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COMMENT

Welcome to a New Year, a year, one suspects, that will throw up more than a few surprises and shocks as uncertainties over Brexit and falling consumer and business confidence cast long shadows on the immediate future.



Indeed, official figures released recently show the number of freight firms filing for insolvency between April and June 2017 was almost double the same period the previous year and has reached its highest level in five years. Some of the blame is being put on the price of diesel which accounts for almost a third of operating costs for an average 44 tonne truck. The rate of duty on fuel was frozen in the last Budget, but obviously a cut would have made all the difference.

That said, our industry is a resilient one and there are a lot of positives. As someone once declared, 'A pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity; an optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty.' Yes, 2018 will present difficulties, but opportunities too.

This month we have been getting up close and personal with the new Iveco Stralis NP and X-Way as well as taking a look at Volvo's new ground-breaking Euro-6 compliant long-haul truck powered by a 13-litre engine that uses liquid natural gas or biogas.

As you'll also read in this issue, Scania tell us they've had a very good 2017 in the UK and are gearing up for the New Year by introducing a series of changes and upgrades to its product portfolio, including the launch of its L-series.

On the van front, we report on Ford's new Transit Connect and Transit Courier featuring advanced new driver assistance technologies; both models will be available to order this coming Spring, and we have been test driving Mercedes-Benz new X-Class pick-up in snowy North Wales.

We also turn the spotlight on tyres in this issue. As we all know incorrect tyre pressure costs fleets money – and there are serious safety implications, too, so we put a special focus on the importance of Tyre Pressure Monitoring Systems.

Well, that's it for now. We hope 2018 will be kind to you. Meanwhile, until next time, you can keep up to date with what's happening across our industry 24/7 by logging on to our website at www.exportandfreight.com

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DAF New CF and New XF voted 'International Truck of the Year'

DAF Trucks' New CF and New XF series have been voted 'International Truck of the Year 2018' by an independent jury of leading road-transport journalists from 23 European countries.

The most prestigious award in the European truck industry was handed to DAF Trucks president Preston Feight by Gianenrico Griffini, chairman of the jury at the Solutrans exhibition in Lyon.

The DAF New CF and New XF feature completely new powertrains with highly efficient transmissions and rear axles. Together with the new compact after-treatment systems, sophisticated software and aerodynamic optimizations, these innovations result in a fuel efficiency gain and CO2 reduction of an impressive 7%.

For vocational configurations of the new trucks there are up to 300 kilograms in weight reductions to further enhance the customer's operating efficiency.

"The annual award is presented to a new truck or model range that has made the largest contribution to road transport efficiency, based on several important criteria including technological innovation, driver comfort, road safety, drivability, fuel economy, environmental 'footprint' and Total Cost of Ownership", commented Gianenrico Griffini, chairman of the jury. "With the introduction of the New

CF and New XF series, DAF has delivered a medium and heavy-duty truck range that sets a new standard in terms of driveline efficiency and overall performance".

On behalf of the 10,000 DAF employees throughout Europe, DAF Trucks' president Preston Feight received the prestigious 'International Truck of the Year 2018' award.

"The honours belong to every member of the DAF organisation", he added. "We all worked hard to make the best trucks on the market even better. The result are the New CF and New XF – representing Pure Excellence. It is fantastic that all these efforts are rewarded in such a great way. In addition, winning the 'International Truck of the Year 2018' award is a recognition for our suppliers and dealers, and most importantly, it is a fantastic tribute to all those customers who have chosen or will choose the DAF New CF or New XF. The jury commented that the trucks are leading the way in transport efficiency. What to say more?"

Renault Trucks' Online Platform Set To Drive Customer Satisfaction

Renault Trucks has announced the launch of its new electronic workshop and fleet management system – Optiplanner.

This web-based system has been specially designed in conjunction with r2c Online, the market-leading software specialists, to deliver the ultimate in customer satisfaction, optimum compliance and vehicle performance as well as maximising communication through real-time interaction.

Optiplanner – powered by the r2c Online platform - will be used to service thousands of its vehicles across the UK and will ultimately see all dealers connected to the platform to

allow fleet operators easy access to digital documentation.

The adapted platform marries together time-based event management to meet with Operator Licence standards and vehicle mileage-based events scheduling to comply with Renault Trucks' manufacturer

recommendations, creating a service routine or 'smart schedule' that offers the ultimate in compliance and vehicle reliability.

Derek Leech, Renault Trucks Aftermarket Sales Director comments on the new system: "This is a game-changing



platform that lets the dealer plan work more efficiently to ensure maximum uptime for the customer and allows the operator to pre-plan work and allocate resources accordingly. It will also allow visibility to our dealer network for national Renault Trucks UK Central contracts too."

Derek Leech continues: "With the mileage inputted, the new system can look up the service criteria for individual vehicles, automatically calculating which service operations are needed and schedule the jobs with the workshops ensuring the vehicle is maintained to the optimum Renault Trucks recommendations. This makes sure vehicles stay on track with service requirements, leading to increased reliability and maximum uptime."

DAF Trucks Optimistic About the Year Ahead

DAF Trucks in the UK is entering the New Year on a positive note, despite the economic uncertainties and the challenges thrown up by Brexit.

In his first pre-Christmas briefing to journalists since taking over as Managing Director from Ray Ashworth nine months ago, Robin Easton predicted the market above 6 tonnes in the UK in 2018 will be around 41,000 trucks.

"This compares to 44,000 in 2017 and 46,000 in 2016, so it's still a pretty good level of demand, despite falling consumer and business confidence," he said.

And he added: "2017 marks DAF's 23rd consecutive year as market leader in the UK and we expect we will end the year with a market share of around 30%."

He referred, also, to some of DAF's recent major investments such as a new cab paint facility at Westerlo in Belgium. "The new facility represents a €100 million investment and sets new standards in quality, efficiency and environmental-friendliness. The capacity of the new facility is 300 cabs per day which is 70,000 per year.

This represents an increase of 50% over the current paint factory. The capacity increase will accommodate DAF's future growth in Europe and around the globe."

He mentioned, too, PACCAR's new Innovation Centre at Silicon Valley in California. The centre coordinates next generation product development and identifies emerging technologies that will benefit future vehicle performance across all PACCAR truck brands, with a focus on areas such as advanced driver assistance systems, artificial intelligence and vehicle connectivity.

Looking ahead, he added: "I believe electric

commercial vehicles represent the future; the entire industry is working hard to provide new suitable, proven and affordable products which will be supported by a wide network of capable dealers."

On the subject of platooning, he had this to say: "Whatever your views on platooning and its relevance in this country, it is important that a real, robust, detailed and comprehensive trial is conducted in the UK, and as DAF is the market leader in the UK it is only right and proper that we play a key role in those trials."

Since assuming the role as MD, Robin Easton has visited all of DAF's dealerships in the UK

and Ireland, and he commented: "I now fully understand why we have the best and fully supported dealer network in UK; our customers keep reminding me of that fact.

"Our dealers are investing in new technologies and in new facilities. We have fantastic products and our new ranges have been exceptionally well received by both customers and dealers alike – and, of course, we are delighted to have been awarded International Truck of the Year for our new CF and XF. Our new LF has also been voted Fleet Truck of the Year."

He said he was 'hugely impressed' too by what he called 'the commitment, dedication, and hard work' delivered by the people at DAF and throughout the dealer network. "Put together that's what we call the DAF difference."



Robin Easton

New Battery System Provides Better Driver Comfort And More Reliable Starts

Volvo Trucks is introducing a new battery system for its FH and FM ranges which provides sufficient power for all in-cab functions while also reducing the risk of standstill due to discharged batteries.

"Drivers can enjoy improved comfort and living conditions, knowing that they have enough power for their needs, with minimal risk of draining all the power from the starter batteries," says Samuel Nerdal, Product Manager Electrical and Electronics at Volvo Trucks.

The new battery system has two separate battery sets - one for starting the engine, and the other for all other in-cab electrical equipment. The starter battery's only function is to crank the engine and is not affected by power consumption in the rest of the truck. All other functions such as the parking heater, parking cooler, refrigerator, media system and personal equipment including laptops, mobile phones and tablets are powered



The new battery system has two separate battery sets - one for starting the engine, and the other for all other in-cab electrical equipment.

by separate gel batteries.

By using gel technology, the new battery solution can meet the increasingly high energy requirements demanded by many customers today. Compared to

conventional lead-acid batteries, gel technology has the ability to maintain high concentrations of energy for long periods of time.

"These benefits can be seen primarily in long-distance

transportation and in really hot or cold climates. Even on cold winter nights, the driver can enjoy a good night's rest without having to get up and start the engine in order to recharge the batteries," explains Samuel Nerdal.

Fewer engine starts also means lower fuel consumption and reduced environmental impact. "A parked truck with an idling engine consumes about three litres of fuel per hour. With our solution, it is possible to minimise idling time and thus significantly cut fuel costs," says Samuel Nerdal.

The new gel batteries offer a far longer service lifetime than conventional lead-acid batteries, as well as more charging cycles. In fact, during tough cycles, the gel batteries will last at least 10-15 times longer.

"Our battery system not only meets today's high demands for a secure electricity supply, it also contributes to increased vehicle uptime and lower operating costs. This is a solution that will benefit many customers," concludes Samuel Nerdal.

IVECO STRALIS NP LAUNCH DESCRIBED AS 'DEFINING MOMENT'



The launch of the new Iveco Stralis NP has been described by Pierre Lahutte, Iveco Brand President, as 'a defining moment in the transformation of long-distance transport, driven by the fight against Climate Change and the pursuit of air quality in urbanised areas.' Export & Freight's Garfield Harrison reports from Ulm in Germany.

Pierre Lahutte told an international gathering of journalists: "The Stralis NP, fuelled by biomethane, allows CO₂-neutral transport of heavy goods over international long-distance. The use of biomethane makes our countries more independent from oil and gas producers, because we can generate biomethane from our waste. "It can be generated from urban and agricultural waste, waste from the food industry and even waste water sewage from cities. It creates jobs and provides a new revenue stream for agriculture, as farmers begin to set up biodigesters to generate biomethane from their farm's waste. It can be produced locally, dramatically reducing the need for transporting energy and the related CO₂ emissions. Its production process creates valuable by-products, such as bio-CO₂ for refrigerated units and bio-fertiliser for agriculture.

"One last point: it is easy to handle, transport and store in its liquefied form or through the existing natural gas network without the need for public investment in costly new infrastructure. You may have heard that "Orange is the new black" – well, 'biomethane is the new hydrogen!' "The Stralis NP and Iveco's full line of Natural Power vehicles, running on bio-methane, are key elements in a circular economy that can provide an answer to the demand for immediate action against Climate Change and for air quality in our cities."

Full Line-Up

Introductions over, we were able to get down to the detail. The main focus was on the new Stralis NP 460. It is not just a new tractor: it's a full line up including rigids and models designed for highly-specialised missions – in particular:

- An LNG low tractor made for high volume transport
- Two full pneumatic rigid models designed for multi-modal transport
- A 6x2 tractor to meet UK market demand and well as heavy load transport up to 50 tons
- An X-Way version, a truck dedicated to construction logistics.

Commented Pierre Lahutte: "These five models are all world premiere and this makes the Stralis NP 460 absolutely unique on the market. It is quite simply the truck FOR OUR PLANET."

It is driven by a new Iveco Cursor 13 NP single-fuel engine developed to deliver the power required for the most demanding missions. Also new is the 12-speed Hi-Tronix automated transmission that further improves on the previous version's excellent driving comfort and performance, as well as adding new functionalities such as the GPS-based HI-CRUISE predictive driving.



The vehicle can run on CNG, combined CNG and LNG, or LNG. The double LNG tank version ensures the record range autonomy of up to 1,600 km. It is claimed the engine will be capable of doing a million kilometres over its lifetime. Having been able to get behind the wheel, we can say that the engine is certainly quiet, much quieter than its diesel equivalent. There are, of course, pros and cons. Take the price, for example, it is 30% more expensive than the diesel option. But natural gas is around 12% cheaper than diesel – and Iveco claim payback is achievable within three years.

Gas Stations

Then there is the availability of gas filling stations in this part of the world; there are only two in the whole of Ireland – one in Dublin, the other in Cork. That will undoubtedly change over time. The UK and Europe fare much better with a decent number of gas stations dotted around the various regions.

And explained Pierre Lahutte: "The natural gas distribution network is developing fast: the first filling stations were built in 2011 and now, just 6 years later there are more than 150 across Western Europe, with the greatest numbers in Spain and Portugal, France, Italy, Benelux and the UK. France and Italy, which started later than the other countries, in 2014, are catching up very fast. And we now see major projects in Germany and in Poland with Shell, in Austria with RAG, in Romania, and every day we discover new projects across Europe.

"The main transport corridors in Europe will soon be covered, which will enable the natural gas haulage sector to really take off. In fact, we realised that the network has developed so fast that there wasn't a good enough map of filling stations. We knew that for the transition to natural gas to happen, a

comprehensive, reliable map with a constant update was a must ...so we are developing a map that we will launch at Solutrans.

"It will be the best one available on the market and will be updated in real time, as new filling stations come on stream; this is very important, because now the network is growing at the rate of 2 to 3 stations opening every week across Europe. The map will be available very soon on our Iveco website and on the Michelin Solutions MyBestRoute app, and will be updated in real time on both."

So, it all sounds extremely promising. However, one thing we should draw your attention to, though: gas trucks are currently not allowed to travel through the Eurotunnel. One would suppose that too will change over time.

Revolution Continues

The revolution, of course, all started with the Stralis NP 400 hp. Iveco tell us that they know they have the right answer that the market wants, because orders are coming four times faster since it launched it.

"We asked 36 drivers who work for transport operators in our main European markets and have been driving the Stralis NP 400 hp on their national, regional and long-haul routes. They think it is excellent for its eco-friendliness, fuel consumption and acoustic comfort – and also better than diesel for all of them.

"But there is more: they rated its driving comfort, overall performance, reliability and gearbox performance as being good – with the last two equal to a diesel truck and 91% of the drivers told us they would recommend the Stralis NP to other drivers."

All things being equal, there is no reason that this new Stralis NP 460 will not only continue the revolution, but will firmly cement it.





FUSO IRELAND A FORCE TO BE RECKONED WITH

FUSO Ireland continues to go from strength to strength. After a highly successful 2017, the company anticipates further growth in the year ahead.

In over 30 years, more than 10,000 Canter trucks have been sold into the Irish market; the FUSO Canter has been, and remains, an integral part of the group's operations. Export & Freight's David Stokes recently caught up with Fuso Ireland Sales Manager Andrew Johnson to find out more.

FUSO Ireland has grown to become a force to be reckoned with, so what's your secret? 2017 seems to have been good to you.

Yes the FUSO Canter is a force to be reckoned with and the secret is quite simple, a great product for any business! With its versatility, robustness, high payloads and 5 year/150,000km warranty Canter remains the number 1 truck in the 3.5t - 10t range. 2017 has not been without its challenges but our long existing and loyal customer relationships have played a great part in continuing our success in 2017 with sales to fleet, SME and public authority customers.

The dealer network undoubtedly plays a big part in your success; how big is the network and have you any plans to extend it?

We currently have 14 FUSO sales and aftersales dealers and two service only dealers. Our dealers are spread across the island of Ireland which gives the customer great confidence in knowing that you are never too far away from a FUSO dealer. The dealers are a huge part of the success with many dealers selling Canter for over 20 years. In particular, J&F Group are celebrating their 21st year as a FUSO Canter by opening a new state of the art showroom in Mallusk. We have a very settled and mature dealer network but we will always look to see if we can explore opportunities to expand our coverage if it adds value to our existing network.

The product range continues to expand; tell us a little about the latest range.

We currently offer a range of Canter trucks from 3.5t to 8.55t. Our 3.5t is available in wheelbases ranging from 2500mm to 3850mm with the option of single cab or crew cab with a wide

range of bespoke body options. This includes body ready trucks direct from the factory - tippers or dropsides - which can be delivered to customers immediately for their business needs. We also offer a 7.5t Canter, with class leading payloads, with wheelbases ranging from 2800mm to 4750wb in both single and crew cab. There is a huge amount of flexibility due to the chassis cab payload availability of up to 5t. The 7.5t Canter is also available as an Eco Hybrid, the first mass produced truck of its kind which can provide sizeable fuel savings for our customers as a result of the electric battery, and without any compromise in operations. If you are looking for even more payload, our 8.55t is the vehicle for you. With 6t chassis payload, it is the equivalent of some 10t to 12t trucks. Finally, if you are looking for off road capabilities, the Canter 4x4 is a 6.5t chassis which can get you in and out of any situation which we have demonstrated locally!

Do you think the eCanter has a big future, particularly in Ireland?

Yes, most definitely. E-mobility is going to play a huge part in our transport requirements of the near future. Battery technology is developing at such a pace that the range is increasing while the batteries are getting lighter with quicker charging times. We are a small island, so with the right charging infrastructure electric driving is perfectly suited for our business needs. The eCanter will be the first mass produced electric truck on the market and will be available in Ireland in early 2019. We will have a loan unit in our country in April 2017 to showcase at various events.

I believe the Canter has won 'Truck of the Year' a number of times; what's the appeal?

