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Welcome

Can it really be 10 years since the Driver Certificate of Professional Competence went live for the freight transport industry? How time flies when you are enjoying yourself!

Think back a decade and there were a considerable number of drivers who were in denial that it would ever be implemented.

There were also, sadly, a good number of operators who took 'legal advice' and declared that it was up to drivers to sort their training out themselves if they wanted to keep their jobs.

That advice was technically correct, but did nothing to encourage employee loyalty or skills development: both of which are vital in the ultra-competitive world of transport.

Most of the industry had a more responsible approach and at least took steps to ensure that drivers got themselves qualified.

Now, as the Driver CPC has become established in the industry, an increasing number of employers and drivers are seeing it as an opportunity for enhancement rather than

just a hoop that must be jumped through in the interests of legal compliance.

This scenario means choosing training that is relevant to the task in hand and delivered in a way that will engage drivers and encourage them to subsequently work safely, efficiently and without feeling stressed.

For FORS members, there are exclusive courses on offer that promise to do just that, with the added bonus of being free of charge and helping towards Silver and Gold accreditation.

An ideal choice, if you have drivers who need their hours topping-up before the 9th September deadline.

And, even if you don't, courses taken on or after 10th September will count towards the next training cycle.

Enjoy the issue!



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300 up for FORS Gold membership

The 300th FORS Gold member has been announced, with abnormal load specialist Gundel & Son Transport Services the operator in question. The honour of being a Gold member is one that every operator aspires to and – as the highest level of FORS accreditation – is one that requires exceptional levels of safety, efficiency and environmental best practice.

The Mansfield-based operator ensured it implemented the processes and procedures to reach FORS Gold, the highlight being a fleet-wide mpg improvement of 34 per cent. The family-run business, which has been operating for more than 30 years, specialises in the transportation of abnormal loads and mechanical handling, and currently runs a fleet of six trucks, two vans and 10 trailers including lorry-mounted cranes and fork-lift trucks.

"I like to be ahead of the game and knew that FORS

Gold accreditation was what we should aim for," said Kevin Gundel, the company's owner and Transport Manager. "As a family business, safety and fleet management has always been really important to us, but FORS has helped us quantify and record our practices correctly and effectively to really add value."

Along with the improved fuel consumption, Gundel & Son has seen real benefit from FORS training. The company currently has one apprentice driver and has always championed driver development. "Our new apprentice will be the third we have trained, my son being another," explains Gundel. "It is really important to ensure the drivers are skilled – we have an aging driver workforce so



looking to the future is key.

"The FORS Safe Urban Driving course and the knowledge we have gained from understanding how driving style can help improve fuel efficiency and tyre wear has made a big difference," he added.

Graham Holder, FORS Head of Quality Assurance and Compliance, was quick to congratulate Gundel & Son on reaching FORS Gold. "Reaching our 300th FORS

Gold accredited member is great news and shows our members continue to have the appetite and dedication to push for ever higher standards for their businesses," he said. "This milestone is significant for our industry too. It means there are now even more highly skilled, safe and environmentally efficient FORS operators working across the country continuing to raise operational standards in road transport."

All aboard the FORS train

Funded places on a selection of FORS training courses have been announced, to help members upskill their driving workforce. The free training places – exclusive to FORS members – are being funded to help individuals fulfil the training requirements set out in the FORS Standard and to aid progression through the FORS tiered accreditation. Places are available on mandatory FORS Safe Urban Driving, Van Smart and LoCITY Driving courses, with each place allocated on a first come, first served basis.

"At Silver, the FORS Standard requires drivers to undertake training on road risk and the safety of vulnerable road users every five years. At Gold, drivers must undertake training on reducing fuel consumption and vehicle emissions, also every five years," explained Sonia Hayward, FORS Manager.

"Safe Urban Driving and Van Smart meet the FORS Silver professional development requirement, while LoCITY Driving meets the FORS Gold professional development requirement," she added. "In addition, each course is seven hours in duration and is Driver CPC accredited, which is helpful for drivers ahead of the CPC deadline in September."

FORS Professional Safe Urban Driving is designed to give commercial HGV drivers



experience of urban driving from the point of view of vulnerable road users such as cyclists, with each participant completing a practical cycling module. For light commercial vehicle drivers, places are available on Van Smart, which also offers practical vulnerable road user training.

The LoCITY Driving course focuses on minimising the environmental impact of vans and HGVs by reducing emissions through the use of pre-journey planning and vehicle checks, fuel-efficient driving, and alternative fuels.

Conference call

The fourth annual FORS Members' Conference will take place at the National Conference Centre, Birmingham, on Tuesday 15 October 2019. FORS will once again welcome delegates from its extensive membership base to the one-day event, to engage in a range of presentations. The key message from the event will be how FORS can make road transport operators 'Safer, Smarter, and Greener'.

This year's event will be hosted by Jo Godsmark, Chair of CILT (Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport) Outsourcing and Procurement Forum, and Director of BigChange. Godsmark is also a trustee of Transaid, an international charity that seeks to provide safe, sustainable and affordable transport across the world.

Many exciting speakers have already been confirmed for the event, including: Michelin's Edwin Farquhar; Caroline Barber from Transaid; Highways England's John Kerner; John Spottiswood, Director of Heathrow Logistics Integration and many more.

The invitation-only FORS Members' Conference will include an exhibition featuring FORS Associates and Affinity Partners, each showcasing services designed to help FORS members meet the FORS Standard and assist in driving-up industry best practice.

FORS heads to RWM

Those attending RWM Exhibition, the recycling and water and energy waste management event, will have the opportunity to meet the FORS team.

Taking place at the NEC, Birmingham on the 11th and 12th September 2019, the show will feature more than 500 exhibitors, 350 seminars and 50 free-to-attend theatres, making it one of the biggest platforms for latest innovations in the recycling and waste management sectors.

One of the main speakers will be NASA's leading Chemical Engineer and Principal Investigator, Dr Annie Meier, who will discuss a technology NASA is developing that will allow for chemical recycling in space.

FORS will be exhibiting at the two-day event on stand R4.

Visitors to the stand will get the opportunity to speak with FORS experts,

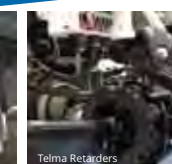
who will be happy to answer any queries you may have in regards to your level of accreditation or the benefits of membership.

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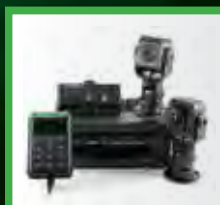




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News

Urban trailers have a more certain future

Uncertainty about future emissions standards in cities is driving some operators to switch away from rigid trucks to 4x2 tractors and short 'urban' trailers.

Investing in a diesel rigid truck with a working life of perhaps 10 years is no longer the safe bet it once was: the rise in 'localism', which allows councils to impose low or zero emissions zones, means that such vehicles could easily be banned from the areas that they were purchased to work in before their life is over.

An unpowered trailer obviously does not have those constraints, and could conceivably continue to work coupled to a gas or electric tractor unit if the need arose.

Speaking at the Commercial Vehicle Show, SDC's Regional Sales Manager Matthew Duxbury explained that the company was seeing

growing demand for its urban trailers, which are available in curtainside and box body form, and with or without tail-lifts, or with hinged or roller-shutter doors.

The show trailer featured a positively-steered rear axle from BPW, controlled by link arms from the trailer's turntable, but self-steer axles are also available.

BPW also supplied the load restraint system.

Duxbury said that the trailer could access premises that were difficult for rigid trucks, and allowed better utilisation of tractor units.

The only downside is that such equipment obviously requires drivers with C + E licences – some of whom will not be keen on urban delivery work.

Operators could address this by helping existing Cat C drivers to upgrade to C + E.



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Drivers: are you properly qualified?

On the 9th September 2019 the Driver Certificate of Professional Competence (CPC) will celebrate its 10th birthday.

Born from a European Union Directive 2003/59/EC it requires all professional drivers of lorries over 3.5 tonnes to receive 35 hours of training in five years to gain a Driver CPC, which is in addition to a vocational driving licence.

Most employers put their drivers through an in-house Driver CPC course at least once a year, but the onus is not on the employer, it is with the driver.

