

A step forward

"In 1992, I bought a second hand motorhome and right from the very first time out I left the step opened during parking maneuvers. I hit a tree and broke the step. That's why I got the idea to design an electric step with an automatic closing movement. Later, I modified the system to create a two-step module." Davide Nardini - Project 2000 CEO

Words Andrea Cattaneo

The horizontal sliding electric retractable step Innolight 10856 presented in a new design in 2014, has been the subject of a technical review as regards the fixing kit for the Fiat Ducato chassis. The first great advantage is given by the assembly time, reduced to less than 3 and a half minutes. This obviously involves not only time savings but also personnel savings, as only one employee is sufficient for the assembly and no longer needs a tripod or clamps. In order to achieve this important result, both front and rear brackets have been modified and dedicated anchors have been created. The 10856 is a complex RV step that features a casing into which the whole system is enclosed, and a footrest that moves in and out of the casing by sliding on two lateral runners. The 10856 second generation is 80% built of plastic parts and 20% in steel and aluminium. The innovative system that blend these 3 materials is the result of a time-consuming research and extensive testing that have created a high quality product, corrosion-proof, very durable and extremely lightweight. The powerful 12V



engine is water-proof, featuring a built-in thermal protector. The sliding on special guide is patented and allows a smooth sliding even after a long period of disuse. The waterproof "open step" sensor was inserted into the motor unit to guarantee safety and prevent damages. The footboard is made of anodized aluminium with a non-slip rubber

profile and without water stagnation areas. It is available in four sizes: 440mm-550mm-700mm and the new 1000mm, perfectly suitable of special vehicles. The opening time is 2.5 seconds and the power consumption of only 2.5A.



Company Profile

Project 2000 was founded in 1995 as a sole proprietorship, experiencing constant growth that has led to a market leadership position in the recreational vehicle sector, for the manufacturing of retractable steps (electric, electronic and manual), LCD television bracket mounts and height adjustment solutions for beds. All metal workmanship processes are carried out in-house, and all step design prototypes undergo a battery of operating tests and structural stress tests using equipment and instrumentation that is specifically designed for this purpose. Project 2000 obtained its Certificate of Suitability for mass production in 2010. In 2013 the company initiated a partnership deal with Lippert Components in the U.S. market, and in 2016 Lippert Components acquired Project 2000.

The 10750 series

Eleven years after its invention and since its launch on the market, the step 10750 retires, to be replaced by a second generation of products that feature dramatic improvements thanks to the use of new materials and modern construction technology. Compared to the first generation, which already was qualitatively very high, more safeties were added, rethinking the clutch so as to absorb the impact and thus prevent mechanism damaging, if the user climbs up before the step is completely open. The robustness of the mechanical movement, both static and moving, was improved. Moreover, it should be noted that the new step is 30% lighter than its predecessor. Before being produced, the 10750 step was subjected to 85,000 opening and closing cycles – the test was further made stressful through the short rest time of the components between a cycle and the following one - and to a dynamometer test during which the step underwent a tensile stress for 40 minutes with a force of 250 kg. The new steel and aluminium structure was designed to achieve greater stability in all conditions and with a light weight. The galvanizing and epoxy coating as well as the stainless steel bolts offer a strong protection against saline mist. The footboard is made of anodized aluminium with non-slip rubber profile and without water stagnation areas. The anti-shock clutch preserves the gearmotor from violent impacts on the platform when the step is moving. The step operation is very fast: it features an opening time of just 1.5 seconds and a power consumption of only 3A.



The 10574 series

This electric step is part of the product range of double steps with disappearing motion. A model developed with special attention to design, it maintains the essential characteristics of safety and quality typical of Project 2000 products. The platforms are made of anodised aluminium, feature a non-slip rubber profile, and the structure is built in zinc plated and painted steel. The opening and closing system operates by means of a pulse with an automatic return at the motor's start-up, and is equipped with a sensor that activates the open step signal light. In the event of an emergency, the mechanism can be released and operated manually. Special attention has also been placed on the gearmotor, which is bracketed onto ball bearings and safeguarded from excessive stress by a protection system. All step functions are entirely controlled by a multifunction control unit, and the position of the motor group can be customized, either to the left or right. Available in three sizes: 480mm, 530mm and 650mm, with a power absorption of roughly 3A.



The 10576 series

This series too offers the same characteristics as the 10574 range, but with one essential benefit: the option of overcoming a significant difference in height between the vehicle surface and terrain, maintaining an equally reduced space in the closed step position. In fact, the step is designed to close again taking up just half of its opening space. In addition, in spite of its opening dimensions, this model provides a lightweight yet extremely sturdy design.



The 10577 series

This product series is specially designed for dual-floor vehicles. To prevent an excessive pitch between the floor and first step, a solution was designed with a limited distance between the joint and the first step. The same specifications are adopted as for the previous dual step, with a fourth measurement of 440mm.