I think the appeal is that customers know exactly what they are getting. A workhorse which is ready for any job! This along with the confidence of a knowledgeable dealer network and a 5 year/150,000km warranty really sets

the Canter apart from its competitors.

What impact has the introduction of the Scattolini Factory bodies had on the business?

As one of Europe's biggest producers of tipper and dropside bodies, we were delighted that FUSO has partnered with Scattolini for our body ready Canters. It has certainly helped our sales as it reduces completed vehicle lead times for customers without compromising on quality. We have had great success with these bodies since the launch in early 2017 and we certainly see that continuing for the future. Scattolini bodies are available on both our 3.5t and 7.5t Canters, and on single or crew cabs.

You attended this year's ploughing championships; what was the response?

We have a long association with the National Ploughing Championships and see it as a vital part of our annual marketing strategy. It is not necessarily about the immediate sales over the 3 days but more so about building awareness around the FUSO brand and our extensive product range. We showcase our full range on the stand to give customers the full Canter experience! Weather obviously plays a factor for such an outdoor event, but the visiting crowds continue to hit record levels every year. We hope to see our customers again at the 2018 Ploughing Championships and we may even have an eCanter on display!

How important is the provision of reliable after sales and customer services?

It is vitally important. There are no further sales without aftersales. Without reliable aftersales, customers will quickly lose confidence in any product. Luckily for us we don't have this problem. With our extensive dealer network and 5 year/150,000km warranty, Canter customers can rest assured that any of their aftersales and service needs are in safe hands.

What does the New Year hold out for Fuso Ireland?

We are aiming to continue building on our success over a long number of years and with the current level of customer pre-orders for 2018, it is already shaping up to be a successful year. We will also launch the eCanter ahead of 2019 supply which is a major and exciting development. As Brexit negotiations continue to develop, we are hoping for more stability in the market in order to maintain our sales momentum with both existing and new Canter customers.

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SCANIA WELCOMES IN NEW YEAR WITH NEW LAUNCHES

Following what has been described as 'a very good 2017 for Scania in the UK', the manufacturer is introducing a series of changes and upgrades to its product portfolio, including the launch of its L-series, an entirely new low-entry cab range designed for urban environment applications such as local distribution, waste and construction.

As Export & Freight's Helen Beggs reports from a Press Briefing in Hampshire, other new developments see the arrival of a new generation CrewCab, the option of a low-placed window in the passenger door of new generation P- and L-series models called City Safe Window, an extension of Scania's gas engine range, and a new family of 7-litre engines.

Scania's Andrew Jamieson told the briefing that sales expectations for the past year had been exceeded by 'a significant margin' and that the New Year should see further increases, buoyed by growing orders for its new generation truck range.

Mark Grant, Scania's Services Director, added that having made major investments in training, facilities and staff in recent times, the focus in 2018 for both the manufacturer and its dealer network would be on three main areas: Uptime, Productivity and Partnership. "We continue to work hard to expand our range of products and services," he said, "and we believe our staff are the best trained in the industry."

L-Series

So, to Scania's new developments: let's take the new L-Series first. Traditionally, of course, low entry cabs were restricted to the refuse collection industry but are now being specified for more and more applications.

All models in the L-Series feature cabs that



The new CrewCab

are 2,000mm long and available in three roof heights: low, normal and high. In addition to being low mounted, the boarding step on an L-series cab is 790mm wide.

An optional kneeling facility permits single-step entry via a floor well, with the cab floor height itself being approximately 800mm from the ground, depending on tyre choice. Without kneeling, a second boarding step is fitted, with the cab floor height being approximately 930mm. Movement around the interior is assisted by a passageway in front of the engine tunnel connecting the driver and passenger areas of the cab.

The L-series is powered by Scania's updated nine-litre engine, which is available in three different power steps for diesel. During 2018, Scania will also add its OC09 dedicated gas-fuelled engine in two power outputs (and for both CNG and LNG) to the engine range for the L-series. All engines can be combined with Scania Opticruise or with an Allison automatic gearbox.

In terms of enhanced safety for operation in urban areas, the low datum height L-series helps the driver detect vulnerable road users such as cyclists and pedestrians more easily. The driver's vision can be further assisted by the fitment of an optional Scania City Safe Window in the passenger door.

Also available in the new generation P-series models, this option is known as the Scania City Safe Window.

Scania have been retro-fitting vision panels into the passenger doors of existing P-series models in the UK for some time, and the success of this programme, and its acceptance by operators, drivers and the authorities, has been instrumental in the Scania factory's decision to develop the option for new generation P- and L-series models.

CrewCab

Scania is also launching its new generation CrewCab, an all-new version of the current model Scania P-series-based safety crew cab, which for many years has served emergency services around the world. Available in two lengths, the new CrewCab has been fully collision and impact tested, and to further enhance safety, it can be specified with four optional rollover side-curtain airbags.

Available in either CP28 or CP31 format, the longer version is offered in two roof heights; L (Low) or N (Normal). The crew compartment



The P-Series



The Scania
7-litre engine

area can be equipped with everything from separate air conditioning and heating systems, controlled either manually or automatically, in conjunction with the vehicle's basic system. The seating can be made up of separate seats or full bench seats and can be fitted with various seatbelt configurations, depending on whether the passengers are wearing rescue equipment.

Sustainability

Meanwhile, Scania has reinforced its commitment to sustainable transport solutions with the introduction of a new 13-litre dedicated gas-powered engine. Rated at 410 horsepower, the new engine joins Scania's existing 280 and 340 horsepower nine-litre dedicated gas units.

With 2,000 Nm torque from 1,100rpm through to 1,400rpm, the new 13-litre gas engine delivers similar performance to comparable diesel engines. When running on biogas, emissions of carbon dioxide are reduced by

up to 90 percent. As such, say Scania, this new engine will appeal to operators looking to switch to a renewable and sustainable fuel source while reducing their environmental impact without compromising performance.

The new 13-litre engine can be specified on a range of Scania G- and R-series trucks, with vehicles operating on Compressed Natural Gas (CNG), Compressed Bio Gas (CBG) or Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG).

In CNG/CBG format, a total of eight gas tanks are fitted. These are either 95 or 118-litres each, depending on wheelbase and battery position, giving a maximum capacity of 944-litres. This equates to a range of up to 500 kilometres, depending on road conditions and the type of application. For LNG tractor units, two tanks provide a capacity of 740-litres and a range of up to 1,000 kilometres, while LNG rigidids can accommodate single or double tanks, giving a capacity of 400-1,100-litres and a

maximum range of up to 1,600 kilometres.

Extended Range

In addition, Scania is introducing a new family of seven-litre engines. Available in three power outputs – 220, 250 and 280 horsepower – the new platform is intended primarily for urban operations, with key features being high fuel efficiency, excellent driveability, low weight and low noise.

When specified in conjunction with Scania Opticruise, the compact size of the new unit enables a G-series cab floor to be used in P-series models, thereby providing a 95mm lower engine floor and greater storage space.

The introduction of Scania's seven-litre engine platform means the company now offers a total of four engine ranges – the others being nine-litre, 13-litre and 16-litre – providing a broad spectrum of power outputs from 220 to 730 horsepower.



Featuring the City Safe Window



The Scania L-Series

Renault Trucks Predict a Healthy New Year Market

Renault Trucks have been looking back on a year full of positive developments and predict 2018 will see a continuation of that trend, albeit with some concerns over Brexit.

Nigel Butler, Renault Trucks Commercial Director, told a gathering of journalists in London that while the market should be healthy, the manufacturer detected a bit more nervousness about the future from its customers.

"The prospect of no trade agreement looms and passes and looms again. WTO rules and import tariffs could significantly affect prices and parts logistics, so we continue to monitor events closely and to prepare plans for a hard Brexit. In this way our customers can be secure that we will make the necessary changes to protect their brand experience and to continue to build satisfaction," said Nigel.

"It is perhaps worth considering too that if we do have a hard Brexit, import tariffs are likely to be in the region of 11% to 16%. If this is the case, we think this could lead to a pre-buy in 2018, extending lead-times as customers try to avoid a hike in operating costs."

Renault Trucks are forecasting the UK market, without a major Brexit distortion, will be around 5% down at 43,250 units this year, while in Ireland, which is very dependent upon exchange rates and trade talks, it could be around 1,900 units, down from 2,200 last year.

Key Focus

Going forward, Renault Trucks' key focus in 2018 will be on several areas: to excel on basics, on retail performance and on people development and co-operation.

"The UK and Ireland is our 3rd largest market with close to 4,000 units per year



Nigel Butler, Renault Trucks Commercial Director

and we have ambitions to grow market share on a consistent basis, aided by the recent introduction of our flagship tractor for UK & Ireland, the Renault Trucks Range T High.

"We are delighted to bring this to market and production has already started, with orders currently for over 60 of them, so we should start to see them hitting our roads in February; I'm sure you agree, it looks fantastic and I'm looking forward to seeing more and more of these on our roads."

He added: "When I think about our proven, simple and cost efficient solutions, I have known for some time that we are punching below our weight with Range D, however we are pleased to see that a renewed focus is delivering real results for us - volumes for 18-tonners are up by 69% in a market that has shrunk by 8%. There has been similar success in the medium-duty market too, with volumes up 52% in a market up only 4%

"It is a testament to the strength of our Irish

importer, Setanta, and the growing competence of their network that our market share in Ireland also goes from strength to strength."

Aftersales

On the aftersales front, he commented: "2017 has seen us continue to build collaboration with our customers, reducing their downtime and costs. Our Service Excellence Programme is probably the best initiative we have ever launched, improving first time fix rates with more attention to first class diagnosis and parts availability.

"Three years ago we introduced a new Logistics Parts Agreement with our dealers where we take responsibility for managing their parts orders. Parts availability has improved to 93% over the counter. We have a central store in Rugby holding 27,800 lines for emergency VoR. If you include their stocks then it is 99%."

Alternative fuels

Renault Trucks have some big ambitions with its alternative fuels offer too, with aims to design and develop electric solutions up to and including 26-tonnes.

"Badged ZE, we will be further prototyping full electric 16-tonne Range D during the year. The first of which some of you may have seen at Solutrans, is undergoing trials in Lyon city centre right now. Q3 will see us launch Master ZE - a full electric van with a real 80 mile range and 1-tonne payload - and we will also bring a 26-tonne ZE refuse collection prototype to market in 2019."

MAN TGE takes off with air ground support specialists

MAN Truck & Bus UK has supplied Dungannon-based Mallaghan Engineering Ltd with a new MAN TGE 2.180 4x2.

The vehicle will be put into operation as a service support vehicle with Mallaghan, which offers specialist ground support equipment for the aviation industry.

The company is already a longstanding MAN customer and the vehicle was supplied by the R K Truck Centre, Dungannon.

A spokesman for Mallaghan said: "We are proud to be the first in Ireland to purchase a MAN TGE. Mallaghan have built a strong and proud relationship with MAN Truck & Bus UK, a principle supplier of commercial vehicle chassis to Mallaghan GSE for 25 years. Mallaghan had no hesitation before ordering a new MAN TGE



when they became available. "The main attributes which make it an ideal Mallaghan support vehicle are the length and height of the cargo space, the low loading sill and

extra-wide sliding door." Russell Stevenson, special products manager at MAN Truck & Bus UK, added: "We are delighted to have supplied Mallaghan with the first MAN TGE in Ireland.

"They are longstanding customers and the new van will serve them well in this support role from their base in Dungannon. We look forward to continuing our excellent working relationship."

More Krone Dry Liners for Quinlan Transport

Quinlan Transport has taken delivery of its second consignment of Dry Liner box trailers from Krone which, says the company, have joined its 30-strong trailer fleet to deliver bread and related products to RDCs throughout Ireland.

Based in Thurles, Tipperary and established 30 years ago, Quinlan Transport required a box trailer which combines strength and high capacity. "We tend to cube-out before we weigh-out," comments Michael

Quinlan, "and therefore we need as much internal capacity as possible within the 4m overall height. These Dry Liners allow us to comfortably load up to 6 tonnes of bread and the insulated box is dry and secure."

Manufactured in Herzlake, Germany, the Dry Liner is designed to work in both the UK and European markets: Its slim, 100mm neck affords additional load volume and with a fifth wheel height of 1,250 mm, a

total height of 4,000 mm allows an internal height of 2,615 mm.

"We compared the Dry Liner to similar trailers and found it to be best in terms of strength, loading capacity and overall value for money," adds Michael.

Launched by Krone in the UK and Ireland during 2015, the Dry Liner bodywork construction is accredited with the European Code XL (EN 12642) and has fast become the default choice for operators across a wide range of transport sectors, owing not least, to its build quality and load security.

The body construction allows a variety of cargo to be 'form-fitted' without the need for internal strapping, which saves turn-round time and ensures safe and secure loading. The sidewalls retain around 40% of the load, while the steel front bulkhead, which is lined with a tough phenolic guard plate, retains 50%.

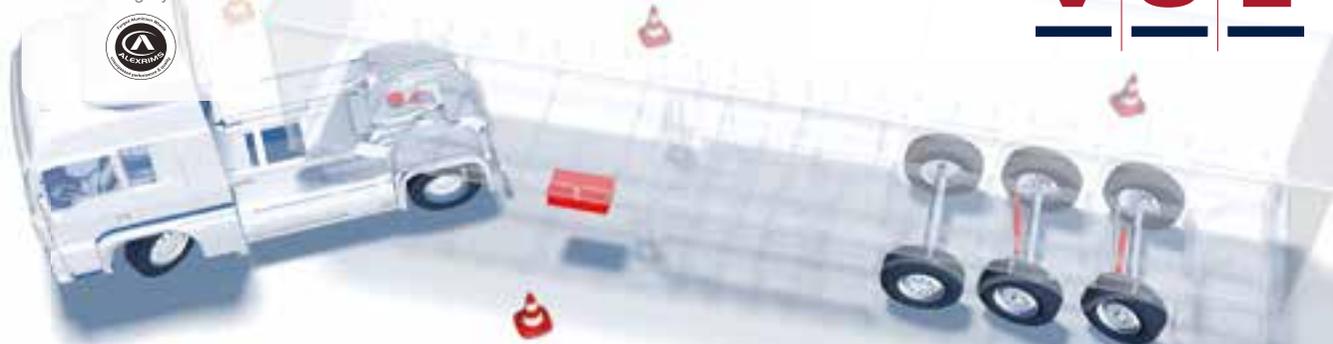
For additional load security and fitted as standard, there is full length, twin-track surface-mounted load restraint. While the flush-fit steel, container-type rear doors are also designed for maximum security and feature a unique security protection for the locks.



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VOLVO LAUNCHES NEW LNG TRUCKS



Volvo Trucks has introduced new Euro-6 compliant long-haul trucks with a 13-litre engine that uses liquid natural gas or biogas to achieve better emissions and cheaper running costs, as Kevin Swallow reports for Export & Freight.

Volvo Trucks is the latest manufacturer to introduce new Euro-6 compliant engines powered by liquid natural gas (LNG) or biogas. The manufacturer said the 13-litre engine, a revamped six-cylinder diesel with common-rail injection, will reduce carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions by 20%.

There is a choice between the 420hp/2,100Nm-torque rating and the 460hp/2,300Nm-torque driveline in either the FM or FH cab.

Volvo will offer the 4x2 and 6x2 axle configurations for tractor units, with both the standard and Lite pusher mid-axle available. For rigid chassis it'll be offered with all 4x2, 6x2 and 6x4 options.

Volvo join Iveco, who offer LNG-powered vehicles across its range including a 13-litre Stralis NP460, and Scania, who announced its new 13-litre dedicated gas-powered engine offering LNG and compressed natural gas (CNG) with a 410hp rating will join its nine-litre dedicated gas units.

Lars Mårtensson is Volvo's director of environment and innovation. He said LNG is the long-term first choice alternative to diesel for local and long-haul where fuel efficiency, payload and productivity are critical.

"With a higher proportion of biogas, climate impact can be further reduced. There is a potential to go to 100% using hydro-treated vegetable oil (HVO) and biogas. It is most cost efficient to run with LNG, which is around



40% cheaper than diesel. Gas-powered trucks also use 20% less AdBlue than a diesel."

New Ground

Speaking at the FAST Parcmotor Castelloli test track in the hills overlooking Barcelona

Mats Franzén, product manager for engines at Volvo Trucks, said Volvo is breaking new ground with the LNG driveline.

"That inevitably takes time to build up internal knowledge and expertise. It's been an extensive process but as a result these are going to be high-performing trucks."

The double-skinned insulated vacuum tank stores LNG at around 7bar of pressure at minus 130centigrade. A hydraulic pump sends LNG to a gas conversion unit that turns it into CNG. That is fed into the injectors, which have two needles; a small one to inject diesel at 5-to-10% to act as a liquid spark plug for combustion and then a second larger needle for CNG to provide the rest of the energy.

It uses diesel when idling and has just 50hp using solely diesel once the gas runs out, so it can be limped to a safe place if there are any problems. The repair and servicing schedules are the same as a diesel.

Tank Options

Fuel tank options for three-axle tractor units are a 115kg with a 500kms range or 155kg with capable of 750kms fitted to the nearside,



Long-haul is seen as a market where significant savings can be made.