If the employer does not offer Driver CPC modules to its employees, do they know how many of their drivers still need periodic training ahead of

the deadline? The original deadline was 9th September 2014 and it is important to remember that this new deadline is a cut-off date.

If a driver has not met this deadline, the certificate is deemed to have lapsed.

Therefore, the driver would not be legally covered to drive a truck professionally on the 10th September 2019. A driver can be fined up to

£1,000 for driving professionally without the Driver CPC. Should the driver complete their training on 15th October 2019, then their next training deadline is



15th October 2024, a full five years. However, they could not drive professionally between 10th September and 15th October 2019.

According to official

government statistics, from October 2014 to February 2019 some 295,000 new Driver CPC cards were issued, in a sector that employs 323,000 lorry drivers.





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News

Bus and coach sector update

Coach operator First Choice Minibus Services has been welcomed by FORS onto its Governance and Standards Advisory Group (GSAG). The appointment will allow First Choice the opportunity to share its wealth of experience and help FORS deliver best practice change for all operators in the passenger carrying vehicle (PCV) sector.

First Choice was one of the first coach operations to attain FORS Bronze accreditation in 2014. The news follows the announcement that the accreditation scheme has strengthened its remit in the PCV sector, having already established itself as the go-to accreditation scheme in the commercial vehicle sector with well in excess of 5,000 members.

With a strong commitment to safety and environmental protection, First Choice feels FORS now has a fully-rounded package of training and benefits that meet the specific demands of PCV operators.

"We sat down with FORS to discuss not only our own requirements, but also those of the wider bus and coach industry," said Jason Thornton, Associate Director at First Choice. "In five years, we have seen the benefits of FORS accreditation, but we also felt there was scope for the scheme to benefit the industry at large.

"I am pleased that today, First Choice sits on FORS GSAG alongside a group of like-minded companies and industry bodies who possess a single focus on

driving-up standards of best practice," added Thornton.

The success of FORS can be attributed to its ability to remain relevant to operators, updating its accreditation requirements – as set out in the FORS Standard – every two years to allow for legislative changes and working closely with members to deliver on its promise of providing a clear route to increased safety, efficiency and environmental protection across road transport.

These changes to FORS are testament to the growing diversity of its members and the organisation's continued goal to provide specific guidance for sectors with differing needs.

"Bus and coach operators, or those which operate passenger carrying vehicles have a lot to gain from FORS membership," explained John Hix, FORS Director.

"As FORS members in the haulage sector know, following our progressive accreditation will not only increase operational efficiencies for fleets and help ensure best safety practices for drivers and passengers," he added. "But it will also ensure members are able to be prepared to meet new environmental legislative changes coming into force. Urban passenger carrying fleet managers are well aware of the need for increased environmental efficiencies, with local authorities charged with improving air pollution in our towns and cities."

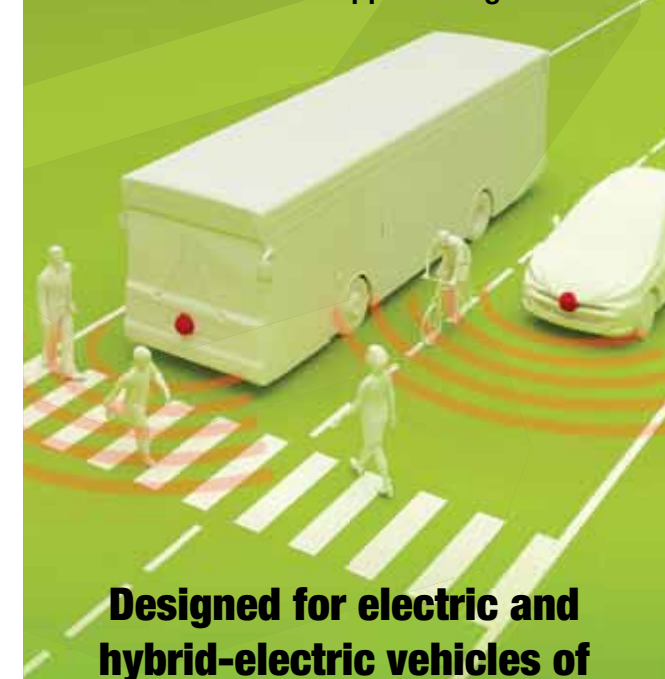


Jason Thornton, Associate Director at First Choice



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More than 450 firms use new online tools

More than 450 businesses are already using a new range of online fleet tools created for FORS members by fleet software specialist FleetCheck and launched at the CV Show 2019.

Available free to FORS members, there are three key elements to FORS Fleet Tools. A Fuel Tracker, which allows fleets to record and track fuel use; a PCN Tracker, which delivers management of penalty charge notices; and an Incident Tracker, which provides the means to monitor incidents involving drivers and vehicles.

Paul Wilkes, FORS Business Services Manager, said: "The new tools incorporate the latest thinking in fleet management and provide easy, reliable and effective

ways for FORS fleets to manage key areas of their operations. This allows them to adopt more effective strategies to increase efficiency and effectiveness while reducing their environmental impact and provides evidence that helps towards their FORS accreditation.

"The reaction to FORS Fleet Tools at the CV Show was excellent and we are pleased but also unsurprised that so many fleets have adopted them so rapidly," added Wilkes.

Second collaboration

The online tools – available for FORS members free of charge at www.fors-online.org.uk/cms/fors-fleet-tools/ – is the second



Peter Golding, Managing Director at FleetCheck

major collaboration between FORS and FleetCheck in the last 12 months. The first was the FORS FMS fleet management system launched in July 2018, which is now in use by 88 fleets totalling more than 4,000 vehicles. It is designed explicitly for FORS members seeking to gain and maintain their FORS Bronze, Silver and Gold accreditation as set out in the FORS Standard.

Wilkes said: "Fleets have been quick to recognise the potential of FORS FMS and the feedback from those that have started to use it is very positive. Over the next few months, we expect take-up to increase even further. This is a genuinely useful fleet tool."

Peter Golding, Managing Director at FleetCheck, said: "We're delighted to be involved with FORS and provide technology that is targeted at helping their members operate their fleets more effectively. FORS is a very worthwhile initiative and our tools and software are designed to help fleets maximise its benefits."

Easy access

FORS FMS includes an online checklist that allows FORS members quick and easy access to the specific fleet data required for accreditation, a comprehensive data platform providing online document storage, an information portal and an advanced reporting suite.

An intuitive traffic-light system included in the software alerts users to calendar events such as MOTs, service intervals, driver training and licence checking. Operator licence criteria is also managed, with FORS FMS providing a wide range of additional tools.



DVSA reveals that 88.5% of almost 11,000 LCVs stopped at the roadside annually are overloaded

With plans to pull over more LCVs on the roadside and potentially to enforce HGV-like legislation on the LCV market, it's about time you checked your van's laden weights, especially the individual axle weights, as SvTech has discovered many more vans have overloaded rear axles than previously thought. Any overload could invalidate your insurance, and if severe enough, could affect your braking and handling.

SvTech is seeing an increasing amount of van uprates at the moment, especially under 3500kg, where we are uprating from 2800kg to 3000/3200kg and from 3200kg up to 3500kg. This additional 300kg of payload is proving vital for many van owners, as it is very easily to overload these vehicles.

Whilst we uprate 3500kg vans by up to 500kg, there are some issues to take into consideration when going above 3500kg. A van over 3500kg needs a speed limiter fitted and, if carrying goods commercially, the van will need a tachograph to be fitted.

In addition, it means that the van can only be driven by someone who either passed their test before 1997 or by someone with a C1 entitlement on their driving licence.

These factors often make the uprate over 3500kg unviable or impractical for some fleet operators, however if the van is being regularly overloaded, SvTech would recommend uprating. We offer fleet discounts and can advise on the next steps. Please contact us to discuss your fleet needs.

"SvTech can help with uprating your LCV to give you more payload, keeping you safe and legal. Most makes and models are catered for."

Caution

It's important to remember that if a driver doesn't possess the C1 entitlement, and they overload a 3500kg van, in the event of being stopped, it would also be considered as a licence offence, which can hold strict penalties. It's worth weighing the van in an unladen and fully laden state to ascertain your limits.

