

A SPECIAL CROP OF LIFTERS

BY GREG KEANE

To say that Camden (NSW) company Cavanagh Cranes & Transport (Cavanaghs) is innovative is like saying that the Australian team is OK at netball: a massive understatement.

The crane trucks are probably the most “normal” items in the fleet although having some cranes mounted on Unimog extreme all wheel drive trucks is certainly unusual in Australia, although more common in Europe.

The first telehandler in the fleet is definitely unique, being the first Dieci slewing telescopic handler fitted with Hi-Rail and a range of attachments suitable for rail maintenance work.

Cavanaghs operates in the Sydney, Hunter and South Coast regions, and concentrates on specialised civil construction in areas such as pole and light replacement, cable installation and rail maintenance.

The crane trucks (both rigid and semi trailer) cart poles to site and install them with the onboard cranes.

Cable stands with Hydrologic brake locks can be carried on the trucks and used for running out cable either from the truck or on the ground.

A Unimog U1250 crane truck is fitted with a crane that is good for 500 kilograms at 10 metres, and can get into areas that even conventional 4x4 trucks could not. However it has other benefits, with the factory standard power take-off points at the front, rear and centre of the chassis allowing a wide range of tools and attachments to be fitted.

The Cavanaghs Unimog carries a hydraulic hand-guided compactor and a demolition saw, as well as slings, a spreader bar and lifting chains. Its crane (like all Cavanaghs crane trucks) has remote control, a personal proximity cut-out and an overload cut-out to prevent tipping.

A Hi-Rail Dieci 45.19 Rail Master slewing telehandler is the latest addition to the fleet, and the first slewing Rail Master model in Australia. As the model designation suggests, it has a maximum capacity of 4.5 tonnes and a reach of 19 metres.

The Hi-Rail allows use on both standard and broad gauge rail, and the Dieci can also tow a 22-tonne rail trailer, allowing it to be self-sufficient in many types of work.

Attachments include a man basket, forks, a rhino hook and a carriage-mounted 3.8-tonne capacity winch. The man basket has a hydraulic extension to 4.2 metres and a capacity of



Hi-Rail Mecalec boring a hole for a pole



Mecalec placing a pole with a pole clamp



Dieci with work basket, from which the telehandler can be operated



Prime mover crane truck with trailer can transport and erect poles



Unimog crane truck setting a pole

600 kilograms, and both the basket and the winch can be radio controlled.

When asked how the purchase of the Dieci telehandler came about, Sam Cavanagh said, “I took my time in looking at all brands of telehandler and what could be offered as a base product, which led me to the Hi-Rail Dieci 45.19 Railmaster telehandler.

“From there, it just seemed the most logical decision to make. The Railmaster that we purchased fills a gap where other Hi-Rail telehandlers fall short.”

Sam explained that Hi-Rail system was an integral part of the Dieci telehandler rather than being an aftermarket bolt-on attachment, and he believes that this puts his Dieci machine “light years ahead of what is currently being offered by suppliers in the rail sector.

He said, “In an environment heightened by an ever-growing awareness of safety while on site, The Hi-Rail Dieci 45.19 Railmaster telehandler stands out.

Its 3B6 Load Management System with attachment recognition allows the telehandler’s onboard computer system to recognise which



Dieci Rail Master with pallet forks

attachment it is connected to and adjust its load chart accordingly, all while being able to traverse forwards and backward with occupants in the work platform, and without the use of its outriggers.”

Sam is proud that Cavanaghs is currently the only company in Australia to offer the Hi-Rail Dieci 45.19 Railmaster, and that it is recognised by WorkCover as complying with Australian Standards AS1418.10 and AS1418.5. He states that the rail sector demands high safety standards, and that he was taking orders for the Dieci before he had even taken delivery of it.

“Since touching ground it hasn’t stopped working. What a great machine!” he enthused.