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Just over one year into his new job as boss of the UK's top-selling truck-maker, Robin Easton is preparing for its move next month into a smart new head office and training centre. But this is by no means the only sparkling jewel in the Daf Trucks and Paccar global crowns. Tim Blakemore reports.

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Scania (Great Britain) is to have a new managing director from 1 September. FirstGroup is looking for a new chief executive. Graeme McGregor is Boughton Engineering's first chief operations officer. Two Renault Trucks apprentices are among the 18 preparing for next month's semi-final of a big skills competition.

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Self-driving vehicles: this reality check is long overdue

Thatcham Research, a respected, not-for-profit research centre funded by motor industry insurance companies, went public this month with stinging criticism of the way vehicle manufacturers, car-makers in particular, are introducing ever-increasing levels of “autonomy”. Not before time. Level-headed fleet managers and engineers have long been concerned at the apparent blind faith that many manufacturers apparently have in such trendy systems, and their failure to take proper account of the realities and risks of everyday vehicle operation. They are not alone. Academics and road-safety experts share many of their worries. Here is what David Cebon, professor of mechanical engineering at the University of Cambridge and director of the Centre for Sustainable Road Freight (CSRF), had to say a few months ago following reports that an Uber self-driving Volvo car had killed a pedestrian in Arizona. The driver had switched the car into “autonomous” mode and apparently then assumed, not unreasonably, it could be argued, that she had nothing more to do. For reasons that still remain unclear, the Volvo’s camera and sensor systems failed to detect the pedestrian and the car just ploughed into her.

“If safety is the objective, it would be much more effective to develop vehicles that refuse to crash instead of the headlong rush to develop vehicles that drive themselves,” said Cebon.

Now this observation has been echoed loudly, in effect, by Thatcham Research director Matthew Avery. “There’s a problem with the manufacturers trying to introduce technology and

consumers not being ready for it, not being sure if it’s automated or whether they need to keep watching,” he says. “We want it very clear. Either you are driving, assisted, or you are not driving, automated.”

A Thatcham Research test track demonstration underlined the point vividly. A Tesla car with its “Autopilot” system switched on stayed in its lane and slowed to a halt automatically when the car it was following came to a stop as if in stationary traffic. But on a second run when the car in front switched lanes at the last moment the Tesla was unable to brake in time and ran into the back of a stationary vehicle (just a dummy vehicle, actually).

Tesla’s reaction to this demonstration is arguably even more alarming than the crash itself. “Our communications are very clear about the functionality of Autopilot and that it does not make the car self-driving,” said a spokeswoman. “We’ve continuously educated customers on the proper use of Autopilot, reminding them that they must remain alert and be prepared to take control at all times.”

This is dangerous contradictory nonsense. Commercial vehicle manufacturers by and large so far have been rather more measured in their approach to the introduction of driver assistance systems such as adaptive cruise control and lane-keeping assistance. But they too surely should take heed of the “autonomous” vehicle warnings now coming from the likes of Thatcham Research and the University of Cambridge.

Points of view

Commercial Vehicle Engineer welcomes letters, comments and tweets. Follow us on Twitter @CVEngineer1. Write to the editor at Aztec Media Services Ltd, 1 Bankside, Churt Road, Hindhead, Surrey GU26 6NR, e-mail: timb@aztecexpress.com, telephone 01428 605605. Please be sure to include your postal address and a daytime telephone number.

Fuel-saving wind in their improbable giant sails

What have tyres and lubricants to do with commercial vehicle aerodynamics? It is a question likely to be asked in response to recent developments (separate and unrelated) from Michelin and Shell, the latter featured in May’s *Commercial Vehicle Engineer*. Both companies are global giants with reputations built on, respectively, tyre development and manufacture, and oil industry research and supply. Yet within the space of a few weeks recently both Michelin and Shell have indicated a quite unexpected and sudden diversification of interest into the topical subject of vehicle drag reduction, with associated fuel-saving implications, of course.

In North America Michelin has unveiled a semi-trailer aerodynamics package called Energy Guard. The five-piece kit for refrigerated and dry-

freight van trailers is said to include “side skirts, trailer-end fairings, aerodynamic mudflaps and a wake-reducer”. The complete kit can deliver a fuel efficiency gain of up to 7.4 per cent, it is claimed.

The aero kit’s development was driven, according to Michelin, by “a desire to build upon the company’s efforts with wide-single tyres, with their reduced rolling resistance, vis-à-vis twin tyres, on tractor drive and trailer axles”. The tyre-maker has started what it calls an “incubator program,

designed to generate new and non-traditional ideas and help the company expand into areas beyond tyres.”

Shell’s lubricants division, Rotella, meanwhile has unveiled its Project Starship articulated truck.

Again fuel saving from drag reduction is the main aim of the project, though it is made clear by Shell that the smooth-contoured eye-catching rig is a one-off, albeit “street legal”, concept vehicle.

Notable details include a 5,000 watt solar panel array

on the trailer roof, and an “active radiator grille shutter that opens and closes in response to monitored engine cooling requirements”. Hardly anything revolutionary there. Truck radiator shutters were on sale in the UK in the 1970s. Were they not even a standard fitment on Scammell Crusaders? Sceptics of the kind mentioned several times in May’s *Commercial Vehicle Engineer* may be wondering how keen Shell’s fuel arm (as distinct from its lubricants division) really is on a development intended to lessen demand for its principal product.

It is surely apparent from both the Michelin and Shell initiatives that fuel-saving has now become such a dominant issue that even companies on the periphery of the subject are eager to jump on the bandwagon. And they are having to move out of their own comfort zones, as a result.

Alan Bunting
Harpenden
Hertfordshire □



Bio-diesel warning for mobile machinery

Operators of diesel engines used in non-roadgoing equipment such as generators, fork-lift trucks and agricultural tractors are being warned that an increasing proportion of bio-diesel in the rebated “red diesel” they use could result in problems such as blocked filters and failed fuel injection equipment. UK-based truck and bus operators are already familiar with such problems following an initially poorly-publicised step up in the bio-diesel content of pump and bulk fuel a few years ago.

The warning this time comes from the Federation of Petroleum Suppliers (FPS), a Solihull, West Midlands-based trade association representing most fuel and oil distributors in the UK and Irish Republic. FPS technical manager Tony Brown is especially concerned that a growing proportion of one particular type of bio-diesel, fatty acid methyl ester (FAME), can have serious detrimental effects on engines not designed to cope with it. In the UK FAME is made from recycled cooking oils and blends of renewable and recyclable matter such as animal fats and plant oils. The end product is a powerful solvent with which some materials used in diesel fuel injection equipment are incompatible.

“The increased use of FAME in



FPS technical manager Tony Brown: “percentage of fuels from renewable sources is increasing.”

sulphur-free gas oil (SFGO) could lead to issues and challenges for many users of the fuel as FAME is corrosive to certain materials such as rubber, can cause filters to clog, and can increase the risk of bacterial growth as well as fuel instability,” says Brown.

The percentage of bio-diesel in all diesel fuel is being gradually increased as a result of the UK’s Renewable Fuel Transport Obligation (RTFO) commitments.

“In April this year, the legally-required percentage of fuels derived from renewable sources increased to 7.25 per cent,” explains Brown. “This will rise

to 8.5 per cent from 1 January 2019 and keep rising until it reaches 12.4 per cent by 2032. All suppliers are obliged to meet the targets overall but free on just how they reach each one. There are different ways to achieve this, including the addition of FAME to SFGO, and it is this that we want to warn all users of non-road mobile machinery about as the FPS understands that numerous suppliers cannot guarantee that their SFGO will be free of FAME.”

Precautions being recommended by FPS are similar to those recommended previously for truck and bus fleets with their own diesel tanks in response to increased use of bio-diesel.

“Before taking delivery of any bio-fuel, give the tank a specialist clean,” advises Brown. “Continue to carry out regular tank checks and take remedial action if you notice any water, dirt, mould or

growth in the tank. Water is a big problem for SFGO containing FAME, so it’s recommended to limit storage time of fume-blended fuels, and to keep the tanks topped up to reduce air, which can draw moisture.”

In a separate move, a coalition of European vehicle manufacturers, fuel refiners and suppliers, including the European Confederation of Fuel Distributors (ECFD) this month published a guide to a European Union directive on alternative fuels, 2014/94/EU, which requires EU and EEA (European Economic Area) member states to improve the information provided to fuel buyers. A “fuel identifier” standard has been drawn up, requiring a common set of symbols to be used on vehicles and fuel pumps, no later than this October.