Fleet discounts are available for uprates on 5 or more vehicles.

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Nothing to be afraid of...

The next generation of smart digital tachographs allow greater scrutiny of the vehicle and the operator so, unless you have something to hide, it should be welcomed. **By Kevin Swallow**

The rules that govern road transport are there to create a level playing field. With a degree of hindsight, it would be fair to say that when digital tachographs were introduced in 2005, many operators were given the opportunity to flout the rules, often without having to do anything.

For example: location, namely the inability to pinpoint a truck beyond the country (in our case, GB) it was in.

This requirement brought ambiguity, because before the driver had to add the location by law onto the paper tachograph.

This situation brought dire consequences to cabotage, which is the right to operate your truck in another country within the European Union.

By law, an international haulier can only carry out up to three jobs in seven days within the host member state with a five-day 'cooling off' period before the vehicle can return to that country. Having 'GB' as the only reference made policing cabotage impossible.

Moving from paper to digital tachographs inadvertently opened the door to using magnets, data manipulation and multiple cards to name but three. Legislators had to act.

Changes to tighten up tacho misuse

In March 2016 the European Commission moved to regulate the requirements for the construction, testing, installation, operation and repair of second-generation digital tachographs, also known as smart tachographs. It was critical to introduce security procedures to address security threats. All of those factors underpin European Regulations (Regulation 799/2016) for smart digital tachographs.



LEFT: Many trucks are now fitted with the SE5000 Connekt tachograph from Stoneridge

This is the sea change in the battle to stop rogue operators circumnavigating the rules. It does two things; it establishes location and allows roadside vehicle inspection officers from the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) to use remote-downloading to spot a wide range of irregularities associated with the tachograph system.

Traditionally, DVSA officers stopped trucks using the agency's traffic light system from the vehicle operator compliance risk score (O CRS) or a targeted campaign using a roadside checkpoint or if they'd spotted something wrong with the vehicle or the way it was driven.

Digital tachographs still do everything they did before but, in addition, there is the GNSS (Global Navigation Satellite System), which automatically records the location of the vehicle at the start and end of its journey. It also updates every three hours.

And DVSA roadside vehicle inspection officers will be able to communicate with the smart digital tachograph remotely using a short-range radio device. From the warmth and comfort of their own vehicle, they can follow a truck fitted with a smart digital tachograph and check the data without unnecessarily stopping the vehicle. If offences are registered, the vehicle can be stopped.

Remote control

So what is the remote-download accessing? Calibration data, card inserted while driving, driving without a card, longest break of power supply, most recent bid to breach security, motion data error, recorded speed, sensor fault, time adjustment data, vehicle motion conflict and vehicle registration data. It is a black box in all but name.

These factors target areas where fraud, misuse or device manipulation were prevalent. However, a remote download will not send information about drivers' hours, that can only be accessed once the vehicle has been stopped. Even then, information about drivers' hours and break times cannot be retained for longer than three hours unless it shows tachograph malpractice. In that situation, a full examination of the tachograph could be done, leading to further action.

The examination is comprehensive and designed to back up other areas of legislation, like cabotage. Prosecutors have said that being unable to prove the location of a vehicle has led to cases against drivers with alleged tachograph fraud or breaches of environmental conditions being dropped.

And then there is the minimum wage/posting rules. It is proposed that truck drivers from poorer

economic countries working in more affluent states receive the minimum wage of their temporary host.

For operators, the tachograph changes also present some new challenges as well as removing some software headaches. They will now collect more data and will need to understand what information can be shared with other approved vehicle telematics systems, which will allow all the information to be kept in one place.

Existing drivers' cards will work with new smart tachographs, although the cards will not record any of the extra information smart tachographs can capture. New Annex 1C cards will be phased in for drivers and will work in the old and new tachographs.



BELOW: The SE5000 Connekt is one of the new generation of smart tachographs

Licences: best to check



FORS driver licence checking service goes from strength to strength

FORS Affinity partnership with driver licence checking specialist, Licence Bureau, has led to over 100 FORS members taking the service. This service helps manage requirements around risk-based licence checking, thus ensuring they run a safe, compliant and legal workforce, while taking advantage of preferential rates for FORS members.

Licence Bureau was the first FORS Affinity Partner and helped set the model for future FORS Affinity partnerships, which provide FORS-branded products or services. FORS Affinity Partners add value by enabling operators to comply with legal or contractual requirements and/or improve on safety, emissions, security and operational efficiency.

Companies can request a quote for the FORS Driver Licence Checking Service from the FORS website at <https://www.fors-online.org.uk/cms/licence-checking-service/> with preferential rates available for all FORS members.

Growth in operator duty of care compliance

"This partnership agreement has come about after very careful consideration by Licence Bureau and FORS," reveals Malcolm Maycock, Managing Director at Licence Bureau. "It was critical for us to design a service that will benefit the operating community. Naturally we are delighted to be working with FORS. We have great expertise in this field and our business is growing. I

know we can help FORS members accurately process and manage driver licence checks, keep their records up to date and improve the overall safety of their fleets and all with a cost saving for FORS members, too".

Paul Wilkes, Business Services Manager, FORS, adds: "Regular, appropriate and risk-based licence checking is an important part of the FORS Standard, and we are delighted to have launched this opportunity with our Affinity Partner Licence Bureau, to offer FORS members this crucial service at a discounted rate."

How it works

Checking licences, in fact all of Licence Bureau's services, are managed and accessed via a Compliance Managed Services (CMS) online portal. FORS members gain a unique login to the site, which also allows access by other individuals in the transport office, thus enabling tailored information and alerts to operators' specific requirements.

A company dashboard lets the user see, at a glance, headline figures and risks. From here, users are able to easily click through the site to interrogate reports and management information.

Automatic training sessions can also be arranged.

For example, a FORS member may decide that for medium-risk drivers, a 'Driver Risk Assessment' and targeted eLearning is appropriate, where a high-risk driver may qualify for classroom training.

As well as the portal Licence Bureau also has the ability to upload the data, providing the driver has consented, to the FORS Fleet Management System (FORS FMS).

Basic requirements

Commercial vehicle drivers must have the correct licence categories and qualifications, and may require additional certifications depending on the vehicle type. Fleet managers need their drivers' consent to check their information, and once this is obtained can check their suitability through the DVLA.

The DVLA offers a basic driving licence information service, which can be used by individuals to view their own driving record, check penalty points or disqualifications and to create a licence 'check code' to share the record with someone else.

A 'check code' is then valid for 21 days and can be used to verify driving licence details.

Added value

With FORS Driver Licence Checking Service, the driver does not need to provide access for each check as the system completes the task automatically, saving time when regularly checking licences. Intuitively built to help manage licences, the system notifies the user of any exceptions required and allows the user to add actions and thus provide the audit trail required for compliance checks.

"It's about minimising hassle for operators," says Maycock. "Compliance is our business, and we cover all aspects of driver licencing, allowing FORS members to concentrate on the important business of meeting, and exceeding, their own customers' expectations.

"We've devised a highly effective management tool and, crucially, we provide operators with the peace-of-mind of knowing their drivers are compliant and operating within the law."

Meeting the requirements

FORS requirement 'D1 Licensing' states that all drivers shall hold a valid licence for the category and type of vehicle they are tasked to drive and manage any risks associated with endorsements or restrictions.

For drivers licensed in Great Britain, this shall be conducted through a service that directly accesses current DVLA data.

It is to ensure that drivers are licensed to operate vehicles on the public highway and any risks that have been identified are monitored and managed.



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Laying down the law

Senior figures within DVSA and the DfT speak out about the issues facing their areas of the transport industry

There are many challenges faced by operators with regards to human and physical resources, but there is also plenty of help and guidance available from organisations within the transport community. Marian Kitson was appointed Director of Enforcement at the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) last September. In her current role, she is responsible for DVSA enforcement activities including roadside checks, counter-fraud and intelligence. She also works with the traffic commissioners to help improve standards.

From her position in the roads and transport enforcement agency, Kitson's main areas of concern at roadside checks are tyres, wheels and load security. With seven per cent of the eligible UK vehicle parc now in DVSA's Earned Recognition Scheme, she says it allows proportionate intervention, with more effort going into targeting non-compliant operators.

