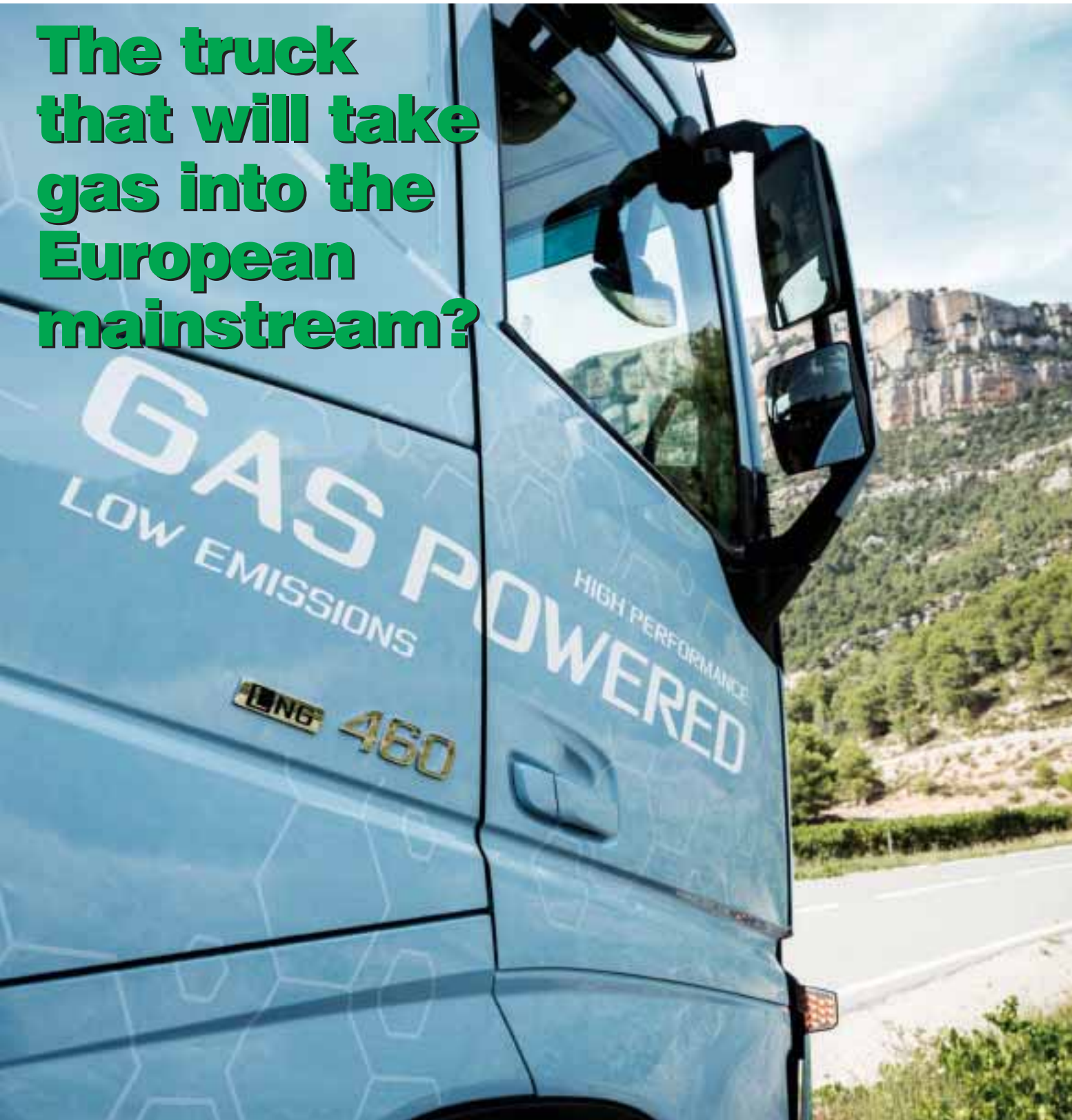


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A breath or two of fresh air at last instead of just hot air

Even among politicians, it takes a quite breathtaking degree of incompetence to introduce a scheme designed specifically to boost apprenticeship numbers that turns out to have the immediate and polar opposite effect: cutting these numbers by nearly 60 per cent. Cue the British government's much-hyped apprenticeship levy, introduced only about seven months ago and already attracting such descriptive terms as "car crash" and "disaster" from sober organisations not known for over-reaction to anything (page 11).

Question is, when a bunch of hopeless incompetents like this government can make such a hash of a subject that hardly is terribly complicated in the scheme of things, how far can they be trusted with decisions and pronouncements on rather bigger challenges related to commercial vehicles, such as the accelerating drive towards "autonomous" vehicles, climate change and air quality? The answer is surely obvious: not at all.

So it really does come as a welcome and refreshing change this month to hear some people talking sense at last on these subjects. Unsurprisingly, these people are not politicians but commercial vehicle engineers, in particular those behind the latest Volvo gas-fuelled truck engine (page 14) and Iveco UK's alternative fuels director, Martin Flach (page 12).

There are fascinating differences in the technologies favoured by these two truck and bus manufacturers but the underlying

message from both is the same. It is that commercial vehicles of the future will be even more environmentally friendly than those of today but they certainly will not all be electrically powered by the day after tomorrow. There will be room for diesel for many years to come, and gas (especially in liquefied form and especially biogas) is set to play an increasingly important role.

Unlike nearly every UK politician we can think of, Volvo Trucks' director of environment and innovation, Lars Mårtensson, has a clear, plausible idea of what he is aiming at and how to get there. "Our vision is that trucks from Volvo will eventually have zero emissions, although the way of achieving that is not by one single solution but rather through several solutions in parallel," he says.

Here's a thought. Maybe nobody should be allowed to become a Member of Parliament and certainly not a government minister without first going through suitable training. Continuing professional development would be required too, naturally, to ensure that MPs' certificates of professional competence are kept up to date, just like transport managers as well as truck, bus and coach drivers. And the starting point for all of this could be an apprenticeship scheme. Trouble is, it is hard to imagine many of the current crop of UK politicians having the ability to make it past year-one tests.

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@aztecpress.com, telephone 01428 605605. Please be sure to include your postal address and a daytime telephone number.



Legal drug hazards: ignore them at your peril

It's a scenario any employer could imagine. A trusted employee, let's call her Ellie, has been absent with a slipped disc but is now back at work. She's still in some discomfort, but she's taking codeine tablets prescribed by her doctor to control the pain, and seems to have returned to her usual reliable self.

Would you question Ellie's fitness to work? The disturbing fact is that many bosses would not. Yet by failing to implement a drugs and alcohol policy which includes testing for prescription and some over-the-counter drugs, they could be laying themselves open to prosecution, not to mention risking the safety of employees and customers.

If Ellie were a coach driver or machine operator, the dangers are clear. Codeine is an addictive opiate-based substance which can cause drowsiness, even when taken

at the recommended dosage. Under government rules which came into force in 2015, it is an offence to drive with legal drugs such as codeine in your body if those drugs impair your driving, whether they are prescription drugs or certain over-the-counter medicines. But it's not just Ellie who could be liable for prosecution if she was found to be unfit to drive. Her employer could be scrutinised for breaching health and safety legislation, leading to fines or even a jail sentence for failing to take all reasonable steps to ensure staff members are fit to work.

Drugs and alcohol testing – what's the law?

Drugs and alcohol testing is subject to legislation in certain transport sectors, such as aviation, rail and shipping. There is no legal obligation for most other employers to adopt a specific testing policy, but they do have a duty of care to maintain a safe working environment under the provisions of the Health and

Safety at Work Act. If methods for detecting misuse are not implemented and an accident occurs, it's clear that employers could be held liable. The risks are present in almost any working environment. There are obvious ramifications

however for companies employing commercial drivers or machine operators.

What drugs should employers test for?

It's no surprise that illegal substances such as cannabis,



cocaine, ecstasy and ketamine should be included in any testing regime. Alcohol should also be tested for. But the implication of the 2015 UK drug-driving law is that other “everyday” drugs often thought of as innocuous should also be considered.

Legal drugs cited in the 2015 law include:

- Antihistamines such as chlorphenamine, diphenhydramine, loratidine or cetirizine
- Diazepam
- Morphine or opiate and opioid-based drugs such as codeine, Tramadol or Fentanyl
- Termazepam

There is no law stating specifically that employers must test for these substances, whether or not staff are driving or operating machinery. But employers ignore the dangers at their peril. Along with prosecution and the immeasurable emotional impact of an accident, the damage to a company’s reputation if an incident occurs can be immense. And it’s worth noting that there doesn’t have to be an accident for legal drug-taking to impact negatively in the workplace. Drowsiness and other side-effects can lead to lower productivity, costly mistakes and absenteeism. A study in the US this year reveals that 71 per cent of employers have been affected in some way by employees’ misuse of legally prescribed medications, including opioids. Yet the survey of 501 decision-makers in HR (human resources) departments found that 41 per cent of those drug-testing employees are not testing for synthetic opioids.

Setting up a drug and alcohol testing policy

Many large corporations have policies in place, but smaller businesses may feel daunted by the sensitive task of setting up a screening procedure. Yet the process can be quite simple and not as expensive as many imagine. Technological advances have transformed the quality and accuracy of testing hardware. High-quality police-grade testing kits can now be bought at a reasonable price,

offering instant and reliable results. It’s important that personnel are trained in the correct use of the kits and accurate interpretation of results. This will ensure that any evidence provided is irrefutable and able to



Suzannah Robin

withstand challenge in any subsequent legal action.

