

Changing tide

AERIALS20 fleet numbers by year

	2015	2014	% change	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
TOP 5	216,801	215,965	1.44%	200,327	189,268	158,733	161,084	169,284	182,710
TOP 10	271,651	266,300	2.00%	244,517	222,783	201,824	198,195	208,084	224,530
TOP 20	294,753	289,982	2.32%	265,615	241,522	222,281	220,964	231,614	245,387

ALH A20 AERIAL PLATFORMS

The A20 shows an overall increase compared to last year's figures, but within the top five companies, there are some fleet adjustments while mid-sized and independents show gains. ALH reports.

It's been one year since our last AERIALS20 top list and the market shows signs of steadiness. The top 20 rental companies in North America showed an overall gain of 2.32 percent with a total of 294,753 aerials compared to last year's 288,071, however, numbers across the board are varied with some large rental companies reducing fleets while mid-sized and independents experience growth. Once again, at the top of the AERIALS20 is



Able Equipment Rental increased its aerial fleet by 11 percent this year.

United Rentals. The company decreased its fleet by -4.79 percent from last year's 108,700 aerials to 103,490 this year. Despite this leveling out for the world's largest rental company, rental revenues for United Rentals hit \$1.22 billion in the second quarter of 2015, a year-on-year increase of 3.5 percent. United revised its forecast for the full year, saying utilization is expected to hover around 67 percent as opposed to their original quote of 69 percent.

Michael Kneeland, chief executive officer of United, says, "The adverse impacts from the drop in oil and gas activity as well as industry fleetings were greater than we anticipated and,

as a result, we've updated our outlook on our 2015 targets.

"Demand for our equipment is clearly there, and our industry is expected to benefit from solid growth in the years ahead as oil drilling stabilizes and rental fleet is absorbed. Industry experts are projecting years of growth ahead, led by the ongoing rebound in non-residential construction."

Of the top five rental companies, United wasn't the only firm to decrease its fleet. Ahern Rentals also downsized its aerial fleet by -7.77 percent from last year's 20,405 units to this year's 18,819. That said, a bright spot shines in

RANK 2015	RANK 2014	COMPANY	FLEET 2015	FLEET 2014	% CHANGE 2014-2015	FLEET 2013	FLEET 2012	HEAD OFFICE	WEBSITE	PHONE
1	1	United Rentals	103,490	108,700	-4.79%	107,341	101,829	Greenwich, CT	www.ur.com	800-877-3687
2	2	Sunbelt Rentals	(est) 53,345	49,406	7.97%	40,332	34,000	Fort Mill, SC	www.sunbeltrentals.com	800-667-9328
3	3	Hertz Equipment Rental	24,447	20,704	18.08%	20,460	18,650	Park Ridge, NJ	www.hertzequip.com	888-777-2700
4	4	Ahern Rentals	18,819	20,405	-7.77%	18,894	18,894	Las Vegas, NV	www.ahern.com	800-400-1610
5	7	Sunstate Equipment	16,700	14,500	15.17%	13,000	9,500	Phoenix, AZ	www.sunstateequip.com	888-399-4826
6	6	NES Equipment Rental Co.	15,500	15,000	3.33%	13,300	15,895	Deerfield, IL	www.nesrentals.com	900-637-7368
7	5	H&E Equipment Services	14,900	16,750	-11.04%	13,200	13,100	Baton Rouge, LA	www.he-equipment.com	877-410-4242
8	8	BlueLine Rental	(est) 14,800	11,235	31.73%	9,675	3,000	Asheville, NC	www.volvorentsconstructionequipment.com	828 650 2000
9	9	Briggs Equipment	5,000	4,950	1.01%	4,850	4,150	Dallas, TX	www.briggsequipment.com	214-630-0808
10	10	Equipment Depot	(est) 4,650	4,650	0.00%	4,300	1,860	Waco, TX	www.eqdepot.com	800-835-2128
11	11	Star Rentals	(est) 3,700	3,650	1.37%	3,465	3,300	Olympia, WA	www.starrentals.com	800-825-7880
12	13	Neff Rental	2,500	2,502	-0.08%	3,000	2,750	Miami, FL	www.neffrental.com	888-709-6333
13	16	High Reach Co.	2,484	2,211	12.35%	1,876	1,420	Sanford, FL	www.hr2fl.com	800-860-1648
14	15	Admar Supply Co. Inc	2,350	2,242	4.82%	2,015	1,900	Rochester, NY	www.admarsupply.com	800-836-2367
15	14	All Aerials (All Family of Companies)	2,300	2,466	-6.73%	2,942	2,424	Cleveland, OH	www.allcrane.com	216-986-5190
16	17	Simplex Equipment Rental	(est) 2,000	2,000	0.00%	2,140	2,160	Montreal, Canada	www.simplex.ca/en	800-361-1486
17	20	Voisin's Equipment Rental	1,878	1,623	15.71%	1,300	1,225	Aberfoyle, Ontario, Canada	www.voisinrentals.com	877-967-5438
18	19	WesternOne Equipmment Sales & Rentals	1,290	1,630	-20.86%	N/A	N/A	Calgary, Alberta, Canada	www.westernone.ca	877-875-9378
19	22	American Scissor Lift	1,150	850	35.29%	825	700	Stockton, CA	www.americanscissor.com	209-466-3867
20	21	Able Equipment Rental	1,086	978	11.04%	596	423	Deer Park, NY	www.ableequipment.com	866-468-2666
21	24	Ideal Crane Rental Inc.	668	607	10.05%	465	459	Madison, WI	www.idealcranerental.com	608-241-4092
22	23	Kropp Equipment, Inc.	630	630	0.00%	625	600	Streamwood, IL	www.kroppequipment.com	866-402-2222
23	25	Randall Industries	600	382	57.07%	540	527	Elmhurst, IL	www.randallind.com	630-833-9100
24	NEW	Birch Equipment Co., Inc.	466	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Bellingham, WA	www.birchequipment.com	360-734-5744

