

Buying a Used Cherry Picker Truck

A condensed buyer's guide to assessing a used truck-mounted EWP — for buyers and procurement managers.

A used truck-mounted EWP is really two assets in one: an access machine and the vehicle that carries it. It can be an excellent buy, but only if you assess both halves properly and understand where the machine sits in its compliance lifecycle. This condensed guide sets out what to weigh before committing.

START WITH THE HISTORY & LOGBOOK

- %A complete logbook with recorded pre-start, routine and periodic inspections by a competent person.
- %The date of manufacture, which sets the 10-year major inspection clock regardless of when you buy.
- %Major inspection certification if the machine has already passed the 10-year mark.
- %Operator and service manuals for the specific model of EWP.
- %Service records for the base vehicle.

TIME TO THE NEXT MAJOR INSPECTION

The most commonly overlooked cost in a used EWP purchase is the looming major inspection. Because the 10-year clock runs from manufacture (subject to the manufacturer's requirements), a machine that is eight or nine years old is close to a significant planned expense and a period of downtime, while one freshly through its major has that behind it. Neither is inherently a bad buy — but the position in the cycle should be reflected in the price.

STRUCTURAL & NDT RED FLAGS

- %Cracks, prior weld repairs or deformation in the boom, chassis, platform or guardrails.
- %Wear or play in pins, bushes, slew ring and pivot points.
- %Corrosion, especially on machines that have worked in coastal or marine environments.
- %Hydraulic leaks, tired hoses, cylinder drift or poor fluid condition.
- %Safety devices — interlocks, emergency lowering, overload and tilt systems — that fail a functional check.

INSULATED UNITS — DIELECTRIC CERTIFICATION

If the machine is an insulated EWP used for live-line or near-live work, its insulating properties are a safety-critical feature that degrades in service. Confirm there is current dielectric test certification and that testing has followed the applicable standard and the manufacturer's requirements — do not assume an insulated unit is still rated without the paperwork to prove it.

THE TRUCK ITSELF

- %Assess the base vehicle as you would any used truck — engine, driveline, brakes, tyres and chassis corrosion.
- %Satisfy yourself about registration and roadworthy status; requirements vary by jurisdiction and change over time, so confirm the current obligations where the truck will be registered and operated.
- %Remember the combination — vehicle plus mounted EWP — needs to be legally able to travel and work, not just each half in isolation.

WHY A PRE-PURCHASE INSPECTION PAYS FOR ITSELF

Where the records or condition of either the EWP or the truck leave any doubt, an independent pre-purchase inspection by a competent person is a modest cost against the price of a mistake. An assessor can verify the structural condition, flag an approaching major inspection, and give you an evidence-based view before you commit. To arrange a pre-purchase inspection, call 0416 689 689.