“WITH A HIGHER PROPORTION OF BIOGAS, CLIMATE IMPACT CAN BE FURTHER REDUCED. THERE IS A POTENTIAL TO GO TO 100% USING HYDRO-TREATED VEGETABLE OIL (HVO) AND BIOGAS. IT IS MOST COST EFFICIENT TO RUN WITH LNG, WHICH IS AROUND 40% CHEAPER THAN DIESEL. GAS-POWERED TRUCKS ALSO USE 20% LESS ADBLUE THAN A DIESEL.”

with a small 170-litre diesel tank and AdBlue tank on the offside of the chassis. Two-axle tractors can be fitted with a 205kg tank, the largest available, with a range of 1,000kms.

In theory there is a significant fuel saving to be had. Fuel duty on gas is the equivalent to 18pence-per-litre compared to 58pence-per-litre for diesel, and the UK government said it will keep this differential until 2024.

As a rough guide 0.72kg of LNG equates to a litre of diesel, so travelling 1,000kms at 40 tonnes gross vehicle weight using gas is the equivalent to 9.9mpg using diesel. This suggests a significant saving as gas is cheaper to buy and more efficient on the road than diesel.

Test Drive

Out on the test track we drove two 460hp FH 4x2s; one powered by gas, the other with diesel. You’d be hard-pressed to notice the difference between the two. If anything the gas-powered engine is marginally quieter, and runs at a slightly higher rev count more akin to Euro-5. At 87km/h the gas engine runs at 1,160rpm, which is 80rpm more than the diesel at Euro-6.

While reducing co2 emissions and potentially cheaper running costs are welcomed there are practical concerns for hauliers.

A four-year Low Carbon Truck Trial that saw £23.4million provided by Government and

other industry bodies saw the number of LNG refuelling stations rise from 12 to 27, according to Gas Vehicle Hub. These can be found mainly across England with a few in Scotland and Wales.

LNG Stations

So far there are no plans to build any LNG stations in either Northern Ireland or the Republic of Ireland, and the island remains the only part of north-west Europe without an LNG terminal.

Plans to build a €500million LNG terminal in Shannon, County Clare, stalled although the Port of Cork, in Munster, has signed a ‘memorandum of understanding’ with NextDecade Corporation, an American LNG development company.





COMPLIANCE – ONE SIDE OF THE COIN

Operators, and especially those plying their trade in towns and cities, face a dazzling array of compliance issues. Often without consultation, operators are expected to accept, learn and implement new legislation or contractual requirements into their fleets, not to mention the attendant increase in costs with which it is accompanied.

Accordingly, FORS, the Fleet Operator Recognition Scheme, had little doubt in using compliance as the theme at its second FORS Members' Conference in October at the National Conference Centre in Solihull. Almost 400 delegates, representing the full spectrum of FORS membership, interacted with a panel of independent experts from the DVSA, the CILT, the Police, and alongside leading operators and supply chain specifiers. With compliance at the crux of the conference, keynote presentations sought to update the audience on current thinking and to alleviate their concerns.

To a large extent, the conference presenters did unravel many of the complexities, but it is with respect to day-to-day road transport operations where FORS – a voluntary accreditation scheme – goes much, much further in providing its members with comprehensive training, advice and guidance, designed to assist with the many issues surrounding not only compliance, but also legal requirements and legislative updates; all with a focus on increasing safety, boosting efficiency and promoting environmental protection.

For fleet managers, FORS exists to educate and advise on the wide-ranging aspects of commercial vehicle operation. FORS Practitioner workshops, now numbering ten with the introduction of the latest 'Managing noise in logistics' module, provide a fully comprehensive training programme for managers. Graduation from which can be taken at an individual's own pace, and always with the ultimate goal of laying the groundwork for them to go above and beyond basic compliance and to achieve operational excellence through best practice. The first two FORS Practitioner workshops were recently delivered in Northern Ireland.

For drivers too, whether they're behind the wheel of a van or a 44-tonne GVW artic, education and best practice guidance exists in the shape of Safe Urban Driving (SUD), cycle safety, a course for van drivers, and more besides. Indeed, FORS in Northern Ireland has completed SUD courses for 50 local drivers, for free, since July. Drivers are almost always at the sharp end of operators' transport activities, and certainly the most visible, so compliance is a basic requirement, whereas attention to best practice can bring tangible commercial benefits. "Compliance is one side of the coin," as CILT chief executive, Kevin Richardson, rightly pointed out at the FORS Members' Conference, "the other," he said, "is ethics." He went on to say, "But FORS accreditation can be an ethical decision – for your employees, your shareholders and for society. It shows you go beyond compliance and differentiates you in a competitive industry and enhances your reputation as an operator."

And that goes to the heart of FORS; a drive for better standards of road transport that will impact not merely on all operators regardless of their fleet make-up, but other road users, particularly vulnerable road users, and the wider public. Accordingly there is, of course, a responsibility among vulnerable road users, namely cyclists, to understand and guard against the dangers presented by commercial vehicles in towns and cities. Here too, FORS seeks to educate, being as it is an active supporter of Ciclovía Belfast; a free event where parts of the city are closed to allow cyclists traffic-free access. FORS has been an active presence at the last two Ciclovía events, providing cyclists with help and advice, and access to an HGV to see first-hand the difficult job drivers face every day.

Commercial advantages also exist thanks to

FORS membership becoming increasingly important for specifiers when buying-in their transport requirements. FORS, in short, can get you shortlisted. Increasingly in Northern Ireland, and right across the UK and Ireland, the FORS sticker is becoming recognised as a symbol of operational best practice inside and outside of the transport sector – as Seamus Deighan of Deighan Transport, Northern Ireland's first FORS Gold Member, attests, "New customers have come on-board because they recognise the value of the FORS accreditation, and we know that as a Northern Ireland operator, we can travel around the country and be at a nationwide high standard. FORS is more than a route to compliance, it shows dedication to best practice."

So, FORS is much, much more than a compliance tick-box. Yes, a thorough understanding of compliance, what it means and how to master it, is a fundamental skill required by any transport professional. But, with FORS providing guidance and training, the intricacies of compliance can be taught while a subsequent focus is placed on the more holistic attitude toward best practice. And, with safety very much at the heart of this mind-set, productivity can be boosted at the 'front-line' of operations through more defensive driving performance giving rise to greater fuel economy, reduced downtime and fewer Penalty Charge Notices.

Compliance is seen by many as merely an encumbrance, but it is there for good reason; delivering a base level of operational standards to which all must adhere. FORS, by extension, is about taking compliance to the next level and to provide a pathway to operational excellence. Moreover, the FORS ambition is to make best practice a day-to-day objective out on the road, in the traffic office, and throughout the industry.

Compliance Survey

The 2016/17 Random Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV) Compliance Survey estimated the non-compliance rate at just under 22%. This does not represent a significant change in the three year period since the HGV survey was last carried out. This rate means that, at any given time, around 1 in 5 HGVs on NI roads are estimated to be in breach of compliance legislation, either because they are committing a traffic offence and/or have a roadworthiness defect (estimated at 1 in 10). *Source: Driver & Vehicle Agency 'DfI Driver, Vehicle, Operator and Enforcement Statistics' 2017.*

Krone launch new container carrier trailer for UK and Ireland

Krone has introduced a new container carrier trailer for the UK and Ireland and the first consignment has been taken by H B Commercial, the vehicle service, parts, rentals and sales group.

The new 'Box Liner' trailer is manufactured by Krone in Europe and HB Commercial have agreed to be a Krone service agent and replacement parts distributor for the East of England.

HB Commercial Managing Director Howard Brunt says, "We are delighted to be given the opportunity to work as the service agent for Krone and with this new and exciting product we look forward to its success. The Krone Box Liner has been initially well accepted by our customers, reporting back that they are easy to operate and even with a 25-tonne container, drivers are reporting a very smooth slide."

The Box Liner was designed with close involvement from the Krone UK sales team – primarily to ensure compatibility with the UK and Irish market. The sliding chassis is quickly and easily adjusted to carry any standard sized dry freight or tank container and its no-frills specification ensures easy and fast operation.

According to Krone's UK Sales Manager Jason Chipchase, the new Box Liner combines features which have been tried and tested over several decades with the latest paint application process and cutting-edge telematics technology. The result, says Jason, is a no-nonsense specification built for loading flexibility, asset management control and a long working life.

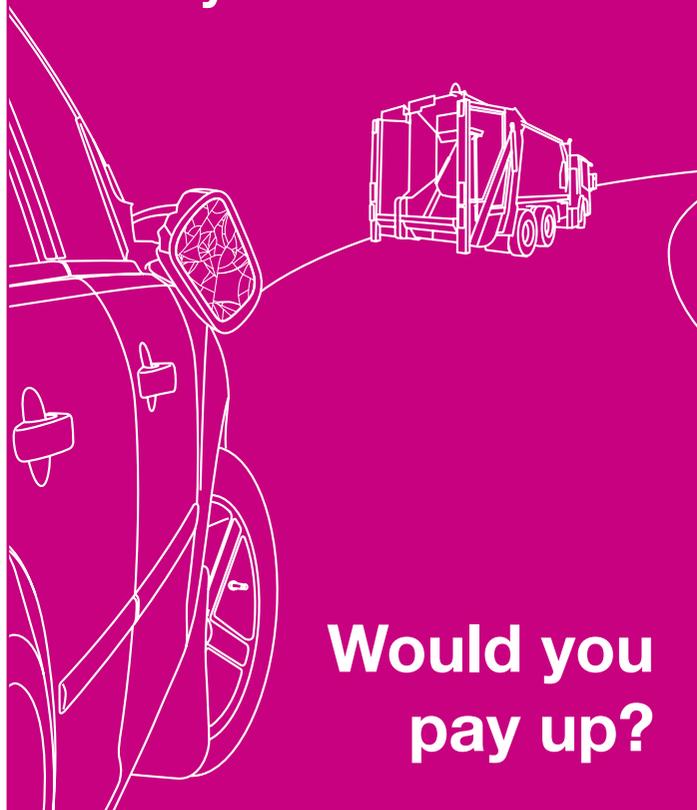
As an additional extra, the Krone Telematics package enables HB Commercial and their customers to monitor tyre pressures, mileage records for maintenance intervals, empty running or reduced-load miles, braking system status and trailer location. Additionally, an automatic notification can be given to alert regarding ABS or EBS malfunctions and a further alert made to the customer if any remedial work has not been carried out within a given time frame.

Krone's UK Sales and Key Accounts Manager Jason Chipchase.



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Donation From Volvo Trucks Enables Transaid To Expand Road Safety Projects

Volvo Trucks has pledged its continued support for international development organisation Transaid with the presentation of a cheque for £67,080 to patron HRH The Princess Royal – the largest single donation that Transaid has received in more than a decade.

The donation came following an auction at Volvo UK's 50th anniversary gala dinner which saw a top-of-the-range Ailsa 'limited edition' gold FH16-750 sold for £220,000 to Northern Ireland operator Manfreight.

Volvo pledged that all funds raised above the truck's reserve price of £100,000 would go to charity, to be split between Transaid and the winning bidder's nominated charity, Cystic Fibrosis Trust. A further £7,080 was raised at the Gala.

Chris Slowey, Managing Director of Craigavon-based Manfreight, presented the cheque to Transaid's Patron, Her Royal Highness the Princess Royal, alongside Carlos Rodrigues, CFO of Volvo Group Trucks, at Transaid's annual showcase event in London.

Speaking at the event, Chris said: "Transaid's professional driver training projects are particularly close to our hearts as they help to make commercial vehicle drivers more competent and vehicles safer in addition to reducing death and injury on the road. It's an honour to know that our money will be used to help such a worthwhile cause."

The £67,080 is being directly spent towards the development of Transaid's current road safety



Pictured (L-R) HRH The Princess Royal, Carlos Rodrigues (Chief Financial Officer, Volvo Group Trucks) and Chris Slowey (Managing Director, Manfreight).

and driver training projects in Zambia, Tanzania and Uganda, and will also allow Transaid to expand its road safety programme in West Africa.

Transaid's Chief Executive, Caroline Barber, said: "We are incredibly lucky to receive such

fantastic support from our corporate members and are so grateful to Volvo Trucks for making us the beneficiary of this high-profile vehicle auction. Thousands of people in sub-Saharan Africa will benefit from their generosity."

Construction on the A5 Western Transport Corridor scheme to begin

The Department for Infrastructure has announced its decision to proceed with the A5 Western Transport Corridor scheme, with construction of the section between New Buildings and north of Strabane ready to start in early 2018.

The A5 Western Transport Corridor dual carriageway scheme is an Executive flagship project which will provide 85 kilometres

of dual carriageway commencing just south of Londonderry at New Buildings, bypassing Strabane, Newtownstewart, Omagh,

Ballygawley and Aughnacloy before terminating at the existing A5 just south of Aughnacloy.

Further phases of the scheme will be constructed on confirmation of funding, while Phase 3 (between Ballygawley and the border at Aughnacloy) remains on hold pending clarification from the Irish Government on its proposals for the adjoining N2.

It is one of five key transport corridors in the region and the proposed upgrade will improve links between urban centres in the west and provide a strategic link with international gateways.

DAFcheck hits two million jobs

DAFcheck, DAF Trucks' own electronic vehicle maintenance record system, has reached a noteworthy milestone after two million individual 'jobs' were completed and registered by DAF Dealers from its total of 136 locations across the UK and Ireland.

DAFcheck logs all regular vehicle inspections, servicing and maintenance work, with secure reporting back to DAF customers through emails and a dedicated DAFcheck web portal.

Importantly, DAFcheck – available to DAF customers free-of-charge – goes towards compliance with the DVSA. DAF Trucks is also working with the DVSA on its Earned Recognition scheme to ensure operators

can access their KPI information required by the new scheme. Ultimately, DAFcheck has a meaningful impact on DAF customers' ability to protect their O-licences.

Further, and with the benefit of almost 1900 IRTEC accredited DAF Technicians throughout its network, DAFcheck has helped the UK market-leader achieve over 96% MOT first-time-pass rate in September 2017.

Launched in 2010, DAFcheck has grown significantly year-on-year to reach an average of 6,500 jobs every week in 2017. Last year alone, over 62,000 individual vehicles were logged and inspected through DAFcheck.

Stay safe with Jost Technology

Three-sensor fifth wheels take human error out of trailer coupling and allow the operator to be confident that the vehicle is safe to drive.

The technology was pioneered by JOST UK 14 years ago, who here looks at how it has developed over the years and become popular with increasing numbers of fleets both in the UK and around the world.

JOST's Sensoric fifth wheel is based on its market leading lightweight JSK 36D. All the sensors are incorporated within the structure of the fifth wheel, to create a robust and damage resistant unit.

Paul Clayton, JOST's UK and Regional and Technical Sales and Support Manager, explains: "Safety has to be paramount with fifth wheel couplings. Special features within the standard JSK36D, include a recessed lock jaw to assist safe coupling, guide bars to ensure the king pin is directed squarely into the mechanism, while a fully supported locking bar gives complete security to the king pin when the mechanism is closed. Once the tractor unit and trailer are coupled, an automatic locking catch ensures overall security.

"Thus coupling is quite a straightforward operation and there is even a spring hook and chain to provide extra security. In addition there is also an option of a Fleetmaster handle."

Uncoupling is equally simple, using the JSK36D's pull cable.

JOST's Sensoric fifth wheel brings additional

operational safety and driver confidence by detecting three separate functions. The first sensor indicates that the skid plate of the trailer has made contact with the main plate of the fifth wheel; the second one shows that the king pin has entered the mechanism correctly; the third sensor, located on the locking catch, provides a final double check.

When all three sensors have been activated a green 'coupled' light is automatically illuminated on the sensor console mounted in the driver's cab. This confirms to the driver that every step of the coupling process has been safely completed.

Once driving has commenced the green light gradually fades away until it is completely out. However, the sensors constantly monitor the fifth wheel during travel, giving the driver confidence that the vehicle remains safe.

"The Sensoric means the driver has one less thing to think about," says Paul, "so can concentrate on the road, traffic and weather."

JOST offers several versions of the Sensoric fifth wheels, including cast steel and low maintenance versions. Some vehicle manufacturers offer these as a factory option, which allows them to integrate sensor display within the dashboard rather than fitting it as a separate remote unit.

Jannine Burt, Regional Sales and Fleet Manager for JOST UK, gives her view on the Sensoric fifth



wheel: "As you would expect, JOST has designed the sensor system to be incredibly robust and able to withstand the rigour of long hours on the road. The sensors are located in places where they are afforded maximum protection from knocks and bumps, environmental conditions and vibrations. They are also positioned so that they are not likely to be broken during coupling/uncoupling and to discourage deliberate tampering or unauthorised adjustment..

"Our design team also ensured reliable signal transmission by selecting top quality sensors, shielding against signal corruption by electromagnetic interference and maximised compatibility with other electrical and electronic vehicle systems."

In summary, JOST takes the view that sensors systems are becoming a way of life and are further enhancing vehicle and driver safety and represent another step in the onward march of technology.

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NEW STRALIS X-WAY: ADVANCED AND ADAPTABLE

Iveco describe their new Stralis X-WAY as a completely new construction logistics and urban services range that combines the legendary Trakker chassis and off-road capability with the best-in-class payload, ultimate on-road performance and fuel efficiency, as Export & Freight's Garfield Harrison discovered on a recent trip to Ulm in Germany.