You may be wondering how employees would react to news that they are to be tested, whether that’s on a random or regular basis. In our experience at AlcoDigital, the vast majority of staff actually welcome the introduction of alcohol and drug testing, recognising that it’s in the interest of all employees and the company’s wider customer base. Many will be surprised to learn of the possible side-effects of common drugs like anti-histamine or codeine, but again they understand the importance of securing a healthy and safe working environment for all.

Huge progress has been made over the past decade in tackling illegal drug use and alcohol abuse in the workplace. Now it’s time for employers to direct their attention towards the problems caused by legal drugs. Lesser known they may be, but these problems can have equally catastrophic effects.

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JLR boss’s challenge: let’s get physical

When I decided to take on the English Channel swim I found the main challenge was recognising how much training I had to do and wondering how I would fit it into my life. I’d never thought about it until I started training. Then I came to realise that “I don’t have time” is never an excuse.

You can always find the time and when you feel like you can’t go, that’s actually the best time to go. Make it part of your day. I sometimes trained at odd times and in odd places. When my team and I were away on business trips, for instance, we found ourselves in a swimming pool in the middle of Wigan at 7am.

I believe you need a goal. It makes you do something. There were times after work when I could have easily driven past David Lloyd and gone straight home, but I knew I had to do it if I was going to get myself to the level of fitness required to succeed in this challenge. It’s amazing how,

after exercise, the endorphins kick in. My simple rules were to always carry my kit with me and to keep track of what I had done. So I bought a Garmin swim-watch to track my activity religiously. That spurred me on too. I found myself continually checking the app to see how my distances were increasing month by month. My peak was ten kilometres in a week.

Our first big milestone was the qualification swim: two hours of continual swimming. So we focused on working towards that. It was a daunting task for all of us. After that, I committed to swimming at least 1,500 metres three times a week. Now, even though the challenge has been completed, I’m keeping up the training.

In terms of what the training has done for my physical fitness, I’ve never felt better. I’m as fit now as I’ve ever been. My level of stamina is also really good. But it’s not just my physical health that has improved. My ability to deal with things is also better.

I don’t worry about things in the same way. Things don’t get



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to me as much. Swimming has definitely helped with my personal wellbeing and confidence. I've really noticed that I'm much better equipped mentally and I'm much more effective in all aspects of my life, including work, because of swimming. It's become a big part of my life now. I don't want to stop.

When I first became aware about the potential social benefits of the challenge, it was actually the result of something negative. When we decided to swim the Channel, it became a big topic of conversation for those in the team. Then someone said to me: "you've created an exclusive club, Jeremy, others are feeling left out." This was obviously not what I wanted to happen, so I encouraged and challenged the wider team to get involved. This was how the JLR Run and JLR Bike challenges were born.

This created a unified sense of purpose across JLR UK. We were all working together behind a fantastic cause with a clear goal, not only to raise



Jeremy Hicks

funds, but also to raise awareness about Ben. The social element of this challenge has been absolutely fantastic. Some JLR colleagues still go running and cycling together regularly. Likewise, if there's ever a chance for the swim team to swim together, we do.

I would urge anyone to take

on a challenge like this. The personal benefits have stretched far beyond physical fitness for my colleagues and me. We all understand that physical wellbeing is important, but mental health is still slightly taboo and an unspoken topic. By being part of this challenge, I've seen how different aspects of health and wellbeing fit together (physical, mental and social) and how important they are, not just individually, but collectively as well. They are inextricably linked.

Future challenges

The cyclists have put together a proposal for next year. They want to cycle to every JLR location in one day. That's 150 miles. I've also been thinking about the next swim challenge and we are definitely going to do something else next year. There's talk of swimming Lake Windermere and potentially the Thames Marathon. I've also just bought a bike. So that's another challenge on my list. There's definitely still a buzz across the business as other

colleagues have been asking me what we can do next year.

The purpose of this challenge was not only to raise funds but also awareness about how Ben can help individuals with all aspects of their health and wellbeing. I believe we've done that. The health benefits are definitely good for business too. What's not to like?

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Don't undervalue employee welfare

European Union nationals make up seven per cent of the total UK workforce but account for 18 per cent of people working in the warehousing and logistics sectors. That's according to a recent report by the Recruitment and Employment Confederation (REC).

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Labour and skills shortages have long been a problem for the UK logistics industry but there is no doubt that the issues have been exacerbated by Brexit and the subsequent fall in the value of the pound. This is prompting something of an exodus among the Eastern Europeans on which our sector has relied for some years. And recruiters are warning that it will be impossible to find enough Brits to fill these roles, with UK nationals seemingly unwilling and/or unable to fill the void that will be left.

So, in the post-Brexit employment landscape, it's more important than ever for companies in the logistics space to strive to ensure that their workers are happy, loyal and engaged.

Cliché it may be, but a company's staff are unquestionably its most important asset. This is particularly true in a labour intensive order fulfilment business such as DKF.

We take staff welfare very seriously. As a result, we have



Mark Elward

a happy and productive workforce that is eager to contribute towards helping our company achieve its goals.

At the start of each quarter, all workers attend a resource planning meeting at which our targets for the coming period are discussed. Once the business mapping has been agreed and understood we then go on to talk about the social activities planned as

well as performance-related perks and bonuses that staff will receive for their efforts.

The social activities we have introduced include sailing trips, family barbecues, fishing competitions and five-a-side football tournaments. All have helped create a real bond among workers at all levels of our business.

By getting people at all levels of the business involved, our aim is to help employees feel valued and happy. When people feel that they are an essential part of the team, they are more productive and willing to go the extra mile for their customers and co-workers. Studies show that engaged employees miss less work and are more supportive of changes and willing to make them happen.

Our statistics certainly support this view. Since we established our staff welfare programme absences are down by 22 per cent and productivity up by 14 per cent.

Customer-focused companies in the logistics sector often overlook the needs and wellbeing of their staff. They are wrong to do so. By respecting, rewarding and listening to your staff, you'll be giving them the motivational push they need to stay loyal and committed to your company's objectives. Conversely, when people feel unmotivated or undervalued, the company suffers.

There is currently a lot of chatter about the increased role that greater warehouse automation might play in filling the gaps left by a dwindling workforce. But logistics will remain a people business for the foreseeable future. Any 3PL (third party logistics provider) forgets that at its peril.

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Unintended air-quality consequences of new London ULEZ plans

Plans to bring forward the introduction date of London's

ultra low emission zone (ULEZ) by 17 months to April 2019 could lead to an increase in the number of vans and other light commercial vehicles (up to 3.5 tonnes gvw) operating in the capital. Businesses may end up shifting payload away



Peter Golding

from non-compliant trucks into compliant lcv simply because of the limited number of compliant heavier vehicles at their disposal.

The fact is that trucks are operated on much longer replacement cycles than vans, so fleet operators will probably have much larger numbers of compliant vans than trucks available in 2019. The £100 daily charge for using non-compliant trucks is a major disincentive so the obvious operational solution that fleets will tend to adopt is to transfer loads from trucks to vans where possible, leading to more vehicles in the ULEZ.

Whether this is a desirable outcome for air quality is obviously at least open to question. The earlier deadline certainly could have unintended consequences.

Short-term changes of this kind in national and local government policy make fleet planning very difficult. The fact is that many businesses will continue to need to operate in the ULEZ.

Fundamental changes of this kind at short notice will have a definite impact on them.

Fleets have been planning

for the original ULEZ date for years, timing vehicle replacement accordingly. Changing the date at short notice carries a definite cost, either in terms of replacing vehicles early or operational compromises.

Sorting out air-quality problems in London and elsewhere is undoubtedly crucial. But surely the impact that changing the deadline could have on businesses in terms of jobs and more needs to be taken into account.

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Government inaction on truck parking area means M20 stack will pile higher and higher

Failure by Highways England and the Department for Transport to make a final decision on the planned M20 lorry parking area means that Kent residents could be facing further disruption from M20 lorry stacking for years to come.

Knights Solicitors is acting for G Forge Ltd, whose property abuts the southern part of the planned parking site. We are frustrated and annoyed at promises made and broken.

We had an agreement with Highways England on 31 October 2016, with a handshake on the terms and compensation figures. Despite continued contact, meetings, correspondence and phone calls we are no further forward. Now it seems my client is being blamed for the delay. Yet the blame clearly lies with Highways England and the Department of Transport. They are unable to make a decision, it seems.

Everyone agrees on one thing: that there is an urgent need for a lorry parking area to be made available whenever there is disruption at the ports (Dover and Calais) or at the Channel Tunnel. Dover is the only

major port not to have a contingency plan for such a situation, hence the well-known and problematic stacking that occurs on the M20.

The area identified for the lorry park runs up to Westenhanger Castle, a complex of three Grade 1



Matthew Knight

listed buildings and a scheduled ancient monument belonging to G Forge Ltd.

The uncertainty of what is happening is causing this company, my client, a major headache. We had an agreement that met the requirements of everyone involved, but as time has passed it has become increasingly apparent that, even though we were dealing with the most senior Highways England officials, they had no authority to make decisions. Now, rather than own up, the Department for Transport is trying to blame us for holding things up as we have requested a judicial review, due to be heard on 6 and 7 December 2017.

The judicial review can easily be avoided. All interested parties have agreed to withdraw before the hearing dates if their conditions are met, as we were promised months ago.