DVSA aims to set out and enforce "minimum standards for a lifetime of safe driving and safe vehicles and to protect society from the consequences of unsafe drivers and vehicles being on the road". Kitson adds: "DVSA is at the roadside 24 hours a day, seven days a week and is aided by 10,000 ANPR cameras around the UK. Our aim is to detect, deter and disrupt the non-compliant; over £7 million worth of fines are now issued by DVSA examiners."

Wheel security and tyres are areas where the industry could do better, she admits, saying that "tyres remain a big issue at roadside stops and that's a real disappointment". Load security is also under scrutiny and Kitson gave a recent example of where pallets of bottled water had been placed in a curtainsider trailer completely unstrapped and subsequently caused an incident for the driver to deal with.

Traffic commissioner talk

In the year that the Department for Transport celebrates 100 years as a government ministry, Senior Traffic Commissioner Richard Turfitt believes that then, as now, consistency, continuity and transparency were key qualities for TCs in their role. "They are gatekeepers of the industry, reassuring

compliant operators that they were competing on a level playing field," he says.

Digital services have revolutionised operator licensing, says Turfitt, admitting that "the old VOSA platform was not fit for service". A new platform, launched late in 2016, meant that all major transactions between operators and DVSA could now be conducted digitally. "Operators can now change their nominated operating centre and fleet size on-line," he says.

There is still a great need to reduce the times taken to process these O-Licence applications and, while Turfitt says it is a "flagship priority", the success of this ramp-up was – to a great extent – dependent upon operators getting all the correct information attached to their application on at least the second attempt. "No application should be outstanding over six months," he admits.

Recognising that the process works both ways, the traffic commissioner says there is a big need to focus on operators who seek to frustrate or avoid the law. "We also need to educate and inform operators – too many still don't engage with us," says Turfitt. "We are seeking to engage with those we don't currently reach. We are also looking at moving away from making physical checks that buses are running to route and timetable."

Managing driver behaviour was a key factor in keeping an O-Licence, TC Turfitt explains, saying that there were now 30 case studies available online that operators could use as a basis for 'toolbox talks' with drivers. He congratulates the majority of operators on an invisibility of their success. "If there are no incidents, then we don't get noticed," he says.



Senior Traffic Commissioner Richard Turfitt



Marian Kitson, Director of Enforcement at the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency

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ID: A00320



By Richard Simpson



In respect of safety and legislative compliance, Mols says the big advantage is the intelligent connection to tyres and braking systems. "This enables trailer roadworthiness to be maintained at all times. There is huge demand now for digitalised

>>>>>>>>>

Keep tabs on your trailers

There is a huge advantage in detecting potential tyre and brake problems before they occur

► solutions. Every transport organisation now needs data and tracking, but many are struggling to integrate data from various sources and make the most of it.

Mols says that Schmitz can offer a comprehensive product and can also retrofit to other trailers if required. "For instance, Gist purchased 55 of our 'Executive' trailers, which come with a full suite of telematics – and was so pleased with the data generated that it asked us to fit our system to the rest of its 'other make' trailers. This is a task that can be undertaken locally by our service partner network."

The race for a return on investment

While many SCB customers are drawn by the ability of telematics to monitor and verify load condition for cold chain compliance purposes, Mols emphasises that real financial paybacks can be found in reduced chassis running costs and breakdowns. "There is a huge advantage in detecting potential tyre and brake problems before they occur," he asserts.

"We have developed our own tyre pressure monitoring system (TPMS) that also reads tyre temperature, which enables it to detect problems with hubs and brakes too. The system informs the operator when things are likely to go bad.

"The expense of fitting tracking is nothing when

compared to the cost of a tyre breakdown on the road," he proposes. "To the cost of the replacement tyre, you must add a call-out charge of maybe £300 and possible penalties for the operator for a late delivery.

"Regardless of whether the trailer is a fridge or not, telematics has an increasingly important role to play. As consumers, we have all been 'educated' by Amazon to expect to be able to know where our deliveries are all the time and so we expect the same of our trailers.

There are obvious benefits of tracking were there is a risk of theft, but Mols says the SCB system also keeps an accurate track of trailer mileage, even when the trailer is not coupled to a truck's electrical system. "This is not the case for some others, which are connected instead to the ABS, which only becomes active when connected to a tractor unit," he says. "Our system uses a motion sensor, which is built into the axle, which we manufacture ourselves. It is available on all trailer types with SCB axles.

"An additional, related, feature is geofencing, which can be lined to an internal locking system, so the trailer doors can only be opened in specific areas," he adds. "A feature like this is particularly appealing, for instance, for operators who are running between Dover and Calais and having to deal with the thread of stowaways."

The need for connectivity

All makes and types of trailer with an electronic braking system (EBS) can use Effitrailer, a trailer-monitoring system marketed by Michelin and aimed at fleets with 100 trailers or more, irrespective of tyre fitment. Michelin claims tyre-related trailer breakdown reductions of up to 50 per cent. Fuel costs may fall: just one under-inflated tyre can increase an artic's diesel consumption by four to five per cent. When Welsh scrap-metal haulier

Ronnie S Evans trialled Effitrailer on 15 trailers, the system detected 45 cases of low pressure which could potentially have written a tyre off in just eight months. The remainder of its 56-strong trailer fleet has now been connected.

Air-brake pioneer Wabco, which is about to become part of the ZF empire, supplies braking systems to many trailer manufacturers and is using the data generated by its EBS technology to provide trailer, truck, and driver-related information as one back-office platform to help optimise logistical processes. It recently announced the upgrading of its TX-TrailerGuard system to TX-Trailerpulse, which connects equipped trailers to the Internet of Things saying it would combine "real-time track and trace functionality with additional remote trailer health and diagnostic information.

TX-Trailerpulse can be installed on the production line or retrofitted, and is aimed both at operators, and at rental and leasing companies who need to monitor the use, condition and position of their assets.

Philippe Colpron, Wabco's Vice-President and Fleet Solutions Global Business Leader, says: "Seventy per cent of today's operational trailers in Europe are not equipped with any form of connectivity solution. TX-Trailerpulse offers a cost-effective way to optimally track and manage trailers and is agnostic to the trailer type, enabling fleets with mixed cargo to apply the technology."

TX-Trailerpulse captures and processes EBS and diagnostics data via the web-based TX-Trailerfit portal, which assesses the technical health of the trailer and can provide, for example, root cause indication and repair hints. Additionally, users can monitor the EBS' use over a trailer's lifetime and check critical EBS events. Data can be shared easily and securely with workshops and service partners, building a digitally connected repair and maintenance chain, and maximising trailer uptime.

The system can be integrated into Rio, the telematics platform of Scania and MAN parent Traton, which would give operators already using Rio to monitor their trucks trailer monitoring on the same platform.

Cold storage solution

Specialist trailer axle manufacturer BPW is also getting in on the act and launched its own service at this year's CV Show, using technology developed by BPW Group subsidiary idem telematics. This is primarily aimed at the temperature-controlled sector: with up to six load compartment temperature

sensors, and door openings are also recorded. Customers can build on the platform with brake wear and tyre pressure monitoring, together with the recording of EBS performance.

The latter feature enables operators to reduce roller brake testing to annual intervals while maintaining compliance with the DVSA Earned Recognition Scheme, and makes pre-emptive repairs easier.

Orbcom describes itself as a global leader in the Internet of Things, connecting businesses to their assets. Alongside temperature-controlled specific systems it also rolled out its trailer and container trackers

at April's CV Show. The BT120 is a self-contained trailer management and tracking unit. It offers real-time tracking via multiple satellite systems, and can also transmit text and email alerts on door openings, record date from the EBS system, including whether or not the trailer is loaded, and is installed in a covert position with no external antenna.

Orbcom also launched its solar-powered GT1210: this unit is intended for use on intermodal containers and trailers, with solar power to ensure that it can continue reporting even when the asset has been disconnected from a power unit for a long period of time. It can message for 40 days at 15-minute intervals without recharging, and an hour of sunlight will harvest sufficient energy to send up to 300 additional messages.