More information at www.oilsave.org.uk, www.fpsonline.co.uk, www.fuel-identifiers.eu □



Fork-lift trucks: reliability may suffer as bio-diesel proportion rises.

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Cold-chain telematics shaping up to be Hannover headline-grabber

Telematics in temperature-controlled trailer operations seems set to be one of the main talking points among visitors to the huge IAA (Internationale Automobil-Ausstellung) commercial vehicles show in Hannover, Germany this September (www.iaa.de).

Europe's biggest trailer-maker, Germany's Schmitz Cargobull, is planning to officially unveil its latest "connected" S.KO Cool refrigerated semi-trailer at the show. Restyled bodywork on the S.KO

Cool SmartTrailer includes a new front bulkhead, floor, and side-guards, but the real attention-grabber is a telematics system offering operators more extensive remote control over trailer and refrigeration unit functions than has been available hitherto. Operators specifying Schmitz's own refrigeration equipment get the telematics service free of charge for two years. But it is available too, for a monthly fee, with proprietary fridge units such as those from Thermo King or Carrier Transcold.

Among the latest physical changes to the Schmitz refrigeration unit is an all-new diesel engine made by Hatz, an independent German company. Previously Schmitz used a small diesel engine from Perkins, a Peterborough-based division of the Caterpillar group. The new Hatz engine is designed to meet the latest "Stage V" European Union exhaust emission limits for "non-road mobile machinery" (NRMM). These tough Stage V emissions limits start to come into force next January and are having most impact on small diesel engines with maximum power ratings between 19 and



Marco Reichwein: Schmitz approach to trailer telematics has "four pillars."



37kW (25 and 50hp). Many of these are now starting to use common rail fuel injection systems and exhaust after-treatment for the first time.

Marco Reichwein is managing director of the Schmitz group's Cargobull Telematics GmbH division. He says that the new reefer telematics system comprises "four pillars", designed to

trailer and refrigeration unit type. The system's on-line display includes vehicle location, internal trailer temperatures and door openings. Temperature settings and door locks can be controlled and adjusted remotely. Geo-fencing can be used to prevent the doors from being opened outside of predetermined locations. Pillar four is a cellular phone

please not only operators but also their customers and drivers.

Pillar one is TrailerConnect, involving data from sensors all over the trailer including brakes, tyres, door locks, temperature sensors and the refrigeration unit.

Pillar two, TrailerConnect TCU3, is described by Reichwein as "the fruit of 20 years experience of trailer telematics." The unit stores temperature data going back up to twelve months, controls door locks, controls and records tyre pressures, records brake wear, and battery condition. The TCU3 can be retrofitted to old trailers and is compatible with other, non-Schmitz telematics systems, it is claimed.

Pillar three, TrailerConnect Portal 2.0, can host a vast array of data regardless of

and tablet computer app called beSmart. The main idea of this is to enable truck drivers to more easily control SmartTrailer systems such as the refrigeration unit and door locks. The app can even be used to trigger a temperature recording printer.

Peter-Hendrik Kes, boss of the Schmitz group's parts and service division, believes that no other trailer-maker is as advanced as his company in using telematics for condition monitoring and predictive maintenance. The Schmitz Smart Services system started in 2002. Now the maintenance histories of around 650,000 trailers are on file, and can be accessed readily by all 1,700 Schmitz "service partners".

Tyres are included in this. After complaining of supply problems from some leading



European tyre-makers, Schmitz famously began offering its "own label" tyres, supplied by Hankook, a while ago.

Now Schmitz is happy to offer tyre management contracts with its trailers. Two

types of tyre-pressure monitoring are available. One employs conventional wheel-mounted sensors. The other involves an idea first developed by Daimler's trailer axle division (now part of the Jost empire),

Tyre pressure monitoring: axle tube doubles as air reservoir.

in which the axle tube doubles as an air reservoir. A centrally mounted hose runs from the hub to tyre valves. High-pressure air from this tank can automatically inflate a tyre which has begun to lose pressure. A warning lamp indicates when this process is taking place. The lamp flashes when the tyre is losing pressure faster than it can be replenished, warning the driver to stop the truck before the tyre suffers catastrophic damage.

Seemingly undeterred by all the latest anti-diesel sentiment among politicians and the public, Schmitz seems happy to commit to diesel-powered refrigeration units for the foreseeable future. The new Hatz engine in the latest Schmitz reefer is said to be the result of a ten-year development. This four-cylinder unit with a swept volume of 1.95 litres fits comfortably behind the trailer's 430mm-deep front cowling. The engine

is reckoned to be a worthwhile 50kg lighter than the Perkins engine it replaces. A peak power rating of 1.9kW (at only 1,250rpm) is crucial because it is in effect the threshold above which stationary engines require exhaust after-treatment under the EU's Stage V emissions limits. But even at this modest power rating the Hatz engine apparently develops enough torque to run the two evaporators needed for multi-temperature applications.

A Perkins engine is still available in Schmitz reefer trailers for single-temperature applications.

A host of detailed updates on the latest Schmitz S.KO Cool SmartTrailer includes better front bulkhead insulation with stouter bump protection on the bottom edge; more robust anti-theft protection for the on-board temperature recording unit and printer; and a more durable floor claimed to generate less noise than before, though still not quiet enough it seems to gain certification under the widely used Dutch PIEK scheme. □

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Starkest Brexit warnings yet from angry logistics businesses

The starkest warning yet of the catastrophic consequences that will be suffered by the UK road transport and logistics sector and everyone it serves if the government fails to change its apparently clueless approach to Brexit negotiations, and soon, has come from the Freight Transport Association (FTA) at a London conference this month. The 17,000 member FTA has long had a reputation for measured, sober comments in any dealings it has with governments of all stripes. Not any more. Anger among FTA member companies, including many of the biggest and smallest truck fleet operators in the UK, seems to have reached boiling point. This is reflected in comments made by FTA deputy chief executive James Hookham in advance of the "Keep Britain Trading" London conference.

"Of the eight demands made in FTA's list of essentials to keep Britain trading issued at the beginning of the year, not a

single one has been progressed," says Hookham. "Details of whether or not the country will have a transition/implementation period are still unclear, and there is still no decision on what customs arrangements we will have from March 2019 onwards. We keep getting told that all food and agricultural exports to the continent and Ireland will be checked at EU ports - but there is nowhere to check them, and the system to check them does not exist. We still don't know if we will be able to employ the 43,000 truck drivers in the UK that are nationals from another member state - that's 13 per cent of our driver workforce. There is no clarification on whether UK drivers' qualifications are to be recognised, so they could well be barred from driving their own vehicles on the continent. But the real show-stopper is that, under European law, unless an agreement is reached, there will be only 103

international haulage permits to cover the 300,000 journeys made by British trucks to Europe each year. The logistics industry is being asked to decide who would get a permit to drive if there are not enough to go around - in effect, being asked to destroy the businesses of its international haulage members."

Leigh Pomlett, executive director at Ceva Logistics and a hugely experienced logistics manager after holding senior posts at the likes of DHL Supply Chain and Exel, is the current FTA president. He was similarly critical of the government at the London conference this month.

"Without knowing who we will be employing, how we will be crossing borders, what certifications and permits goods and vehicles will require in order to travel, business as we know it will be unable to



James Hookham

continue," Pomlett said. "The logistics industry will be the first part of the economy to encounter the realities of Brexit when vehicles drive off the first ferry to arrive in Calais on 30 March 2019 and we want things to go smoothly, but we need more

information about the trading conditions we are to expect once the UK leaves the EU. The time for talking is over - it's now time to act."

Further warnings about dire Brexit effects at present and in the future on business and the UK economy came also this month from Airbus, BMW and Siemens, among others. The government appears entirely unmoved by all this, judging by a widely reported, off-the-record comment by foreign secretary Boris Johnson at a Foreign Office reception this month. "Fuck business", he is reported to have said to Belgium's ambassador to the EU. □

Top Mercedes truck and van apprentice awards go to Sheffield and Bristol

The two top prizes this year in the annual apprentice awards scheme run by the Mercedes-Benz UK truck and van divisions have gone to Kane Hindmarsh of a Sheffield, South Yorkshire-based dealer, Northside Truck & Van; and to William Stewart of Avonmouth-based City West Commercials. Hindmarsh, 19, beat two other finalists, Dylan Harris of Euro Commercials, Swansea and Oliver Warrington of Orwell Truck & Van, Norwich to take the parts operation specialist award. Stewart, 21, beat Ben Audsley of Northside Truck & Van, Hull and Christopher Egan of Western Commercial, Glasgow to take the 2018 technician award.