A debate in Westminster Hall last month, on Wednesday 25 October, saw Folkestone and Hythe MP

Damian Collins press roads minister John Hayes repeatedly for assurances about the M20 lorry area only to be met with claims about the project being subject to a judicial review and therefore not able to be discussed. This is typical of the excuses to which we have been treated since the judicial review was settled in principle on 31 October 2016. The truth seems to be that Highways England and the Department for Transport do not really want to build the M20 lorry area. My client's judicial review (about environmental impacts which were addressed on or after 31 October 2016) is being cynically used as a convenient excuse for inaction.

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Why TUPE needs rethinking

TUPE Regulations, the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006, were introduced to protect employees' rights when the organisation for which they work, or the service they provide for that organisation, is transferred to a new employer.

But, as every third party logistics (3PL) operator that has won or lost a contract will testify, though the TUPE rules are founded on sound principles they can create problems for employers and employees alike.

Broadly speaking, under TUPE if a 3PL wins a new contract, it may inherit workers from the previous logistics company if those workers are deemed to have been part of a group organised to serve that particular contract. This can mean becoming responsible for the accrued service and employment rights of a group of workers.

TUPE also impacts on a company that loses a contract. It is sometimes difficult to

demonstrate that a group of workers is dedicated to one particular contract so, if that contract is lost, the workers will not necessarily transfer across to the contractor and redundancy payments may be due if they have to be laid off. Even if they are eligible for TUPE, there is a great deal of uncertainty in the interim period which can lead to a lack of engagement at work. This often happens at multi-user warehouse facilities where workers are servicing a number of clients.

At Walker Logistics we have bumped up against the TUPE regulations on numerous occasions. From my experience, it is quite obvious that the regulations as they stand are unsuited to the needs of small and medium-sized employers and are unhelpful to employees too.

For example, Walker Logistics recently won a fulfilment contract from another 3PL that had been running the account from a

them for a number of reasons. Yet the drawn-out TUPE process had to be completed. After two months of dialogue all four objected to the transfer on the grounds of distance and opted for redundancy. Of course we would happily have finalised this early on in the dialogue but were prevented from doing so by the TUPE rules.

In our industry the TUPE regulations work well if you are one of the bigger logistics companies and have picked up a new contract that involves remaining at the same site. Thanks to TUPE, workers can just switch hi-viz jackets and carry on doing what they have always been doing. But for smaller companies there are many aspects of the regulations that simply do not work in the best interests of either the outgoing or incoming employer or, indeed of the employees.

The TUPE regulations are supposed to be a legislative balancing tool that protects employees against unscrupulous employers, providing an important safeguard for workers. But in practice there are aspects of the rules that could be said to inhibit and restrict business and competition. The Times newspaper has gone so far as to describe TUPE as "one of the chief obstacles to business in Britain" and a "significant deterrent to competition."

I stress that, as an employer with a proud record of excellent employee relations and a long-held commitment to the wellbeing of its workforce, Walker Logistics has no issue with the fundamental concept behind the TUPE rules. But we feel that the legislation in its current form throws up so much ambiguity that it is in urgent need of a root-and-branch overhaul that takes the fundamental differences and requirements of large and small employers and their staff into account.

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William Walker

site some 80 miles away from our facility. Under the terms of TUPE we had to offer the four members of the outgoing contractor's staff who had been employed on the account the chance to continue their roles with us. All four were modestly paid warehouse workers and it was fairly clear from the outset that the prospect of a 160 mile daily commute to our site would not be attractive to

Truck operators warned of need for “urgent improvement” to brake testing and inspection

Large numbers of truck operators are failing to inspect and maintain vehicle braking systems adequately, with the result that lives are being put at risk. This is the startling gist of conclusions reached this month by enforcement authorities both in the UK and North America.

The results of the latest annual “fleet compliance checks” survey by the British government’s Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) were published this month. In a sample of around 6,000 vehicles stopped at random for this survey (not targeted in any way, unlike most DVSA roadside checks), eleven per cent of British-registered and 12.5 per cent of foreign-registered trucks were found to have defects serious enough to warrant delayed or immediate prohibitions. Brakes account for 28 per cent of the mechanical defects found in British-registered trucks; 44 per cent of those in British-registered trailers; 33 per cent in foreign trucks; and 42 per cent in foreign trailers. The number of immediate-prohibition defects found in braking and steering systems has been increasing for six years, says DVSA.

The latest survey findings have prompted the agency’s boss to urge operators, transport managers and truck drivers to check brakes far more carefully and regularly. “Brakes that don’t work, particularly in something with the weight and power of a lorry, can devastate families and their communities,” says DVSA chief executive Gareth Llewellyn. “So it’s disappointing that a minority of operators are still not performing effective checks. If we catch you with brakes that

don’t work we will take your vehicles off the road to ensure the safety of the travelling public.”

An even more damning and unequivocal indictment of the general standard at present of brake maintenance and inspection by UK truck operators comes this month from the eight traffic commissioners, the licensing authorities responsible for truck, bus and coach operating licences.

“Despite the clear warnings for industry, traffic commissioners are still receiving reports about a lack of effective and proactive brake performance testing regimes,” says a statement issued this month jointly by Sarah Bell (London and south-east area) and Kevin Rooney (west of England), the two lead traffic commissioners on enforcement matters. “This is not limited to a specific type of licence, size or operator or a particular sector. It is across the board. That is why traffic commissioners are highlighting the need for a change of attitude within the industry towards brake testing. There should be no compromise in any operator’s approach, no flexibility around standards.”

The commissioners highlight a string of recent public inquiries at which serious brake maintenance failings by operators were apparent.

One operator based in Barking, east London, had brake figures missing from all its PMI (preventive maintenance inspection) sheets. Another London operator failed to comply with a previous public inquiry undertaking to have roller brake tests carried out every six weeks. A Kent firm had failed to put its vehicle

through a proper brake test for more than ten years. And a London operator had written “not applicable” in the brake-test section of

Roller brake testing: not used often enough.

every one of its preventive maintenance inspection sheets.

“Operators should carry out an urgent review of their brake testing regimes now,” say Rooney and Bell. “This should include an analysis of safety inspection records over the past 15 months, looking at whether the type of test and the information recorded is sufficient. Operators must make sure that their brake tests are planned in line with DVSA guidance and satisfy themselves that the vehicles *and trailers* running under their licence are roadworthy. We want licence-holders to be sure that their brake-testing regimes are effective.”

Traffic commissioners and the DVSA have been made especially sensitive to truck brake maintenance by an horrific, fatal Bath tipper crash of nearly two years ago and the publicity that followed.

In January this year the owner of the firm operating the Scania tipper and the technician responsible for its maintenance were sentenced to jail terms after having been found guilty of manslaughter.

On 9 February 2015 a Scania 8x4 tipper operated by Grittenham Haulage went out of control on a Bath hill, killing four people: Mitzi Steady, aged 4; Robert Parker, 59; Philip Allen, 52; and Stephen Vaughan, 34. Several other bystanders were seriously injured.

In December 2016, following a four-week trial at Bristol Crown Court, Grittenham Haulage owner Matthew Gordon and Peter Wood, the independent technician who had been engaged to inspect, repair and maintain the firm’s trucks, were both found guilty on four counts of manslaughter (by gross negligence). Phillip Potter, the 20-year-old driver of



Bath tipper crash horror of February 2015: caused by brake failure.

the tipper at the time of the fatal crash, was cleared of all charges, including causing death by dangerous driving and causing death by careless driving. Potter had testified that the crash had been caused by the truck’s brake failure. The trial made clear that the cause of this brake failure was wholly inadequate maintenance, repair and inspection.

Figures published in the US this month by the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance (CVSA), a long-established not-for-profit body encompassing various safety enforcement authorities and industry representatives, make it clear that the problem of inadequate truck and trailer brake maintenance is not confined to the UK. On one day in September when more than 7,500 trucks and nearly 4,000 trailers were checked at the roadside in 31 US states and nine Canadian provinces, around 14 per cent were taken off the road with brake-related defects.

“Brake-related violations are the largest percentage of all out-of-service violations cited during roadside inspections,” says CVSA president Christopher Turner of Kansas Highway Patrol. “Our goal is to reduce the number of crashes caused by faulty braking systems, by conducting roadside inspections, educating drivers, mechanics, owner-operators and others on the importance of proper brake inspection and maintenance.” □



Picture this: EU road transport painted by numbers



Graphic evidence of how misguided are many forecasts suggesting that huge numbers of all-electric, self-driving cars, vans and trucks are just around the corner is provided by the latest annual “vehicles in use” report from

ACEA (*Association des Constructeurs Européens d'Automobiles*), a big Brussels-based European association of vehicle manufacturers.

The report reveals, for instance, that the average age of trucks in service across the

entire European Union (EU) is 11.7 years. Greece has the oldest trucks, averaging 18.7 years. Nearly all trucks in the EU (95.5 per cent) run on diesel at present. The total number of trucks in operation in EU countries is just over six

million, with Poland having the largest fleet, followed closely by Italy.

The country with the largest number of vans in operation is France, followed by Spain and UK. Around 88 per cent of all light commercial vehicles in service in the EU are diesel-powered. Greece is an exception to this rule, with more than 42 per cent of LCV petrol-powered, 36 per cent diesel, and 22 per cent “other” (not electric, hybrid or gas).