The **Stralis X-WAY** certainly raises the stakes in construction logistics and urban services missions with the biggest payload in its segment: its Super Loader version on an 8x4 chassis developed for concrete mixer applications, for example, weights in at less than 8,845 kg, taking the customers' payload to new heights.

The new range takes the modular approach to the extreme, offering a choice of line-ups that can be tailored to match the exact requirements of every mission with no compromise - from light tipper to concrete mixer - a key asset in a highly vocational sector where transformation is the rule rather than the exception.

Commented Pierre Lahutte, Iveco Brand President: "It stands out on the market for being designed specifically for this sector, with record modularity that enables us to match each customer's mission exactly, without compromise. The exceptional payload of the Super Loader version is testament to this vehicle's ability to meet the specific requirements of every application. This ultimate flexibility comes with the outstanding TCO that results from the cutting edge technology we introduced in our TCO2 Champion, the Stralis XP, plus winning features such as our Hi-Traction system for off-road capability."

Added Gianalberto Lupi, Head of Iveco's Heavy Business Line: "This new range addresses the transformation that is taking place in the construction logistics and urban services market, where demand has been shifting from heavy to light off-road trucks, so that in 2016 more than three quarters of vehicles sold in construction logistics and urban services in Europe were light off-road trucks. This represents a market of around 45,000 units just in Europe.

"These customers are mainly small to mid-sized companies that mostly work locally and in urban areas and municipalities. They need a truck that will spend 90% of the time on the road, but they need off-road capability for the last mile - just 10% of their mission. And this off-road capability makes all the difference for them, because that's what enables them to complete the mission and get the job.

These companies provide a service that is paid on payload, so low kerb weight is absolutely key. They are very focused on Total Cost of Ownership, so fuel efficiency and low maintenance costs are essential and they won't compromise on performance. They need a truck that is tailor made for their specific mission, with a high degree of customisation that changes from country to country, from mission to mission. And, because the truck spends so



much time on the road, they need the best driver comfort that long-haul trucks have to offer."

Impressive

We spent a couple of hours behind the wheel, putting it through its paces on- and off-road and were particularly impressed with its handling and performance in a quarry environment. Traction was superb, the cab provided a comfortable working environment and the super fast new auto gearbox made driving so much a pleasure.

It really is the perfect crossover vehicle, a bridge between the outstanding on-road excellence of the Stralis and the legendary off-road robustness of the Trakker, and ideally suited to our local market requirements.

For the driver, the Stralis X-WAY offers a choice of cabs to match the different requirements of the varied missions: in addition to the current cab offer, the outstanding comfort of the Hi-Way cab is now also available across the range.

Customers also have a choice of three different vehicle set-ups, depending on whether the operator is looking for a vehicle to work safely on urban roads or he needs more off-road performance.

The line-up includes artic and rigid versions, the three highly fuel-efficient engines of the Stralis range, including the mid-range Cursor 11, which is new on the 6x4 and 8x4 versions, and three transmissions: manual, automatic and the last-generation Hi-Tronix automated transmission jointly developed with

ZF and launched last year on the Stralis XP.

This new transmission is now also available in 16-speed version with mission-dedicated Creeping, Rocking and Off-road driving modes.

Tyre Choices

Incidentally, the new Stralis X-WAY is available with the Michelin X Works tyres, developed for deliveries on construction sites. The tyre sizes 315/80 R 22.5 and 13 R 22.5 for steer and drive axles are low rolling resistance tyres (ECE/R117 labeling C for rolling resistance).

The Michelin X Works tyres enable transport operators to reduce fuel consumption compared to the previous Michelin X Works XZY (ECE/R117 labeling D for rolling resistance) with no compromise on other aspects of their performance, such as durability, safety and retreading capability.

Starting from the first quarter of 2018, new Stralis X-WAY will be available with the brand new Michelin X Multi Energy tyres, developed for transport operators covering a variety of missions. The new tyres offer the lowest fuel consumption and CO2 emissions in the market with no compromise on other aspects of their performance, such as durability, safety, as well as regrooving and retreading capability.

The Michelin X Multi Energy tyres enables transport operators to reduce fuel consumption by 0.9 litres / 100 km and CO2 emissions by 2.4 tons every 100,000 km compared to the Michelin X Multiway 3D.





Seamus Leheny

Policy & Membership Manager - Northern Ireland, Freight Transport Association



PAYING OUR OWN WAY

New independent research conducted by the Freight Transport Association and recently released in November has shown that HGVs pay enough tax alone to cover almost the whole of UK spending on road maintenance.

The report, prepared for FTA by RepGraph ahead of the recent Autumn Budget, has shown that not only do lorries more than pay for all the wear and tear effect they have on the roads, but in fact they pay 94% of the UK's total spending on road maintenance.

The report finds that heavy goods vehicles pay three times more in tax than the estimated cost of damage to infrastructure.

Between 2015 and 2016, central and devolved governments and local authorities across the UK spent around £4.7 billion on road maintenance. HGV taxes (vehicle excise duty, road user levy and fuel duty) raised in the same period £4.4 billion. The cost estimate for infrastructure damage imposed by HGVs totalled only £1.5bn. The total tax take from motor vehicles was £33.5 billion – more than seven times as high as the road maintenance budget.

The report supports FTA's central points for the most recent Budget in saying that road freight taxes are too high and vital infrastructure spending is too low.

Taxes on UK road freight are already the highest in Europe, any further



increase would add to the cost of doing business in the UK and the cost of goods in the shops.

FTA will continue to lobby Government for a reduction in fuel duty both at Westminster and our local political representatives. I recently met with the DUP prior to the autumn budget to discuss several industry matters. One of the key points outlined was the detrimental effect that high fuel costs are having on legitimate commercial vehicle operators in Northern Ireland and the negative consequences a rise in fuel duty in the subsequent budget would have on our industry. Although the budget didn't deliver a cut, the

freeze was maintained, for now.

A5 Upgrade

However in recent months there has been some particularly welcome news regarding the long overdue upgrades to our near Victorian era road network.

Hopefully by the time you are reading this, work will have finally begun on the first phase of the A5 upgrade between Newbuildings and Strabane. This section upgrade will see a 15km stretch of the A5 upgraded to dual carriageway standard at a cost of £150 million.

The upgrade will not only improve journey time for those travelling on the A5 but it will deliver significant safety benefits such as no direct access or gaps in the central reserve, something that the very busy A1 road linking Belfast to Dublin is crying out for. The speed limit will also increase for HGV's from 40mph to 50mph therefore driving at a more efficient speed. The length of construction is estimated between 2 to 3 years so hopefully completion by early 2020.

When the entire A5 is finally upgraded it will give us 85km of high specification dual carriageway but coming in at a hefty price tag of £1 billion. Funding for the remaining stages between Strabane and Aughnacloy still has to be secured however it's encouraging

that the Irish Government has committed to £75 million over the next 3 years towards the first phase of the upgrade.

Many of you will have already driven on the A6 between Randalstown and Castledawson and seen at first hand the impressive work already underway. This upgrade will result in a new dual carriageway commencing at the end of the M22 along a 12km route to the Castledawson roundabout. The Randalstown to Toome section is due to be completed in 2019 and the rest of the section by early 2021.

Of course work would be already near completion if the numerous legal challenges were not submitted against this scheme. FTA was extremely supportive of this scheme from the outset both lobbying Government, political parties and Transport NI as well as contributing extensively to local media coverage during the legal challenges outlining the need for the scheme to progress and its economic importance to the transport industry. Indeed I attended two of those A6 hearings at Belfast High Court and I hope it's a long time before I ever have to cross that doorway again!

Thankfully for now both schemes are making progress but there is still much work to do on pushing forward the overall completion of both as well as other projects in the pipeline such as the Newry Southern Relief Road, Cookstown by-pass and improvements to the A1. The transport industry as mentioned earlier more than pays its fair share towards the maintenance of our road network and that is why we will continue to demand that the road network is fit for purpose and doesn't hold back our industry from doing its job.

The following table clearly shows just how much more UK consumers are paying in tax compared to the levels of duty imposed in other European states:

Country	Fuel Duty (Pence per litre)
UK	57.95
ROI	45.30
Bulgaria	29.98
France	49.63
Netherlands	44.84
Spain	33.35
EU average	39.21

Source: EC Directorate General for Energy, Weekly Oil Bulletin No. 1868 11 September 2017

Willis IRM acquire two independent brokers

Willis IRM has recently acquire two independent brokers, McCausland, Light and Rankin in Castlereagh and Hull-based broker Kennett Insurance Brokers.

The deals bring together two of Northern Ireland's best-known independent brokers and further extend Willis IRM's presence in England, where it already has an office in Reading.

The firms will continue to trade as McCausland, Light and Rankin and Kennett Insurance respectively while the existing management and staff will also be retained, bringing the overall number employed by Willis IRM to more than 100.

Willis IRM Managing Director Richard Willis, whose father Robert Willis set up the firm almost 40 years ago, said the acquisitions would further strengthen its offering to companies across all sectors.

"We are delighted to come together with two long established brokers, each of them, like ourselves, have built up a strong client base over many years. The acquisition of local business McCausland, Light and Rankin will further strengthen our significant presence in the transportation industry and broaden our expertise in the taxi sector.

"By acquiring Kennett Insurance Brokers, we are continuing our strategy of growing independent businesses and will continue the good work undertaken by Nick Wride and his team in establishing a solid reputation in east Yorkshire.



Welcoming the deal with Kennett Insurance Managing Director Nick Wride (centre) are (left) Richard Willis, Managing Director Willis IRM, and Robert Willis, Executive Chairman Willis IRM

"It follows the opening of Willis IRM's office in Reading in 2015 and we continue to look for further opportunities for growth through strategic acquisitions. The clients of both firms will have access to Willis IRM's full-service offering, which includes Risk Management, Health and Safety, Financial Services and Employment Law."

McCausland Light and Rankin (MLR) was established in 1993 by Gary McCausland and operates from premises at Castlereagh Business Park where it employs more than 20 staff.

MLR Managing Director Gary McCausland said: "The success of

McCausland, Light and Rankin has been due to providing customer focused personal services to all our clients. It is that customer service which has allowed us to enjoy an exceptional client retention rate and it is an ethos that is shared with Willis IRM. We look

forward to pooling our resources to further strengthen our offering to existing and future clients."

Kennett Insurance was set up in 1975 employs 10 staff at its office in Saxon Business Park in Hessle, just outside Hull. Kennett Insurance Managing Director Nick Wride said: "Kennett Insurance brokers has a long tradition of working with a wide range of companies in Hull and the Humber. We look forward to a new period of growth in the local market following the acquisition by Willis Insurance and Risk Management."

Willis IRM was originally set up in Bangor in 1978 by Robert Willis, its current Executive Chairman.

The company is also run by Managing Director Richard Willis and his three brothers as shareholders and directors. The firm has grown significantly over the past three years with staff numbers doubling over the period to 65.

FORS affirms robust compliance with audit re-structure

FORS, the Fleet Operator Recognition Scheme, has announced it is to reduce the period between mandatory FORS Bronze re-approval audits from three down to two years for Gold accredited members from 1 January 2018.

FORS Gold members are required to undertake periodical FORS Bronze re-approval audits as part of their FORS accreditation.

The move to reduce the time period between Bronze re-approval audits was announced at delegates at the recent FORS Members' Conference in Solihull.

From now on the change will affect members applying for Gold for the first time, and to existing Gold members as and when their current Bronze accreditation expires.

The decision was taken by the FORS Executive Group (part of GSAG, the scheme's Governance of Standards Advisory Group), after it deemed a three-year period between on-site audits was, it said, 'simply too long'.

The annual process to renew FORS Gold and FORS Silver accreditation through the online evidencing system remains unchanged.

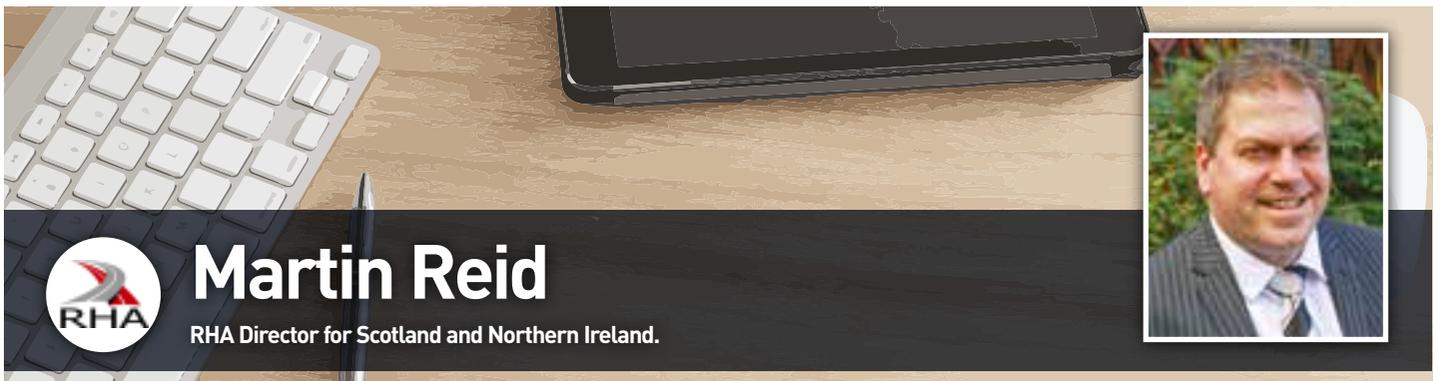


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Martin Reid

RHA Director for Scotland and Northern Ireland.



KEY AREAS OF CONCERN OVER BREXIT NEED ADDRESSING

So, the EU has declared that we have made “sufficient progress” to begin discussing phase two of Brexit. On the ground it sure doesn’t feel like the sufficient progress they are talking about has manifested itself into many answers. The situation with Brexit can best be described as fluid. The politicians are in a state of high excitement and there is conflicting information and opinion abounding. For goods vehicle operators working internationally there are significant uncertainties – that applies equally to EU based operators coming into or through the UK as well as UK operators coming into or through the EU.

The RHA early on identified three key areas of particular concern for road haulage operators. These are: Labour, Market Access and Regulations, and Customs. Given the land border between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, the highly integrated operations across the entire island of Ireland, and the political environment, it is clear that customs arrangements provide the sector with a potentially massive to deal with.

While the politicians can afford to get excited, the whole logistics supply chain does not have that luxury. In the road haulage sector we have to start dealing with the issues as best we can. To that that we decide what we know, and what we can do about it.

Firstly, it is prudent to plan for Brexit. It may seem obvious, but it is true that so far many businesses have taken the wait and see approach. There are two dates we should probably work to, 23:00; 29 March 2019 (UK and Irish time) is when Brexit is scheduled. With a transition to 29 March 2021 it is possible that no changes will happen on the ground until 2 years after that. BUT whether it is 2019 or 2021 we need to plan.

Labour Issues

What do we know so far on the labour issue? To put it simply, EU labour already in the UK before Brexit happens can stay and vice



versa. Many companies have been reassuring drivers in particular that they are welcome to stay – and that has helped to some extent.

Even so a drift away from the UK by drivers has been observed and this has been most strongly felt in Northern Ireland so far. The UK Government has committed to a visa system after Brexit based on securing the labour the economy needs – more work needs to be done on that to build confidence in sectors like logistics where the skill levels are perceived to be lower than other areas.

Market Access

What do we know so far on the market access and standards issues? Well, not much. This area has been in the long grass while

phase one has been negotiated.

The Road Haulage Association has suggested that arrangements for the sector are pretty much fit for purpose and that for international movements it is practical that EU and other international rules will still need to be followed.

Ideally respecting UK operator licenses and EU community licences would be the simplest solution, but we may get to a situation where international access for UK operators may require permits agreed with individual Member States of the EU (if that happens it might still work well in the UK/Irish context as permitting unfettered transit through UK and Republic of Ireland territory could be agreed bilaterally).

Customs

Well, there is agreement that there will be no hard border on the island of Ireland. The real question is - how can that be made to work? Well, somewhere at some point there is going to be some sort of “accounting” for the goods that cross borders. Given that, our advice (in the absence of anything more substantial) is that the current levels of documentation used in the logistics now will not be good enough to support any customs processes at all.

Proper descriptions of goods will probably be needed – good enough to identify standard customs codes. Commercial invoices will need to be up to standard too. So what to do next?

Well, regarding labour, companies need to continue to re-assure staff that they have a future in Northern Ireland and the UK in general. We know how difficult it is to get new blood into the industry so it is imperative that we hang on to the ones we have. On market access and other road haulage regulations, it’s fair to say that companies can only watch for the next 6 months to see what happens as there is very little coming out of Government to give much comfort in this area just now. And as for customs? I guess some companies will need to start improving their paperwork now – just in case!



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Fined For Having No Driver CPC

A County Londonderry operator was convicted at Lisburn Magistrates' Court and fined a total of £500 plus a £15 Levy.

The conviction arose when DVA Vehicle Examiners directed a 2 axle flatbed lorry to the Department's weighbridge facility at Sprucefield for the purposes of an inspection and weight check. During the course of the inspection the driver was asked for a record of his daily driving either digital or manual and his Certificate of Professional Competence, none of which were produced.

