Abel & Cole gets box bodies for payload hike

Following its change of spec for 3.5 tonne home delivery vehicles from refrigerated van conversions to refrigerated box bodies, Abel & Cole has ordered 45 more of the new specification vehicles.

Nick Cannell, transport manager at the organic food delivery specialist, explains that, having achieved a full 13% extra payload with the new models, he is now going for Paneltex 3.8m refrigerated box bodies.

"We were looking for a better payload to achieve more efficient delivery routes and a better fit for our product range," says Cannell.

"Paneltex came up with the best payload by far, with an increase from 940kg on our earlier van models up to 1,060kg on the latest Iveco Daily chassis cabs that we have just purchased." To date, Paneltex has supplied Abel & Cole with 35 new box bodied vehicles and there are a further 10 in build at the company's factory in Hull.

All the vehicle bodies use Hubbard 360 direct drive refrigeration systems with the Paneltex refrigerated box body, which is compliant with ATP Class C standards and designed to operate at chilled temperatures of +8°C.

Each body has triple rear insulated doors, with an integral central double step, and the bodywork has been custom built, with flexible shelving space and sufficient roof height to allow drivers to stand up fully inside.

All the Iveco chassis cabs feature air deflectors – the exception being those that run in Greater London – enabling even better payload.

On most routes, the Daily chassis cabs run on stop/start delivery routes, handling up to 75 drops per day per vehicle – this figure rising to over 115 in the London area.

The 95-strong Abel & Cole home delivery fleet is now 100% Iveco, with the latest Daily 35S13 chassis cabs purchased via dealer Hendy Van & Truck and supported by a five-year R&M contract.

Cannell says that, while the chassis cabs have a five-year working lifespan, Abel & Cole will use the Paneltex bodies for a further five years, switching them to new chassis for a 10-year overall working life.

Fuel economy spurs Yeardley on Volvos

International logistics operator Brian Yeardley Continental is buying more Volvo FH low-height tractor units, because of their "excellent fuel economy" and the back-up of Volvo dealer Crossroads.

Three new FH-500 4x2 tractor units have recently gone into service and, since 2009, the haulier has bought 14 FHs, including two premium quality used trucks, also sourced from Crossroads.

Managing director Kevin Hopper says that fuel figures up to 10.65mpg are being achieved by its latest FH-500 artics on European long-haul duties at 40 tonnes gcw – in part due to Volvo's Dynafleet Telematics.

"We were impressed with the FH-480's fuel performance, but the latest Euro 5, 13-litre 500 has improved even on that," says Hopper.

All Brian Yeardley Continental's Volvos are now fitted with Dynafleet, including two 05 plate FHs. Its package includes remote downloading of digital-tachograph cards, driver and vehicle performance data, fuel economy and environmental emissions reports.

The haulier's package also utilises geofencing and the tracking facility produces 'snail-trails' as a security measure to identify any deviations from specified routes. "We worked closely with Volvo and Crossroads to tailor the specification of the latest low-height tractor units to meet our needs," comments Hopper.

"And that applies from the fitment and monitoring of Dynafleet, to help us manage fuel costs and environmental performance, down to specifying snow chains, separate air conditioning and gas detectors – and a panic button linked to our head office base to protect our drivers," he adds.

"We always scrutinise costs very carefully, but are also very focused on quality of service, and the quality of the equipment we use is paramount," he continues.

"We use Krone straight frame mega-cube trailers, which are specified with knife-proof, armoured curtains that are pretty much as secure as a box van. The trailers come with load securing certification to the latest EN12462/XL standard, which is the toughest in Europe.

"When coupled to our Volvo FHs, we believe we can provide our customers with a highly reliable, innovative and cost-effective means of delivery for the widest variety of products," he concludes.

New London bus one of planet's cleanest

Cummins engineers, working with bus manufacturer Wrightbus, say they will make the New Bus for London (NBfL – a revolutionary recreation of the iconic Routemaster series) one of the cleanest in the world.

The power plant is based on a Cummins ISBe 4.5-litre engine, which already meets the EEV (enhanced environmentally friendly vehicle) ultra low exhaust emissions standard, without any additional exhaust particulate after-treatment.

However, Neil Pattison, Cummins automotive engine business director, says the firm has developed a "unique" after-treatment system that will allow the bus "to meet the real world ultra low emissions targets needed".