As for cars, on average across the EU there are 494 cars per 1,000 people. The highest number of cars per inhabitant is in Luxembourg, the lowest in Romania. There are 74 commercial vehicles per 1,000 EU inhabitants. Portugal has the highest number per inhabitant. In Hungary nearly half of all households do not have a car, whereas in France nearly 30 per cent of households have two cars.

More information at www.acea.be. □

Numbers up for Allison and Schmitz

Notable production milestones are being celebrated this month by two of the biggest names in commercial vehicle engineering: Allison Transmission and Schmitz Cargobull.

At Allison, a top-selling global manufacturer of fully-automatic truck and bus gearboxes, the 500,000 mark has just been passed for its 4000-series gearbox, used in a wide range of commercial vehicles including refuse-collection trucks, multi-wheeled tippers, fire and emergency trucks, coaches and buses.

Production of the 4000-series began at Allison Transmission's base in Indiana, US, back in 1993 when it was a division of the giant General Motors (GM) group. Production was extended to Szentgotthárd, Hungary in 2005 (*Commercial Vehicle Engineer* September 2016). Allison Transmission was sold by ailing GM to private equity firms in 2007 and was floated as an independent public company on the New York Stock Exchange in March 2012.

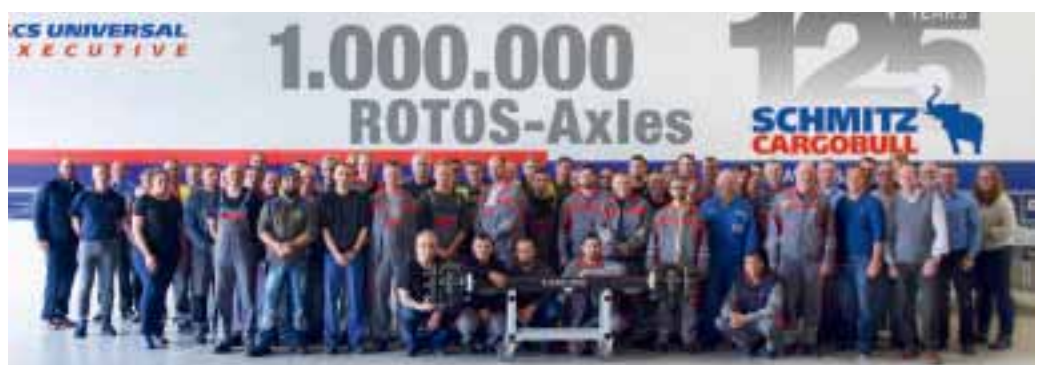


The firm is to have a new chief executive from 1 June next year. He is David Graziosi, being promoted from chief financial officer to take over from Lawrence Dewey following his retirement.

At Schmitz Cargobull's main trailer-making plant in Altenberge, Germany, the cause for celebration this month **No productivity problems here: Allison's plant in Hungary (left) and Schmitz's in Germany (below)**



was production of Rotos axle number one million. Schmitz, Europe's biggest trailer-maker, started producing its own axles as an alternative to those from the likes of independent suppliers such as SAF and BPW back in 2004. Now it is claimed that around 80 per cent of the 58,000 trailers built annually by Schmitz are fitted with the company's own Rotos axles. □



Bright future promised for Daf's new Belgian paintshop

The first Daf trucks with cabs finished at an ultra-modern new €100 million (£73 million) paintshop in Belgium are now in production, following the

emissions are said to have been cut in half.

"This important investment continues a strong tradition of setting the industry standard in product quality, customer

service and environmental leadership," said Mark Pigott, executive chairman of Paccar (Daf's US-based parent group) in Westerlo this month. "Paccar and Daf have invested over



official opening this month.

The paintshop, at the long-established Daf cab and axle plant at Westerlo, is claimed to be among the most advanced of its kind anywhere. It was designed and built by Eisenmann and Dürr, a big multinational surface-finishing specialist group based in Germany, and measures 144 metres in length, 58 metres wide and 26 metres tall (over three floors). Maximum throughput is 300 cabs per day, a 50 per cent increase over the paintshop it replaces.

The Westerlo cab plant was opened in 1966. Axle production was added in the 1970s. The plant now has around 2,150 employees producing 500 axles per day as well as cabs.

One of several ground-breaking innovations claimed for the new Westerlo paintshop is a system for capturing overspray and extracting energy from it. Paintshop

€600 million (£537 million) in our cab and axle plant in the past 15 years. We look forward to a very bright future in Belgium."

● The latest Daf XF and CF truck ranges have won the title "International Truck of the Year 2018" in a long-established annual awards scheme judged by road transport journalists from 23 European countries. Daf Trucks president Preston Feight was presented with the award at this month's Solutrans show in Lyon, France.

"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, driveability, fuel economy, environmental footprint and total cost of ownership," says Italy's Gianerico Griffini, chairman of the award's judging panel. "With the introduction of the new CF and XF series, Daf has delivered a medium- and heavy-duty trucks range that sets a new standard in terms of driveline efficiency and overall performance." □

Awards for apprentices despite "car crash" levy

This April's introduction by the UK government of an "apprenticeship levy", a new tax on firms with annual wages bills of £3 million or more, was described last year by Institute of the Motor Industry (IMI) boss Steve Nash as "a car crash." It has turned out to be even worse than he and others had feared. The government's stated aim was to greatly increase apprentice numbers. In fact the number of people starting apprenticeships has plunged by nearly 60 per cent in the past year. Companies with between about 50 and 200 employees now have to pay the government ten per cent of the cost of apprentice training. Previously they paid nothing. Department for Education figures show that in the final three months of the 2017 academic year, 48,000 people started apprenticeships in the UK. This compares with 117,000 in the same period last year. The figures are described as "shocking" by EEF (formerly the Engineering Employers Federation).

The levy and the government's incompetence in introducing it has not stopped truck-makers from proceeding with their annual apprentice award schemes, however. The Daf Trucks scheme, run by Skillnet and City of Bristol College, is one of the UK's biggest. This year's top award-winner for first-year Daf apprentices is Daniel Rayfield from Harris Daf of Basildon, Essex. The top second-year apprentice is David Dunlop from TBF Thompson of Mallusk, Northern Ireland. Liam Collins from Channel Commercials of Strood, Medway is Daf's top third-year apprentice.

Liam Collins (left) of Channel Commercials receives his award from Daf Trucks Ltd managing director Robin Easton.



Prepare for more specialised trucks, but don't write off diesel prematurely

Reports of the death of the diesel engine have been greatly exaggerated. But the days of this power unit being the "one size fits all" solution for nearly all commercial vehicles are over, or soon will be. So engineers and fleet managers need to plan accordingly, not least in vehicle replacement budgets. This is the gist of the message delivered to hundreds of vehicle operators gathered in Glasgow this month for the latest in the long-established annual Scottish Rewards awards presentation organised by *Transport News*, a leading Scotland-based monthly magazine with which *Commercial Vehicle Engineer* works closely (pages 17 - 19).

The message comes from Martin Flach, a hugely experienced commercial vehicle engineer who is now Iveco UK's alternative fuels director.



As his job title suggests, Flach is a keen advocate of alternatives to diesel. But crucially he recognises that in some operations diesel will continue to be the best choice for many years to come. He wants more done to explain the sound reasons for this to politicians and the public they represent.

"Let's be honest, diesel hasn't had a great press recently," he conceded. "Dieselgate (the scandal over Volkswagen cheating diesel car emissions tests in the US and Europe) is behind much of that, though in reality the dice were being rolled against diesel long before that came along."

Flach divides the planned introduction of clean-air zones by UK local authorities into two phases. The first of these, due to come into force in 2019, includes not only London but also Leeds, Birmingham, Nottingham and Derby. "Phase two, in 2020, adds Sheffield, Middlesbrough, Bath, Bristol,

Iveco UK's alternative fuels director Martin Flach: "The heavier you get, the more gas is going to be the answer."



Coventry and several others," said Flach. "London, as ever, remains a law unto itself. The T-charge (toxicity) scheme, introducing a charge for operators of pre Euro-4 vehicles went live last month. London's ultra-low emission zone (ULEZ) is already planned." Controversially, its planned introduction date has been brought forward suddenly by Transport for London (TfL) to early April 2019, fully 17 months earlier than planned originally.

Trucks and vans failing to meet the ULEZ requirements face hefty charges, £20 per day for a van and £100 per

past 20 years. "So diesel isn't dead," emphasised Flach. "It will remain in use for long-distance transport for years to come."

But it was a different story entirely for other types of operation. "In the urban environment, where distances are smaller and your vehicles will return to base of an evening, electricity will probably be the main choice," said Flach. "The heavier you get, the more gas is going to be the answer. Compressed natural gas or liquefied natural gas (cng or lng) is a clean fuel that can deliver the real-world



day for entering the zone. But there is no need to panic and start a headlong rush away from all diesel engines in the face of these charges, Flach counsels. Truck diesel engines meeting Euro VI exhaust emission limits are clean enough to be exempt from the charge, he points out. And the proportion of trucks in service at present in the UK with Euro VI diesel engines is already as high as 30 per cent, he reckons. This figure is expected to rise to 60 per cent by 2020. Authorities behind all the UK's new clean-air zones have accepted that Euro VI diesel engines are "exceptionally clean", said Flach, pointing to the dramatic cuts in emissions of particulates and oxides of nitrogen (NOx) from truck and bus diesel engines over the

practicality and economy so vital for longer distances. Gas delivers much lower noise and exhaust emissions too, even less than Euro VI diesels, and can show significant savings in total operating costs, up to nine per cent with the Iveco Stralis NP."