The GT1210 connects to base via cellular and (optional) satellite telecoms, so it can be tracked anywhere in the world. Features include a cargo sensor, tamper indicator and a three-axis accelerometer. It can be connected to most proprietary management systems.

While trailer-based systems won't relay the minutiae of driver behaviour (cruise-control use and engine idling, for example) back to base, it will provide fleet managers with a great deal of data concerning location, mechanical condition and the state of the tyres and load. Plus information from the braking system and motion sensors will give some insight into how vehicles are being driven. Clearly, it's not the best solution for every operator, but for those with a large trailer fleet or high-value or sensitive cargoes, it can be a winner.



Telematics consultant, Simon Mols

Wabco's TX-Trailerplus can be used with the Rio telematics platform



Urban delivery is loads better

The need to reduce levels of pollution in urban environments is leading vehicle manufacturers to re-evaluate all models in their ranges. **Steve Banner** looks at the tipper market

Prominent FORS supporter and FORS Gold member J Murphy & Sons is one of the companies leading the way so far as environmentally-friendly 7.5-tonners are concerned. The infrastructure giant is putting 20 low-emission diesel-electric Fuso Canter Eco Hybrid tippers into service in London, in response to the introduction of the city's Ultra Low Emission Zone.

The newcomers are equipped with bodies constructed by Penman Engineering of Dumfries and are operated by Murphy Plant, a subsidiary of the Murphy parent company. This outfit provides plant and commercial vehicles to the group's various contracting divisions.

The Canter Eco Hybrid is powered by a 150hp 3-litre diesel engine, which works in parallel with a 40kW electric motor. When pulling away from rest, the Canter uses electric power only, then switches to a combination of diesel and electric operation once the truck gets up to around 6mph. The electric motor also supports the diesel at higher speeds depending on the power requirement.

An idle stop/start system is fitted as standard and contributes to fuel savings of up to 23 per cent compared with the truck's conventionally-engineered diesel stable-mate, according to Fuso. CO₂, NO_x, and particulate emissions are lower as a consequence too.

Safer and cleaner

Canter Eco Hybrid has further advantages says Murphy Plant Compliance Manager, Richard Burnham, especially when it comes to the protection of vulnerable road users. "Its low seating position

puts drivers in a better place to make eye contact with cyclists and pedestrians," he says.

A key plus-point as far as all Fuso Canter derivatives are concerned is their competitive payload figure, a characteristic they share with Isuzu's 7.5-tonners. Both model ranges are heirs to a Far Eastern design heritage that features robust, but lightweight, ladder chassis, which allow operators to transport loads weighing up to 4.0 tonnes.

That weight is considerably more than many of the more-heavily-engineered 7.5-tonners from established European brands can offer, which are, in some cases, down-plated versions of trucks operating at much higher gross weights.

Nor does one have to go up to 7.5 tonnes with either Fuso or Isuzu to enjoy a healthy payload capacity. A pair of 5.5-tonne Isuzu N55.150

tippers fitted with aluminium bodies that recently went into service with the landscape and tree services division of a well-known West of England infrastructure company can shift 2.1 tonnes apiece.

"The trucks are robust enough to be more than capable of towing our trailers which have chippers and shredders on them," says a company spokesman.

On a Daily basis

It is worth noting that Iveco is offering Fuso and Isuzu some competition at 7.5 tonnes with a Daily chassis cab grossing at 7.2 tonnes. Not only does it have a similarly competitive payload capability, despite the fact that it is lighter, but its van-like cab makes it look less intimidating if the driver is delivering a load of sand or gravel to a house in a suburban street.

Payload capacity matters in tipper operation – the more sand or gravel you can carry, the more you can earn – and is a particular issue at 3.5 tonnes. While today's 3.5-tonners are undoubtedly safer, better-equipped and more pleasant to drive than their predecessors of 30 years ago, all the extras that have been added have driven up un-laden weight, and driven down their payload capability; and tipper body builders have been entrusted with the task of winning some of that capability back.

As things stand, a 3.5-tonne tipper with a body with a steel floor, aluminium drop-down sides and an aluminium tailboard can typically transport little more than 1,000kg to 1,100kg legally.

However, if you need to carry closer to 1,200kg-1,300kg or more – and assuming that the body is mounted on a lightweight chassis such as Citroën's Relay, Peugeot's Boxer or Fiat Professional's

Murphy Plant operates 20 Fuso Canter Eco Hybrid tippers in London





ABOVE: Volkswagen's Crafter-based tipper was produced by Ingimex

Ducato, then you may have no option but to delete the steel floor and specify an all-aluminium body instead.

The drawback is the price; aluminium cost between 30 per cent and 35 per cent more than steel at the time of writing. But supporters of alloy bodies argue that the extra weight they can carry means that they will pay for themselves if the vehicle is being acquired on a finance agreement spread over several years.

The conversion options

Back in January, Renault Pro+ launched a tipper

with an aluminium body constructed by VFS and based on a Master chassis cab. VFS is one of Renault's accredited convertor partners. Almost all light commercial vehicle manufacturers offer accredited or approved conversions encompassing dropsides, Lutons and a variety of other body types as well as tippers, with market leader Ford naturally playing a prominent role.

As part of its One-Stop line-up, VFS markets a three-way as well as a one-way tipper. Three-ways make it easier to, for example, pull up alongside a pavement and repair it without having to park at right-angles while tipping and block the street. But their extra cost and complication mean they have never been all that popular in the UK.

A Pro+ Master tipper can be specified with a large toolbox mounted between the cab and the tipper body, which allows valuable tools to be transported securely. The risk of theft means that they should not be left lying around in an open-backed tipper.

Not to be outdone, Volkswagen Commercial Vehicles launched a new range of Engineered to Go conversions at the start of this year including a tipper based on Crafter and produced by Telford, Shropshire-based Ingimex.

Material choices

Another way of cutting tipper body weight is to employ high-strength steel rather than aluminium or mild steel. High-strength steel is more expensive than its mild counterpart, but less of it has to be used, so its use can be cost-neutral, reckons VFS.



RIGHT: The Citroën Relay features an lightweight chassis



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Lightweight tippers

▶ Yet although it is ideal for rugged applications that result in the body receiving a pronounced battering, it does not offer the same level of payload advantage that aluminium delivers.

VFS says that a cage tipper body and a tool pod all made from high-strength steel and mounted on a 3.5-tonne chassis weigh around 700kg in total. The same package made from aluminium will tip the scales at closer to 500kg.

Using a lightweight tipper body is especially important if you are mounting it on a four-door double-cab chassis. Fail to do so and you will be unable to achieve anything like a respectable payload once the cab is full of burly labourers. Opt for the aforementioned VFS alloy tipper on a Master double-cab and you can haul a payload of almost 1,000kg depending on the derivative chosen.

Weight expectations

While a 3.5-tonner chassis is the favoured platform for light tippers, it is not the only option. Ingimex has cleverly developed a tipper under the Tip-Up banner based on a 3.2-tonne VW Transporter T32 chassis that can transport up to 1,050kg; as much as some 3.5-tonners can shift.



Nor has it been obliged to go the all-aluminium route. The body uses alloy sides and an alloy and steel sub-frame but a steel floor and tailgate. What is more, Toyota and Bristol body builder TGS have come up with a tipper based on a Hilux 4x4 chassis under the Trade Plus banner that can carry up to 1,000kg.

Just what you require if you need to venture off-road and repair a piece of infrastructure on the other side of a muddy, deeply-rutted field.

ABOVE: The new generation of tippers are cleaner and also more efficient than the vehicles they've replaced

As an accredited approved partner for Renault, VFS has developed a number of tipper options for the French manufacturer



What to know before you tow

For those operators running 4x4s on their fleets that have the ability to affix a trailer, it's important to understand the weight limits and restrictions that apply when on the move. **By Richard Drinkwater**

There is an argument that bigger is better when it comes to 4x4s and their towing allowances, as people seek to pull ever-larger trailers or caravans.

Indeed, nothing can come close to the likes of a Land Rover Defender or Isuzu D-Max with a possible 3,500kg capability for towing.

