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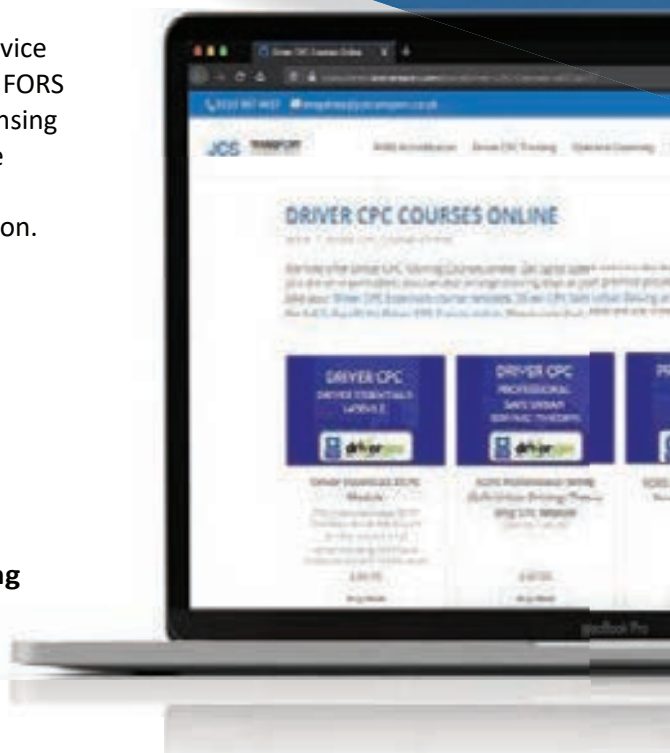
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Welcome

There is a good chance that you are reading these words in Farnborough, at ITT Hub 2021. The first Innovation and Technology in Transport event has been a long time in the making, having been rescheduled from last year because of the Covid-19 pandemic. However, all the signs are that it has been worth the wait, with an impressive list of participants within the exhibition and speakers at the conference.

Many people within the transport sector have suffered or had to compromise with their working lives since March 2020. Events such as ITT Hub enable an opportunity to celebrate the fact that there are signs of life getting back to some sort of normality. Being able to meet up with industry colleagues and make new contacts is something that many of us might have taken for granted in the past. However, having endured prolonged periods of being locked down, face-to-face contact – socially distanced, of course – is appreciated now, more than ever.

The event will cover pressing issues in the transport and logistics sectors including decarbonisation, fleet efficiency, safety and compliance. There will also be support from FORS, as members of the team will be at Farnborough's International Exhibition and

Conference Centre on 30 June and 1 July. Staff in attendance will be giving advice, guidance and information about everything under the FORS umbrella and are keen to spread the FORS message. Visitors and fellow exhibitors can find FORS on Stand B14.

However, while physical events are great, there are still advantages to online interactions. The time and efficiency benefits of not having to travel to a meeting are huge – as well as the cost savings. With that in mind, 'Introduction to FORS' webinars have been scheduled for fleet operators and individuals keen to find out more about the scheme. Running monthly from July until the end of the year, the webinars last one hour and as well as listening there will be the opportunity to ask questions. For more information about the Introduction to FORS webinar, visit www.fors-online.org.uk/cms/introduction-fors-webinar-2/.

Enjoy the issue,

Matthew Eisenegger
Editor



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FORS member Rhenus High Tech battles against Covid pandemic

Many vehicle operators have stepped up to the plate during the Covid pandemic – and one such example is FORS Bronze member Rhenus High Tech.

Drawing on its experience of more than 35 years in the specialist field of medical equipment delivery and installation, the company was ready when the pandemic began to take hold in March 2020. At that point, it redeployed many of its fleet and staff to help deliver and install vital medical equipment where it was needed most.

Over the course of the last year, Rhenus has ensured the safe delivery of patient monitors, ventilators and



respirator systems designed for Covid-19 patient treatment.

Dedicated teams have also worked hard in the life sciences and biosciences. They have delivered biomedical freezers, incubators, blood analysers and clinical diagnostic

systems across the UK and Europe.

“As a business with specialist knowledge and experience of delivering and installing high value equipment to the medical sector, we knew we had an important part to play when the

pandemic hit last year,” said Graham Barrow, Managing Director at Rhenus High Tech. “The agility and commitment the company has demonstrated is testament to our fantastic staff and it’s a real achievement that so many critical supply chains have been fulfilled.”

Rhenus High Tech has two FORS-accredited operating centres in the UK in Ashford and Manchester. They are supported by a fleet of high tech vehicles ranging from 3.5-tonnes up to 26-tonnes.

“Our FORS membership has enabled us to access more work and gather interest from new customers who recognise the value of FORS accreditation,” added Barrow.

New TyreWatch products to go on show at ITT Hub

Commercial vehicle tyre management company and FORS Associate TyreWatch is unveiling two products at this

year’s ITT Hub transport show.