Making informed decisions on truck specifications, including power sources, would be even more crucial in future than it is at present, stressed Flach, pointing to the Stralis NP tractive unit and freshly unveiled X-Way Iveco tipper on show at the Scottish Rewards venue. "The revolution has started," he said. "The way we power our vehicles is changing today and will continue to change over the next few years. We are ready to help you find the best way forward." □

Lewisham plugs electric waste body benefits

An excellent example of how operating engineers and fleet managers are becoming ever more imaginative in lessening the environmental impact of commercial vehicles, without necessarily rushing headlong away from diesel, can be found in the latest waste-collection truck to join the fleet operated by Lewisham Council in south-east London. Like 40 others in the Lewisham fleet, this one is based on a Mercedes-Benz Econic chassis-cab. And similarly its main power unit is a six-cylinder diesel engine, in this case a Euro 6, 7.7-litre six cylinder OM946 with a maximum power rating of 220kW (299hp). But this truck also has an electric motor, to power its Geesinknorba bodywork. The two-axle truck's specific job, six days a week, is collecting and compacting waste from trader stalls at Lewisham market.

Conventional refuse collection trucks rely on diesel engines to power the body through bin-lifting crushing and compaction cycles. The plug-in electric Geesinknorba bodywork tackles these tasks more quietly and with zero emissions harming local air quality.

Noel Everest is Lewisham Council's group manager for

passenger and fleet services. "Our local markets are thriving, but because they're in busy, high-street locations they pose difficulties in terms of waste collection and removal services," he explains. "We ruled out trucks with engine-driven bodies because they have to tick over all day to power the compactor, with resulting increases in local emissions. So we've been leaving a compactor skip on site at Lewisham market, but that's not ideal because of the challenges arising from the



need to drop and pick up the equipment in such a congested area."

The plug-in electric Geesinknorba-bodied Econic is summed up by Everest as "an ideal solution." It is a mobile compactor skip, in effect. "The



Noel Everest: "Busy, high-street locations pose specific waste-collection difficulties."

body runs purely on electric power, so is very quiet," he explains. "When it's full, usually by lunchtime, the driver can leave the market with relative ease to tip. The Econic then returns and remains on site, typically until 7.30pm, at which point it comes back to the depot for the body to be recharged overnight."

The battery pack adds about 1,200 to the truck's kerb weight, but this is not seen as problem for market waste collection because the truck never gets close to its maximum gross weight limit.

"Safety and environmental considerations are far more important," says Everest. "In these respects our Econics with plug-in bodies work superbly." The council has been operating a 6x2 Econic with plug-in electric body at nearby Deptford market since 2011.

The trucks are contract hired by the council from the NRG group, a Lancashire-based company set up and now headed by former Biffa Waste Services fleet director Sid Sadique. This month NRG unveiled a new Birmingham-based division, called Electra Commercial Vehicles, specialising in trucks with all-electric drivelines and based on Econic chassis-cabs. □

Hovis toasts lightweight Tiger Trailers bodywork

Payload is the top priority for the latest 7.5 tonnes-gvw trucks in the fleet run by Hovis, one of the UK's biggest bread suppliers. The latest 27 Fuso Canter 7.5-tonners in the Hovis fleet have box bodies built by Tiger Trailers (*below*), the Cheshire-based company set up by former Cartwright Group joint managing directors Steven and John Cartwright. Tiger Trailers also won the bodywork order for the latest 30 Daf LF 12-tonners ordered

by Hovis (*right*). All 57 of this batch of trucks are part of a contract hire deal between Hovis and Airdrie-based TOM Vehicle Rental group.

Hovis runs eight UK bakeries, four flour mills and three distribution centres. The new fleet of rigid trucks are used for store deliveries six days a week.



"Getting maximum payload from these vehicles was vitally important to us," says the baker's head of logistics operations support, Tony Stuart. "Tiger has worked hard to find ways of giving us extra

capacity. This enables us to carry more loaves per vehicle and make fewer journeys, bringing both operational and environmental benefits."

Axtec on-board weighing equipment is used to ensure

maximum vehicle and axle weight limits are not exceeded. □



Stepping on the gas



Volvo is the first truck-maker to adopt a clever injection system which allows Euro 6 diesel engines to become even more environmentally friendly, by running on natural gas, without losing any traditional diesel engine strengths. Tim Blakemore went to Barcelona to find out more.

This is much more than a product launch for us. This is a step towards sustainable transport solutions. So declared Lars Mårtensson, Volvo Trucks director of environment and innovation, at the official unveiling this month at a test track near Barcelona, Spain of a range of FM and FH regional and long-haul trucks fuelled by liquefied natural gas (LNG). They go into production at the main European Volvo truck assembly plant in Gothenburg, Sweden in January, to be sold, initially at least, only in western Europe.

Has Mårtensson uncharacteristically allowed marketing hyperbole to get the better of more cool-headed engineering assessment of the latest additions to the FM and FH truck ranges? Maybe not, even though there is surely nothing revolutionary about trucks running on gas instead of diesel, and Volvo itself is no stranger to this alternative fuel. Take its FE middleweight range (up to 18 tonnes gvw) for instance. This has been available with the option of a 320hp, 8.9-litre gas engine for more than three years. And some rival truck-makers could argue that they are ahead of Volvo in the introduction of more powerful gas engines.

Iveco boss Pierre Lahutte claims to have started a “natural gas long-haul revolution” with the launch of the 400hp Stralis NP at last year’s Hannover commercial vehicles show. Last month a 460hp version of the 12.9-litre Cursor 13 gas engine was added to the Iveco Stralis line-up, and no time has been wasted in winning some eye-catching orders. At the Solutrans show in Lyon, France this month Iveco announced that one of France’s biggest road haulage firms, Jacky Perrenot, is buying 200 Stralis NP tractors at 460hp to join the 250 at 400hp it has been running since last year. There are now reckoned to be around 23,000 gas-fuelled Iveco vehicles (trucks, buses and vans) in operation globally.

What makes the new FM and FH gas-powered Volvo trucks any different from them and indeed all others to date? In essence, it is the clever gas/diesel injection system at the heart of the G13C version of Volvo’s familiar 12.8-litre, in-line six-cylinder D13 engine. All other purely-gas truck engines (as distinct from dual-fuel engines) to date, including those

Handy guidance on molecular structure: Lars Mårtensson shows how diesel (right hand) compares with methane.

from Iveco and Volvo’s own 8.9-litre in the FE, depend on spark plugs to ignite gas in the combustion chambers. In other words, unlike compression-ignition diesel engines, they are categorised as spark-ignition. This means they inevitably have lower compression ratios and thus are unable to match diesel engine torque and overall fuel efficiency.

The Volvo G13C’s power and torque characteristics are virtually the same as those of similarly rated D13 engines running on diesel only. And the central point of inviting journalists and operators to the Barcelona test track this month was to demonstrate convincingly how the LNG range performs no differently from similar diesel trucks at the same weight.

The Volvo G13C’s injection system, designated HPDI (high pressure direct injection), was designed by Westport Innovations, a long-established Canadian company specialising in natural gas engines. A 50/50 joint venture between Westport and diesel engine manufacturer Cummins was set up in 2001 to develop and produce Cummins gas engines. But Volvo is believed to be the first diesel engine manufacturer anywhere to fully adopt the latest Westport HPDI injector (HPDI 2.0). It was developed jointly with and is manufactured by Delphi Automotive. The injector has two concentric needles to allow two separate fuels to be injected. A small amount of diesel is injected first to initiate combustion. One Volvo engineer describes this graphically as akin to a liquid spark plug. But virtually all the engine’s power comes from burning gas.



Some engineers may wonder therefore whether this engine really ought to be described as dual-fuel rather than gas. Volvo engineers are having none of that, insisting that it is categorised not only by them but also by independent type approval authorities as a gas engine, not least because the amount of diesel it uses is so small, no more than five per cent. A wide range of lng tank sizes, said to give refuelling ranges up to 1,000km, will be on offer for the new FM and FH 420 and 460hp gas trucks when they go on sale next year. But the only diesel tank size available to go with them will be 170 litres. Nevertheless, Volvo points out that the trucks do have a useful sort of limp-home ability, just in case they run out of lng. Running on diesel only, maximum engine power output would be limited to 50hp.

The timing of this unveiling of FM and FH regional and long-haul trucks fuelled by gas is significant. It comes as more and more fleet operators and, crucially, many big transport and logistics buyers across Europe are focusing more intensely than ever on how to cut emissions of carbon dioxide (CO₂) and other greenhouse gases responsible for climate change. Back in May the European Commission finalised the long-awaited European Union regulation on CO₂ emissions from heavy trucks and buses. This will mean that from early 2019 every heavy truck model sold in Europe will have to come with a declaration on its CO₂ emissions (fuel economy, in other words). The figures will be calculated by the VECTO (Vehicle Energy Consumption Calculation Tool) software which has been under development for decades (*Commercial Vehicle Engineer* March 2015). Volvo evidently hopes to steal a march on rivals with LNG trucks which seem likely to have eye-catching VECTO figures but which also offer nearly all the familiar practical benefits of diesel-only trucks.

"Many of our customers and their customers already work hard to reduce their environmental footprint," says Mårtensson. "This regulation will drive the development of lower emissions, where we see a clear possibility for increasing lng market shares as a vital part of the solution. Our vision is that trucks from Volvo will eventually have zero emissions, although the way of achieving that is not by one single solution but rather through several solutions in parallel."