Popular vehicles such as Nissan's Navara, the Mitsubishi L200 or the Hilux from Toyota may only have a towing allowance of around 2,600-2,800kg, which, to many drivers, won't fit their requirements for towing a 3.0-3.5-tonne trailer.

In most cases this towing allowance is calculated by subtracting the maximum weight of the vehicle (GVW) from the overall Gross Train Weight (GTW), leaving the maximum that you can legally tow, irrelevant of whether or not the trailer is capable of more. However you may find that what the Manufacturer advertises as a towing allowance is achieved by sacrificing some of the payload on the car/pickup.

For example, if a manufacturer's declared towing allowance is 3,500kg, the actual vehicle GVW rating is 3,050kg, and the GTW rating is 6,000kg, there is a difference of 2,950kg. So in order to tow the full allowance of 3,500kg, you would need to ensure the laden weight of the vehicle didn't exceed 2,950kg, not 3,050kg.

Check before you travel

The whole situation can be confusing, so the only way of knowing what you can carry and what you can tow is by checking both the VIN plate and the manufacturer's spec sheet.

You cannot simply guess that if the vehicle is not loaded up to a specific weight you can transfer the



Nothing can come close to the likes of an Isuzu D-Max with a possible 3,500kg capability for towing

// Nearly all vehicles from North America are not legally allowed to be used to tow //

remaining allowance on to the towing allowance. There may be other limiting factors about the vehicle, such as chassis strength, towbar rating, driveline and clutch ability, etc that restrict the maximum amount to be on the trailer.

Once you've ascertained how much you can tow or need to tow, you'll need to make sure that the complete combined weight of pickup and trailer doesn't exceed the stated GTW design weight, and to do this you'll need to get the truck and trailer weighed at a weighbridge.

In addition to checking the weights, the driver also needs to ensure that, where the vehicle and trailer combination exceed 3.5 tonnes maximum authorised mass (MAM) and is being used for commercial purposes, it falls within scope of the EU Regulation EC561, meaning the need to record drivers' hours and the use of tachographs (barring some exemptions).

American experience

Although American vehicles may be considered a "power-horse" that could pull just about anything behind them, you may be surprised to know that nearly all vehicles from North America don't have a towing allowance (GTW) rating shown on the VIN plate, and as such are not legally allowed to be used to tow.

It's irrelevant what the manufacturer may offer as a train weight on a spec sheet. If there's no figure shown for towing on the VIN plate, you are not authorised to tow.

Some vehicles from North America don't have a towing allowance (GTW) rating shown on the VIN plate, and as such are not legally allowed to be used to tow



A tachograph may be needed where the vehicle and trailer combination exceed 3.5 tonnes maximum authorised mass (MAM)



The Land Rover Defender is one of the best-known vehicles for towing

However, despite the seemingly generous allowances for carrying and towing weight for 4x4s, SvTech – the UK's leading re-rating specialist – is seeing an increasing number of 4x4 towing overloaded, in addition to large number of GVW overloads. Conversely, SvTech is also downplating the GVW in some vehicles so that the Towing allowance (GTW) can be increased. But this is dependent upon the driver ensuring he or she does not overload the vehicle, with passengers and luggage and to ensure this they must weigh their vehicle.

Ignorance isn't deemed a suitable excuse by the authorities so don't take any chances with your safety and that of other road users. SvTech has, for over 20 years, assisted drivers of all vehicle makes and models, with vehicle weight issues and towing options.



The SvTech story

Established in 1993, SvTech Ltd is now the UK's leading authority on re-rating vehicles, which includes uprating to give more payload capacity and downplating to reduce Gross Vehicle Weight (GVW) for licence and low-emission purposes. SvTech specialises in offering technical

support to truck and van manufacturers in matters relating to Vehicle Type Approval, with specific emphasis on payloads and braking systems. SvTech has accumulated a vast database covering all makes and models of commercial vehicles and its service is used across the UK and Europe to modify minibuses, motorhomes,

horseboxes, vans, 4x4s, pick-ups and HGVs.

SvTech attends many shows and offers free weight checks to highlight how easy it is to overload vehicles. In addition, it also offers a fleet weighing service to dealers and operators of HGVs, LCVs, Motorhomes, minibuses and horseboxes.

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Reflecting on the future

With the debut of MirrorCam, Mercedes-Benz heralds a bold new era in which rear-facing cameras replace conventional mirrors. But it's not the only manufacturer embracing the idea. **Dean Barrett** takes a look at the technology and practicalities

At the launch event of its New Actros in Berlin in September 2018, Mercedes-Benz ushered in a number of technological 'world firsts' for commercial vehicles. Most are concerned with making life easier for the driver and further improving fuel economy. Perhaps the most obvious (certainly for anyone looking at the truck from the outside) is that New Actros (and also New Arocs) is fitted with rear-facing cameras instead of conventional mirrors.

Until now, alternatives to traditional glass mirror clusters have typically only been seen on concept vehicles.

But Mercedes-Benz is the first manufacturer to put a truck into series production that has this technology fitted as standard. Operators have the choice to specify conventional mirrors on New Actros and Arocs if they wish, and it will shave around £755 off the purchase price. But according to the German OEM, the advantages in taking its new camera system – dubbed MirrorCam – more than justify the cost outlay and the kit will in fact pay for itself quickly in terms of fuel savings. Indeed, Mercedes says, the cameras improve the truck's aerodynamic profile and account for a fuel efficiency boost of up to 1.3 per cent.

On the face of it, MirrorCam claims to offer drivers better all-round visibility with performance that Mercedes reckons "exceeds legal requirements". The 2.1 MP cameras with dirt-resistant lenses are attached to the right and left side of the roof frame, and the images are fed to two 15in displays mounted to each A-pillar inside the cab.



The camera specifics

Each monitor has a resolution of 720 x 1920 pixels and is divided into two views. When the truck is moving forwards, the upper, larger section shows a standard view alongside the trailer, while a wide-angle image sits at the bottom of the screen to mimic the layout of conventional mirrors.

On the upper view, some handy markers are overlaid to aid the driver. The shorter dotted line marks the end of the trailer, which is set manually to suit trailer length. Above these, distance markers are shown, which can indicate safe zones, such as for pulling in after overtaking.

The screen's upper image automatically pans to follow the end of the trailer while turning. And while reversing, the bottom display automatically switches

to a wider angle to give a better view of the yard or loading bay.

The cameras are heated to avoid misting, and Mercedes says low-light performance is "grainier, but clear". The camera arms pivot to reduce impact damage (though its smaller footprint should reduce strike instances anyway); replacement costs are "not significantly more" than a traditional mirror assembly, apparently...

On the move – mirrorless

While driving, the absence of conventional mirrors mounted outside the windows delivers a reduction in blindspots. With the view now unimpeded, it's now much easier to clearly monitor traffic at junctions and roundabouts, for example. And with the driver's

side display more closely aligned with their forward field of view, it can be checked with a much quicker flick of the eyes compared to a traditional mirror – so a driver's attention can get back on the road that much faster.

Some MirrorCam functionality can be customised. The brightness of the displays, for example, can be manually adjusted; and the field of view can be modified via arrow keys on the door.

While parked up for the night, drivers worried about noises outside can also activate the cameras covertly and see what's going on around the vehicle without having to open the curtains. Though there's no facility to record footage should anything untoward be happening, it should be fairly easy for a driver to record the feed on their mobile phones

The view of ZF's Side Vision Assist system from the driver's seat

// MirrorCam claims to offer drivers better all-round visibility with performance that Mercedes reckons exceeds legal requirements //

The goal with MirrorEye is to "outperform traditional mirrors in all situations"

Stoneridge debuted the MirrorEye on a concept truck at the IAA Commercial Vehicle Show in Hannover in 2018



should the need arise. So far, so good. But what about residual values when the time comes for operators to sell on camera-equipped vehicles? Mercedes says if MirrorCam is no longer required, the kit can be easily retrofitted with conventional mirrors at pre-defined attachment points on the doors.

Other contenders

While Mercedes is the first to market with MirrorCam, there are signs that other manufacturers and suppliers are close to launching competing systems. A tour of the show halls at the IAA Show in Hannover last September revealed tech giant Stoneridge had fitted its Innovation Truck with a proprietary MirrorEye system. This vehicle uses cameras of a similar resolution to that found on the Actros, though feeds them to slightly smaller 12.3in displays in the cab.