The awards were presented this month by Mercedes-Benz Vans UK customer services director David Joyce, who was instrumental in starting the

company's apprentice training scheme back in 1995.

"Having begun my own career as a 16-year-old apprentice I have always been a strong advocate of the benefits that accrue to Mercedes-Benz and, by extension, our customers, as a direct result of the substantial investments we make in training our young people," he says. "The apprentices whose fantastic achievements we are celebrating represent the future of our business. We are not only teaching our apprentices the functional skills they will need to excel in their jobs, but also helping them to develop as independent, well-grounded young adults able to cope with the challenges that life will inevitably throw their way from time to time."

Kane Hindmarsh studied business, information

technology and engineering at college for a year before applying to Northside Truck & Van in 2016. "I'd had enough of conventional education and wanted to get out into the real world and do something practical," he says. "It's gone better than I could have hoped. I like the people I'm working with and they treat me like an adult. I've particularly enjoyed the responsibility of manning

the parts department on my own for a few night-shifts and weekends."

William Stewart began his apprenticeship with City West Commercials in 2015, after completing A-levels in geography, physics and product design. "My brother and other friends were all off to university but I wanted to do something that was more hands-on," he says. "Being able to work on



David Joyce, Kane Hindmarsh and Glyn Frain, head of customer service and parts development.

DVSA reacts to vehicle tester “crisis” complaints, but has it gone far enough?

A long-running dispute with the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) over a lack of vehicle testers for mandatory annual truck and bus roadworthiness tests at privately-operated test stations, “authorised testing facilities” (ATF) in the civil service jargon, seems to have moved a small step or two closer to resolution this month. The DVSA has agreed to “review the current testing model” by the end of October and to try to make test slot availability more transparent. Many ATF operators, including franchised dealers and independent workshops, have been complaining for months that a shortage of DVSA vehicle testers has meant that they are increasingly having to turn vehicle testing business away. Truck operators have been forced to travel further and further from their operating bases to find suitable annual test booking slots either at ATF stations or the few remaining

vehicles and strip engines ties in with my interest in engineering, so I certainly don't have any regrets about the path I've taken. Best of all, this is so much more than just a job. I have a complete career laid out in front of me. It's up to me now, to make the most of the fantastic opportunity I've been given, and that's something I'm determined to do.” □

William Stewart of City West Commercials.



testing stations still run directly by the DVSA.

The Daf Trucks dealer network in the UK claims to operate more ATF than any other truck manufacturer. In a recent interview with *Commercial Vehicle Engineer* (page 14) Daf Trucks managing director Robin Easton said that the situation varied from region to region but “most dealers have suffered test cancellations because of no availability of DVSA testers.” Daf Trucks would support “deregulation to allow testers to be recruited locally,” says Easton.

At the Birmingham Commercial Vehicle Show in April a delegation led by Tom Cotton, head of licensing and infrastructure policy at the Road Haulage Association (RHA), descended on the DVSA stand to demand answers to what was described as an “ATF tester crisis”.

Suggested means of easing the problem put forward by the RHA include additional training for the specialised psv (passenger service vehicle) testers employed by DVSA to allow them to test trucks as well, and redeployment of roadside vehicle examiners to ATF until more testers have been recruited.

“This is a crisis for hauliers and ATF operators alike,” said RHA chief executive Richard Burnett at the April CV Show. “Hauliers across the country are now struggling to get their trucks through roadworthiness testing, the equivalent of the MOT, because the DVSA cannot attract and retain enough qualified testers to meet the demand. If hauliers are unable to keep their vehicles compliant and on the road then the risk to their businesses and the economy is huge. We also know of hauliers having to book testing slots far from their operating centres, thereby costing them money and of course time. This is a disaster for hauliers, for ATF operators and for the supply chain as a

whole and we urge the DVSA to improve pay and conditions for ATF testers to attract more staff.”

The RHA was among several trade bodies, including CPT (Confederation of Passenger Transport UK), SMMT (Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders), ATFOA (Authorised Testing Facility Operator Association), and NFDA (National Franchised Dealers Association) represented at ATF-related talks with DVSA this month.

“This was a very positive first meeting and we look forward to working with the industry,” says Richard Hennessey, DVSA's southern region operations director. “We know ATF, vehicle operators and their representative bodies have concerns about the availability of testing slots and the ease of securing test bookings. However, there is more we can do to improve the way we work with ATF and operators. We are in the process of recruiting an additional 85 vehicle testers into high-demand areas. This will have the benefit of also relieving testing pressure in other parts of the UK.”

But neither the DVSA nor its Department for Transport (DfT) bosses seem open to suggestions that non-DVSA staff, such as authorised technicians employed by dealer workshops, should be allowed to carry out truck and bus roadworthiness tests, as they do already with MOT tests for cars and vans. This would require “primary legislation”, points out DVSA. “Our focus at present is on addressing the immediate challenges surrounding heavy vehicle testing,” the agency says in a statement.

In a separate development, the DVSA website has been updated to allow the annual



Vehicle testers needed desperately: DVSA is on a recruitment drive.

roadworthiness test record of any heavy commercial vehicle, truck, bus or coach, to be checked freely online. The MOT history of cars and vans has been accessible on the DVSA website for some time. The new service for trucks, buses and coaches reveals vehicle age, date of its most recent test (and when the next one is due), most recent test result (pass or fail), and any defects recorded in previous tests. The plan, according to DVSA, is to extend this for buses soon so that even more information is available online including vehicle description, mileage, fuel type, and more details on recorded defects.

“Our priority is to help you keep your vehicle safe to drive,” says DVSA chief executive Gareth Llewellyn. “Although bus, coach and lorry operators should keep their vehicles roadworthy at all times, the annual test is a key indicator that the vehicle is being maintained properly. Anyone who operates a commercial vehicle that has not passed its MOT is not only breaking the law but also maybe putting lives at risk.”

More information at www.gov.uk/check-mot-history.

A list of DVSA network business managers, who should be the first port of call for operators having difficulty booking test slots, can be found on the RHA website: www.rha.uk.net. □

Waste-watcher attention focused sharply on tyres and whole-life costs



Keeping tyre costs under close control is a crucial responsibility for any fleet running multi-axle rigid trucks. And the positive and negative effects on these costs can sometimes come from surprising sources. Tim Blakemore reports.

Transport managers and fleet engineers in the tippers and wastes management sector of the UK truck market invariably take a keener interest than most in tyres. Anyone puzzled by this need look no further than the annual *Commercial Vehicle Engineer* analysis of truck operating costs for a simple explanation. Our 2018 analysis puts the annual tyre cost for a 32-tonnes-gvw 8x4 tipper covering 80,000km a year at close to £5,000. This compares with just over £2,300 in tyre costs for a high-power 6x2 tractive unit at 44 tonnes gcw and covering 140,000km a year (*Commercial Vehicle Engineer* January). Tyres account for a hefty chunk of total operating costs in most fleets running multi-axle rigid. Small wonder then that these fleets always pay close attention to any developments promising tyre cost reductions and perhaps even more to those threatening cost increases. Tyre pressure monitoring systems and last month's introduction of steep additional European Union duties on tyres made in China certainly fall under these two headings, respectively.

Truck tyre prices generally have been on the rise in the UK for about two years as a result of raw material cost increases and the devaluation of sterling following the shocking June 2016 referendum on EU membership. Against this backdrop, more and more fleets are turning to the latest tyre monitoring technology as they seek to keep costs under control.

One Cumbrian waste management fleet operator, Brampton Skips, tried Continental's tyre pressure monitoring system, ContiPressureCheck, for the first time last year on one of its 20 multi-axle rigid trucks. The fleet manager then was Neil McPhillips.

He left the company last month and was succeeded by David Hinds but there is no change of policy on TPMS. Both agree that the system paid for itself within one month by providing early warnings of pressure loss.