Natural gas (methane) is, like diesel, a



A rose by any other name: Carl Johan Almqvist makes it clear why protective gloves are essential when handling anything this cold, maybe minus 160 degrees C.



Largely unchanged diesel engine running on gas: thanks to this clever injector from Westport and Delphi.

fossil fuel, he acknowledges. But its CO₂ emissions can be 20 per cent lower than diesel's, he argues. If the gas is biomethane then the well-to-wheel cut in CO₂ emissions is 100 per cent.

But methane is itself a potent greenhouse gas. Growing popularity of dual-fuel (diesel and gas) truck engines in the UK was killed off about a year ago by the discovery of an alarming amount of "methane slip" (where the gas leaked to atmosphere during switching of the engine from diesel to gas and vice versa). Mårtensson and his colleagues are confident that they have done enough to ensure that methane slip will not occur on their lng trucks or their fuelling systems. Extensive training of dealer network technicians is underway, as is delivery of the specialist equipment needed for workshops.

The supply of biogas is limited at present, he concedes, but



describes long-term availability of natural gas as “excellent in a global perspective.”

Given the recent increasing popularity of gas as a truck fuel in the US, it seems surprising that Volvo is deliberately confining the introduction of its latest long-haul LNG ranges to Western Europe. The explanation appears to lie in the need for a reliable gas refuelling infrastructure. The European Commission and many EU member states now are firmly committed to expanding this refuelling network across western Europe. And the substantially lower price of lng compared with diesel in most European countries at present is another important plus point.

“All told, this makes liquefied gas the best widely available climate alternative on the market for regional and long-haul transport,” says Mårtensson. “What is needed now is gas-powered trucks that can compete with diesel in terms of performance and fuel consumption, and continued expansion of lng infrastructure. In both cases major progress has been achieved. We regard lng as a long-term first choice alternative to diesel, both for regional and long-haul truck operations where fuel efficiency, payload and productivity are crucial. With a higher proportion of biogas, climate impact can be reduced far more. For transport operations in urban environments, where range is not as critical, electrified vehicles will play a greater role in the future. Our vision is that trucks from Volvo will eventually have zero emissions, although the way of achieving that is not by one single solution but through several solutions in parallel. Liquefied natural gas is one of them.”

Among the nitty-gritty questions being asked by fleet managers and engineers in Barcelona this month to take a close look at the LNG trucks, weight, capital cost, safety and total operating costs are sure to be among the highest priorities. Volvo engineers do not shy away from these topics (well most of them, at least). Capital cost is one subject on which it is hard to get clear-cut answers. It is clear, however, that the LNG FM and FH trucks will carry substantially heftier price tags than conventional diesel equivalents. That is hardly surprising, given the double-skinned, stainless steel, lng tanks and associated pumping and metering equipment which certainly does not come cheap. When the trucks go on sale in the UK early in 2018 they are expected to carry a price premium of at least 30 per cent over comparable diesel models. Volvo engineers are confident, however, that it will not be too difficult to show operators how this additional capital cost can easily be more than amortised over the truck’s lifetime. “With a truck covering 120,000km a year, an operator choosing natural gas instead of diesel can cut CO₂ emissions by 18 to 20 tonnes a year,” says Mats Franzén, Volvo



Trucks engines product manager. “Our new trucks running on liquefied natural gas or biogas produce a far smaller climate footprint than diesel trucks do. In addition, they are much more fuel-efficient than the gas-powered trucks available on the market today. This makes gas more viable as a replacement for diesel even for heavy long-haul operations.”

As for kerb weight and thus payload, there is inevitably a penalty from those big, double-skinned lng tanks. About 100kg on a typical 6x2 tractor, it is reckoned.

Some fleet managers and their drivers may have safety worries about gas tanks. Carl Johan Almqvist, vastly experienced safety director at Volvo Trucks, is more than happy to tackle such concerns head-on. He points to the vast array of tests through which the tanks are put.

“The new LNG trucks are as safe as any Volvo,” he says. “Liquefied natural gas is one of the safest fuels. It is harmless, colourless and odourless but a very cold liquid. So you must wear protective clothing (stout gloves and eye protection) when refuelling.”

The lng is stored on the truck at about minus 130 degrees Celsius in a cryogenic, vacuum-insulated stainless steel tank at a pressure of about 10 bar. An hydraulic pump inside the tank increases its pressure, vaporises the liquid and thus converts it to high-pressure (300 bar) compressed natural gas (cng) as it leaves the tank. After passing through a five-litre “integrated gas module” to stabilise pressure, the gas then passes through a “gas conditioning module” to regulate pressure for injection. Around 90 per cent of the components on the D13 engine are unchanged from the diesel-only version. Service intervals are the same. So too is engine oil specification.

Much of the development effort spent over the past three years, since the Westport HPDI 2.0 injector was first unveiled, has been spent ensuring that any gas leaks between tank and injector are extremely unlikely.

“It’s been an extensive process, but as a result these are going to be very high-performing trucks,” says Franzén. “You will not be able to tell if you are driving a diesel truck or a gas truck. They combine fuel cost savings with CO₂ savings and diesel-like durability.” □

On the move: a pan-European gas fuel station infrastructure is growing fast, and mobile stations like this can plug gaps easily.



Q. We are currently in the process of completing an application to upgrade our operator licence to a Standard International. We have a driver from Romania who was previously a transport manager for a company in Bucharest. Can we use him as our transport manager?

A. If you are a CPC holder in any EU member state, you can apply to use your qualification in the UK. You must submit a foreign CPC qualification to DVSA for translation. Alternatively, you can arrange for a translation yourself and submit for approval.

National electronic registers are in place to facilitate the cooperation and exchange of information between EU countries. Intelligence is shared, so if a transport manager has lost their reputation in their home country, it has also been lost in the UK.

It would be highly recommended to send your proposed CPC holder on a transport manager refresher course to ensure he/she is well versed in the regulations in place in the UK.

Q. What certification is required to pull a fuel bowser containing diesel? The bowser is capable of carrying up to 9,000 litres. I'm unsure whether I have to attend an ADR course on packages or tanks.

A. A bowser is not actually a recognised term under ADR and there has often been confusion as to how they are categorised.

Authorisation was given in accordance with regulation 36(7) of The Carriage of Dangerous Goods and Use of Transportable Pressure Equipment Regulations 2004. This direction allows certain bowsters carrying diesel or gas oil only to be treated as Intermediate Bulk Containers (IBCs) provided they meet a number of conditions.

One of the main conditions is that the bowster must not exceed a maximum capacity of 3,000 litres.

If a bowster meets the conditions laid out in the authorisation document, it can be classed as an IBC and therefore treated as a package and labelled accordingly under

The Truck Advocate

GRT is a transport and training organisation specialising in road transport legislation and regulation, offering a range of commercial vehicle compliance services, advising on a number of issues, and operating across Scotland and the north of England.

In conjunction with Transport News, GRT presents this regular Q&A column dealing with compliance and legislation issues relating to road haulage. Readers who have any queries can call 01236 422517, visit www.grtconsultants.com or post questions on Twitter page, @GRTConsultants.

GRT

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ADR. However if it is capable of carrying up to 9,000 litres, an ADR tanks qualification would be required.

Q. One of our younger drivers was recently issued with a speeding ticket on the A75 having joined the road from the M6. Are there any plans to increase the HGV speed limit in Scotland?

A. There has been appeals from local Dumfries politicians to increase the speed limit for HGVs on the A75 but the Scottish Government has recently rejected proposals.

It is vitally important that all drivers are aware of the changing speed limits when driving between England and Scotland. This should be included in any induction training for new starts and in any ongoing refresher talks. In-cab stickers with speed limits may also be beneficial.

In 2015, the speed limits were increased in England and Wales to 50mph on single carriageways and 60mph on dual

carriageways.

At present, the speed limit for HGVs over 7.5 tonnes in Scotland remains at 40mph and 50mph for single and dual carriageways respectively.

Note that European speed limiter requirements are still in force in each country and must be set at 56mph or lower.

Q. Can you clarify the situation around the 'banking' of CPC hours? My card expires in September 2019 but I have already completed 35 hours. Will any further training completed before 2019 be valid?

A. It is not possible to bank CPC hours beyond the current five year period. For example, if you have a card that expires in September 2019 but have completed 35 hours by September 2017, you won't be able to start your next cycle of training until after the expiry date.

On each driver's online training account, there are validity dates listed at the top of the page. You can register for access on the DVSA website, just Google 'check driver CPC hours'.

To register for access, you must enter your driving licence number and postcode. A pass code is then posted out by DVSA and once this is entered along with your driving licence number, your training account should come up.

Q. I read in your column earlier in the year about taking weekly rest in a vehicle. Has there been any progress on penalties for this in the UK? I know France are particularly hard on operators who allow this but visiting drivers here seem to get off lightly.

A. DVSA were expected to start issuing drivers with a £300 fixed penalty in November 2017 if they are found to be taking a regular 45 hour weekly rest in their vehicle.

Some EU countries adopt a particularly hardline approach to this issue. As mentioned, France imposes fines of €1,800 for drivers and up to €30,000 for operators found to allow the practice.

At present, it is still permitted to take a reduced weekly rest of 24 hours in your vehicle.

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USE TRANSPORT NEWS' ROAD HAULAGE SERVICES DIRECTORY: REAR PAGES



Chris Delaney (left) and Lawrence Todd.

