



ALI - Automotive Lift Institute

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By Tammy Miser

About ALI

[ALI](#) (Automotive Lift Institute) is a non-profit trade association comprised of North American manufacturers of automotive lifts. ALI does not design or sell lifts however ALI is accredited by [ANSI](#) (American National Standards Institute) to perform automotive lift product certification and they are also accredited as a Nationally Recognized Standards Development Organization. ALI's mission statement demonstrates a clear vision and concern for the safe construction, installation, and use of automotive lifting products. The three ANSI standards that ALI maintains are :

1. ANSI ALCTV (Automotive Lift Construction Testing & Validation)
2. ANSI ALOIM (Automotive Lift Operation, Inspection & Maintenance)
3. ANSI ALIS (Automotive Lift Installation & Service)

New Leadership

In his role as ALI's President and CEO, R.W. O'Gorman has not let his short period of time at ALI keep him from making big changes that are getting noticed by the industry. ALI is active in promoting safety and awareness for the entire industry. Since initially joining the Institute as ALI's Executive Vice President in January of 2005, Robert has recharged ALI by:

1. Gaining New Standards - [ANSI/ALI ALCTV-1998](#) became fully effective on April 1, 2000. At that time the previous standard entitled "ANSI/ALI B153.1-1990" was withdrawn - this standard is no longer recognized for newly produced or newly installed products. It should be noted, that prior to ANSI/ALI ALCTV-1998, the B153 series of standards that existed only allowed for the process of a manufacturer to "self declare" compliance to the National Standard. On May 4th, 2006, The Institute under Mr. O'Gorman's leadership gained approval of a revised ANSI standard that will replace ANSI/ALI ALCTV-1998 in approximately 18 months. This standard will be entitled ANSI/ALI ALCTV-2006. Like the 1998 version of ALCTV, both of these performance standards require independent third party testing and product certification to demonstrate compliance to the National Standard. Validation by a qualified third party such as ALI and the laboratories they work with closely assures such things the lift user often would not consider such as certified steel, documented welder qualifications, a strong production facility quality plan. Other points more common to the lift operator include "rated load capacity". This rating includes an industry standard ratio to provide a safety factor so that catastrophic failure does not become an event within the shop environment. It is important to stress that neither ALI nor the credible manufacturers that produce lifts believe a lift operator should ever place more load on an automotive lift than is presented on the lifts rated lifting capacity (each lift is clearly marked with this value). The most common lifts in a small service or repair facility are "rated" at 7,000 and 9,000 pounds. A visit to ALI's website will demonstrate models capable of lifting more than 50K pounds! Skipping over the technical details, such as stress calculations, finite element analyses (FEA), etc., the load test and other evaluations contained within the ALCTV standard that are used to evaluate a lifts capacity and compliance should be left to the professional laboratories that work with ALI and are recognized by OSHA to perform these and other tests (such as compliance to the UL201 standard to determine compliance with Electrical requirements for Garage Equipment). ALI is currently working through the process of developing a new draft of the ANSI ALOIM standard so that it may be submitted to ANSI for approval.

2. Updating and Renewing Safety Materials - Within the last 12 months ALI has invested heavily to update existing safety materials that are counted on heavily by responsible manufacturers, vocational schools, risk managers, shop owners, and technicians. The Institute is currently developing supplementary warning labels that will be available later this year in both French and Spanish. They recently released an update to the Lift Safety Tips Card - typically hung on a lift or throughout the service garage area as a reminder of important aspects to consider regarding a lift. ALI will also be releasing a new safety DVD in October. This new DVD includes a test that can be reproduced and placed into the employee or the vocational school tech's training file. The Institute's most exciting development perhaps is ALI's LP Guide CD-ROM - This is an ALI sponsored Vehicle Lifting Points/Quick Reference Guide for Frame Engaging Lifts covering 20 years of domestic and imported cars and light trucks. This CD-ROM has been hailed by risk managers and corporate training managers as an upfront risk management tool in the shop .

3. Hosting ALI's first Public Conference – You can meet Mr. O’Gorman and other lift industry leaders during the [AAPEX](#) & [SEMA](#) Show in Las Vegas on November 1st. This will be an educational Panel Discussion. Beginning August 1st you can check the ALI site for more details.