"We spotted tyres that had very low-grade pressure losses and so were able to remove and repair them before they got any worse," says McPhillips. "Before the arrival of ContiPressureCheck, these would have simply deteriorated further and may have resulted in blow-outs and complete loss of the tyres. Blow-outs can cost more than simply replacing the tyres, with body and light damage always a possibility, and far, far worse, injuries or even fatalities among drivers and other road-users."

The system is now being fitted to the entire Brampton Skips fleet of eight-wheeler hook-loaders and two- and three-axle skip-loaders.

Truck operators across Europe are taking to tyre pressure monitoring systems in general more keenly than ever, though there is still no legislation forcing them to do so, as there is already for cars. Hartwig Kühn, head of the global Conti Pressure Check (CPC) division at the Hannover, Germany-based Continental group, admits that growth in demand has been so great that Continental has struggled to keep pace, and delivery lead times have stretched.

The CPC system was introduced about four years ago but truck operators initially showed little interest, admits Kühn, mainly because it was incompatible with various fleet management/telematics systems already in service. Now it is,

Burcombe Haulage: manoeuvrability and payload were key factors in its latest eight-wheeler specification.



following development work by Continental engineers to ensure that the RFID signals transmitted by CPC tyre-mounted pressure sensors can be received and interpreted by independent telematics systems such as those from Astrata, MiX Telematics and Verilocation (now part of the Isotrak group). "It's very important that data from our system are properly displayed in the ui (user interface) of the third-party telematics provider," says Kühn. "We now have a validation tool. It's software we provide to these guys once they've programmed everything to make sure that the messages are properly displayed in their systems."

Brampton Skips: cutting tyre costs dramatically with the help of a tyre pressure monitoring system from Continental.

Tyre pressure monitoring systems (TPMS) became a legal requirement on all new cars in the European Union from 1 November 2014. And since 1 January 2015 a faulty or missing TPMS means MOT test failure for a car in the UK. But there is no EU or UK legislation requiring such systems on trucks and buses. This is on the way, however, expected to apply to newly type approved vehicles from September 2020 and to all new vehicles from one year later. But the explanation for a surge in truck operator interest in TPMS lies far more in the equipment's ability to lower operating costs than in any legislative move, according to Conti's Kühn. List prices for the modular CPC hardware range from about €520 (£370) for a three-axle tractor unit with the basic kit comprising sensors and in-cab display to about €850 (£610) for a six-axle artic. Monthly charges for adding alerts to a fleet manager's smartphone or computer will vary from one telematics provider to another. But in every case the CPC will pay for itself in twelve months or less, mainly through avoiding the fuel economy penalty of under-inflated tyres, maintains Kühn.

Truck fleet operators typically want to test the system in service for maybe three months, he says. Often that test is extended to six or nine months or longer. Then it comes to the crucial investment decision. Many fleets that have been running these trials have now reached the point where that decision is being made because they can see how quickly TPMS will pay for itself, says Kühn. Avoid one tyre-related breakdown per vehicle per year and the amortisation period could be as short as six months, he reckons.

That pay-back period would be shorter still for a system costing less and taking even less time and effort to fit than Conti's. This is precisely what is promised by a company called



Wheely-Safe, set up eight years ago in Burntwood, Staffordshire-based by a former transport consultant, Gary Thomas, and an electronics engineer, Gary Broadfield. A Wheely-Safe tyre pressure monitoring system for cars and vans, or indeed any vehicle with tyre pressures up to around 6 bar (86psi), has won approval from tyre-maker Michelin and went on sale complete with Michelin branding last month.

A Wheely-Safe Light kit for a two-axle vehicle comprises valve-mounted sensors to replace orthodox valve caps, a solar-powered small display unit designed to mount easily with adhesive tape to a corner of the windscreen, and a hand-held pressure checker which quickly and easily provides a digital read-out of a tyre's pressure when held next to its valve-mounted sensor.

"This is the perfect system for fleets as there are no batteries to change in the sensor or display unit, no cables to route and no complicated set-up," says Wheely-Safe managing director Steve Jackson. "It's literally plug-and-play and can be fitted by anyone in just a few minutes, with options available for linking to on-



Wheely-Safe tyre pressure management system: cars and vans only at present but a truck version is on the way.

board telematics systems. Our patented search-and-assign technology also means you can hook up to a trailer with our sensors fitted, and move sensors between different wheel positions, without any reprogramming required. The sensors can also be fitted to vehicles with different tyre pressures on different axles.”

A Wheely-Safe TPMS for trucks and buses is under development and expected to go on sale later this year, according to Jackson. He is not ready yet to talk about the likely selling price of this truck system, but fleet operators are sure to be encouraged by the low cost of the current system. A Wheely-Safe Light kit with four sensors is selling for £89.95 plus vat, and a pair of additional sensors sell for £24.95 plus vat.

The risk of truck tyres having to be replaced long before their tread wears out, as a result of severe casing damage, is naturally greater for many on/off-road tipper and waste management operations than for others. It is scarcely surprising then that this sector is one where cheap tyres from China have had a big impact in recent years. That could be about to change.



Pirelli (above) and Giti (right): both subject to the EU's "anti-dumping" duties on tyres made in China.

Truck and bus tyres made in China have suddenly become much more costly throughout the European Union as a result of “anti-dumping duties” introduced by the European Commission last month. The duties are described by the commission as “provisional” and will apply initially for six months. But a change of heart after that time seems unlikely given that the latest action follows a lengthy and hugely detailed investigation into the European truck and bus tyre and retread market. This was prompted by vociferous complaints from European tyre-makers and others about the effects on various EU businesses, not least small independent retreaders, of a flood of cheap tyres originating from the Peoples Republic of China (PRC).

Four specific Chinese tyre-makers are singled out in the anti-dumping regulation published by the commission in the Official Journal of the European Union last month. They are Xinguan Tire Group, Giti Tire Company, Aeolus Tyre Company (owner of the Pirelli tyre business), and Chongqing Hankook Tire Company. The new duties apply to all tyres, new and retreaded, made since February, and range from €52.85 (£46.1) per tyre for Hankook to €82.17 (£71.7) per tyre for Xinguan and “all other companies” from China exporting tyres to the EU. Tyres made by “co-operating Chinese exporting producers”, including plants operated by Bridgestone, Goodyear, Michelin, Toyo and Triangle Tyre, are also subject to an anti-dumping duty, of €62.79 (£54.80) per tyre. The duties apply to all China-manufactured tyres with a load index above 121 (certified to carry up to 1,450kg at maximum rated speed).

The official European Commission investigation into allegations of dumping by Chinese tyre-makers started a year ago following a complaint by a group of European tyre-makers and others thought to represent collectively more than 45 per cent of all EU truck and bus tyre and retread production. Last October it was claimed by the China Rubber Industry Association (CRIA) and the China Chamber of Commerce of Metals, Minerals and Chemicals Importers and Exporters (CCCMC) that there was no evidence of a history of dumping, selling tyres at a loss and even below the cost of a retread, which is normally expected to be around 60 per cent or less than the price of a new tyre.

The commission disagrees, following its initial investigation into alleged dumping and “injury” covering the period from 1 July

The commission disagrees, following its initial investigation into alleged dumping and “injury” covering the period from 1 July

Michelin: emphasising the environmental arguments in favour of retreading.



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2016 to 30 June 2017. Investigators visited several tyre manufacturers and retreaders in the EU, including a Goodyear plant in Poland, a Marangoni retreading operation in Italy and four producers who asked to remain anonymous. Visits were also made by commission investigators to tyre plants in China including those operated by Aeolus Tyre Company, Giti Tyre and Shanghai Hankook Tire Sales as well as to EU importers including Giti's UK base in Cheshire and Hankook's in Northamptonshire.

Hankook, based in Korea but with many tyre manufacturing plants elsewhere, including China and Hungary, is reckoned to be the top-selling tyre maker at present in the UK's replacement truck tyre market. Hankook tyres were being retreaded by Devon-based Bandvulc until last year. But that contract unsurprisingly came to an end following the purchase of Bandvulc by Continental two years ago. Now Hankook tyres are being retreaded in the UK under the Alphatread brand name by Lincolnshire-based Vacu-Lug, an independent retreader.

The commission calculates that the number of Chinese truck and bus tyres imported to the whole EU grew from around 3.5 million in 2014 to 4.6 million by last year. The share of the market taken by Chinese tyres has grown from 17.1 to 21.3 per cent in that time, it is estimated.