Kerr & Smith's Glasgow Base Acquired By Cartwright Fleet Services

West of Scotland Iveco dealership provides first Scottish base for rapidly expanding CFS, the asset management arm of the Cartwright Group. Alistair Vallance visits Baillieston to be put in the big picture.



The first sighting of the CFS link with Iveco at Truckfest Scotland in August.

THE CFS branded Stralis XP on the Iveco stand at this year's Truckfest Scotland was the first hint of a dealership change for the truck manufacturer. And just before the annual *Transport News* Scottish Rewards breakfast, the story broke.

Cartwright Fleet Services had acquired the Baillieston branch workshops and offices of Kerr & Smith, together with the west of Scotland franchise for the full range of Iveco vans and trucks.

Formally announcing the acquisition, CFS directors Lawrence Todd and Chris Delaney, with dealer principal Chester Smith in attendance, gave *Transport News* an insight into the company and its high speed UK development, with further plans for the future.

Cartwright Fleet Services Ltd, a wholly owned subsidiary of the Cartwright Group was established in 2013 to bring all maintenance for the 5,000 assets in the Cartwright rental fleet under a properly managed system of service and maintenance

procedures to be applied to all outsourced companies providing this facility throughout the UK.

Lawrence and Chris joined the business on start up, as two of four CFS directors with the prime directive to maintain the rental fleet with management systems as well as creating a platform to grow the business.

'We started with a fleet management call centre, initially to manage our assets and then proceeded to build dedicated Cartwright maintenance depots in five locations: Aldridge in Walsall, Skelmersdale, Leeds, Bruntingthorpe and now Baillieston, which brings us up to our present strength of 12,000 assets not all of which are Cartwright products.

'In addition, we have 45 mobile technicians and 125 service agents,' explained Lawrence, to which Chris added, 'We are not just here to look after Cartwright trailers, in fact we're not just trailers, we are keen to dispel the perception that CFS is in business for Cartwright trailers only.

'We are now very much in the business of leasing or selling trucks and vans too, with our Iveco franchise at Baillieston and a similar Isuzu franchise at our Leeds depot. In the future we are looking to achieve eight locations by 2020 with more truck franchises coming on stream.'

With the Baillieston depot, CFS inherited business links with previous Kerr & Smith service agents, Central Motors in Airdrie, McKinnon and Forbes in Paisley and Imperial Commercial based in Ayr.

'These centres will continue to offer parts

and service on behalf of CFS and we will develop these relationships as we as a company, strive to offer 'fleet management and more', enthused Lawrence Todd.

For the record, the Kerr & Smith name will remain at its birthplace in Cumnock, Ayrshire, continuing with their current Vauxhall car and van franchise.

Back to CFS, it was interesting to hear that both Lawrence and Chris have a background in total fleet management including truck, van, plant, indeed any motorised item on wheels.

'We are now on a journey to take on other assets across the broad commercial vehicle spectrum to offer service and maintenance facilities,' said Chris.

'In acquiring Kerr & Smith we took on a truck franchise covering the full product range from 3.5 to 44 tonnes and we firmly believe that the Iveco marque has a great future in Scotland. As we open up our latest contract and lease finance products for truck and trailer combinations, tractor units on



The sizable Baillieston premises about to have CFS branding applied.

Looking to the future the turnover plan for CFS is £55 million by the year 2021 and an integral part of that ambitious increase will be generated by Baillieston which already has a good track record for truck and van service turn round.

their own, plus bodied trucks and vans, we expect to see Iveco numbers on the roads increase sequentially,' said Lawrence.

'The fundamental message that Cartwright Fleet Services Ltd has to get across is that whereas the Cartwright Group sold trailers for years, we can now offer a whole range of services for trucks, vans and trailers encompassing: sales, including contract hire and leasing deals, together with servicing and parts.

'Of course we will be able to sell trucks and trailers which will feature on the operator's balance sheet, but we're also happy to supply leased trucks and trailers on a pence per mile basis and we are sure this facility will help us sell trucks here in the west of Scotland.

'Our sales people will be given tools for funding a truck and trailer deal subject to the usual terms and conditions and this funding will be hassle free because under the banner of the Cartwright Group, we're partnered by Cartwright Finance who, as part of the group, gives us access to a panel of funders and we can cherry-pick which one is most suitable for our customers, be they hauliers or a local authority. Of course, we can also tap into Iveco Finance funding too,' said

Chris Delaney.

'We will fund any asset, which can be any make of truck or trailer and this facility will parallel our strength at CFS in fleet management service to ensure haulier compliance with emailed documentation as well as reminders sent for six week servicing and, as part of our all round asset management, we have access to web portals so that we can interrogate any asset prior to its arrival for a service.

'In addition, we plan to expand our ATF facilities at Leeds and Baillieston where we already have one lane in place respectively.'

At Baillieston, continuity of staff is 100% while Chester Smith, previous managing director of Kerr & Smith, is now a full time CFS management employee.

Explains Lawrence, 'to help carry forward the enthusiasm of the staff, only the name has been changed for the moment, but we will develop the CFS psyche as we all get to know each other and we are finding already that both Kerr & Smith and Iveco are sleeping giants, so we have massive development opportunities in the west of Scotland and this is all happening when the Cartwright Group is celebrating 65 years of trailer building, but now the group has

broadened to include truck dealerships and of course fleet management for all truck and trailer assets.

Chris added, 'We will look after these assets from cradle to grave with our one stop shop offering from CFS so that at the end of a vehicle or trailer's hire term, we have options available such as placing a new body on the truck chassis and putting it out for a further rental period, or sell it as a used truck, or trailer.

'We started in 2013 with a blank canvas and now we are turning over £33 million just four years later. We have a head count of 220 which includes 50 people in our call centre with the remainder in workshops or out in the field.

'Our fleet management HQ is in Altrincham and they control our 45 mobile technicians, who are also trained to service trailers on site.'

'Looking to the future the turnover plan for CFS is £55 million by the year 2021 and an integral part of that ambitious increase will be generated by Baillieston which already has a good track record for truck and van service turn round.

'Our target is to increase sales of all products and services whether it be in truck and/or trailers on hire purchase, lease or contract hire deals,' confirmed both Lawrence and Chris as they began working on plans for the formal, public launch of CFS in Scotland at the *Transport News* Scottish Rewards Breakfast.

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An engineer who played a central role in development of the innovative side-curtain airbag fitted to the latest Scania truck range has won a top European award for his work on enhancing commercial vehicle safety. **Fredrich Claezon** was presented this month with the 2017 European Commercial Vehicle Safety Award, in an annual scheme run jointly by the European Association for Accident Research and Accident Analysis (EVU), based in Graz, Austria; DEKRA, a big pan-European vehicle inspection company based in Berlin; and Germany's Road Traffic Safety Council (DVR).

"Fredrich Claezon receives the honour for his outstanding engineering services in the field of electronics, which have helped significantly to enhance the active and passive safety of commercial vehicles," said EVU council member **Egon-Christian von Glasner** at the DEKRA conference in Berlin where the award was presented.

Mr Claezon, 39, studied computer sciences at Linköping University in his native Sweden, graduating in 2006 with an MSc (Master of

Science) degree. His first job was as an integration engineer at car manufacturer Saab (then owned by General Motors, now defunct) where his responsibilities included a driving simulator. The job also involved development of various advanced driver assistance systems (ADAS) such as detectors of driver fatigue and inattention.

In 2008 Mr Claezon moved to Scania's base at Södertälje, south of Stockholm, as a safety systems development engineer. His responsibilities from the start there included airbags and systems for detecting vulnerable road-users such as cyclists and pedestrians.

Six years ago Mr Claezon was promoted to senior engineer and began working on development of the rollover airbag control system now employed in "new generation" Scania truck cabs, including the side-curtain airbag which is claimed to be a "world first" in heavy trucks. Another of his projects was the software used with the MobilEye-based camera system behind Scania's lane-departure warning and autonomous emergency braking (AEB) systems. Now Mr Claezon is working on the



DEKRA's Wolfgang Linsenmaier, EVU's Christian von Glasner, Scania's Fredrich Claezon and DVR's Christian Kellner.

control systems behind increasingly autonomous trucks and buses of the future.

"Enormous progress has been made in road safety in recent decades in the commercial vehicle sector, as accident statistics impressively demonstrate," says **Clemens Klinke**, the DEKRA management board member in charge of its automotive business unit. "Fredrich Claezon has played a key role in ensuring that this positive development can continue in future. The European Commercial Vehicle Safety Award is our acknowledgement of his contribution."

The award has been presented annually since 1990. Last year it was won by **Christian Wiehen** of Wabco. The UK's **Paul Oppenheimer**, then of Lucas Girling, won the award in 2001.

The government's Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) has a new head of enforcement, following the departure of **Andy King**. She is **Zöe Murray-Ross**, who moves



Zöe Murray-Ross

to the Bristol-based agency after an 18-year military career. She joined the British Army in 1999 as a private but later went to the Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst and was commissioned in 2001 as a second lieutenant. After four years in the army's staff and personnel support branch, Ms Murray-Ross moved to the Royal Military Police where she progressed to the rank of major.