Interestingly, Stoneridge reckons MirrorEye reduces drag and fuel consumption by 2-3 per cent. Plus, the firm announced in December 2018 that MirrorEye is the first CMS (camera monitoring system) to receive approval from the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) – which effectively means MirrorEye is currently the only federally-approved CMS that allows for complete

removal of traditional mirrors in the US. According to Stoneridge, the goal with MirrorEye is to "outperform traditional mirrors in all situations". It will also have other "value-added features including a self-cleaning function to eliminate problems with rain and dirt, an advanced defrosting system for winter driving, night vision to make manoeuvring at night safer and easier and advanced image handling to minimise glare caused by direct sunlight".

In addition to MirrorEye, which is designed to handle class II and IV mirror views (rear views of the vehicle), Stoneridge is also developing a TopEye system for classes V and VI (front and side views of the vehicle). TopEye can be mounted at various points on the vehicle to offer better visibility in front and to the sides of the truck, with the same resolution and clarity as MirrorEye.

Elsewhere, ZF has a similar technology under development – Side Vision Assist. This technology is based on a combination of cameras and radar systems that replace rear-facing mirrors with screens in the cab, though augmented with artificial intelligence that the company says can "clearly distinguish and classify pedestrians, cyclists and static objects" – as well as warn drivers if it detects a risk of a collision.

"Our system is based on two radar sensors

mounted on the lower right side of a truck," says ZF's Commercial Vehicle Driver Assistance expert, Martin Mayer. "This configuration ensures optimal all-round coverage of potential collision areas, even in confusing scenarios or where poor visibility is a factor."

The system primarily supports the driver if objects come close to entering the danger zone of the vehicle, or if the previously still-standing road user (cyclist or pedestrian) suddenly begins to move. In such scenarios, the system issues visual, acoustic or haptic warnings, depending on need.

ZF said Side Vision Assist can be connected to other

systems, such as its Automatic Emergency Braking and Evasive Manoeuvre Assist, to further increase safety – and added its digital mirror screens can also be used as a platform for additional warnings if required.

Looking ahead

So with Mercedes first out the blocks with MirrorCam and other tech firms readying their own versions, it's not that much of a stretch to expect similar technology to appear

on other brands in the near future. Fellow German truck-maker MAN has already offered a glimpse of its own developments on new NEOPLAN Skyliner and Cityliner coach and bus models – and rear-view cameras are also fitted to its CitE concept truck, which took pride of place on MAN's stand at the recent CV Show in Birmingham. And with Iveco just about to take the wraps off its new Stralis models, there is mounting speculation the new vehicles will also forgo conventional mirrors for some form of camera-and-screen combination.

But cycling back to the message set out by Mercedes-Benz last September, one thing is clear:

Rear view cameras are fitted to the CitE concept truck from MAN



the future for commercial vehicle technology is increasingly digital, and savvy operators would be wise to consider such developments with an open mind. It's still early days and these systems are in their infancy – but having trialled MirrorCam ourselves on the open road, we can attest to the benefits of screens instead of glass.

The real proof will come once these vehicles enter daily operation with hauliers, and there will doubtless be early niggles. But increased fuel efficiency, vastly improved visibility for the driver and a host of other safety benefits on offer from rear-facing camera systems is very hard to ignore.

Mercedes-Benz is the first truck manufacturer to introduce camera technology in place of traditional mirrors

CAZ the way to do it

Across the UK more and more clean air zones are being designated, with many more set to follow in the future.

Steve Banner reports

City councils countrywide are introducing vehicle exhaust emission restrictions in a bid to cut air pollution levels. They are doing so at the behest of government and against a background of rising concern over the impact of NOx, particulates and other pollutants generated by diesel engines in particular on human health. NO2 (nitrogen dioxide) is a particular worry, because it inflames the lining of the lung and reduces immunity to lung infections such as bronchitis.

Taking action is a legal obligation under the 2010 Air Quality Standards Regulations. These regulations enshrine the World Health Organization's 2005 Air Quality Guidelines into UK law.

Commercial vehicle operators are concerned, however, that the restrictions being imposed are inconsistent from one city to the next. These operators fear that a truck or van that is acceptable to one local authority will be penalised when it attempts to make a delivery to premises in another authority's catchment area where different rules prevail. There is also concern that a regulatory patchwork quilt will make it impossible to organise national and regional deliveries efficiently and cost-effectively.

Where are the CAZs

The first five English provincial cities mandated to introduce what are referred to as Clean Air Zones (CAZs) by 2020 are Leeds, Birmingham, Nottingham, Southampton, and Derby. These areas are pursuing different approaches and, while charging is not compulsory, some councils are slapping levies on commercial vehicles that are deemed to be non-compliant.

Leeds is one city that falls into this category. It

aims to impose a £50 daily penalty on trucks entering its CAZ that do not meet Euro 6 when the zone comes into force. Vans will not be penalised however and three of the city's key industrial areas – Holbeck, Pudsey and Seacroft – will be exempted from the zone until 2024.

Businesses affected by the scheme are receiving over £23m of government support; not quite as much as the city council might have hoped for.

Birmingham intends to slap a penalty of £50 a day on non-Euro 6 trucks too, with non-Euro 6 diesel vans and non-Euro 4 petrol vans facing an £8 daily fee. However it also intends to grant a one-year exemption for commercial vehicles currently registered in the zone, and for those registered in the wider Birmingham area that are subject to a finance agreement that extends beyond 2020. Both exemptions are limited to two vehicles for each business and are being supported by £38m from the government's Clean Air Fund.

Variation in charges

By contrast, Nottingham will not be levying charges at all. Its atmosphere is deemed to be clean enough thanks in part to reduced emissions from its buses; Nottingham City Transport has been operating 53 double-deckers powered by biogas and plans to have a further 67 in service by the end of 2019.

"Cleaner engines are helping to improve air quality in Nottingham," says Richard Wellings, Principal Public Transport officer at Nottingham City Council.

Southampton had planned to roll out a CAZ that would involve a £100 daily levy on trucks that did not meet Euro 6. However, it has scrapped the plan, following a public consultation and lobbying by hauliers and trade associations. The move has been praised by Richard Burnett, Chief Executive, Road Haulage Association (RHA). "The city has made the



right decision in dropping a charging scheme that would have put businesses and livelihoods at risk," he says.

Westminster is supporting Southampton with funding to the tune of £1.8m in its efforts to take other measures to improve air quality, including encouraging local taxi firms to opt for electric vehicles.

No decision had been taken about what will happen in Derby at the time of writing. Last year the council put three CAZ options out to public consultation, with Option 1 gaining by far and away the most support. It involves traffic management measures rather than charging and the proposed steps have been set out in an outline business case to Westminster.

The future of the CAZ

Twenty-three other English councils could be obliged to introduce CAZs from 2021 onwards, potentially followed by a further 33. In the meantime an Ultra Low Emission Zone came into force in central London on 8 April. At present it has the same boundaries as the Congestion Charging Zone but will be expanded to an area bounded by the North and South Circular Roads

from 25 October 2021.

Diesel vans and trucks entering it have to meet Euro 6. If they do not, they attract a daily penalty of £12.50 and £100 respectively. Petrol vans have to comply with Euro 4 to avoid being penalised.

The move has drawn considerable fire from the RHA. It argues that many operators who run Euro 5 trucks which may be less than five years old simply cannot afford to replace them with Euro 6 models.

"Hauliers still running Euro 5 trucks are caught between a rock and a hard place," Burnett argues. "Profit levels in haulage are meagre and a charge of £100 to deliver into London will completely wipe out their already tight margins and make new vehicle acquisition impossible."

Retrofit emission control packages have been developed for older buses and coaches that will enable them to meet Euro 6, but the availability of systems suitable for trucks is limited, and they are expensive.

London Mayor Sadiq Khan has, however, introduced a scheme to help London businesses with fewer than 10 employees meet the cost of acquiring ULEZ-compliant vans. Elsewhere, Leeds City Council has been offering local businesses grants of up to £16,000 to replace trucks that do not

ABOVE: Lawsons has added a 26-tonne CNG-powered Stralis NP to its London delivery fleet

// Things are going to get a lot tighter across the UK. CAZs are just the start //

Gas-powered vehicles, such as this Iveco Daily, will be exempt



comply with its CAZ subject to conditions.