Among the key findings in the report published last month are that around 4,200 EU jobs in tyre manufacturing and retreading were lost during the period under consideration, that large companies have shut down plants, and that as many as 85 small and medium-sized enterprises in retreading had stopped production.

The commission will decide in November whether or not to continue applying the current anti-dumping duties for a further five years. It can surely expect intense lobbying between now and then from Chinese tyre-makers on the one hand arguing against this and from established European tyre-makers and retreaders on the other strongly supporting a continuation of the duties.

One pressing concern for truck operators in the UK and Irish Republic, apart from the sudden price increase on some tyres simply as a direct result of the new duties, is that there could soon be shortage of some sizes and tread types as some Chinese tyre-makers decide to cut back on exports to Europe and established European tyre-makers struggle to keep up with increasing demand.

The commission accepts the commonly held view that the European replacement truck tyre market sub-divides into three broad categories or "tiers", ranked according to product quality.

"The majority of the total volume of dumped Chinese imports concentrates on tier 3, forcing several EU producers in that tier, in particular SME (small and medium-sized enterprise) retreaders, to exit the market," it says. Prices of all tyres were set previously by top-quality "tier 1" products, it reckons. Now this is changed, with tier 2 price established on the basis of tier 3 and tier 1 on the basis of tier 2. "This resulted in a decrease of selling prices in all tiers. The commission thus provisionally concluded that the surge of

Latest Daf eight-wheelers in the Cemex London fleet: bristling with safety features including Conti TPMs.



dumped imports from the PRC had a determining role in the material injury suffered by the European Union industry."

There are more variables than ever in the tyre cost calculations facing tipper and waste-management fleet managers. But those who get their sums right can surely expect to see their efforts pay off handsomely in lower whole-life truck operating costs.

Stuart Wilkie is all too familiar with such calculations. He is transport manager at the Burcombe Haulage group, based near Saltash, Cornwall. This Batten family-owned firm offers a wide range of transport services, from construction and road-sweeping to general haulage. A sister company operating concrete mixers, B&C Concrete, was formed four years ago in a joint venture with a groundworks firm.

Most of the 45 trucks in the Burcombe Haulage fleet are from Daf and Volvo but last December it acquired its first Mercedes rigid, an Arocs 3240 eight-wheeler with McPhee mixer bodywork for the B&C Concrete operation. Manoeuvrability on narrow Cornish roads and minimising tyre scrub were two of the factors that led Wilkie to a tridem axle configuration for the Arocs, with a lifting/steering axle behind the tandem drive bogie. A second Arocs with a similar axle configuration but this time fitted with a Charlton steel tipper body joined the fleet in January.

"We have to access some tight locations in this part of the world," says Wilkie. "The steering and lifting back axles effectively give these trucks the same degree of manoeuvrability as a shorter six-wheeler, while allowing us to retain a payload capacity which is only slightly lower than a conventionally-configured 8x4 chassis. We're also confident that as 32-tonners they will command significantly higher re-sale values than 26-tonners. It's very difficult these days to sell a six-wheeler tipper. But we'll look at each deal on its merit and never put all our eggs in one basket." □

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Hidden treasures

Just over one year into his new job as boss of the UK's top-selling truck-maker, Robin Easton is preparing for its move next month into a smart new head office and training centre. But this is by no means the only sparkling jewel in the Daf Trucks and Paccar global crowns. Tim Blakemore reports.



Words like “treasury” and “treasurer” crop up time and again in Robin Easton's curriculum vitae. So what? Nothing unusual in that for a senior executive at a big American corporation, you may be thinking. But this is hardly a typical background for the managing director of the sales and marketing operation of the UK's top-selling truck-maker, Daf Trucks. So does his appointment signal some sort of radical underlying change in this market, or perhaps a fundamental policy shift at Paccar, the US-based Daf Trucks parent group? Can operators of Daf trucks and the company's UK network of independently-owned dealers expect the new boss to be taking a different approach to doing business with them? We went to the Daf Trucks Ltd head office in Thame, Oxfordshire (soon to be moved a few miles down the road to a smart, new £20 million purpose-designed, three-storey building and training centre at Haddenham, Buckinghamshire) to put such questions directly to the man himself.

Easton has been in this job now for just over a year, following the retirement of Ray Ashworth in April 2017. There is undoubtedly a stark contrast between their career paths. Ashworth, 64, had been Daf Trucks managing director in the UK since early 2009, promoted from commercial operations director following the retirement of Stuart Hunt. Ashworth's long and distinguished truck industry career began with an engineering apprenticeship at what then was the state-owned Leyland Motors. Daf bought the Leyland trucks operation from the government in 1987, outmanoeuvring Paccar's bid in the process. But nine years later, Paccar was back with well-laid plans for European expansion, this time by buying the entire restructured Daf Trucks after the old Daf/Leyland Daf business had

spectacularly crashed into administration in 1993.

In the UK, Paccar-owned Daf Trucks has been the top-selling manufacturer in the six-tonnes-plus market for more than 20 years. Last year, Daf's share of this market was over 30 per cent (*Commercial Vehicle Engineer* February). And its share of the continental European truck market has been growing steadily too under shrewd Paccar stewardship, as has the entire group's considerable financial strength. In his foreword to the 2017 Paccar annual report, executive chairman Mark Pigott (son of Chuck Pigott, who masterminded the original Leyland Trucks bid and the subsequent Daf Trucks takeover) sums up last year as the second best in the company's 112-year history, with record high turnover and “excellent net profits.”

Easton's background is largely in corporate finance and business administration. He has a degree in management science from the London School of Economics (LSE) and another in finance from Cass Business School. Easton, 51, worked for the Inchcape group in corporate finance in his native UK and then in Singapore before moving in 2001 to northern California, primarily because his wife (who is from Seattle) had started a new job there. Easton's own Californian post was director of global treasury operations at Applied Materials, one of the biggest global suppliers of the equipment, services and software needed for the manufacture of semi-conductors and the visual display units used on computers, smartphones and televisions. He joined Paccar, based at its Bellevue, Washington state head office in 2004 as assistant treasurer.

The big picture: Robin Easton is more familiar than most with the relationship between Paccar's three truck-making divisions - Kenworth, Daf and Peterbilt.



Easton is evidently a little surprised when we confess that this “assistant treasurer” job title is unfamiliar to us (as it is, we suspect, to many truck operators and commercial vehicle engineers). He patiently points out that there are plenty of assistant treasurers in the UK, and indeed a professional body, the Association of Corporate Treasurers, of which he happens to be a Fellow. “Treasury is the management of financial assets, borrowings, foreign exchange, banking arrangements, dividend policy, etc, etc,” he helpfully guides us. “A treasurer typically works alongside a controller (an accountant), both of whom report to a finance director.”

Easton clearly is extremely good at this job. At Paccar he was promoted in 2007 to treasurer and head of investor relations, which brought the challenge of learning how to deal with shareholders and analysts. “I enjoyed seeing how the external financial community looks at companies, and understanding how they analyse and what they analyse,” he recalls. “Are they seeing the whole picture? Are they putting more emphasis on something in particular perhaps more than they should?”

Nevertheless, after seven years in this job Easton was ready to accept a fresh challenge, though that phrase hardly seems an adequate description of a move to India from the west coast of the US with a young family.

“The way my family and I approached the move was as a big adventure,” he says.

From 2014 until his move back to the UK in December 2016 (in preparation for taking the Daf Trucks reins from Ray Ashworth a few months later) Easton headed Paccar’s technical centre in Pune, an Indian city which has attracted investment by several vehicle and engine manufacturers. But Paccar neither makes nor sells any trucks or anything else in India at present. So why does it need a technical centre staffed by more than 200 engineers and information technology specialists?

Easton’s answer to this question seems to underline how successful Paccar has been in quietly constructing a global business comprised of high-quality individual manufacturing, research and development and sales and marketing operations. Much of the cost-cutting, profit-generating, quality-raising co-operation between these businesses goes on behind the scenes. The Pune technical centre is one of four run by Paccar globally, including the newest one in

Painting by numbers: a new, £88 million Westerlo paintshop boosts production capacity by 50 per cent and sets new quality standards.

California’s “Silicon Valley”. The other two are at Daf’s Eindhoven base in the Netherlands and at Mount Vernon, Washington in the US. What exactly does the Pune technical centre do?