The driver was subsequently cautioned and interviewed. At a later date the operator was interviewed and cautioned.

When the offence of causing and permitting failure to record data was put to the operator he replied, "We weren't aware that the driver needed it for his journey. Since then we have nominated two drivers for the vehicles and have provisionally booked their Certificate of Professional Competence training and practical test."

Tachograph Not Properly Calibrated

A County Armagh operator has been convicted at Craigavon Magistrates' Court and fined a total of £400 plus a £15 offender levy.

The conviction arose when DVA Vehicle Examiners directed a three axle Volvo in combination with a 3 axle trailer off the M1 for an inspection of the vehicle and tachograph records.

During the course of the inspection Officers noted that the tachograph was not calibrated in accordance with the regulations, in addition the vehicle was driven on two separate occasions when the tachograph recording equipment was not utilised. The Operator was cautioned and interviewed regarding the offences.

Failed to Take Daily Rest

A Republic of Ireland driver appearing at Omagh Magistrates' Court has been fined a total of £500 plus a £15 offender levy.

The conviction arose when DVA Vehicle Examiners directed a 3+3 Scania goods vehicle in combination with a semi-trailer to the DVA Test Centre in Omagh for the purposes of an inspection. An analysis of the driver's tachograph charts revealed two breaches of exceeding daily driving period and failing to take daily rest.

The driver was cautioned and interviewed regarding the offences. The driver subsequently paid three court deposits at the road side which were held pending the outcome of the prosecution case.

In Charge of 'Dangerous' Vehicle

A County Fermanagh operator was convicted at Omagh Magistrates' Court and fined a total of £500 plus a £15 offender levy after DVA Vehicle Examiners directed a 2 axle Mitsubishi rigid goods vehicle to the DVA Test Centre in Omagh for the purposes of an inspection and vehicle weight check.

The Department's mobile weigh pads were deployed and the vehicle was identified as being overloaded on its 1st axle by 400kgs (22.2%), overloaded on axle two by 280kgs (11.2%) and overloaded by 1,480kgs (42.28) on its Gross Vehicle Weight.

The vehicle was overloaded to such an extent that it was deemed to be in a dangerous condition putting massive stress on tyres, brakes, steering etc with the vehicle less stable, difficult to steer and taking longer to stop.

The driver was cautioned and interviewed regarding the offences. The operator was subsequently cautioned and interviewed at a later date.

Tachograph Offences

A County Armagh operator has been convicted at Newry Magistrates' Court and fined a total of £400 plus a £15 Levy.

The conviction arose when DVA Vehicle Examiners were carrying out a Goods Vehicle operation in the Warrenpoint area and stopped a Volvo 3 axle articulated lorry in combination with a united tipper trailer.

An analysis of the driver's tachograph charts revealed two infringements of exceeding daily driving hours. The driver was cautioned and interviewed regarding the offences. The operator was subsequently cautioned and interviewed at a later date.



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Modulift Spreader Frame Lifts Iconic Horse Statues

Irish rental firm O'Carroll Haulage and Crane Hire used a modular spreader frame to lift two famous bronze statues and place them into temporary storage while a major construction project takes place at the Curragh Racecourse, located on the Curragh plain in County Kildare.

Co. Limerick-based O'Carroll utilised the Modulift CMOD modular spreader frame and supporting rigging gear below the hook of a 100t Palfinger PK 100002 Performance loader crane mounted on an articulated truck.

The statues were both lifted, one at a time, onto the vehicle, secured and transported together to an on-site storage area approx. 500m away, where they were both offloaded. A lift area and pathway for the vehicle were prepared with hardcore prior to the lifting team's arrival onsite.

John Sisk & Son Limited, the main contractor for the work, presented O'Carroll with a challenging scope of work to remove the statues, weighing 6.7t and 4.5t respectively. It was considered to protect them under covering for the duration of the work but they were deemed of great historical importance to the course.

The larger statue, complete with jockey, commemorates the legendary Vintage Crop, a British-bred, Irish-trained thoroughbred racehorse best known for becoming the first overseas runner to win Australia's premier race, the Melbourne Cup. The lighter statue represents Nijinsky, known in the United States as Nijinsky II, a Canadian-bred, Irish-trained thoroughbred and sire. Both statues had to be removed still attached to their concrete foundations.

Maurice O'Carroll, director at O'Carroll Haulage, explained: "The only option was to bore through the concrete footings and cradle the loads with slings;

there were no jacking points so that wasn't a viable solution. Four 3t slings were good for 12t capacity and, combined with the frame, we were able to create a stable and efficient lifting solution. The rig performed perfectly, as it has done when we've employed this solution in the past; the CMOD is a brilliant invention."

The crane and rigging equipment was sourced from O'Carroll stock but its familiar partner and Modulift distributor in Ireland, Irlequip, provided the modular spreader frame. The CMOD 12 was used in this instance but the range spans CMOD 6 to CMOD 110, boasting 300t capacity. They are commonly used for lifts where there are height restrictions as the height of the rig is lower than, say, a one-over-two solution.

The statues were lifted from the racecourse's parade ring, which will be transformed by the new development. A new ring will ensure that more patrons can share in the excitement and build up to races. The new Curragh will also see the creation of world-class facilities on a par with anywhere in the world. The centrepiece of the redevelopment will see the creation of a major new grandstand that will incorporate five star corporate facilities.

The construction and utilities marketplaces primarily busy the fleet of loaders plus Liebherr and Grove mobile cranes, but O'Carroll said the Curragh project epitomised the company's "anything, anytime, anywhere" ethos. "Business is picking up but diverse applications like this challenge us to remain innovative in our above and below-the-hook solutions."

RTITB only accrediting body included in new Logistics 100

Laura Nelson, Managing Director of RTITB, has been recognised as a key industry influencer in The Logistics 100, the only representative of an accrediting body to receive this endorsement.

Having worked at RTITB, the transport training accrediting body, for more than a decade, Laura has extensive logistics industry experience.

She was appointed Managing Director in 2015 following five years in the role of Operations Director for the company. She has also studied business growth and development at Cranfield School of Management and her qualifications include a Certificate of Professional Competence in National Road Haulage and ISO9001 Lead Auditor.

"I am extremely passionate about being a catalyst for positive change in the UK logistics and transport industry, so I'm delighted that this has been recognised by The

Logistics 100," says Laura. "It's an honour to be the only Director of an accrediting body on the list. This shows just how dedicated RTITB is to promoting safety, and compliance, and to helping train, support and protect the future of this vitally important sector."

The Logistics 100 is an annual list of the UK logistics industry's most influential professionals. It is selected by a panel of industry experts and is based on factors such as delivering operational strength, driving change in the industry, positively influencing others and demonstrating visionary ideas for the sector.



DSV Launches UK Traffic Academy

DSV is making further investments in training and education in the UK with the launch of its Traffic Academy programme, which aims to secure the highest level of skilled employees in planning and freight forwarding.

The DSV Traffic Academy is a comprehensive educational programme, with a primary focus on improving customer retention, strengthening customer interaction and increasing its economic traffic results.

The programme will look at key processes, such as negotiations with suppliers, traffic planning optimisation and productivity improvement. All basic planner skills are covered and the programme will be adapted to fit the specific needs of each training group. Students are presented with practical, real life traffic or logistics cases that they have to solve, providing the best possible economic and customer outcome.

The sessions also focus on individual staff development, to increase confidence and provide better business understanding to empower all personnel to make the best decisions, while also encouraging closer cooperation with colleagues, including Sales and Customer Service teams.

Jesper Hansen, Managing Director for DSV Road explained: "The DSV Traffic Academy has trained employees in specific skills required for planning and freight forwarding, in countries throughout Europe including Spain, the Baltics and Ireland. The results from these training sessions have more than paid back the invested effort. The benefits are real and have been measured in terms of Customer Satisfaction results and an increase in profit-making transports. Once the first group of twelve has graduated, there will be a second group who will start the programme. This will continue until all relevant staff have been through the Academy."

OBITUARY: GERRY CALLAGHAN, TECHNICAL SUPPORT SERVICES LTD

It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of Gerry Callaghan of Technical Support Services Ltd (TSS), who passed away on Friday 20th October after a lengthy illness aged just 56.

A beloved husband of Teresa, adored Dad of Olivia and Fiona, much loved son of Tom and the late Katie, brother of Ollie, Liam, Aileen and Ethna, Gerry loved his family, his work and his sport.

Gerry studied Mechanical Engineering in the then Athlone Regional Technical College and was a sales representative with TSS at his time of death.

Gerry had a great rapport with all his customers and colleagues alike. He is described by many as "a true gentleman", "a character" and a reliable friend and colleague. As one friend so aptly put it, "he was absolutely great company - he would fit in with anyone. He was a fantastic people's person who never offended anyone in his life."

Gerry started with TSS in Northern Ireland in 1994, and was at the forefront of sales and service, for both Carrier refrigeration and Zepro tail lifts over the past 23 years. He helped Vincent Marmion start the company's first service depot in Northern Ireland in 2003, originally in Lisburn, later moving to Hillsborough



in 2007, and most recently was instrumental in the depot achieving Carrier Transcold UK 'Service Partner of the Year' in 2017.

Gerry was regarded as an exemplary employee, a fine salesman, and a company man through and through. He enjoyed participating in company outings, whether they be golf at Lough Erne, various awards nights, or the CV Show in Birmingham.

He was a passionate sports enthusiast and was a member of the Tulsk team that won the 1984 Roscommon intermediate football title in the GAA's centenary year. Earlier in his career, he also played underage football for the Western Gaels club.

He loved golf and was captain of Strokestown Golf Club in 2011 as well as serving as secretary of Strokestown United Soccer Club. He was also a former chairman of Tulsk GAA Club and was an avid Tulsk GAA man as well as being a passionate Manchester United supporter.

The late Gerry Callaghan reposed at his residence before being removed to Strokestown Parish Church for Funeral Mass on 23rd October, which was followed by burial in Tulsk Cemetery.

Thermo King Introduces Innovative SLXi Hybrid Trailer Refrigeration Units

Thermo King has launched the SLXi Hybrid, an innovative refrigeration unit for semi-trailer applications designed for lower environmental impact and reduced operating costs. Initially introduced as a technology concept in 2016, the new unit is now officially available as part of the SLXi portfolio.

The Thermo King SLXi Hybrid uses a Frigoblock EnviroDrive package. This package includes a generator installed on the tractor engine and an inverter-drive system to provide constant electric power and operate in electric mode both when connected to a three-phase power supply at the loading dock and while driving on the road.

The technology allows for all deliveries to be performed with the refrigeration unit's diesel engine turned off for minimum impact on the cities' or stores' environments. This offers a unique flexibility to transport companies, as the diesel engine can be restarted whenever needed and allows the unit to keep its full autonomy at all times.

For even more operational flexibility, the new hybrid technology from Thermo King and Frigoblock can be applied to a SLXi trailer fleet already in operation. One tractor can pull different trailers operating in hybrid mode and customers can easily upgrade their existing fleet with the hybrid mode capability.



Transaid Takes Delivery Of A Used Volvo Truck

Volvo Trucks has pledged its continued support for international development organisation Transaid with the donation of a used FH13 tractor unit shipped to Uganda.

The used truck donation follows on from a £67,080 contribution raised from an auction at Volvo UK's 50th anniversary Gala dinner which saw a top-of-the-range 'limited edition' gold FH16-750 with the registration plate 'FH16 ONE' sold to Manfreight in Northern Ireland.

The donated 2012 Volvo FH 6x2 tractor

unit comes direct from Volvo's approved Used Truck stock and features a 460hp Euro-5 engine coupled to a 12-speed I-Shift automated transmission system. The 3900mm wheelbase chassis is also fitted with a plain white Globetrotter XL cab.

Transaid's Road Safety Project Manager,

Neil Rettie, says, "This vehicle donation from Volvo will make a real difference to our Professional Driver Training project – Uganda. With drivers starting training, this vehicle has come at a perfect time. We are hugely thankful to Volvo for this donation which will enable thousands of drivers to be trained over the next few years."

BFGoodrich To Launch First Ever Truck And Bus Tyres In Ireland

BFGoodrich is introducing its first ever tyre range for trucks, buses and coaches in Ireland.



The company, most famous for its off-road specialism, sells more than 1.6 million tyres per year to the commercial vehicle market in all territories across the world – previously except Europe.

Targeting all segments of the market – from long distance and regional to on/off road and urban – the extensive range will feature 54 steer, drive and trailer tyres available in 17.5", 19.5" and 22.5" fitments.

Three key products will make up the new range: Route Control, designed to provide long lasting performance for the general haulage and coach market; Cross Control, a robust, high-grip tyre for the construction industry – particularly suited to tippers; and Urban Control, a low-noise tyre specifically designed for local service buses.

Describing the new range as 'one of the most significant new brand launches into the commercial vehicle tyre market for years', Guy Heywood, Commercial Director at BFGoodrich for the UK and Ireland, said: "The breadth of our range means there will be a BFGoodrich tyre to fit pretty much every requirement on the market, meaning operators can adopt a single brand strategy."

Tests Show Michelin Truck Tyres Reduce Fuel Bill

Michelin X Line Energy tyres have demonstrated their long distance fuel efficiency after tests revealed a truck and trailer running on the fuel-saving tyres will save an average 1.4 litres per 100km.

According to the manufacturer, that equates to an annual saving of up to Stg£1,670 and a reduction of 5 tonnes of CO2 emissions based on a vehicle covering 130,000 km per year – compared to the average of its five main competitors in the long-haul market, achieved by the superior rolling resistance of the tyres.

Michelin X Line Energy tyres went

up against those manufactured by direct competitors on a 200km journey at an average speed of 80km/h on real roads, organised by the DEKRA Test Centre.

Commenting, Chris Smith, Michelin's Marketing Director North Europe – Truck & Bus, said: "If a typical haulier fitting this profile changed its policy from a regional fitment to Michelin X

Line Energy tyres, they could easily save up to three per cent in fuel, which in some cases could even wipe out their entire tyre bill."

Michelin X Line Energy tyres enable a 30 per cent increase in mileage performance for the steer axle on 315/60 R 22.5 and 17 per cent for the 295/60 R 22.5 Michelin X Line Energy Z, compared to the previous Michelin XZA2 Energy range.

Giti Launches Key Trailer Tyre Size

Giti Tire has added size 445/45R19.5 alongside the 435/50R19.5 in the Giti GTL925 pattern, as the company completes its wide base range in the growing volume transport segment.

The new size offers a lower diameter which gives high cube trailer fleets the opportunity to maximise the inside loading volume of up to three meters height, while still respecting the total vehicle height of four meters allowed across Europe. Both tyres carry a load index of 160 and speed index J.

The 445/45R19.5 can use the same rim and be

fitted to same axles as the 435/50R19.5.

The GTL925 pattern features an extra wide shoulder for enhanced resistance to tearing, a seven rib tread pattern for regular wear across the tread and high mileage potential and optimised rolling resistance which achieves a B label rating citing good fuel economy. Both sizes are M&S marked to indicate superior all-season traction and braking properties.



Myles Stamp, Owner of Stamp Transport, is confident that the new Michelin X Multi D fitments will set a new record mileage for the fleet.

Wexford Haulier Targets Record Mileage On Michelin Tyres

Wexford haulier Stamp Transport could soon be achieving more than 500,000km from its drive tyres, after moving to Michelin's latest generation 315/70 R22.5 X Multi D drive axle tyres.

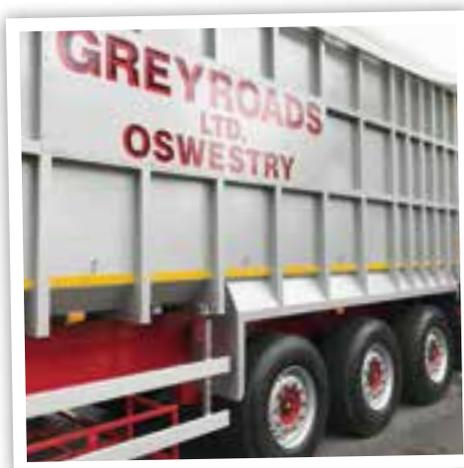
The French tyre manufacturer says the new tyres increase mileage potential by as much as 20 per cent versus the previous X MultiWay 3D XDE fitments, which routinely covered 430,000km for the Enniscorthy-based haulier before being replaced.

Commenting, Myles Stamp, Owner of Stamp Transport, said: "We're used to achieving exceptional mileage from our Michelin tyres, and the potential to increase that by up to a further 20 per cent could have a very positive effect on our operating costs. We are confident these tyres will set a new record mileage for our fleet."

Stamp Transport, which operates a fleet of 40 trucks and 50 trailers, has been in operation since 1992 and provides fresh food, pharmaceutical and general haulage solutions for national domestic and international customers.



SAF TIRE PILOT KEEPS GREYROADS ROLLING AT THE CRITICAL POINT



Greyroads Haulage of Oswestry were singing the praises of the SAF Tire Pilot auto inflation system after a vicious-looking 6-inch piece of metal pierced the wall of a trailer tyre.