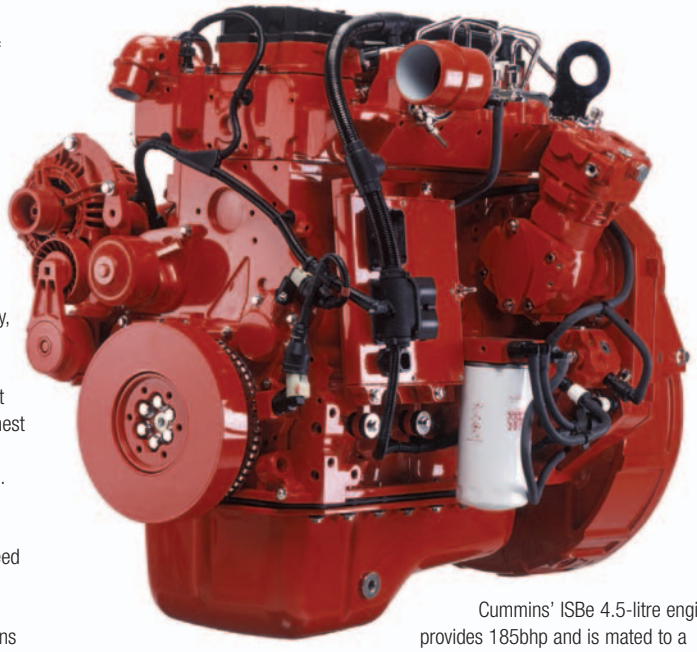
While NOx and particulates emissions are reduced with its Euro 5 EEV SCR (selective catalytic reduction) system, an additional diesel oxidation catalyst (DOC) has now been fitted between the engine and the SCR system to reduce CO and HC emissions (carbon monoxide and hydrocarbons respectively).

The result, he says, is a carbon footprint that is less than half that of the majority of buses operating in London today.

"Cummins has significant experience in cleaning up London buses over the last 20 years," says Pattison. "Many of the original Routemasters were re-powered with Cummins B5.9 Euro 2 engines in the 1990s, delivering improved reliability and fuel economy, with lower emissions."

"One Routemaster was fitted with an early exhaust after-treatment system in 2000, becoming the cleanest bus in London some time before the Low Emissions Zone was introduced. Also, Cummins' Euro 4 ISBe engine and SCR system was the first to be approved for the LEZ, without the need for particulate filtration," he adds.

Several other buses running in London are also powered by Cummins B Series (B5.9 and ISBe), which has seen considerable adoption across the UK bus industry, with an estimated 30,000-plus engines sold since it was introduced in the mid 1980s.



Wrightbus' double decker models and its new StreetLite midibus both use Cummins, and Pattison says NBfL will build on this experience – including ensuring that Euro 6 engine technology can be retrofitted when the legislation comes into force in 2013.

Cummins' ISBe 4.5-litre engine provides 185bhp and is mated to a Siemens hybrid transmission. The engine drives a generator that supplies energy to a lithium-phosphate battery pack, which in turn provides current for the electric drive motors, replenished by regenerative braking technology.

Wincanton goes for new greener trailers

Logistics giant Wincanton has purchased 11 new aerodynamic high-cube curtainsider trailers for its Wavin contract, because of their fuel efficiency and ability to reduce CO_2 emissions.

The bespoke 13.7 metre long, tri-axle step-frame semi-trailers sport the Don-Bur EcoStream curved front roof section, proven to reduce drag and hence also the fuel consumption.

Jim Leaney, general manager at Wincanton for its Wavin contract, explains that the new curtainsiders run at 4.2 metres high and have been specified to cater for Wavin's pipe-carrying requirements.

For example, seven central support pillars, running down the length of the trailer, have been engineered to accept 12 moveable cantilever arm racks that can be positioned at any height.

These, says Leaney, not only provide the flexibility to forklift-load a wide variety of different radius pipework, but also result in a significantly higher percentage load-fill and lower overall delivery miles.

If required, the padded-top arms can also be stowed on the trailers in a specially built storage box, located on the nearside at the rear.

"The new trailers represent Wincanton's ongoing commitment to maximise operational efficiency and maintain safety standards, and demonstrate our ability to reduce CO_2 emissions," states Leaney.

As for the safety side, the trailers' curtain strap assemblies have been stress-rated at 1,500kg. Also, all load restraint straps are labelled to comply with BS EN 12195 and two sets of fall-arrest cables and harnesses have been specified for people working at height.

Other features include reversing sensors and indicators, four sets of pull-out access steps, recessed additional tread steps in the trailer step and a bespoke working platform.

This latter is 700mm above the floor at the rear of the semi-trailer, and sports an integral access ladder and safety gates.