Among other cities that are likely to introduce CAZs, Manchester and Sheffield look set to bring in charges for trucks, while plans devised by Bath and North East Somerset Council (BANES) for a CAZ for Bath will hit non-Euro-6 trucks to the tune of £100 a day from 2021 onwards. Non-Euro-6 vans will be charged too.

With government support, BANES is hoping to provide £28m of funding to help van and truck operators based in the zone, or who deliver to premises within the zone regularly, to upgrade their vehicles to the required standard. This will be in the form of interest-free loans spread over a maximum of five years.

Businesses that are unable to obtain a loan would be able to apply for an exemption from charges until 1 January 2023.

Observes one former Bath city centre resident: "Almost every building in the centre is occupied by either a restaurant or an upmarket shop and Bath plays host to two major department stores. All of these establishments receive deliveries and the measures being proposed will only serve to drive up their costs."

Accompanied by limited traffic management measures in the city centre, the Bath scheme is likely to embrace a section of the A36; an important freight route for the region which by-passes the city centre. Critics suggest that this could prompt hauliers to insist that their drivers take a detour away from the section involved, potentially sending trucks down local rural roads that are unsuitable for them.

Zones outside England

In Scotland, Glasgow city centre witnessed the introduction of a Low Emission Zone (LEZ) on 31 December 2018 which applies to local service buses.

Its scope is gradually being expanded however and it will be fully implemented on 31 December 2022, when all vehicles will have to meet specified exhaust emission standards. LEZs are also due to be rolled out in Edinburgh, Aberdeen and Dundee.

Turning to Wales, last year saw the Welsh government



Vans will be affected, but there are electric versions to avoid charges, such as the Renault Kangoo

direct Cardiff Council to investigate whether a CAZ is needed for the country's capital. Having done so, the council has ruled it out and is instead spending £32m on a variety of measures to cut air pollution, including the introduction of electric buses. It has applied to the Welsh government for the necessary funds.

No CAZs are at present planned for Northern Ireland. However Belfast has rolled out an Air Quality Action Plan, which embraces everything from an improved cycle network to the installation of electric charging points for cars. Also worthy of note is the introduction of the Belfast Rapid Transit system which features diesel-electric hybrid articulated buses.

Future zone potential

CAZs, ULEZs and LEZs could gradually be replaced by ZEZs – Zero Emission Zones – as cities take action to implement them unilaterally, predicts Francis Robson. Now Sustainability Manager at Arriva Group, he was formerly Technical Specialist, Intelligent Mobility, at Cenex, the UK's Centre of Excellence for Low Carbon and Fuel Cell technologies.

Transport for London plans to roll out ZEZs over the next few years while Oxford is proposing to ban all non-zero-emission-capable vehicles from parking or loading in the city centre during certain hours from 2020 onwards.

This could lead to the phased introduction of a ZEZ across a far wider area of the city – the so-called Green zone – with a target date of 2035. Only zero-emission-capable vehicles will be allowed to enter it and the exclusion will apply to all buses, vans, trucks and cars.

"Things are going to get a lot tighter across the UK," observes Robson. "CAZs are just the start."

Air pollution: a danger to drivers' health and a fleet's bottom line

Fleet drivers are at risk from dangerous levels of air pollution which can be two and a half times higher inside a vehicle than outside, according to a literature review by Imperial College London.

Levels of nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) inside vehicles in urban traffic can be as much as 10 times over the World Health Organisation safety limit – and drivers are inhaling toxic gases and particles with every breath. This poses a significant health risk and, as a result, commercial drivers have some of the highest probabilities of developing air pollution related illnesses.

The impacts of air pollution on health are varied in both immediacy and severity of impact. Short term impacts include reduced alertness, respiratory problems and visual impairment, influencing decision-making and worsening of reaction times, while long-term impacts include cancer, heart disease, cognitive decline and a reduction in life expectancy.

Recent research by the University of Washington has also linked air pollution to poor sleep efficiency. Data showed the group with the highest levels of exposure to NO₂ had an almost 60 per cent increased likelihood of having low sleep efficiency compared to those with the lowest NO₂ exposure levels. This lack of quality of sleep could be affecting drivers on a daily basis.

Clean air pioneers

Airlabs is one of the world's leading pioneers in clean air technology. Marc Ottolini, CEO of Airlabs commented: "Fleet drivers urgently need protection from air pollution. Policies like the Ultra-Low Emissions Zone (ULEZ) help to reduce air pollution levels in city centres but have a very limited effect on the total exposure that professional drivers see."

Air pollution has both direct negative impacts on the economics of fleet operations as well as creating risks further down the line. A study by the Grantham Research Institute revealed that a 30 per cent reduction in NO₂ exposure results in five per cent fewer incidents. Evidence also shows that sick

days can be reduced by 3.2 per cent when eliminating air pollution from the workplace of drivers. As the vehicle cabin is the workplace for commercial drivers, fleet managers can and should aim to improve the air quality in the vehicle and the health and wellbeing of staff. This strategy could reduce driver errors and increase employee and customer satisfaction.

Protection solution

Fleet managers need a solution which will both protect their drivers and their bottom line. One such solution is the Airbubbl – an advanced air cleaner that when placed in the vehicle, removes up to 97 per cent of particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) and up to 95 per cent of NO₂ from the vehicle cabin in a matter of minutes.

Ottolini said: "Many drivers and fleet managers believe that standard air filters in their vehicles give adequate protection against air pollution. Unfortunately, in most vehicles this is not the case. By installing a product like the airbubbl, they can be confident that they breathe clean, healthy air, feel better and drive safely."

BELOW: drivers are inhaling toxic gases and particles with every breath

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breathe better

// Commercial drivers have some of the highest probabilities of developing air pollution related illnesses //



Get in touch for more information on how you can protect drivers from air pollution: Mike Miles, Head of Fleet. Mike.miles@airlabs.com, or visit airbubbl.com

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Keep an eye out for safety

// Aspoeck provides its customers with simplified installations and higher levels of detection //

Aspoeck UK can provide customers with innovative VRU detection systems



Developments in detection technology have allowed Aspoeck UK to produce the most advanced systems on the market. The systems created by the company are specifically designed for the detection of vulnerable road users.

Currently, systems require multiple ultrasonic sensors mounted across the vehicle bodywork.

This configuration requires a large amount of wiring and also, due to positioning and the small detection zone of ultrasonic sensors, offers limited coverage.

By using both cameras and/or radar sensors, Aspoeck provides its customers with drastically simplified installations and higher levels of detection.



Turn assist

In the example of turn assist, by positioning a single camera on the vehicle blind spot, Aspoeck can provide movement detection and warning to the driver automatically via an in-cab display.

The camera uses special software to define and track moving objects and alerts the driver accordingly when there is an issue or potential danger. This camera can, in turn, be combined with other cameras to provide surround view features and also recording via DVR.



Side/rear defender

To monitor a large area such as the side of a rigid truck would typically require a large number of ultrasonic sensors to provide a reasonable level of coverage.

In addition, these systems cannot easily differentiate between moving objects and road furniture.

By using a radar sensor from Aspoeck, an area up to 8m-wide can be monitored – ignoring stationary objects and alerting for any movement. A bespoke display unit can be used or the information can be overlaid onto a camera monitor. This system can also be adapted for lane change detection and also reverse detection.

■ For further information, email: sales@aspoeck.co.uk

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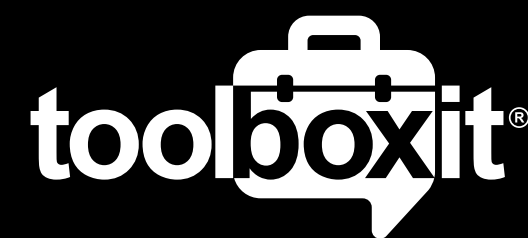
Since 1996, more than 250,000 installations have been completed, with 30W and 100W solar mono-crystalline panel used, allowing the option of making multiple panel sets.

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