“We do three things there,” says Easton, with characteristic directness and precision. “We have teams of engineers supporting our three truck brands, Kenworth, Peterbilt and Daf. We have an IT group supporting our global IT teams in North America and Europe. And we also have a small purchasing team, looking to purchase components made in India for our truck brands around the world. Typically, there are cost-saving opportunities for components made in India. The important thing though is to ensure that the quality of these components is in line with what we are already purchasing.”

Fair enough, but it remains hard to see on the face of it how Easton’s background in the world of corporate finance prepared him for running a technical centre like this, or indeed the UK Daf Trucks sales and marketing operation for that matter. “Paccar is very good at moving its executives around,” he offers. “The role in India was really to test me, to take me out of the corporate finance world. Here was an organisation of 200-plus people, two thirds of them engineers and about one third IT professionals. The question for me was: can you run it, expand it and develop it? I believe I did that successfully. Another part of the role in India was a strategic one, from a global Paccar perspective. What opportunities does India present, if not today then in the future. What should Paccar be doing in the medium to long term in India? This was a unique role in Paccar which I enjoyed very much.”

It is, however, surely a role which shares little with running a truck sales and marketing operation in the UK. Or does it? Has anything about his new job surprised Easton, pleasantly or



otherwise, over the past year? “I wasn’t surprised, but pleased with the management team I inherited from Ray,” he says. “They are experienced, they know the business very well, and they are committed and passionate.”

It can be argued that the strength of Daf’s network of independently owned dealers in the UK is the principal reason for its continuing market-leading position – that this is one of the most valuable jewels of all in the crown.

There surely must have been some misgivings among this network when news first broke that one of the best-known industry figures with whom many of them had been dealing for decades was being succeeded by a stranger to the UK truck market.

In what can be seen as a shrewd but tacit recognition of this, Easton has wasted no time in getting to know these dealers and to win their respect. “I made a point of going out to visit all 33 of our sales dealers (there are 130-plus Daf Trucks dealer sites in the UK, including service-only dealers) as soon as I could,” he says. “I was pleased and impressed with what I saw and with the people I met, especially their commitment and passion, the long-standing nature of our dealers and the individuals in them. It is clear to me that we don’t have a bunch of disparate dealers, we have a real network of organisations working closely together, supporting and promoting the brand and working very closely with Daf employees. Within a week or two of starting these dealer visits I realised that this is something I need to be doing at least once a year, every year.”

Seems like Daf dealers in the UK and their customers can rest assured that they are treasured now more than ever. □

On the move: next month Daf Trucks leaves Thame for a new, £20 million Haddenham base.

Expanding UK range: this is the first CF in the UK with an FAC axle configuration. The lifting/trailing axle is part of a tandem drive bogie.





Big Boys' small toys: Scott Barr of B&B Contracts greets Raymond Reid of James A Cuthbertson. Both are normally pictured at APSE alongside giant trucks. Here they are joking about displaying two of the smallest units on show; a tar and a grit spreader respectively.

Local Authority Fleets On Truck Manufacturers' Radar

The Annual APSE Show at Aviemore has become the place to launch innovative solutions for local authority transport problems. Alistair Vallance caught up with the 'scoops.'

DIESEL, LNG, hydrogen or electric; it didn't matter the fuel choice, the vast array of commercial vehicles on parade in May outside the Coylumbridge Hotel catered for the lot.

This was not only the annual APSE

Show at its sunniest, product wise the 2018 edition, with 120 exhibitors, saw APSE at its best, doing the job it was created for; right up to date with the latest wheel driven equipment for local authority use to meet emissions, noise and fuel cost



restrictions.

Transport News picked out a number of 'new to market' trucks, chassis cab conversions and a massive array of bodywork innovations laid out for local authority procurement personnel who attended the Aviemore show.

Over the three days, various seminars took place with the keynote session discussing income generation strategies for local authorities, exploring market opportunities and challenges. A later session on low emission vehicles, covered the attributes of LNG courtesy of APSE main supporter Iveco and the electric vehicles infrastructure at Transport Scotland looked at available funding support for local government.

Margaret Simpson, Freight Transport Association country manager for Scotland, spoke on the advantages of joining the FTA Van and Truck Excellence schemes which help O-Licence compliance and work towards joining the DVSA Earned Recognition Scheme, now being joined by a growing number of local authorities.

Delegates also heard Zero Waste Scotland's details on the deposit return scheme for single use containers.

Outside in the sunshine, visitors toured the CV displays in shirt sleeve order...



Spotted at APSE, the new sales team appointed by Aberdeen based BLS Commercials Ltd; Andrew Rennie (left) and Keith Johnston.



A new name to catch the eye was Electra Commercial Vehicles, a division of NRG, perhaps better known in Scotland as Riverside Truck Rental whose business development manager Jeff Duncan was on hand to reveal the attributes of the division's prototype electric powered RCV 26 tonne 6x2 which will be available exclusively through NRG Fleet Services. This will put us ahead of the rest and ours will be available on contract hire and let's be honest, do you spend £248,000 on an unproven electric RCV or do you put your toe in the water with one on contract hire? It's a no brainer! says Jeff.



Livingston based MV Commercials Ltd exhibited a 32 tonne Scania with a Hyva hookloader and a DAF CF with a Palfinger M125L grab. Fraser Birks and Claire Gallacher were on hand to demonstrate.



The Volvo logo was in evidence on this skip loader.



APSE organisers came up with a novel lunchtime selection with different nationalities proffering their wares. Here's the Polish sausage offering.



Logan Inglis general sales manager Robert Graham displayed the new Multilift Futura skip loader fitted to this DAF 18 tonne chassis in the livery of Ramsay's Skip Hire based in Dundee.

Three wise men from Renault Trucks: Calum Aitken, Richard Voigt and Graham Fletcher on hand to talk about 'the new High T's which are all the rage' as well as the vehicles on display; a D18 demo skip loader 4x2 18 tonner, a 4x4 Master van and a unique 'cut away' Master chassis complete with a 13.8 metre crane hoist.





A medium duty straight V snowplough is just one of the many add-ons fitted to this Mercedes-Benz Arocs 18 tonne 4x4. As Raymond Reid (pictured) explained, it also has a multi-purpose, light weight, aluminium insulated body complete with Keith walking floor which works in both directions, hence the cantilever tailgate to allow rear loading. In addition, there's a heat resistant conveyor belt for nearside unloading and a removable grit spinner which revolves at road speed. Raymond confirmed that 13 such units are already working for Highland Council. The one on show was destined for Moray Council and another, similar Arocs is working in the colours of current Scottish Local Authority Fleet Operator of the Year, Aberdeenshire Council.



Iveco, as main supporter of APSE, took the opportunity to display a line-up of trucks outside the Coylumbridge Hotel which included a demo gas powered Daily 3.5 tonner with a Hi-matic 8 speed box. It has a Brit-Tipp tipper body and is destined to go 'on tour' round all Scottish local authorities with BOC providing refuelling facilities. Another Brit-Tipp body was fitted to a 7.2 tonne diesel powered Daily, which is £6,000 cheaper than a Eurocargo 7.5 tonner and offers 1.2 tonnes more payload, confirmed Billy Davison (left) and Keith Sergison of CFS Glasgow, the west of Scotland Iveco dealers whose initiative resulted in both demo vehicles going on the road.

Groeneveld has become part on the Timken Group and is now marketing Interlube. On hand to demonstrate the cleansing properties of the filter unit which augments the truck's standard filter was, l to r, sales manager Derek MacPherson, Brian Brown and Stephen MacGowan.



MAN took the opportunity to show their TGE van.

Dennis Double: Two of their latest demos in a comprehensive line-up of RCV's.



Johnston Sweepers Ltd displayed this neat VT651 sweeper on an Iveco Eurocargo, liveried up for Dawsonrentals. Also on show, a couple of traditional kerb sweepers.



John Dyer from Imperial Commercials, Govan and Isuzu's municipal fleet sales manager David Slatcher, came in from the sunshine for this indoor stand picture.



Dan Kaynes and Peter Dugdale of Brit-Tipp demonstrated their wares on a Hybrid Fuso with a cage body and an Iveco Daily tipper, both with remote control systems. Both chassis were also protected with graphene paint. 'We're the only body builder in the world using it, on the 250 bodies we build every month,' said Dan.



Iveco hostesses: As main sponsors of APSE, truck manufacturer Iveco had two ladies on hand to spread the gospel: Rochelle Bedford (left) from the brand marketing division and Anna Strasser, LCV utility and municipal manager.