Despite being embedded some 4 inches into the wall of the tyre, Tire Pilot maintained the correct operating pressure keeping the trailer safely on the road.

Greyroads Director, Simon Yarwood reported that even though the £300 tyre had sustained significant damage, because Tire Pilot had kept it inflated for a further three and a half days after the puncture, it was possible for it to be repaired for just £45.

Simon went on to say: 'The Tire Pilot system has provided us at Greyroads a return on investment within 12 months. The system has also saved

us £1,000 minimum in maintenance per trailer each year after, this is without factoring in other costs to us such as roadside call out charges.

"The system also increases our uptime and allows us to repair or replace tyres at the end of the week rather than during working hours. Most importantly we are now a safer fleet with the risk of a blowout on one of our trailers significantly reduced'.

The SAF Tire Pilot system is available exclusively through IMS Limited. IMS Limited is the specialist importer & distributor of premium products for the commercial vehicle market.

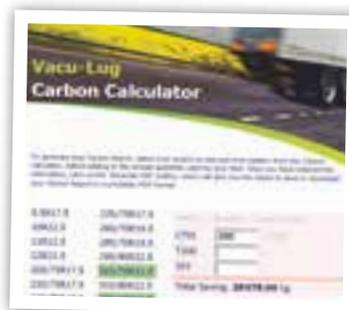
Vacu-Lug Carbon Calculator tool generates real personalised data

Leading independent UK retreader Vacu-Lug Traction Tyres has introduced a carbon counting tool which, says the company, enables their fleet customers to measure the environmental benefits of using Vacu-Lug retread tyres in comparison to an all-new tyre policy.

Complementing the company's tyre fleet management system (VMS), the Carbon Calculator is installed on Vacu-Lug's website and can be used easily to generate an instant, personalised carbon savings report. Operators simply need to access the Calculator via Vacu-Lug's homepage, select the tyre size and pattern and add the

quantity of tyres used annually. Savings will be dependent on the tyres used within a fleet, but, by way of example, an operator with a fleet of 50 tractor units and 100 trailers, using Vacu-Lug's LD01 drive tyres and LT01 trailer tyres would see a saving of 29.38 tonnes of carbon against using an all-new tyre policy. Fleet Sales Director, Dave Alsop,

explains: "As the UK's largest independent manufacturer of retread tyres, we have a responsibility to the environment to keep carbon output and energy consumption as low as possible. Our new Carbon Calculator fits with our environmental policy and enables our customers to easily monitor and assess the carbon output of the Vacu-Lug retread tyres used in their fleet."



Vacu-Lug expect the carbon-counting tool to be widely used and to play a key part in helping commercial fleet operators routinely monitor, assess and reduce carbon emissions. In addition to its extensive retread tyre range, Vacu-Lug also supplies a wide range of new tyres from its partners Westlake, Yokohama and Pirelli.

TYRE PRESSURE MONITORING SYSTEMS: ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW

It's a simple statement of fact: incorrect tyre pressure costs fleets money – and there are serious safety implications, too. Here, Steve Howat, General Manager - Technical Services, Continental Tyres UK, discusses the importance of Tyre Pressure Monitoring Systems.

An underinflated tyre creates more rolling-resistance, raising fuel consumption, and fuel is the biggest budgetary expense for any fleet, by far. A Tyre Pressure Monitoring System (TPMS) is a proven way to help lower fuel usage, with technology developments in this area now creating affordable solutions for any fleet operator. TPMS will undoubtedly provide a financial return in a relatively short time frame, most fleets recognise this, but the industry operates within very tight financial margins. UK fleets are under extraordinary pressure to manage costs, in a highly competitive and regulated market.

What can fleets do to address these problems?

TPMS is a legal requirement for passenger cars, but it isn't on trucks, partly because it poses some technical issues at OE level. For example any TPMS system in a truck must link and talk to the system used in the trailer it tows. This is proving far more successful at aftermarket level, via retrospectively fitted systems.

The first step is for fleets to really understand what their fuel consumption is, and monitor it accurately, because unless you have that information, you can't see what influence correctly inflated tyres will have on fuel costs.

Tyre mileage should also be monitored. Tyre pressure monitoring is not just about preventing blow-outs - underinflated tyres have to flex more and work harder. This extra flex creates higher tyre distortion, and that creates greater tyre wear which ultimately decreases tyre life.

Properly inflated tyres increase tyre lifespan. A tyre which is 20 percent under-inflated results in a loss of mileage of around 18 percent – so around a fifth of its total mileage. And 20 percent is not a dramatic underinflation figure, we regularly find tyres which are 40 percent

or 50 percent under inflated and their loss of mileage will of course be far greater.

What are the safety implications of incorrect tyre pressure management for drivers?

The latest Highways England figures show there were 61,405 wheel and tyre related incidents on major UK roads between April 2013 and September 2014, and of those nine percent were blowouts.

Whereas, more than 35 percent, or 21,752 incidents were caused by punctures, and 29 percent by flat tyres. It is exceptionally rare for a tyre to hit something sharp on the road and suffer an immediate failure, usually it is a very gradual loss of pressure, and this is why TPMS really works.

TPMS can be integrated into telematics system, to send information back to a base, giving operators enough time to manage the problem and keep the truck on the road. The systems help transport managers see pressure degradation occurring, and the time scale, so can choose to wait for the driver to get to their next delivery, or a safe easy to access point, and assess the problem.

Operators can decide at what point they advise the driver of the issues, for example if they need to immediately pull over, or if they should divert to allow a dealer to reach them. Live monitoring allows better planning.

Zipper failure is one of the major safety issues when the reinflation of a tyre occurs after a puncture repair has been conducted. A tyre dealer replacing a tyre which has been severely stressed because it has been running under-inflated or because a penetration has occurred in the tread causing gradual inflation loss, has no idea how long that tyre has been running in that condition and therefore cannot



Steve Howat, General Manager - Technical Services, Continental Tyres UK.

get a picture of how stressed that tyre is.

Tyres are inflated at extremely high-pressures of 125/130 PSI. When a tyre is re-inflated during repair if it has experienced long-term under-inflation, it can cause an instantaneous break in the mid-side-wall area, causing zipper failure and immediate loss of pressure. This is incredibly dangerous and can result in real damage to the technician conducting the repairs.

A tyre fitted with TPMS will give the tyre fitters a much fuller picture of the condition of the tyre. They will have a full indication of how long the tyre has been running under-inflated, and can therefore make an informed decision about whether or not the tyre is past the point of repair.

Can TPMS systems be integrated into existing telematics?

Most vehicles do have some form of telematics system, so for many fleets it is logical to integrate into existing telematics, and monitor pressure at base, to avoid additional driver distraction in the cab.

Integration into telematics either via OEM developed systems or retrospective units is something which Continental Tyres is working on with a variety of technology partners.

Telematics now provide a broad spectrum of operational data and we predict that tyre temperature and inflation data will become a standard addition to this in the near future. We are already seeing simple text and email alerts becoming a useful additional function when a tyre reaches an underinflation or temperature threshold. This helps give fleet managers a tool to instigate further interrogation of the vehicle and understand how quickly the tyre is losing pressure and what specific action is required.

Which emerging technologies are tyre manufacturers investing in, to further improve TPMS?

Connected motorways are going to prove very useful for TPMS. Highways England is already exploring how TPMS can work within these new connected routes. For example, traffic management systems could be linked, in order that a trigger is sent when a tyre is going down, and a gantry warning sign could advise the driver.

With TPMS the existing pressure sensors are just the start. The next step will be more sophisticated sensors measuring tread depth and lateral force - true intelligent tyres, allowing operators to fully understand how the tyre is being driven, and where potential failures may occur.



New guide aims to support driver recruitment, retention and engagement

FORS Professional, the training umbrella of FORS, has worked with Transport for London (TfL) and The Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport's (CILT) Safety Forum to publish a new guide on 'Effective Driver Management – An Industry Code of Practice'.

Creation of the document was led by the CILT Transport and Logistics Safety Forum, in consultation with the wider transport industry, and was jointly produced with TfL and FORS Professional to assist with the need to manage drivers effectively.

The CILT Transport and Logistics Safety Forum is a professional group for members who are engaged in all aspects of transport and logistics safety. The forum aims to inform, advise and influence both members and external bodies on good practice and appropriate policies to enable transport and logistics services to be as safe and effective as possible.

The new guide is designed to provide driver agencies and operators of all sizes with practical guidelines on areas such as how to handle the initial recruitment process, how to retain and engage current drivers, and how to effectively manage performance.

Containing advice and best practice, as well as case studies from operators on apprenticeship schemes, the guide will also help operators with FORS Gold requirement 'G7 Strategy for recruiting new drivers', and is provided free of charge to FORS members.

Dean Clamp, Wincanton Group HSEQ Director, and Forum Chair, said: "The forum exists to raise standards of safety across the industry and to drive scalable best practice in a way that is inclusive and useful to all. We are on a journey that will see collisions/incidents reduce by constantly engaging with industry and driving technology."

"Drivers play a fundamental role both in the transport sector and the wider economy," said Sam Weller, from City Planning, Transport for London. "They are often working alone for long periods and in challenging conditions where delivery schedules are becoming increasingly stringent."



"We believe the driving community should be better recognised as a highly skilled and valued element within the supply chain, benefiting from effective management to ensure retention and productivity, and to enhance the image of road transport in general," he said.

For more information about the guide, please visit the FORS website: <https://www.fors-online.org.uk/cms/news/fors-professional-releases-new-effective-driver-management-guide/>

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Dennison Commercials Celebrates Success By Winning Prestigious UK Award

Volvo Truck & Bus dealer, Dennison Commercials, has been recognised UK-wide at a recent national awards.

The local business was a finalist for two separate awards at the transport industry ceremony and went on to win the much respected 'Franchised Dealer of the Year.'

The awards judges recognised Dennison Commercials as a company that stood out for its investment in people, sales performance and aftersales support and service. Dennison Commercials was the only company from Northern Ireland to be represented in the winner's line-up on the evening.

John Jenkins, Managing Director of Dennison Commercials commented on the success, "We are truly overwhelmed to have been recognised as Franchised Dealer of the Year for the UK. This award pays testament to our dedicated staff, without them, this would not have been possible."



PM Commercials (Award Sponsor) Managing Director Paul May handed the award to staff from Dennison Commercials, Stephen Hill, Chris Arthur, John Jenkins, Amanda Gaston and Rob Ireland who were welcomed to the stage by Will Shiers and comedian Nick Page.

Insolvency figures underline need for fuel duty cut, says FTA

A dramatic increase in the number of road freight companies going bust highlights the urgent need for a cut in fuel duty to prevent further business failures, says the Freight Transport Association.

The Chancellor's decision to freeze the rate of duty on fuel is welcomed by the logistics sector, which is already battling inflation at a five year high, but a cut would have done far more to boost the economy, says the FTA following the recent Budget. The Association had been campaigning for a 3p cut. Official figures show the number of freight firms filing for insolvency between April and June 2017 was almost double the same period the

previous year and has reached its highest level in five years. In the three months up to June 2016, 32 UK road freight companies declared insolvency. A year later, the figure had reached 59.

FTA, whose membership operates almost half the UK's HGV fleet, says the sharp increase illustrates the impact of rising fuel prices and a weakening economic outlook on the logistics industry. Christopher Snelling, FTA Head

of National Policy, says the government needs to take these new figures seriously: "This increase in logistics business failures should raise a warning flag for the government. While the figures are still relatively small, they show a dramatic turnabout in fortunes for the freight transport sector. Over the past six years, the number of operators declaring insolvency had been gradually falling. This sudden rise is extremely worrying and needs

addressing as a matter of urgency."

FTA research shows the price of diesel accounts for nearly a third of the operating costs for an average 44 tonne truck. Just one penny increase in the cost of a litre can add £470 a year to the cost of running one of vehicle. Many FTA members run fleets of hundreds or even thousands of vehicles and the resultant cost of a duty rise can have a significant effect on operating margins and future solvency.

"Fuel price increases adversely affect freight operators of all sizes. For larger fleets, their scale means even small rises can add thousands of pounds to the balance sheet. Smaller companies are often running on very low profit margins, so any increase in the cost of fuel can push them perilously close to being unprofitable."

UK's newest intermodal inland rail freight hub nears completion

iPort Rail in Doncaster will become operational in January 2018, making it the UK's newest intermodal inland rail freight hub.

Set to transform the rail freight industry with a state-of-the-art facility within 7 hours of all UK deep water ports, it will rank in the top 5 of UK inland ports in terms of size and capacity.

iPort Rail is located on a 30-acre site within the 337-acre iPort logistics park, providing an independently-operated, high volume, secure container facility with 24/7 access for customers.

It will accommodate maximum UK train

lengths, with one 800m reception siding, two 400m length handling sidings and a head-shunt and refuge siding, handling up to 6 trains per day. The site currently has 1,500 TEUs storage capacity, rising to 3,000 in future phases when sidings will also increase. It also has a reach stacker operation (115 tonne front axle load) and Channel Tunnel (SACTFF) approved secure facility for international movements.

Steve Freeman, Managing Director of iPort Rail, said: "This is going to be a market-

leading rail freight hub, with state-of-the-art facilities that will minimise downtime and link quickly both nationally and internationally.

"The site is now in its final phase of completion and is connected to the national rail and motorway networks. Network Rail is currently finalising signalling installations and then we will be up and running.

"There is already a great deal of interest – not just from the main operators who like our independent offer, but other businesses drawn by being integrated into the wider iPort hub."

The iPort logistics hub offers 6 million sq ft of logistics accommodation with Amazon, CEVA, Fellowes and Lidl already committed to space and a remaining 3.27 million sq ft to be brought forward over the coming years. Build to suit opportunities are available from 50,000 sq ft to 1 million sq ft and speculative development is ongoing.

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LDV Wins Light Commercial Vehicle Manufacturer Of The Year Award

Less than two years since relaunch, LDV has been awarded LCV Manufacturer of the Year at the 2017 GreenFleet Awards.



Pictured at the awards (l-r) Comedian Ellie Taylor who presented the awards, Liam O'Neill, LDV, Mark Barrett, LDV, and Colin Boynton, GreenFleet.

Now in their 13th year, the UK's GreenFleet Awards celebrate and reward the work undertaken by stakeholders in the fleet sector to reduce the environmental impacts of automotive vehicles, and promote zero and ultra-low-emission technology.

LDV emerged as overall winner in a stiffly-contested category that recognised the efforts it has made to reduce CO2 and increase fuel economy in its LCVs. The other brands shortlisted for the LCV Manufacturer of the Year award included Citroen, Fiat Professional, Nissan, Ford, Peugeot and Iveco.

LDV's much-lauded electric vehicle range, which launched with the EV80, has been designed with zero emissions technology together with advanced electric power systems, providing greener power and in return, reducing environmental impacts.

Manufactured by SAIC, the largest automotive company in China, the EV80 is the first of a new generation of cleaner, alternative fuel vehicles that is ideal for both city driving and short journeys. It is also the first of LDV's zero emissions models boasting a 120 mile range on a single charge.

The company is firmly focused on the future of greener motoring with impending plans to launch a plug-in hybrid, hybrid and hydrogen fuel cell propelled CV.

In addition to the EV80, LDV's V80 range includes a Crewcab, MiniB, Tipper, Luton Panel Van and Dropside, with a model to suit every driver and any delivery need.

Mark Barret, LDV General Manager UK & Ireland said, "The GreenFleet Awards recognise innovators of the low carbon vehicle sector and LDV is leading this charge, supported by significant investment from SAIC. China is recognised as a leader in low and zero emission vehicles and this is evident from the work that companies such as SAIC are undertaking in the areas of R&D, strategic partnerships, product development and innovation.

"To be recognised for our passion, our efforts and LDV's early successes is testament not only to the LDV brand, but to the teams behind it. LDV only relaunched in 2016, so to say that we are thrilled to receive this award is something of an understatement and we would like to thank the judges for recognising what we are doing. We believe in the future of greener motoring and LDV is an integral part of that very bright future."

Ford Transit Plug-in Hybrid Van Makes Dynamic Debut

Ford's new plug-in hybrid electric (PHEV) Transit Custom van, designed to help improve local air quality by running solely on electric power for the majority of city journeys, has made its dynamic debut at the Cenex Low Carbon Vehicle 2017 event in Millbrook, UK.



The vehicle makes its first appearance as Ford prepares 20 PHEV Transit vans for the 12-month fleet customer trial in London, which will explore how the hybrid electric vans can contribute to cleaner air targets and enhanced productivity in city use – the toughest working environment for vehicles. Scheduled for volume production in 2019 as part of Ford's global promise to provide customers with affordable and capable electric vehicles, the Transit Custom PHEV has an advanced hybrid system that targets a zero-emission range in excess of 31 miles, and



features the multi-award winning Ford EcoBoost 1.0-litre petrol engine as a range extender. The EcoBoost engine charges the on-board batteries when longer trips are required between charging stops, providing operators with outstanding efficiency and flexibility.

Commercial vehicles in London make 280,000 journeys on a typical weekday, travelling a total distance of eight million miles (13 million kilometres). Vans represent 75 per cent of peak freight traffic, with more than 7,000 vehicles per hour driving at peak times in Central London alone.

