

PCN online learning platform boosts heavy lift know-how

Training is a key aspect to any discussion about safety. Earlier this year, the Project Cargo Network (PCN) launched its own custom-built online eLearning platform to address the apparent lack of training and staff development opportunities in the heavy lift and project cargo sector, especially for new and young staff members. HLPFI's own newcomer, Paul Lucas, test drove the platform and brings us this critique.

The Project Cargo Network (PCN) eLearning platform is an online tool aimed at those starting out in the world of heavy transport, as well as established industry professionals looking to refresh their skills.

Available to members of the PCN network, each of the course's six-modules is broken down into bitesize sessions of 10 minutes. The sessions cover industry terminology, dimensions, weights and forces, heavy transport, heavy lifting, jacking, skidding and loadouts.

Having only been in the world of project logistics for a short time – albeit as a non-practitioner – I jumped at the chance of undertaking the training with my colleague Sonny Prior.

Wealth of information

Marco van Daal, an experienced lecturer, speaker, trainer and author on technical matters related to the business, delivers the training modules. van Daal's knowledge on the subject matter is evident, and he presents the information in a clear and concise manner. A wealth of information is packed into the 10-minute sessions, and the formulas and calculations for someone starting out in the industry can make the



sessions quite challenging. I would certainly recommend having a calculator to hand for some of the more mathematical sections.

Diagrams and photos are used to illustrate different scenarios throughout the training, which is useful. While diagrams are good for illustrating a point, some of the photos do not have quite the same

effect. In addition to the diagrams and photos, videos are used to show examples of what is being covered in a module. These are very useful as they help with the understanding of specific scenarios.

Several tests, placed strategically throughout the modules, must be passed before participants can move on to the next

LMA course focuses on key principles

Another organisation offering distance learning for the heavy lift and project forwarding sector is Lloyd's Maritime Academy (LMA), a leading brand for professional development.

It offers a course in which students study the key principles involved in heavy lift operations and receive a LMA Professional Development Certificate on successful completion.

Hubert Schaafsma, course director, from Blue Sea Marketing, said: "The course is for people who are working in the maritime industry and need to obtain basic knowledge and understanding of the heavy lift and project cargo sea transport industry."

LMA's Certificate in Heavy Lift is a new addition to its portfolio and comprises seven modules:

- Module One** – Introduction to the heavy lift sector
- Module Two** – Heavy lift fundamentals

Module Three – Heavy lift operations

Module Four – Using heavy lift equipment

Module Five – Cranes

Module Six – Health and safety

Module Seven – Project management

The distance learning course covers the breadth of how heavy lift operations work, from the science behind heavy lifting to the chartering of exceptional transport and the health and safety risks involved. Schaafsma said that students will understand the vital role that heavy lift and project cargo activities play in marine and offshore logistics, and how these affect the industry.

The next course starts on November 28, 2017, and is run over 14 weeks on a part-time basis. It is delivered online with support from leading industry experts.

stage. Failure to pass at the first attempt results in you being re-presented with those questions that you answered incorrectly, until you provide the correct answers.

Another helpful feature of the platform is being able to pause the training at your convenience and start again when you are ready. Not having to travel to a training centre and sit in a classroom for long periods is also beneficial.

Value for money

With the cost of a one- or two-day industry-based workshop elsewhere amounting to between GBP220 (USD300) and GBP1,200 (USD1,500) per person, the PCN has devised a tiered pricing structure to make the programme more cost effective.

For one or two participants the cost is GBP250 (USD330) per user. For three to five participants the cost is GBP200 (USD260) per user. For five or more participants you will pay GBP150 (USD198) per user.

I understand there are plans to include more advanced modules. If this is the case it may be an idea to re-design the learning



The PCN course is aimed at both newcomers and established professionals.

into two categories, one for beginners and one for intermediate, and another for advanced participants. This would make the information more digestible for those starting out in the world of heavy lift and project forwarding.

Overall, I would say that the training

platform is affordable and delivers information that is excellent value for money.

Having completed the modules, I can now say that my understanding of the world of heavy transport is much improved thanks to the PCN. **HLPFI**

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