Gordon Nisbet of LVB Bathgate (left) introduces a customer to a recently converted Transit 3.5 tonner designed for household waste kerbside collection. This was LVB's 15th consecutive year at Aviemore.



Scott Barr, MD of B&B Contracts Ltd, decided to downsize for this year's APSE and instead of displaying an 18 tonne tar carrier, he dropped to a one tonne capacity towable version. It's a Danish Aletho AF17 for which B&B are UK agents. The towable carrier, complete with discharging auger can unload near and rear side to the flow speed required.

Scott confirmed that BT have taken three for their road working crews in Scotland who now carry out their own tarring, following the demise of Carillion.



Q. I run a company that delivers power generators across Scotland. We are often required to deliver to Glasgow city centre and I'm slightly worried over the proposed introduction of a Low Emissions Zone (LEZ). It would cost vast sums to replace our current fleet of vehicles that are fitted with Euro 5 engines. When is the LEZ expected to be in full force?

A. As per the article in May's edition of *Transport News*, it would appear that Glasgow's LEZ will initially focus on buses and coaches rather than LGVs.

The current timescale for bus and coach compliance with emission standards is December 2022, so LGV operators are not expected to comply in the imminent future. However moving forward, emissions standards should be a prominent consideration when purchasing vehicles and any plans to replace your fleet should take this into account.

If you are unsure what standard your engine currently meets, you can use HPI's free checking tool, simply search online for 'HPI Euro Emission Standards Checker'.

Q. Can you clarify the requirements for double manning? Typically, we have no reason to double man, but we have purchased a new bit of equipment from a seller based in Plymouth and we're based in the Highlands.

A. The main difference relates to daily rest requirements, the period is calculated over 30 hours rather than 24 hours when single manning.

The maximum driving time for a two man crew is 20 hours, provided both drivers' are entitled to drive for the extended drive time of 10 hours; otherwise, the limit would be 18 hours before daily rest will be required.

The second driver should insert his/her card to Slot 2 and select the 'Period of Availability' mode when travelling as a passenger. The first 45 minutes of POA will be considered as rest so long as no work is

The Truck Advocate

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undertaken.

Other than the above, double manned driving is governed by the same rules that would apply to a single manned vehicle.

Q. What is the law relating to smoking in your truck? I am a tramper and nobody else travels in the vehicle. A new transport manager has started and has banned all smoking in cabs.

A. Smoking in commercial vehicles is prohibited on a legal basis. The Smoke-free (Premises and Enforcement) Regulations 2006 prevent anybody from smoking in any vehicle used by one or more people for work, regardless of whether they are in the vehicle at the same time. HGVs and buses are covered by this regulation.

The offence carries a fixed penalty of £50 which can rise to £200 if awarded by a court.

Companies are correct to make it policy that smoking is not permitted in company vehicles. Drivers' must comply or risk disciplinary action. Furthermore, if 'no smoking' signs are not present in a vehicle, the company can be fined up to £1,000 for non compliance.

Q. I recently started working for a parcel delivery company after spending many years driving lorries. I'm driving a LWB

Transit. Some of my colleagues can be driving for up to 14-15 hours per day in order to complete their list of deliveries. Is this allowed?!

A. If you drive a van for commercial use for more than four hours a day, you must follow GB domestic rules for drivers' hours.

From stories heard on the news and by word of mouth, it is evident that this is loosely enforced by couriers (companies and those who are self employed) who are leaving themselves wide open to prosecution, especially with DVSA's new enhanced powers to fine drivers' at the roadside.

Under GB domestic rules, the daily driving limit is 10 hours and the maximum duty time is 11 hours. A written record of hours of work must be retained by the driver, a logbook is recommended. This should be handed into management at the end of the week who are expected to check for compliance and sign off.

Q. My vehicle has recently had the gearbox replaced and since then, I've been noticing some discrepancies with my tachograph. Could you advise?

A. This is likely due to the fact that tachograph recalibration is required after any significant repair, especially one involving the gearbox.

The motion sensor for tachograph is located on the gearbox. This allows it to communicate with the vehicle unit to record speed and distance travelled. Any tampering with the gearbox is likely to affect the encryption signal between sensor and vehicle unit, hence the need to book the vehicle into an Approved Tachograph Centre (ATC). You can find your nearest ATC by checking the government website.

Other occasions that require tachograph recalibration include vehicle registration changes and changes in tyre circumference.

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Scania's wholly-owned UK subsidiary is to have a new boss within the next few months. **Martin Hay** has been appointed managing director of Milton Keynes,



Martin Hay

Buckinghamshire-based Scania (Great Britain). He starts the new job on 1 September, taking over from **Claes Jacobsson** who is returning to his native Sweden, to the Scania head office in Södertälje near Stockholm and a new post, details of which were unclear as *Commercial Vehicle*



Claes Jacobsson

Engineer was finalised this month.

Mr Jacobsson, 60, has worked for Scania for 19 years, joining the company in Sweden in April 1999 as head of what then was a fledgling financial services division. He took over from **Hans-Christer Holgersson** as Scania (Great Britain) managing director in September 2013.

Mr Hay too has worked for Scania for decades, 28 years to be precise, including spells as managing director of what then was the Scantruck dealer group and later as a director of the company's south-east region. Between 2009 and 2016 Mr Hay was Scania (Great Britain)'s truck sales director, reporting to Mr Jacobsson for much of that time. Two years ago Mr Hay was promoted to truck sales vice president for Scania's entire global activities, based in Sweden. He was a member of the small team masterminding the introduction over the past two years of Scania's "new generation" truck range. His move back to the top post in the UK is seen as recognition that this was a job well done. "I have been extremely fortunate to work for Scania in Sweden during this exciting period for the business and it is now an absolute pleasure to be returning to Scania (Great Britain)," he says. "The UK is one of Scania's most successful and important markets worldwide, and I am looking forward to rejoining the team and working with them and our customers as we continue to develop the market and drive the shift towards more sustainable transport solutions."

The company he is set to lead turns over about £700 million annually at present, with around £60 million coming from repair and maintenance-related services and about £100 million from parts sales. Dealer workshops owned and run by Scania (Great Britain) typically account for roughly one million labour hours sold annually, with independently-owned Scania dealers such as Keltruck, TruckEast and West Pennine trucks selling about the same between them.

"Having worked with Martin during his time at both Scania (Great Britain) and at Scania AB, I know he will do an excellent job in the UK," says Mr Jacobsson. "I have enjoyed five fantastic years in Great Britain and it is with a heavy heart that I say farewell to many friends, colleagues, customers and suppliers."

The UK's biggest bus operator, FirstGroup, is facing an uncertain future following a huge full-year financial loss, the sudden departure of chief executive **Tim O'Toole**, and a share price



Tim O'Toole

plunge. Mr O'Toole succeeded **Sir Moir Lockhead** as chief executive of Aberdeen-based FirstGroup seven years ago. His departure this month follows the shock announcement of a £327 million loss in the year to 31 March 2018. But Mr O'Toole is understood to be continuing to draw his salary, put at around £1.26 million a year, until the end of September.

Executive chairman **Wolfhart Hauser** has taken on the chief executive's responsibilities temporarily until Mr O'Toole's successor is appointed. He or she will be faced with a host of serious problems not only in First's UK bus operations but also in its train operating franchises here (Great Western, South Western and TransPennine) and with the Greyhound bus operation in the US. This was bought for around US\$3.5 billion (£2.6 billion) from Laidlaw when Sir

Moir Lockhead was at the group's helm in 2001. With Greyhound profit having slumped by 39 per cent last year to only around £25 million, that deal is looking increasingly ill-judged.

A takeover bid for the entire First group by a private equity firm, Apollo, was rejected by the group's board earlier this year, prompting speculation among analysts that a break-up of the group, with separate sales of individual operations, is now likely.

The success of two apprentices from the Renault Trucks UK dealer network in the initial rounds of a high-profile skills competition is being hailed as more evidence of big recent advances in the quality of service now available to Renault truck operators.

Joe Durkan of Leeds, West



Joe Durkan



Ben Rogers

Yorkshire-based JDS Trucks & Vans and **Ben Rogers** of Sparks Commercial Services, based in Swindon, Wiltshire, are among

the 18 heavy vehicle technicians from across the UK now preparing for next month's round of a skills competition which will culminate this year at the WorldSkills UK show in November at Birmingham's National Exhibition Centre (NEC).