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MERCEDES X-CLASS: A UNIQUELY VERSATILE PICK-UP

As the first ever pickup from a premium manufacturer, the X-Class is uniquely versatile. It can be used as a rugged, all-terrain pickup, but also as a vehicle for urban lifestyles and families, as Van Ireland's Phil Eaglestone discovered recently in a cold and snowy North Wales where temperatures dipped to minus 13 degrees!



Based on the Nissan Navara, Mercedes new X-Class sees a 'first' for the manufacturer as it enters the competitive one-tonne pick-up market; we got the chance to put it through its paces on and off road in the shadow of Snowdonia and in the Bala area of Gwynedd.

We have to agree with the boys at Mercedes that the X-Class pushes the boundaries of the classic pickup, offering comfort, design, safety and connectivity in addition to an impressive load capacity of over 1,000kg and a towing capability of up to 3,500kg – and it handles and performs every bit as well as it looks.

Some people may want an X-Class as a 'working' pick-up, but we suspect most will want one, if not as a 'status' symbol, then as a business asset or more likely a luxurious family workhorse to be especially utilised in full at week-ends! Mountain bikes, bales of hay, chainsaws, whatever you want, its loading bed can easily handle dirty, wet or dusty objects up to a length of 1,587mm and weight of 1,092 kg. Between the wheel arches, the loading bed is wide enough for a transversely loaded Euro pallet.

It may look like a pick-up, but it is so much smoother, even off road, thanks to a super and sophisticated suspension system that provides great stability and a more comfortable ride, even at speed over rough terrain.

With prices starting at just over £27,000, there are three model lines: PURE, PROGRESSIVE and POWER. Engine choices are an X 220d 4-cylinder 2.3l diesel with turbocharger offering 163hp (120kW) and an X 250d 4-cylinder 2.3l diesel with twin-stage turbocharger offering 190hp (140kW).

In brief, the X-Class PURE is available with the six-speed manual transmission 220 d 4MATIC engine; rear bumper with integrated step, halogen headlights and a matt black radiator grille; manually adjustable driver and passenger seat in Tunja black fabric upholstery; large storage compartment in the centre console, incorporating an armrest and cupholder; semi-automatic air-conditioning with high gloss black details in the air vents and 17-inch steel wheels as standard

The slightly more expensive mid-level X-Class PROGRESSIVE is available with a choice of either the 220 d 4MATIC engine, or the uprated 250 d 4MATIC engine; painted bumpers with a simulated under guard in matt black; aluminium door sills with 'Mercedes-Benz', chrome door handles and heated exterior mirrors; load securing rail system; black fabric upholstery and an aluminium trim inside with chrome air vents; automatic dimming interior mirror



with integrated compass function; illuminated sun visors, lighting for the front footwell and exit lamps, and 17-inch six-twin-spoke light-alloy wheels in vanadium silver as standard.

For around another £5,000 you can upgrade to the high-level X-Class PROGRESSIVE model. Over and above the other features found in the other two versions, this model is offered in conjunction with the 250 d 4MATIC engine only, but it also has painted bumpers with simulated under guard in chrome; a rear bumper in chrome with integrated step; fog lights with chrome surround and shoulder line trim strips in chrome; LED high-performance headlights with cleaning system and LED tail lights; electrically folding exterior mirrors; KEYLESS GO; eight-way electrically adjustable driver and front passenger seats; leather and microfiber upholstery; leather dashboard with topstitching; black, high-gloss interior trim; and 18-inch six-twin-spoke light-alloy wheels in himalaya grey.

All models for the UK market are doublecab with 4MATIC selectable all-wheel drive as standard and there is an optional Parking package designed to comprehensively assist you when parking and manoeuvring thanks to its camera image with 360° view.

The 360° camera makes the area immediately surrounding the vehicle visible – both from a bird's-eye view and below the window line, while a PARKTRONIC system visually and audibly warns of obstacles in front of the vehicle and behind, and thus helps prevent damage when parking and manoeuvring.

During our driving experience never did we feel our safety was being compromised, not least because the X-Class comes with a host of safety features as standard, including driver and passenger airbags and thorax bags, window bags on the A-D pillar and even a driver knee bag! But perhaps even more comforting are features such as Active Brake Assist, Lane Keeping Assist, Traffic Sign Assist, and Hill Start Assist.

Whether out on the road, or at home, 'Mercedes me' connects you with your X-Class. Your vehicle can share information about its location, status of components like coolant or brake linings as well as summoning emergency services in the event of an accident.

Stowage facilities within the X-Class have been designed to put everything you need within easy reach. Passengers can benefit from a lockable glove compartment, a cup holder and an ashtray in the centre console, and even a spectacles compartment in the overhead control panel.

There are also storage areas under the cover of the armrest with 12-V socket and USB interface compartments in the door trims, including space for 1.5-litre drinks bottle, a stowage net in the front passenger footwell, ruffled pockets on the backrest of the driver and front passenger seats and a storage space under the rear bench seat.

Mercedes tell us that the Pure model is aimed squarely at business users, while it expects the lion's share of sales in the UK will be of Progressive and Power variants. Either way, we'd be happy with any of them!



NEW FORD TRANSIT CUSTOM: STYLISH, PRODUCTIVE AND TECHNOLOGICALLY ADVANCED

Ford have given their top selling Transit Custom an impressive make-over for the year ahead, with a bold new exterior design and an all-new interior, as Van Ireland's Garfield Harrison reports from Frankfurt in Germany.



This new Transit Custom builds on the success of the outgoing model, which became the top-selling van in its segment in 2015 and contributed towards a record sales year in 2016 in the UK. It continues to lead the market, with 86,400 sold September year-to-date.

Available to order now across Europe for customer delivery early this New Year, it is powered by Ford's EcoBlue 2.0-litre diesel engine. With a choice of 105PS, 130PS and 170PS power ratings, the advanced new engine, say Ford, delivers significant cost of ownership and performance benefits compared to the previous 2.2-litre diesel, with fuel-efficiency improved by up to 13 per cent and low-end torque enhanced by 20 per cent.

"Transit Custom has been a runaway success since it was introduced, and this new version raises the game once more," said Hans Schep, general manager, Commercial Vehicles, Ford of Europe. "We have listened carefully to our customers, and delivered a one-tonne van that is even more stylish, even more productive, and packed with smart features."

Out on the open road, it feels almost, but not quite, the same as the model it replaces, but we have to agree with Hans Schep.

Some notable differences we immediately became aware of was in the steering. It feels lighter and more responsive, while engine noise has clearly been taken down a few notches – and comfort levels have been enhanced, all of which combine to give this new version an even greater 'car-like' quality. And dare we say it, it's also better looking!

It has, for example, a dynamic and professional new front-end appearance that shares the same design DNA as Ford's latest passenger cars, with a high-mounted trapezoidal grille and dynamic, slim headlamps. The latest lighting technologies are available, with high series models featuring distinctive new signature LED daytime running lights and powerful HID Xenon headlamps.

Mobile Office

Providing an ideal mobile office environment, the new Ford Transit Custom also features a completely new cabin packed with practical touches that will make any driver more at home during the working day.

Certainly, there is no shortage of storage areas, with up to 25 litres of space offered in the instrument panel alone, including three convenient open bins on its upper surface with space for clipboards or mobile devices, and generous glove box stowage capable of storing hanging A4 files in the lower closed compartment.

Further new practical features include a fold-out cup holder beneath the gear lever, adding to the cup holders and 2-litre bottle holders at each end of the instrument panel. The door panels have also been completely redesigned for improved stowage and usability, with three large stowage spaces and a practical new grab handle integrated with the decorative door trim.

For the driver, all-new displays and control panels have been designed for enhanced ergonomics and ease of use, and high-series models feature a floating, tablet-inspired eight-inch colour touchscreen with Ford's SYNC 3 communications and entertainment system that can be operated with pinch and swipe gestures. SYNC 3 enables drivers to control audio, navigation and connected smartphones using simple, conversational voice commands. By pushing a button and saying "I need fuel", "I

need a coffee", or "find an address", drivers can locate nearby fuel stations, cafés, or the location of their next job. The system is also compatible with Apple CarPlay and Android Auto.

For vehicles not equipped with eight-inch or four-inch displays, the MyFord Dock in the centre of the instrument panel provides the ideal location for drivers to mount, store and charge their smartphone, MP3 player or satellite navigation system.



Advanced technology

The new Transit Custom introduces a range of advanced new driver assistance features that share technologies found on Ford's latest passenger cars, and utilise sophisticated sensors, radars and cameras to provide information about the driving environment around the vehicle.

It is the first commercial vehicle to offer Intelligent Speed Assist, a feature that could help prevent drivers from exceeding speed limits, and potentially from incurring costly speeding penalties.

The system enables automatic adjustment of maximum vehicle speed to remain within legal limits, using the Traffic Sign Recognition system to detect speed limit signs. Drivers activate Intelligent Speed Assist via steering wheel controls to set a maximum vehicle speed. The system uses a windscreen-mounted camera to monitor road signs and, when the speed limit is lower than that maximum set speed, slows the vehicle as required.

The new model is the first Ford van in Europe

to offer Ford's Blind Spot Information System with Cross Traffic Alert, which provides two key functions for commercial vehicle users.

The Blind Spot Information System uses rear-facing radar sensors to detect when passing vehicles may have entered or are approaching the blind spot zone, and alerts the driver with a warning light in the corresponding door mirror.

A new Variable Rear Range feature provides drivers with an earlier warning if it detects that the passing vehicle is approaching with a higher closing speed. The new model also has the latest generation sensors, with increased range and improved capabilities that include the ability to detect motorcycles.

Cross Traffic Alert uses the same sensors to warn drivers reversing out of a parking space of vehicles or bicycles that may soon be crossing behind them, alerting them with an audible warning, a message in the instrument cluster, and a warning light in the door mirror. Activated when drivers select reverse gear the system is ideal for vans that often have restricted visibility to the rear and sides when exiting a parking space.

New Transit Custom also brings enhanced capabilities to the Pre-Collision Assist with Pedestrian Detection emergency braking system introduced to the model in 2016. Equipped with the latest radar and camera technologies as fitted to the all-new Fiesta passenger car, the system is now even capable of detecting pedestrians at night when they are illuminated by the vehicle's headlamps.

These new features add to the comprehensive suite of technologies already available for Transit Custom, including Lane Keeping Alert, Driver Alert, Auto High Beam, Rear View Camera, Adaptive Cruise Control and Side Wind Stabilisation.

The latest specification also introduces a six-speed SelectShift automatic transmission – already chosen by 11 per cent of Transit Custom customers – and a unique-to-segment rear air suspension system on Kombi M1 models that delivers a supple, controlled and level ride across a wide range of load conditions.



Ford Reveals New Transit Connect and Transit Courier



Ford has revealed the first details of the new Transit Connect and Transit Courier – part of a Ford product revolution that will see the company’s entire commercial line-up in Europe renewed during the next 18 months.

Featuring stylish new designs, more fuel-efficient powertrains and advanced new driver assistance technologies, the two new Transit models will be available to order in spring 2018 for customer delivery from the middle of the year.

New Transit Connect introduces a smart new front-end appearance that adopts the latest Ford design DNA. An imposing three-bar Transit grille combined with slimmer headlamps – with powerful HID Xenon lamps and LED daytime running lights available on high series models, combine with a more aerodynamic lower fascia and front spoiler to deliver the fresh new look.

Inside the Transit Connect, an upgraded cabin features a revised instrument panel with a new central control area that incorporates a floating, tablet-inspired six-inch colour touchscreen on high series models, featuring Ford’s SYNC 3 communications and entertainment system.

A state-of-the-art new powertrain line-up provides enhanced fuel-efficiency, while achieving Euro 6.2 emissions standards. Ford’s all-new 1.5-litre EcoBlue diesel engine combines the latest fuel injection, turbocharging and emission-control technologies with a low-friction engine design to deliver improved performance alongside reduced fuel-consumption.

For customers requiring a petrol option, new Transit Connect offers an advanced new version of the multi-award-winning 1.0-litre EcoBoost engine. An upgraded six-speed manual transmission is now fitted to all engines as standard. The 1.5 litre EcoBlue engine can also be specified with an advanced new eight-speed automatic transmission.

Transit Courier

The Transit Courier is the smallest member of Ford’s Transit family, and the new model brings a refreshed front-end appearance that incorporates a reshaped grille opening and revised design for the lower fascia.

The cabin features a redesigned centre console design for enhanced ergonomics, including a new, larger six-inch colour touchscreen with Ford’s SYNC 3 communications and entertainment system that is available on higher series models, and positioned closer to the driver for improved visibility and ease-of-use.

Meeting the latest Euro 6.2 emissions standards, the updated powertrain line-up offers customers the choice of fuel-efficient 1.5-litre TDCi diesel and 1.0-litre EcoBoost petrol engines. All vehicles feature Ford’s all-new six-speed manual transmission in place of the outgoing model’s five-speed gearbox.

New Transit Courier offers urban van operators a payload capacity ranging from 500-590 kg, load volumes up to 2.4 m3 (VDA), and a choice of van and kombi bodystyles. The series line-up now also includes a new Limited variant, providing customers with an alternative to the dynamic Sport model at the top of the range.

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Price shown is an Isuzu D-Max 2.5i Double Cab 23000 and manual transmission, optional accessories may apply. Excludes vehicle tax, road fund licence, delivery, motor insurance, 12 months road fund licence and 24 months motor insurance (VAT included) and non-availability of some items. *120,000 miles/5 year unlimited mileage (UK) payment option is only available on 2.5i engine. Other model conditions apply. *This is a 2017 model shown as a guide only. ©2017 Isuzu. All rights reserved. Isuzu is a registered trademark of Isuzu Motors Limited.

IVECO Daily Blue Power is International Van of the Year 2018

The new IVECO Daily Blue Power range has been crowned International Van of the Year 2018 at Solutrans, the international trade show for the road transport industry held in Lyon, France.

IVECO's new light segment van and chassis cab range fought off strong competition to take the win, just three years after Daily won the 2015 title.

The prestigious award is recognition of the brand's focus on using technology to improve sustainability, with judges agreeing the Daily Blue Power "puts together the main and viable solutions to reduce the environmental impact of light commercial vehicles (LCVs) in urban and suburban operations".

They highlighted the fact that with this range "IVECO has the sustainable vehicles the market is asking for" and that the range's "electric, natural gas and SCR options are all proven technologies developed by IVECO". The jury



was particularly impressed by the technical innovation of IVECO's new range and for "presenting the new Real Driving Emission (RDE)

diesel engine now – three years ahead of the EU's RDE regulation which will be mandatory for vans – far ahead of any competitor."

Jarlath Sweeney, International Van of the Year Chairman, summed up the jury vote: "Congratulations to IVECO on the impressive development achievements with the Daily Blue Power. IVECO has always been on the forefront of sustainability in the LCV segment. The new Daily Blue Power range confirms this position."

Receiving the award, Pierre Lahutte, IVECO Brand President, commented: "In the year of its 40th anniversary, the Daily has been named 'International Van of the Year' for the third time. Beyond the acclaimed and successful product, this award recognises the tremendous efforts made by IVECO to decisively contribute to the battle for clean air in our cities and CO2 emission reductions.

"Daily Blue Power in its electric, natural gas and most advanced diesel versions, is the first and only vehicle to offer three choices that anticipate regulations increasingly impacting access to urban centres. This secures our customers' investment and gives them the competitive advantage they need to develop their sustainable businesses."

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Warrenpoint Harbour Appoint New CEO

Clare Guinness, who takes over from current CEO Peter Conway at Warrenpoint Harbour later this month (January) becomes the very first female head of any port across the island of Ireland; she joins from Fane Valley Group, where she held the position, Director of Corporate Services.



Peter Conway

During her time at Fane Valley, she played an instrumental role in the sale of the dairy to Lakeland and the joint ventures between Slaney, Linden Foods and ABP.

Clare Guinness also held senior roles during 17 years with the Bank of Ireland, working within the Real Estate and Business Banking divisions across Belfast, Dublin and London.

Stan McIlvenny, Chairman of the Warrenpoint Harbour Authority, said: "The Board is delighted to have secured the appointment of Clare Guinness, who has a wealth of corporate experience across multiple jurisdictions.

"We look forward to working

with Clare as she leads the development of the Port's strategy, and building on its growing contribution to the local economy."

An honours graduate in Economics from Trinity College Dublin, Peter Conway was appointed to the Board of Warrenpoint Harbour Authority in 2004 and following public competition became Chief Executive of the Authority in 2005. In 2012 he was elected to the Council of the British Ports Association.

He is Honorary Secretary of Newry Chamber of Commerce and is a founding member and past Chairman of the Northern Ireland Government



Claire Guinness

Affairs Group. He is also a Governor of Kilbroney Integrated Primary School in Rostrevor.

Seatruck installs its own Optimarin BWT systems

Freight ferry operator Seatruck has made a little bit of history in the ballast water treatment (BWT) segment by installing five systems itself while its vessels were undertaking normal operations.

Seatruck chose the market leading Optimarin Ballast System (OBS) for its ships, citing their ease of installation, proven reliability, cost efficiency, and complete regulatory compliance as deciding factors.

