

Bartrums trains for gains with Actros

Drivers at Bartrums Transport are being given driver training on a converted Actros tractor unit from Mercedes-Benz.

The Suffolk-based haulage company believes the guidance will help its drivers improve fuel economy, performance and driving standards when behind the wheel of its own Actros tractor units.

Luke Perry, Bartrums' training manager, says that, with more than 100 premium spec Actros models on the fleet, its latest addition is being used for training in the day, before undertaking trunking at night from company HQ to the Pallet Track distribution hub in Halesowen, West Midlands.

The Actros 2546 has a flat-floored MegaSpace cab that has undergone an approved conversion in the Mercedes-Benz workshops at Wentworth Park, Yorkshire – home to the truck manufacturer's own driver training programme.

The truck has also been fitted with an extra seat, between the driver and passenger seats. And behind, in place of the lower bunk, is a bench for another four



people. The Actros is also fitted with a Daimler FleetBoard telematics system, for the best possible feedback opportunities on performance.

"Training, to help our drivers raise their skill levels and maximise fuel efficiency, is

something we take very seriously," says Perry. "Having undertaken a course for driver-trainers at Wentworth Park, I realised that the vehicles used by the Mercedes-Benz team were ideal for the job, so we decided to buy one of our own."

TGM buses in retrofit route for London LEZ

Bus and coach operator TGM Group (formerly Tellings Golden Miller) has selected Eminox's CRT (continuously regenerating trap) technology to upgrade 71 of its passenger vehicles for the London LEZ (Low Emission Zone) upgrade.

Richard Telling, group engineering director at the firm, which specialises in aviation transport primarily for Heathrow, Gatwick and Manchester airports, says that, currently, the vehicles don't meet the phase 4 LEZ requirements at Euro 4 particulate matter emissions for buses and coaches over the 3.5 tonnes limit.

TGM Group considered several options, he says, including re-deployment of its vehicles to other areas and replacing non-compliant buses

and coaches – which are a mix of Scania, Mercedes, Volvo and VDL vehicles – before choosing the retrofit emissions-busting technology.

"Eminox has an impressive reputation for providing high quality, cost-effective emission control systems," comments Telling.

"I am convinced that Eminox and Scania will deliver the quality of service they are known for, and that this project will ensure our vehicle fleet is compliant with the new LEZ requirements ahead of time," he continues.

"Eminox offered a great solution and service to allow us to meet phase 2 of the LEZ changes in 2008, and so it is great to work with them again on this project for phase 4."

Rigid and drawbar combo exceeds expectations

The first of two new Volvo FH 460 6x2 rigids has entered service with Devon-based haulier M R Horn Transport, which is using the truck with a tri-axle drawbar trailer at 44-tonnes gtw. Managing director Martyn Horn says the Globetrotters – which join his fleet of Scania and DAF vehicles – have been engineered to provide maximum deck space for loads of hay and straw, and for heavy farm machinery.

Horn says he was attracted by the quality of the truck and by the co-operation he received from the sales teams. "The engineering team at Volvo Warwick spent hours with me to ensure that I got exactly the vehicle I needed. They even agreed to build my trucks with a non-standard wheelbase. That's the sort of thing that convinces potential buyers they have made the right choice."

Horn's new trucks are equipped with air suspension on all three axles, a feature that is put to good use when the trucks enter or leave fields or when entering tight farm entrances. And the adjustable air system also ensures improved stability for the unusually high loads.

Meanwhile, power is provided by a 13-litre 460bhp engine and the gearbox is the two-pedal automated Volvo I-Shift. "We had our first automatic box in 2004, another in 2006 and the third in 2008," enthuses Horn. "The Volvo I-Shift is simply streets ahead of everything else. It is exceeding all our expectations."

R Horn Transport's new trailers were supplied by Turners Commercials of Bruton in Somerset, and M R Horn Transport built and installed its own bespoke bodywork.

HN Sillifant lauds dual-purpose FM tipper

West country operator HN Sillifant has taken delivery of a Volvo FM 8x4 tipper, designed for dual-purpose haulage.

The Davidstow, near Camelford, Cornwall-based firm is using the truck to transport loads ranging from dense, heavy sand to lightweight, but bulky sawdust.

Derek Sillifant says the decision to go for a Volvo, instead of another Iveco truck, was down to his experience with another second hand Volvo purchase.

"I can count the times this vehicle has had problems on one hand – it's a truly remarkable truck," he comments.

Powered by the 13-litre 460bhp Volvo diesel, the eight-wheeler has an I-Shift gearbox, lightweight Alcoa wheels, beacons, spotlights and mirror guards. It has also been equipped with an aluminium Wilcox body, Edbro front-end tipping gear and a Dawbarn Hydroclear sheeting system.

"There's only one word to describe her and that's awesome," enthuses Sillifant. "Hauling out of Padstow at maximum weight is as good a trial as you can get, with steep hills, a hairpin bend and unpredictable



holiday traffic. It's effortless.

"Talk about a truck fit for purpose. The power-to-weight ratio is perfect. In fact, she is so much on top of the job that she virtually drives herself. And I never had to touch the performance mode control," he continues.

An on-board camera, used to monitor the loading operation and act as a reversing aid,

plus high-intensity rear strobes and an on-board weigher system, have also been installed on his Volvo tipper.

"The weigher is invaluable when we're loading Padstow sea sand, because the same volume of material can alter in weight by as much as two tonnes, depending on whether it's wet or dry", explains Sillifant.

Canute commits to deal for a dozen DAFs

Canute Group has added 12 DAF XF105 tractor units to its 600 vehicle fleet to evaluate the whole-life cost of the trucks.

The vehicles are the 6x2 mid-lift axle FTG model, powered by the 12.9-litre MX engine, rated at 460bhp and delivering 2,300Nm of torque between 1,000 and 1,410rpm.

They were specified with the DAF Super Space cab, with skylights faired into the roofline, Combi lights integrated into the bumper and a full air management kit.

A 525-litre aluminium fuel tank was also requested, as well as a sliding fifth wheel, an extra long catwalk and axle load monitoring.

The XF105s are the first DAF tractive units to be operated by Canute since 1985. The decision to introduce the model into its heavy fleet was based on previous positive



experience, says regional operations director Iain Brown.

The company already has five 7.5 tonne DAF LF45s, which entered service over the past four years, and Brown says he enjoyed

a good working relationship with dealer Lancashire DAF.

"We need to take a long-term view of the cost of operating our vehicles. This evaluation is about determining the whole-life costs of the 105, against other competitor tractor units," explains Brown.

"Fuel and AdBlue usage are going to be key factors and, at 460bhp, we have an ample power to weight ratio of close to 10.5bhp/tonne, which should contribute to good fuel efficiency.

"We are also expecting that the high specification will lead to decent residual prices when we move them on in five years' time," Brown points out.

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