the top five with Sunstate Equipment jumping two spots from seventh to fifth. The ever-growing company bumped up its aerials fleet by 15.17 percent from 2014's 14,500 units to this year's 16,700 units.

Sunstate has experienced growth each year since the inception of the AERIALS20 top list. When the list was started in 2008, Sunstate had 5,700 aerials, which it has grown year-on-year (6,700 in 2009; 7,100 in 2010; 7,300 in 2011; 9,500 in 2012; and 13,000 in 2013).

Some of the major change on the list this year comes from acquisitions. Trico Lift, a long AERIALS20 stalwart, was purchased by BlueLine Rental and Chicago-based Metrolift now belongs in the hands of Sunbelt Rentals.

Sunbelt continues its expansion in North America this year with a number of location purchases and openings. Parent company Ashtead Group says the company will open 50 new locations across the U.S. in response to a 25 percent year-on-year rise in operating profit for the first quarter of its 2015/16 financial year.

Ashtead told investors, "The majority of our markets are very strong with good long-term prospects," adding that it expected "multi-year growth from strong end markets" and that the impact of oil and gas on the group had been "overstated."

Overall, construction put in place in the U.S. for the 12 months to the end of August was up

13.7 percent on a year ago to \$1.09 trillion, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. This is the highest US construction output has been for seven years.

August saw residential construction for the rolling 12-month period rise some 16.4 percent from where it was a year ago to \$390 billion. Meanwhile, the value of non-residential construction was up 12.3 percent to \$696 billion.

There was growth across the board in the non-residential construction sector, apart from in religious buildings, which account for only a fraction of a percentage of the market. The most striking growth was in construction of manufacturing facilities, which was up 57.6 percent compared to a year ago, to \$92.6 billion for the rolling 12 months. There was also strong growth in office, commercial and amusement and recreation construction.

Most of the growth in general over the last 12 months has come from the private sector. Privately funded construction was up 16.5 percent at the end of August compared to a year ago at \$788 billion. This equates to 72.5 percent of U.S. construction output. Publicly funded construction was up only 7 percent over the same period to \$298 billion.

Related, the American Rental Association (ARA) is projecting U.S. equipment rental revenues to top \$50 billion by 2018, representing more than 7 percent growth each year. The report said the outlook for the next five years remains strong, despite slower demand from the mining and oil and gas sectors. The ARA expects this to be offset by revenues from commercial and residential construction.

With that outlook, it will be interesting to see how the AERIALS20 pans out next year. Will it be flat? Down? Up? We'll have to wait and see. ■

AERIALS20 survey details

Research for ALH's AERIALS20 list was carried out during the summer of 2015. Where companies were unwilling to provide data, we made our own estimates based on company financial reports and advice from industry contacts. We thank those who participated and made our list stronger than ever.

If your company should be listed on next year's A20, please contact Lindsey Anderson, Editor, at (312) 929-4409 or by emailing lindsey.anderson@khl.com.