4. Developing Strategic Safety Alliances - BFRS (Bridgestone Firestone Retail and Commercial Services) and TIA (the Tire Industry Association) are the first organizations to form Strategic Safety Alliances with the Institute. Each program under this offering is unique but all focus to further the aspect of lift safety training throughout their respective organizations. For more information about forming a Strategic Safety Alliance contact ALI.

5. Educating Authorities Having Jurisdiction - Often a lift purchaser attempts to save a buck when purchasing a non certified automotive lift. ALI has been working with code officials and other regulators to help educate code officials inspecting a garage environment to understand that the International Building Code (accepted in 45 states) requires a lift to be compliant with the ANSI ALCTV Standard...this includes the provision of a third party certification and factory inspection program. New York State 's Building Code now requires the same for all lifts installed. It is likely other states will follow this model, but until they do, the buyer must be aware or they may purchase a lift that is not legal to install in their municipality or even worse, the non certified lift could be cause for the loss of life or limb.

During my interview with Mr. O’Gorman he urged "anyone buying, servicing, installing and/or working with lifts to become aware of the differences between a certified and non certified lift". Mr. O’Gorman stated "In today's environment you can buy a lift on Ebay, attempt to install it and in a day be working under it. The risk that the employer is putting themselves and the employees in is not worth it considering the low cost of our [safety materials](#), and the ease of the Institute's process for product [certification](#). We believe our new Lifting Points CD Rom will help reduce injurys, deaths and OSHA citations. The lifting points CD ROM is an easy guide that enables you to insert a vehicle model and gain a diagram of the exact lifting points for that particular vehicle". Mr. O’Gorman also explained that "many mistake the UL component recognition mark for an implication of product certification, in order for a lift to be certified it must pass electrical and structural standards by a third party like [ETL](#), [MET](#) or [UL](#).

I ask Mr. O’Gorman, "How often the lifts are tested." Mr. O’Gorman stated that, "A lift model is initially tested for certification with accessories or add on products also tested to evaluate fit, form, and function to the lift it is being applied toward. Any changes in the design or the product once initial certification has been completed are submitted to the lab at any time PRIOR to being allowed to be placed into the certified model's configuration that is offered for sale. All changes must be pre-approved by the OSHA accredited Nationally Recognized Testing Laboratory and ALI prior to entry into the market as a certified lift. This often requires retesting and an engineering evaluation as well as an update to the test report and the Certified Products Directory (found on our website). All certified models are retested every 5 years, unless a temporary extension of the 5 year re-certification is granted by the certification body (this is a unique situation that may occur to take the standards current development cycle into consideration). When a new version of the standard is printed, each product must be completely retested to assure compliance". Mr. O’Gorman also stated, "all lifts and lift accessories manufactured outside the US must pass the same standards and factory audit requirements in order to claim certification to the National Standard".

And finally, as always, I asked "How many injuries and/or deaths have occurred with ALI and your member company lifts"? Mr. O’Gorman's reply was, "The Institute historically has never collected or maintained injury data. As the Institute's Staff Head since May of 2005, I can confirm that ALI records do not contain such information. Recently we learned that auto lifts are lumped, in if you will, with jacks and jack stands when it comes to CPSC reporting. As an association we do not believe that is a correct position to take and we will investigate this point further." O’Gorman further stated "ALI has made the North American Lift community smarter and safer through the combined efforts of our member companies". There are currently 19 manufacturers that sell ALI certified products, of these 18 are members of the association. Each ALI certified lift comes with nationally validated warning pictorial labels, a vehicle lifting points guide, an ANSI/ALOIM standard, and a safety tips card. In sharp contrast, there are approximately a dozen companies that do not certify their products and provide none of these safety materials that are readily available.....a visit to the ALI website will be a good move for any technician or even for a family that cares"!

For more detailed information:

[What Good Are Standards?](#)

Article in Occupational, Health, & Safety magazine.

[Inspecting an Automotive Service Lift](#)

by Dale W. Soos

You should be aware that most automotive lifts are required by the International Building Code Chapter 30 to meet the requirements of ANSI/ALI ALCTV-1998 *Standard for Automotive Lifts—Safety Requirements for Construction, Testing, and Validation*, which requires third party certification and marking for compliance.