

The Colossus of Cologne – Highest freestanding WOLFF crane renovates facade of the TÜV Rheinland high rise

Cologne – June 2015. “Almost celestial,” “hero of the skies,” “steel giant” – since its erection end of April, the WOLFF 6031.8 clear at the TÜV Rheinland high rise in Poll, Cologne has been given many names by the media. The 130 meter high trolley jib crane is currently the tallest freestanding construction crane in Germany. Commissioned by Bilfinger Hochbau GmbH, it will fit the building with a new, modern glass facade in the course of the next two years.

A hook height of 130 meters is usually child’s play for a tower crane, but a freestanding 130 meter hook height is a challenge. At the TÜV Rheinland construction site, however, this was the only possibility. “We couldn’t place the crane close enough to the building to tie it to the building,” explained Carsten Druske, Branch Manager of WOLFFKRAN Dortmund. “Further, none of the surrounding buildings had a flat roof that could support the 152 ton heavy crane. Actually, these couldn’t even support the scaffolding.” This was a job for the Heilbronn crane manufacturer’s technical experts. “Our technical support department achieved a remarkable of structural calculation, unparalleled in the industry,” Druske said.

Construction site of superlatives

With its tip load capacity of 3.1 tons with a 60-meter jib and a maximum lifting capacity of 8.5 tons at a 25-meter jib radius, and a lifting speed of 115 meters per minute, the flat top WOLFF 6031.8 *clear* meets all the requirements of this construction site. In Cologne, it is used for lifting heavy steel and glass components. To anchor the WOLFF, Bilfinger constructed a 1,300 ton heavy, 12 by 12 meter concrete base with an 18 meter deep pile foundation. “WOLFFKRAN convinced us with the performance and size of this crane, and with their perfected planning concept,” said Michael Gessner, Technical Manager at TÜV Rheinland Real Estate.

Assembling the red giant was an enormous effort. “Normally, cranes with this hook height are climbed to their final height piece by piece,” explained Oliver Manthei, Chief Service Technician at WOLFFKRAN and in charge of the assembly. “For the WOLFF in Cologne, we brought in a 750 ton mobile crane – one of the heaviest in the German market – from the company Colonia. This allowed us to erect the

**WOLFFKRAN
International AG**
Simone Engleitner
International Marketing
Baarermattstr. 6
Ch-6300 Zug
Tel + 41 41-766 85 00
Fax + 41 41-766 85 99
s.engleitner@wolffkran.com
www.wolffkran.com

Press Contact
Sarah Spitzl-Kirch
Rumfordstr. 5
D-80469 München
Tel + 49 9721 67 98 587
Fax + 49 89-23 23 90 99
spitzl-kirch@headline-affairs.de
www.headlineaffairs.de

WOLFF to its final height within the scheduled time of two and a half days,” Manthei continues.

Working between heaven and earth

One further number impresses among all the superlatives associated with the Cologne construction site: The crane operator needs about 40 minutes per day to climb up to his work place 130 meters above the ground – and just as long to climb back down. “It’s a job with a fitness factor,” Druske said. “So we decided to fit the crane with an exterior lift,” Gessner added. “On the one hand, to make the operators job a bit easier, but the main reason being with regards to safety. Should anything happen to the operator, it would take a rescue team 40 minutes to reach him.”

Cologne’s new landmark

With 40 years of service under its belt, the TÜV Rheinland building is being completely refurbished for about 40 million Euros. In addition to the new glass facade, the high rise will be fitted with state-of-the-art HVAC, elevators and fire protection. During the course of the renovation approximately 1,000 employees will have to be relocated. The renovation is scheduled to be completed in 2017. Until then, the highest freestanding crane in Germany will continue to be an impressive sight in this city by the River Rhine, and will certainly attract another nickname or two.

WOLFF crane onsite in Cologne:

WOLFF	Crane base	Over-hang in meters	Hook height in meters	max. lifting capacity in tons	BGL Group (meter tons)
6031.8 <i>clear</i>	Foundation anchor	60	130	8.5	224

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Pictures and captions:



For the next two years, Cologne will boast a second tourist attraction in addition to the Cologne Cathedral: a WOLFF 6031.8 clear, currently the highest free-standing construction crane in Germany renovating the TÜV building.

Source: © Matthias M. Heinekamp



Heavy equipment: The WOLFF was assembled to its full height in only 2 ½ days with a 750 ton mobile crane.

Source: © Matthias M. Heinekamp



WOLFF in the spotlight: The media was fascinated by the assembly of the red giant end of April this year.

Source: © Gabor Leitner



One of the first on top of the crane: WOLFFKRAN Chief Service Technician Oliver Manthei (right) is responsible for the assembly of the WOLFF 6031.8. Left: WOLFFKRAN Branch Manager Carsten Druske.

Source: © Gabor Leitner

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With a tradition of over 150 years WOLFFKRAN is one of the leading manufacturers and rental companies of high-quality tower cranes in Central and Eastern Europe, the Middle East, North America, Australia and Hong Kong. The worldwide rental fleet comprises more than 750 WOLFF cranes. It is headquartered in Zug (Switzerland) and has manufacturing site in Heilbronn and Luckau (Germany), as well as international subsidiaries and partnerships around the world. It employs a global workforce of approx. 900 people.