"Throughout my career my work has included oversight

and management of large volumes of investigations," she says. "These ranged from military offences, like fighting and drunkenness, to low-level civil offences, like assault and theft. I also provided day-to-day policing advice to the wider army and managed my soldiers through lots of different activities." Countries to which Ms Murray-Ross was posted during her army career include Germany, Canada, Australia, Kosovo, Iraq and Afghanistan. On her new job at DVSA she says: "The work our enforcement staff do, from fraud investigations to roadside checks, has a real, tangible effect on road safety. I can't wait to get stuck in."

Gavin Summers, senior fleet engineer at Malcolm Logistics, and **Sandra Stewart** of David Burns Haulage are among the 19 award-winners presented with their trophies in Glasgow this month at the culmination of the 24th annual Scottish Rewards scheme run by *Transport News*, a leading monthly transport magazine



Gavin Summers of Malcolm Logistics

based in Scotland. Mr Summers is winner of the "Scottish fleet engineer of the year 2018" category, sponsored by Outreach of Falkirk. Mrs Stewart has been named "Scottish fleet manager of the year 2018" in a category sponsored by Ryder.



■ Elizabeth and Tom French



■ Sandra Stewart of David Burns Haulage

Other award-winners at this month's Scottish Rewards breakfast presentation include **Tom and Elizabeth French**, owners of the Ayrshire-based, 75-truck T French & Son operation: "lifetime achievement award"; **Angela Martin** from John Mitchell Haulage & Warehousing of Grangemouth: "transport woman of the year"; and **Aberdeenshire Council's** fleet officer **Gordon Ross**, picking up the "Scotland's local authority fleet of the year" award on



■ Aberdeenshire Council's Gordon Ross



■ Angela Martin from John Mitchell Haulage & Warehousing

behalf of his employer.

J Richardson Transport of Stranraer is "Scottish fleet of the year 2018". The "Scottish European haulier" award has been won by Shotts-based **Stuart Nicol Transport**. The award for "Scotland's top tipper operator", sponsored by Hyva, has gone to **J&M Murdoch & Son** of Glasgow. The award for Scotland's "top fleet livery" goes to Fraserburgh-based **Whitelink Seafoods**.

The full story on all the 2018 Scottish Rewards winners will be in the January 2018 issue of *Transport News*, published within the next couple of weeks. More information at www.transportnews.co.uk.

A restructure of Krone's UK trailer sales organisation seems nearly complete following last month's appointment of **Allan McKee** as an area sales manager. He is based in Northamptonshire but has a patch spanning the whole of south-eastern and south-western England as well as part of the midlands.

"I'm delighted to join Krone



■ Allan McKee

at this exciting time, as new trailer products are introduced to the market," he says. "With one of the widest trailer ranges in Europe, considerable manufacturing strength and an extensive European service network, Krone will continue to be one of the leading trailer suppliers in the UK and Ireland."

Before joining the German trailer-maker, Mr McKee was head of business development at Axis Fleet Management, an Oxfordshire-based truck and trailer rental, contract hire and fleet management company. A lengthy career in the commercial vehicle sector both in the UK and overseas includes two years selling MAN trucks and buses in South Africa; two years as fleet sales manager at West Pennine Trucks, a big Scania dealer in the UK; eight years as a divisional director at the City Trucks group; and nearly three years as international key accounts manager at Schmitz Cargobull, Europe's biggest trailer manufacturer. Last year he spent six months working as a direct sales manager for national key accounts at Iveco's UK base in Basildon, Essex.

At Krone Mr McKee's fellow newly-appointed area sales representative is **Chris Coxon**, promoted from sales office manager to cover the west side of the UK. Mr Coxon has worked for the Krone group for seven years, two of them spent at the company's head office and main manufacturing plant in Germany.

"Our product management team have continued to understand the transport needs of operators in the UK and Ireland," says Mr Coxon.

"Consequently, we now have a full range of trailer products, including curtain-siders, dry-freight box vans and refrigerated trailers. Also, we have recently introduced a UK-designed sliding skeletal and flatbed trailer - products which contribute to the 40,000 units we currently produce each year."

Like Mr McKee, Mr Coxon reports to Krone's UK sales manager, **Jason Chipchase**. He in turn reports to UK managing director **Fran Pickering**.

Aftermarket sales of commercial vehicle brake pads and linings are being stepped up by TMD Friction, the West Yorkshire-based friction material supplier which has been a division of the huge Nisshinbo Holdings group of Japan since 2011.

Sue McKay joined the company five months ago as commercial vehicle sales manager but now her job title has changed to UK distributor sales manager. This move is understood to be part of an imminent, Europe-wide reorganisation of TMD's commercial vehicle division. The company remains tight-lipped about the details.

Ms McKay has extensive experience of the UK and wider European commercial vehicle aftermarket. Between 1997 and 2011 she was marketing publication manager at the now-defunct European division of ArvinMeritor, based in the UK and Switzerland. Then followed spells as commercial vehicle product manager in the UK, first at Unipart's Truck & Trailer Components (TTC) division, then at Valeo. Before joining TMD Friction in July this year, Ms McKay spent more than two years as commercial vehicles product manager at Volvo Group's Roadcrew Solutions division, based in Warwick.

"TMD Friction has established a reputation for quality brake solutions under its Textar and Don brands for commercial vehicles," she says. "While its OE (original equipment) technology firmly makes TMD a major player in the marketplace, I do believe



Sue McKay

there is an opportunity to further expand and strengthen our distribution network, not only in the UK but also across Europe.”

Ms McKay's new boss is **Robert Lightfoot**, sales director in TMD Friction's EMEA (Europe, Middle East and Africa) division. "Having worked within the cv sector for almost 20 years, Sue brings a host of experience in both product management and marketing that will help elevate our cv offering globally," he says. "Sue's appointment is part of a wider restructuring of our cv division to expand our distribution network while developing and maintaining our customer relationships."

An apprenticeship scheme started five years ago by Cartwright Group, a big Cheshire-based trailer-maker and bodybuilder, has been expanded this year with the addition of training modules focused on painting and welding. A total apprentice intake this year of 33 is said to be one of the biggest to date for



Cartwright Group: sparking greater interest in apprenticeships.

the Cartwright scheme, run in association with Manchester-based Trafford College (including an Altrincham campus neighbouring Cartwright's main manufacturing site).

"We take great pride in the fact that our programme provides our young apprentices with the skills needed to pursue a career in engineering," says Cartwright Group chairman **Peter Cartwright**. "We are delighted to be able to launch two new training programmes to further expand our offering. We are confident that both the paint and welding programmes will continue to grow in popularity, as has the original programme."

More information at www.cartwright-group.co.uk/apprenticeships.

George Nicoll, a Bibby Distribution driver trainer, is back in his native Scotland and adapting to a climate which contrasts a wee bit with that of Tanzania, where he recently spent ten days on a training scheme run by Transaid, a big charity focused on transport and logistics in developing countries.

Mr Nicoll, based in Ayrshire with Bibby Distribution's tanker division, has been training driving instructors employed by Tanzania's National Institute of Transport, including **Deogratias Mahuwi**, **Ernest Mapunda** and **Ishmael Singajile**. Tanzania has the sixth highest road fatality rate per capita anywhere, according to the World Health Organisation (WHO).

"Driving instructors in Tanzania get little formal training," says Mr Nicoll. "By spending time helping them improve their own skills we have raised teaching standards which in turn could help save lives." Bibby Distribution was one of the first UK truck operators to support Transaid after it was set up nearly 20 years ago by another big charitable organisation, Save The Children.

"Transaid's professional driver training projects fit with our core values of safety, responsibility and giving back



George Nicoll: training trainers in Tanzania.

to the community," says Bibby Distribution managing director **Duncan Eyre**. "George's efforts will leave a lasting legacy in Tanzania and empower the trainers he has worked with to make even more of a difference to road safety."

Caroline Barber is Transaid chief executive. "Drivers shouldn't leave home for a day's work in fear that they may not come home because of a lack of training or dangerous vehicles and roads," she says. "The support and expertise generously given to us by the team at Bibby Distribution is truly transforming lives in Tanzania and we are so grateful for their partnership."

More information at www.transaid.org, www.bibbydist.co.uk

Austria's privately-owned Palfinger group, with subsidiaries including the former Ratcliff business which is one of the UK's biggest tail-lift suppliers, is looking for a new chief executive following this month's surprise resignation of **Herbert Ortner**.

He has been a Palfinger management board member since 2003 and was appointed chief executive in 2008. Four years ago Mr Ortner's employment contract was renewed, together with those of three other senior Palfinger executives, to run until the end of 2018. But now he has decided, for reasons that remain unclear, to leave the

company at the end of next month, on 31 December.

There is no obvious sign of friction between Mr Ortner and the rest of the Palfinger senior management team or of any dispute with the company's owners, the Palfinger family.

"I am happy to have developed Palfinger to a global leader of our industry," he says in a press release issued this month. "We achieved this in close cooperation with a professional management team and the supervisory board. I am convinced that the Palfinger group is in a perfect competitive position and that the professional management team will achieve a great performance in the years to come."

A supervisory board statement wishes Mr Ortner "fortune and success for his future activities" and expresses gratitude for his "brilliant strategic and operational performance."

Palfinger's global turnover has grown from €505 million (£452 million) in 2009 to about €1.5 billion (£1.3 billion) this year, largely as a result of a string of acquisitions.

Ratcliff, one of the UK's top-selling tail-lift manufacturers, was bought in 2005. Two years later Palfinger acquired MBB, a leading German tail-lift maker.

Mr Ortner is understood to have agreed to act as a consultant to the Palfinger family following his departure at the end of next month. □



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