According to the company, the products will help cut costs, improve safety and lower

carbon emissions for operators.

The first product is AutoAlign, due for full UK roll-out in September. AutoAlign is a

vehicle monitoring system designed to combat wheel misalignment which, according to TyreWatch, is unknowingly suffered by around 33 per cent of all commercial vehicles in the UK.

Also due to be launched at the ITT Hub show is an updated version of TyreWatch’s VanSmart tyre monitoring system.

Light commercial vehicle operators using the system will benefit from improved safety and reduced running costs with the new version.

VanSmart II, uses smart-technology and bespoke wheel sensors to monitor and detect potential tyre issues during typical van use, such as urban and ‘last mile’ deliveries.

The system also keeps a watch on general tyre status and performance over longer journeys.

● ITT Hub preview: p.37

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White paper predicts freight sector growth

Research has been published by Shell and Frost & Sullivan stating that global road freight revenues are expected to grow by an average of 4.3 per cent annually from 2020 to 2025.

The news is contained within a white paper, 'Navigating

Roadblocks in the Long-Haul Road Freight Industry.

It examines the status of the freight industry as the world responds to the Covid-19 pandemic. The report looks at key developments within the industry, such as the new generation of fleet management

solutions and the role sustainable practices will play in future-proofing operations. It also offers insights to fleet professionals, helping them to better position themselves for the future.

The main challenges identified are: skilled driver

shortages, cost management, sustainability, security and the regulatory environment.

"Achieving an interconnected and more sustainable future requires collaboration with customers, partners and stakeholders," said Patrick Carré, Vice-President of Commercial Road Transport at Shell. "We are committed to helping customers navigate shifts in the industry, by providing digital fleet management tools such as Shell Telematics, streamlining tolling payments in Europe and increasing access to low emissions fuels, such as LNG, BioLNG, hydrogen fuel cell and battery electric vehicles. These offers are designed to help fleets optimise their total cost of ownership (TCO) and improve security and convenience."

Franck Leveque, Partner and Global Client Leader, Mobility Practice at Frost & Sullivan, said: "The past year has proven how flexible and adaptable industries must be, not just to continue operations but to survive."



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Parksafe gets a rebrand

Vehicle safety equipment company and FORS Associate Parksafe has announced a rebranding, which sees it become Parksafe Group. The move is designed to clearly distinguish the different parts of the business, including: Parksafe Automotive, Parksafe On Demand, Parksafe Vision Dash Cams and Parksafe Locks.

"We have been fortunate enough to be able to secure several large contracts, to provide vehicle safety equipment to fleet operators within the UK and Europe," said Mick Barber, Owner of Parksafe Group.

Draeger welcomes new alcohol lock report

Safety technology provider Draeger Safety UK, has welcomed the publication of the Parliamentary Advisory Council for Transport Safety's (PACTS) report into the use of interlock devices.

The report, 'Locking out the drink driver. Using alcohol interlocks to reduce drink driving in the UK', concluded that the use of interlock devices as part of a rehab programme was effective in reducing drink driving.

"The annual drink-driving figures show that the deaths caused by drink impaired drivers has been

static for the past decade, so we believe that the time is right to try something different to reduce these avoidable fatalities," said Graham Hurst, Marketing Manager, Impairment at Draeger.

In other Draeger news the company has worked with Warrington-based Hawthorns Logistics to install interlock devices on all of the operator's 28 trucks. The move comes as part of a pledge by Hawthorn Logistics to raise awareness of the importance of the technology and how safety levels can be improved.

Drink-driving is

responsible for 13 per cent of all road traffic deaths in the UK and there is growing concern about the number of cases involving repeat offenders. "We believe that having the interlock devices in place safeguards against our drivers unwittingly getting behind the wheel while under the influence of alcohol," said Dave Kilsby, Director, Hawthorn Logistics.

"Furthermore, our drivers often transport goods across the border in Scotland, so we have set the device to 50mg of alcohol rather than 80mg which is the drink drive limit when driving in England."

Project participation

Kerbside management and intelligent parking firm AppyWay has revealed its involvement in the DfT's Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) Data Model Alpha Project. The company acted as a partner to Valtech, the digital agency that led the project.

The project explored how a data publication and distribution system could transform how the data is accessed and published. The work builds on the previous DfT project in 2018 and 2019 that consisted of a discovery, draft standardised data model development.

At present, most local authorities are unable to publish standardised and open TRO data for anyone to access, use and share. The current legal procedures for making traffic orders are paper-based, process heavy, costly and the data is inconsistent and non-standardised.

"The centralised data model that the Alpha project worked towards will deliver huge benefits across the board and we're excited to be supporting Valtech," said AppyWay Founder and CEO, Dan Hubert.

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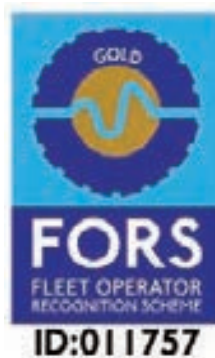
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New DVS rules improve safety on London's roads

Three months after Transport for London (TfL) launched the Direct Vision Standard (DVS) for lorries, new figures show how fleets are adhering to the rules.

