in the use of the gantry has been given to customer service and production control room staff and the yard supervisor to ensure there is a team of people on-site that are competent to move and use the gantry safely.

BENEFITS

- The system allows Imerys employees to work safely at height
- Does not rely on PPE and harness systems, removing requirements to manage this
- Searching for and removal of unauthorised 3rd parties can be undertaken safely
- Drivers can work safely on top of their tanker
- Drivers like the system and are impressed with the installation.

TRANSFERABILITY AND DEVELOPMENT

- The system has been shared with other Imerys sites
- System could be used at other company and industry sites.

