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Shuttlelift ISL's rally on the rails for LA 1 highway bridge reconstruction!

STURGEON BAY, WI, October 17, 2008 – Shuttlelift has recently supplied two ISL mobile [gantry cranes](#) to James Construction Group LLC, which is responsible for the most critical reconstruction phase of the LA 1 highway between Port Fourchon and Leesville, Louisiana. Both Shuttlelift ISL 55B and ISL 70B gantries have an elevated role when it comes to building this portion of the highway – quite literally!

Dan Reinholz, [Shuttlelift](#) Gantry Sales, explains: "The new road will be elevated by approximately 22 feet, over a 7 mile stretch, to counteract flooding that the old LA 1 suffered due to subsidence and coastal erosion. Because of the difficult terrain, both ISL's are operating on temporary rail tracks that are being piled-in to run alongside the elevated section, in 'leap-frog' style, picking up pre-delivered and precast concrete bridge sections and girders.

This unusual operational feature meant that both ISL's had to be specially built to operate on rails, while retaining the ability to be converted back to traditional rubber tired gantries once the job is complete. Jerry Wierzba, VP of Engineering, explains: "Converting the ISL 50B was relatively straightforward; rail wheels were built with the same bolt pattern as conventional wheels and bolted to the planetary drive, just like the standard wheels would have been, then the steering cylinder was replaced with an adjustable rigid link."

Jerry continues: "The ISL 70B required a little more modification due to a single rail wheel at each corner not being adequate to carry the payload. Therefore, new wheel frame assemblies were fabricated to accommodate dual rail wheels again, at each corner. These modifications are yet another example of how Shuttlelift is able to accommodate the needs of the customer."

Lew Love, Vice President of Equipment at James Construction, comments: "It was important that both cranes could be converted back for resale purposes because, once this construction contract is finished, it is unlikely the cranes would be used cost effectively. Shuttlelift gantries are well-known for holding its value; so to be able to resell them and recoup some of the initial outlay made sound economic sense. This was a significant factor in the choice of Shuttlelift [mobile gantry crane](#) for this project."

He continues: "James Construction is delighted with the innovative operational method of the gantries. Because the ISL 55B can pass underneath the ISL 70B, which in turn passes over the ISL 55B, construction progress is much quicker as material is continuously ferried to the construction site."

When complete, unusually, the LA 1 Bridge will have been built from the top down so as not to disturb the delicate ecological system of the marshes and bayous it traverses. The LA 1 highway and replacement bridge will be a vital link between Port Fourchon and the rest of the state, as well as being extremely important to the US economy; approximately 30% of all the oil that is imported into the US comes through Port Fourchon. In addition, it will serve as a crucial hurricane evacuation route for the area's 30,000 residents; the importance of which was made abundantly clear when Hurricane Ivan struck in 2004.

Picture caption: Shuttlelift's ISL 55B and 70B gantry cranes in action.

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