The 18 have won through to the July "national qualifier" event (a semi-final, in effect) from an initial entry this year of 144. The top six semi-finalists at the July event, to be held at Scania (Great Britain)'s training centre in Loughborough, Leicestershire, will go through to the November final.

According to the WorldSkills UK organisation, backed by the government's Department for Education (DfE), the competition is designed to "reflect the work role of a heavy vehicle automotive technician, including skills such as time management, planning and problem solving." Many competition tasks involve fault diagnosis, component replacement and repair.

The heavy vehicle technician elements of WorldSkills UK competitions are organised by the Institute of the Motor Industry (IMI) under its "Skill Auto" banner.

Semi-finalists in July will be faced with six tasks, each of up to one hour's duration. At the final there will be six tasks of up to two hours duration each.

Gold, silver and bronze awards are made at the final. In 2017 the gold award winner was **Luke Coppelstone** from the big Scania workshop at Heathrow airport. The silver award went to **Kieran Leyland**, employed by Ryder but trained at the Stephenson College Volvo Academy. Bronze awards in 2017 went to another Volvo Academy apprentice, **Luke Hopkins** from Wales & West Truck and Bus, and to **Tom Hill** from the Greenhouse Commercial Daf Trucks dealer group.

Messrs Durkan and Rogers are the first two Renault Trucks apprentices to have made it through to the semi-final stage of this competition.

Among the other technicians they will be up against there are three from Volvo Trucks, a Renault Trucks sister company

in Volvo Group. They are **Stuart Burkat** from the Enfield branch of the Volvo Truck and Bus Centre London division; **Ryan Sturgess** from the Croydon branch of the same division; and **James Wade** from the Hythe, Kent branch of MC Truck and Bus.

"We have worked relentlessly to develop the Renault Trucks Apprentice Academy into a cutting-edge training programme using the most up-to-date equipment and tools," says academy and apprenticeship manager **Adam Plastow**. "Getting two students into the semi-finals is the ultimate testament to all the hard work of both Ben and Joe and to all involved in developing our programme."

Sparks Commercial Services director **Michael Spark** is confident that Ben Rogers will do well in next month's semi-finals. "Ben joined our company in August 2015 straight from school and I can honestly say that I have not met such a determined and conscientious apprentice in my 30 years in the transport industry," he says. "He is always keen to learn and goes out of his way to take on board additional skills wherever he can. He never shies away from a problem. Instead he sees it as a challenge. There is no doubt that he is a master technician of the future and has a long and prosperous career ahead of him."

More information at www.worldskillsuk.org, www.theimi.org.uk

Graeme McGregor has joined Boughton Engineering, one of the UK's biggest manufacturers of hook-loader and skip-loader equipment, as its first chief operations officer. Mr McGregor, 60, has extensive international experience of general management of manufacturing operations and says that his main objective at Boughton is to take productivity and efficiency to "world-class standards."

Before joining Wolverhampton-based Boughton last month, Mr McGregor was a director at



Graeme McGregor

Princess Yachts, a French-owned manufacturer of luxury yachts, based in Plymouth, Devon. But he is no stranger to the motor vehicle engineering business having previously worked as a plant manager in the US for Tomlins Engineering, a fuel systems supplier, and before that for the giant Federal-Mogul group, the US-based component supplier which was acquired by Tenneco two months ago in a US\$5.4 billion deal.

Boughton Engineering is a sister company of Oldbury, a defence equipment supplier, in the Skan Group Holdings group. "The Boughton and Oldbury names are among the most respected and valued names in the niche engineering market sectors they serve,"

says Mr McGregor. "They are co-located, they share management, workforce, skills and facilities, as well as ethos commitment and vision. I look forward to building on the outstanding work which has been achieved so far and working with colleagues to take the business to the next level and towards greater future success."

John Symonds continues as Boughton Engineering's director of operations, and **Matt Buckley** remains as director of service and quality. Both now report to Mr McGregor. He in turn reports to Skan Group deputy chairman and managing director **Richard Skan** (son of the group's chairman, **Roger Skan**).

Growing demand for additional windows fitted in the nearside door of truck cabs (driven mainly by London's controversial "direct vision" standard) has prompted a leading window supplier to team up with a network of workshops specialising in accident repairs.

The 190 independent vehicle accident repair centres in the UK network run by Selsia, a repair and refurbishment management company based in Silsoe, Bedfordshire, have become approved fitting centres for the windows supplied by Truck Door Windows of Dartford, Kent.

"Selsia's business model has a perfect synergy with our own



Selsia's Neil Marcus, Truck Door Windows boss Lee Allen, and Selsia's Nev Dickson.

ethos of ensuring that benefits to customers are at the forefront of the company's agenda," says Truck Door Windows managing director **Lee Allen**. "They understand the importance of reduced vehicle loss of use and the strength of collective bargaining power."

Selsia's and the Truck Door Windows management teams are no strangers to each other. Truck Align London, a Truck Door Windows sister company headed by Mr Allen, is itself part of the Selsia network of accident repair centres.

"The appointment of Selsia to support the installations of Truck Door Windows products is a natural progression of Selsia services and ties in with the company's ethos of supporting clients' duty of care obligations and reducing risks of injuries and fatalities to vulnerable road users such as cyclists and pedestrians," says Selsia marketing director **Neil Marcus**.

The latest addition to the Truck Door Windows range of single-glazed passenger door windows for truck cabs is for the Daf CF range.

"We have more than 40 years experience of repairing trucks and buses, but still we find a few makes and models which, due to the door construction, prevent installation of a lower window which allows the main window to lower," says Mr Allen. "But that wealth of engineering expertise has enabled us to overcome most obstacles in creating lowerable variants."

Clifford Tappin, a tanker driver working for Lovell Fuels of Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire, has been named Driver of the Year 2018 in the latest round of the annual driver awards scheme run by the Federation of Petroleum Suppliers (FPS). The scheme, now in its 18th year, is sponsored by the OAMPS Hazardous Industries division of the Pen Underwriting insurance group. "Oil tanker drivers are at the core of all we do in the oil distribution industry," says OAMPS Hazardous Industries account director **Ian Peach**. "Together



■ **Clifford Tappin: FPS driver of the year 2018.**

with the FPS, we believe this award encourages all drivers to operate at the highest levels of safety, customer care and professionalism, something that can only be positive for the sector as a whole."

The two runners-up this year are **James Flynn** of Preston, Lancashire-based Ribble Fuel Oils; and **Bernhard Fuller** of New Era Fuels, based in Harlow, Essex. Mr Tappin was himself a runner-up in last year's competition.

"The standard set by all nominated tanker drivers is always incredibly high, and this year was no exception," says FPS technical manager and driver awards judge **Tony Brown**. "We were impressed by Clifford last year, but he won the competition this year thanks to impressive commitment to the job. His driving professionalism, quality of work, customer care and motivation are inspiring to witness. Nothing is too much trouble for him. He always completes his workload and then is happy to take on more. He takes great care of customers, and is proactive with sales for new customers, winning them over and then working hard to keep them happy with their chosen products and services."

More information at www.fpsonline.co.uk.

Sentinel Systems, a Cirencester, Gloucestershire-based supplier of reversing driver aids for trucks and vans, has a new owner. He is **John Little**, a Cheltenham, Gloucestershire-based mechanical engineer who has worked for Fluid Transfer International, an aviation refuelling vehicle specialist, for 17 years, latterly as managing director. Mr Little has bought Sentinel Systems from its founder **Bill Paulson** for an undisclosed sum. The business was started in 1986 and is currently headed by Bill Paulson's son David. "We are very pleased to hand the business over to John," says Mr Paulson junior. "He has an outstanding track record of business growth and technical excellence, and is committed to

developing Sentinel in both UK and overseas markets. It was important for us to find a buyer who would offer our staff the chance to develop their careers in a growing business and would be able to take Sentinel to new levels of innovation that will benefit our customers and suppliers."

Mr Little has no plans to move Sentinel from its established Cirencester manufacturing base, it seems. "I am excited by the future growth potential of the business through the existing product range complemented by innovative product introductions. All of this while having the opportunity to work with an experienced team that prides itself on delivering excellent customer service."

More information at www.reversewithsafety.com. □



■ **John Little**



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