Seatruck runs a fleet of 10 advanced ferries, ranging in capacity from 65-150 trailers, with over 60 weekly departures. This regular sailing schedule, between set ports, ensured the firm could call on local contractors to 'hop on and off' and carry out whatever engineering work the crew themselves couldn't manage.

It was, as Seatruck Fleet Director Ben Coppack points out, a very efficient way to undertake the installation: "We wanted Optimarin systems because of their track record of quality and approvals, but also because, with their modular nature and operational simplicity, they're easy to install. As a short sea operator we had the goal of carrying out all the work while the ships were in service, with no downtime, thus keeping costs as low as possible.

"With the Optimarin systems and service – quickly responding to any queries or issues we encountered – this wasn't a problem. Our own crews actually performed the vast majority of work themselves using Optimarin's manuals. They were really proud of the excellent work they did, and rightly so. We're very pleased we took this approach, ensuring port state compliance and BWT reliability ahead of regulatory demands." Seatruck began installation onboard the 5,300 dwt Seatruck Progress in November last year. The



remaining four systems were installed between January and the end of September this year.

"This is the first time I've heard of a shipowner installing this number of systems themselves while their vessels are in service," comments Optimarin CEO Tore Andersen. "It's a testament both to their mission to provide optimal efficiency to their stakeholders and customers, and to the simplicity of our environmentally friendly, UV-based system.

"With the ratification of the IMO Ballast Water Management convention, and the strict

regulations imposed by the US Coast Guard, the entire world fleet needs to find proven, effective and reliable systems to ensure compliant sailing. This has the potential to create huge bottlenecks at yards – and obviously increase installation costs. However, Seatruck has shown that, with a system as straightforward and effective as ours, there is another way. I think that's something that will really resonate with shipowners worldwide."

Optimarin has now received orders for over 520 systems, with more than 330 installed worldwide, of which 150 are retrofits.

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Stena Line wins 'Best Ferry Company' for the 25th time

Stena Line is celebrating after winning top ferry company for a record-breaking 25th time at the annual Northern Ireland Travel and Tourism Awards.



The 'Best Ferry Company' award was presented to Paul Grant, Stena Line's Trade Director, Irish Sea North (ISN) at the awards ceremony at the Slieve Donard Resort and Spa in Newcastle, Co Down.

Northern Ireland Travel News has organised these prestigious awards for the past 26 years and this year's ceremony was hosted by BBC's Pointless presenter Alexander Armstrong.

The ceremony was attended by more than 430 guests and travel industry VIPs from all over the UK and Ireland.

Almost 30 awards were presented on the night, decided by votes from the travelling public, the travel trade, and by travel and tourism industry leaders.

Orla Noonan, Stena Line's Travel Commercial Manager (ISN) said: "It's an honour for Stena Line to receive this prestigious award coming as it does from our peers across the travel industry.

"Although this is our 25th consecutive year of winning the award we take absolutely nothing for granted and realise that each year we have to work even harder to provide our customers with a service which really is 'award winning'.

"Whilst the travel industry is constantly changing and reinventing itself in an increasingly digital world, putting the needs of the customer first, every time, still remains the key objective for our business success.

Seatruck Celebrates 10 years in Dublin

Irish Sea freight ferry specialist Seatruck Ferries are celebrating 10 years of operation in Dublin Port where their traffic volumes have grown exponentially.

From small beginnings with the single ship the 'Celtic Star', the Seatruck Dublin services have gone from strength to strength.

Back in October 2007 Seatruck moved just over 3,000 units of freight from Dublin. This compares with just under 21,000 units in October 2017, representing growth of well over 500%. Seatruck Ferries are now one of the largest freight movers in the port.

In the busy midweek period Seatruck now operate 4 daily services to Liverpool and a daily service to Heysham. Seatruck also operate on the popular Warrenpoint - Heysham route which commenced in 1996.

With driver shortages continuing

Seatruck are expecting an ongoing switch to unaccompanied trailer movements which they specialise in with their purpose built freight only ferries.

CEO of Seatruck Alistair Eagles comments: "Ten years on from the commencement of our services into Dublin port we are very much focusing on the next steps to ensure that we can continue to help our customers save money and use their equipment and drivers more efficiently. Seatruck is fully committed to our freight only model and we are planning for a continued industry switch away from the driver accompanied, short sea mode.

"Our Dublin services are an

extremely important part of our route network and I on behalf of everyone at Seatruck would like to personally thank all of our customers for their support."

In December, a new loading ramp was installed in the Port of Heysham which further enhances the Seatruck Ferries Irish Sea services from the Port, which is now directly linked to the motorway network via the new £130m M6 Link.

Meanwhile, Seatruck are working closely with the relevant authorities in Northern Ireland on the Newry Southern Relief Road project which will link Warrenpoint Harbour directly to the Belfast - Dublin motorway.

Irish Ferries Announces Daily Summer Departures To France

Irish Ferries has published details of the new sailings schedule it will introduce following the arrival in mid-2018 of its new 55,000 tonnes cruise ferry W. B. Yeats currently being built in Flensburg, Germany.

Highlights of the plan will see a doubling in the number of summer sailings between Ireland and France – offering daily departures alternatively from both Dublin and Rosslare ports. This is coupled with an increase in autumn/winter sailings frequency, and an expansion in passenger, car and freight carrying capacities on the company's prime Ireland – UK route between Dublin and Holyhead.

Described by its managing director, Andrew Sheen, as a plan "to be welcomed by all interests

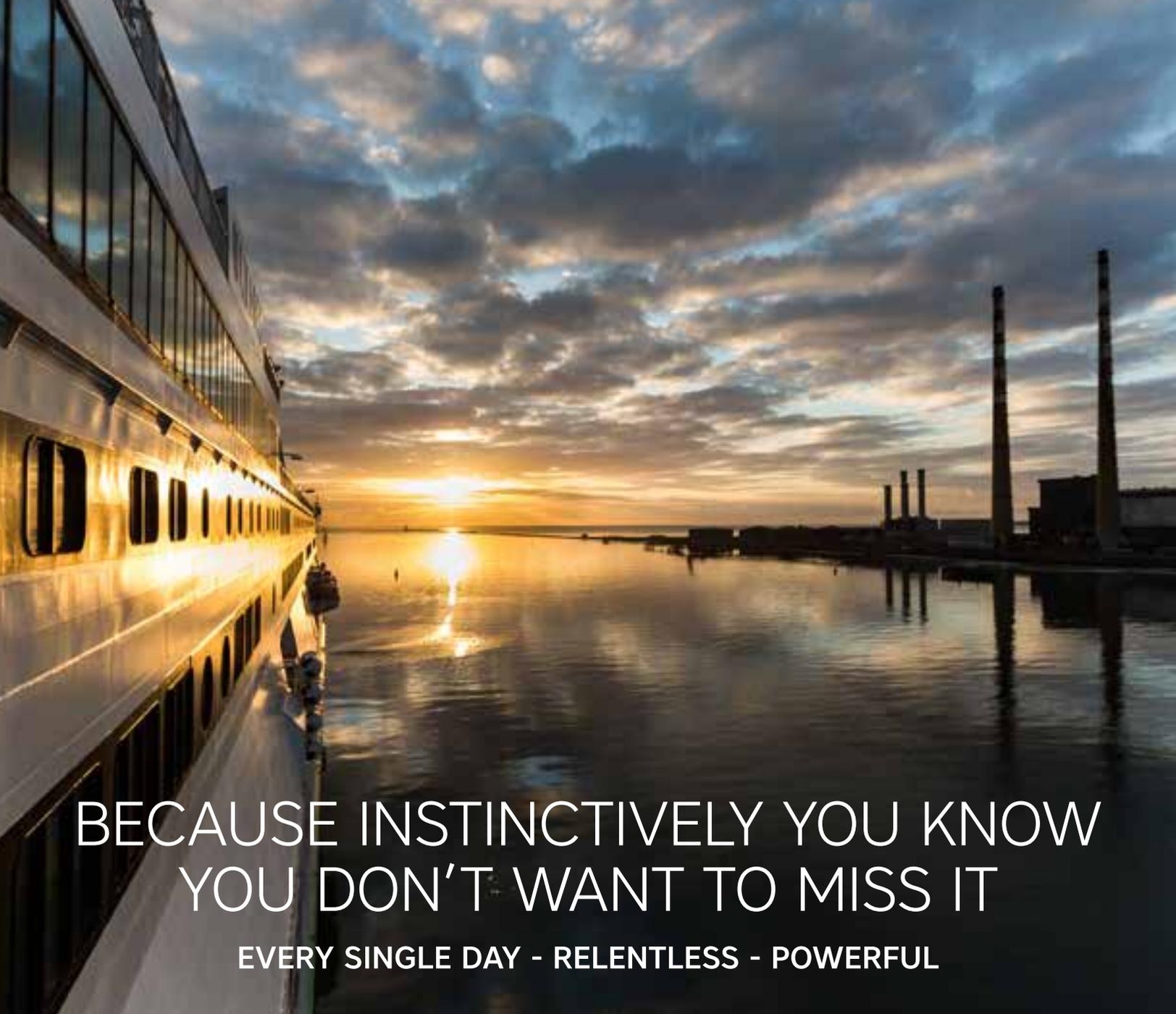
and one that will give a significant boost to Irish tourism and trade", the proposed new sailings and scheduling arrangements will, he said, "give passengers and freight customers alike, more choice in terms of routes and departure dates, particularly on services to France."

When delivered, the new W. B. Yeats will be the largest and most luxurious ferry ever to sail on the Irish Sea. It will have space on board for 1,885 passengers and crew, 1,200 cars in 4kms of vehicle deck space, and

441 cabins, with a variety of cabin grades including luxury suites. A waiter service a la carte restaurant, choice of lounges, an outside promenade deck and a host of entertainment options are amongst its other features.

From mid-September next, W. B. Yeats will transfer to the busy Dublin – Holyhead route. There it will take up service alongside the existing Irish Ferries vessel Ulysses to deliver a 'significant three-fold benefit' that Irish Ferries believes will be wholly welcomed by tourist, business and import/export customers.

Adding its passenger and vehicle carrying capacity to that of Ulysses – the world's largest car ferry when introduced in 2001 – the move will see customers benefit from an increase in sailings frequency and an expansion in the passenger, tourist car, coach and freight carrying capacity that its introduction on this busy route will bring. Given this additional investment in the route, the Dublin Swift fast ferry will operate a summer only schedule next year and will return to Irish Sea service in early April 2019.



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State of the Art Vehicle for Two Trees Recovery Service

Renault Trucks dealer Diamond Trucks, Mallusk, and OMARS distributor Lakeland Recovery Service, Fermanagh, have combined their vehicle and recovery equipment expertise to supply a new state of the art tilt and slide vehicle to Two Trees Recovery Service, Ballymena.

The Renault D12 210HP Crew Cab is the ideal vehicle of choice for such an application due to its payload capacity, robustness, reliability and excellent fuel economy.

Peter Kilop, director of two trees

recovery, says: "We are pleased with the performance of the truck; we needed to have 4.5t payload and also a good loading angle and I was worried about the durability of an alloy body but having seen the strength and build quality

of Omars high tensile body, it seems to be strong and light."

Two Trees Recovery Service was established in 1998 and has eight vehicles in their recovery fleet, which service the three divisions of the business: vehicle recovery,

mobile incorrect fuel rescue and mobile vehicle key rescue.

Ciaran O Keeffe of Renault Trucks says: "We are very happy to be able to provide Two Trees Recovery Service with a vehicle solution which will benefit their business for many years to come and we wish them all the best for the future."

He added: "I would also like to thank David Browne of Lakeland Recovery Services for working with us to ensure the vehicle body and specifications were tailored to suit our customers exact requirements."

Lakeland Recovery Service are based in Fermanagh and aside from running their own 24hr recovery service, they also are a distributor for Italian vehicle body builder OMARS, who have been one of the leading suppliers of vehicle transportation solutions in Europe for over 40 years.

Mallusk based Diamond Trucks is one of nine Authorised Renault Trucks Dealers in Ireland who boast a highly qualified and professionally trained staff which provide their customers with technical excellence, value for money and high levels of service.



Pictured (from right to left) are David Browne Jr of Lakeside Recovery Services, Peter Kilop, Director of Two Trees Recovery Service, and Ciaran O'Keeffe of Renault Trucks.

Brexit 'Breakthrough' Given Cautious Welcome

What's been described in some quarters as a 'breakthrough' in the Brexit negotiations, particularly in relation to the Irish border issue, has been given a cautious welcome by the transport and logistics sectors.

The FTA says the news is encouraging, but adds that there is an urgent need to now translate this good political will into action and to reach a swift agreement on a transitional deal providing clarity and certainty to businesses.

"This development is the first block in the wall," says Pauline Bastidon, Head of European Policy at FTA, "but there are still many complex issues that will need to be solved when discussions on the future relationship start, to ensure that goods can continue to flow across borders, not least for transport, trade and customs.

"The urgency is now to provide clarity to businesses, and that's why a transition and implementation phase is so crucial. Businesses should only have to adapt to one set of changes and should be given enough time to do so, once new arrangements and rules become clear. Two years is a very short time: it is imperative that business is given sufficient notice to adopt new practices and systems, and ensure that they are correctly staffed to keep Britain trading."

Adds Road Haulage Association chief executive Richard Burnett: "We hope that the successful outcome of these particular border issues can be reflected in negotiations over cross-border traffic between other EU member states. However, our big concern is that we can strike a deal for free-flowing lorry traffic across the Channel."

The RHA also welcomes the statement made by the Taoiseach, Leo Varadkar that no one wants to see a border in the Irish Sea.

Meanwhile, the British International Freight Association's Director General Robert Keen, commented: "Our members, which form the bulk of the UK freight forwarding and logistics sector, will be breathing a sigh of relief.

"There is still plenty of hard work to do, but this does appear to mean that discussions on transitional arrangements and our future trading relationship with the EU can now commence.

"The focus for the UK Government must now be on agreeing a transition deal, and

explaining to business and the country as a whole what kind of trading relationship it is looking for in the long-term.

"The most pressing concern for our members has been the matter of the future trading relationship between the UK and the EU, especially Customs procedures post-Brexit.

"The Phase 2 negotiations need to remove the uncertainty that is currently faced by a large number of traders over the matter of future Customs declarations once the UK leaves the European Union.

"We are actively involved with HMRC and have always recommended that there needs to be wider engagement with all who are engaged in processing international trade to give them as much time as possible to prepare and to allay fears. We will be continuing with our lobbying efforts to make sure that our members and the trading companies that they serve get better and more regular information about the likely Customs implications of Brexit."

Irish Exporters Association brings Supply Chain initiative to the East

The Irish Exporters Association, in partnership with Ulster Bank and others, recently held the final in a series of 4 large Supply Chain Seminars which have taken place around the country as part of a new supply chain collaborative initiative, the IEA Supply Chain Series 2017.

The event titled "Securing the Interests of Irish Exporters in the East" took place at Ulster Bank's head office in Georges Quay, Dublin 2 and attracted over 100 exporters and manufacturing companies from all over the east of Ireland.

Simon McKeever, Chief Executive, Irish Exporters Association commented: "Events like the Supply Chain Seminar Series are vitally important so that we can prepare companies for what may be coming down the line with customs implications, how to prepare and how best to operate with third countries. This initiative also provides a network for our corporate members across all sectors to interact and exchange information on challenges, industry requirements and best practice while keeping up to date with local, national and international issues affecting the export industry supply chain."

Olaf Fitzsimmons, Head of SME Banking East, Ulster Bank, said: "The event was a great opportunity for our relationship management teams to hear about the challenges and opportunities facing businesses in Dublin and the surrounding areas as they seek to manage and grow their export activities, and specifically



(L-R): Sean Brogan, Owner and Director, Brogans Bakery; Eddie Cullen, Managing Director Commercial Banking, Ulster Bank; Simon McKeever, Chief Executive, Irish Exporters Association; and Graeme Treadwell, Head of Supply Chain, Procurement & Development, Standard Brands.

how we in Ulster Bank can help them. Most business relationships cross borders and time zones and managing that supply chain is vital to business success. Ulster Bank aims to provide real support for these businesses, whether it's through managing foreign exchange

risk, supplier payment methods, the right funding or advice on expanding to capitalise on market developments. We're delighted to continue our strong relationship with the Irish Exporters Association and to continue to provide meaningful support for businesses."

FORS Professional launches new Managing Noise in Logistics Practitioner workshop

FORS Professional, the training brand from the Fleet Operator Recognition Scheme (FORS), is introducing a new Practitioner workshop.

The course is designed to help managers better understand how their transport operations can minimise incidental driving and delivery noise when working in urban environments.

Along with understanding the issues and policies around noise in urban areas, the new Managing Noise in Logistics Workshop will give attendees practical advice on how to reduce the impact of noise from freight deliveries in urban environments.

The half day workshop will offer guidance on how to assess and mitigate the impact of noise and reduce unintentional noise made at

the point of loading, for example in yards close to housing, throughout the delivery journey, and when driving in quieter or less busy times.

The new workshop is open to all FORS members and will also help operators action the noise assessment requirement included in the FORS Standard at Gold.

All FORS members wishing to become FORS Practitioners must complete all 10 workshops to qualify. Workshops can be completed in any order and are delivered at locations across the UK. The addition of this new workshop will not affect the status of current Practitioners.



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