TfL's DVS requires operators of HGVs weighing more than 12 tonnes to apply for a free permit that assigns vehicles a star rating based on how much the

driver can see directly through their A and B windows in order to be able to drive in London.

It is now operating 24 hours a day, seven days a week and is enforced on all roads in London.

Permits are enforced by Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) cameras. Those without a permit face a penalty charge notice (PCN) of up to £550 and since March TfL

says that around 7,000 PCNs have been issued.

Overall, 136,000 safety permits have been issued to date and almost 70,000 HGVs have been fitted with the safety measures aimed at protecting people walking and cycling.

Christina Calderato, head of transport strategy and planning for TfL, said that in just a few months the direct

vision standard had helped to "dramatically improve" the safety of lorries and save lives.

"We want to thank all of the freight operators who have led the way in ensuring they only operate the safest lorries in London and across the UK and we would like to encourage any freight operators who haven't yet applied for a safety permit to do so," she said.



Vans and Light Commercial

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 be dangerous for the driver, and if caught you could face a fine, points on your licence and a loss of your van.

SvTech is seeing an increasing amount of van uprates at the moment, especially under 3500kg, where we are uprating from 2000kg 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 easy to overload these vehicles.

What 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 to be inspected by a competent person.

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 deliver on the next day. Please contact us to discuss your fleet needs.

Caution

It is 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 unloaded and fully laden state to ascertain your limits.

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

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New TruTime

Compliance software company TruTac has launched a more comprehensive version of TruTime – the time-keeping software module designed for the commercial transport industry.

Integrated with TruTac's existing software tools, the all-new TruTime web-based time and attendance system analyses and manages working time for drivers and employees. TruTime saves administration time and reduces agency costs by accurately recording staff attendance.

"TruTime is a comprehensive software product for fleet operators who need to manage and monitor all their drivers' daily work activities in one place," said TruTac's Commercial and Marketing Director, Jemma James.

"Now, with greater functionality, from detailed lead-in and lead-out data and driver CPC hours management to holiday requests and clocking facilities for remote workers, TruTime can save even more time and money for fleet operators," she added.

Correction

In the Spring 2021 issue of *The Standard*, it was stated that LondonEnergy was a FORS Silver member, but the company is a FORS Gold member.



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Safer wheels for Procon Readymix

London-based concrete supplier – and FORS Silver accredited firm – Procon Readymix has become one of the first operators in the UK to protect its vehicles with the latest generation Wheely-Safe technology. The innovation combines intelligent tyre pressure monitoring (TPMS), wheel loss and brake temperature sensing systems with walkaround checkers to help drivers complete daily inspections.

The company has installed the products onto two of its 32-tonne DAF multi-wheelers, with a view to rolling it out across the rest of its 18-strong fleet over the coming months.

“The Wheely-Safe kits give us the reassurance our drivers will be notified at the first sign

of a wheel nut loosening, abnormal temperatures being detected from the wheel area or tyre pressures dropping rapidly, allowing them to bring the vehicle to a safe and immediate stop,” said Christian Vale, Operations Manager at Procon Readymix.

“Plus, it is helping us put our tyre maintenance under the microscope, with amber alerts if any fitment drops below optimum inflation,” he added.

“We are confident this will help us to improve fuel consumption and reduce tyre wear, which brings both financial and



environmental benefits.”

Procon Readymix – part of the Cemex UK Group – specified Wheely-Safe’s external TPMS sensors, which replace the valve cap and pair up with an in-cab solar receiver. These are fitted

alongside a pair of wheel loss and temperature sensors on each wheel, with a battery-powered booster under the chassis to ensure signals from even the rear axle are transmitted to the receiver with ease.

Champion status for care home contractor

A specialist company in care home developments has become a FORS Champion. Appledorn Developments hopes the new status will help it boost efficiency and environmental best practice.

Scarborough-based Appledorn completes building projects, from initial land procurement, through to complete build and facilities management.

“The care home sector is no different from the broader construction sector – all works start with client requirements, and it is our job to ensure they are completed as efficiently as possible to meet each client need,” said Mark Dodgson, Appledorn’s Contracts Manager.

“As FORS Champions, we can now ensure all our contractors meet FORS Bronze, which provides value for our clients and makes sure we are demonstrating the importance of operational efficiency,” he added.

FORS Champions make FORS accreditation a



contractual stipulation in their road transport supply chain. Champions can specify a level of FORS which contractors must meet, from entry-level FORS Bronze, up to FORS Silver – the level at which FORS aligns with CLOCS (Construction, Logistics and Community Safety) and on to the highest tier – FORS Gold.

● If your organisation specifies FORS but is not registered as a FORS Champion, please email: associates@fors-online.org.uk

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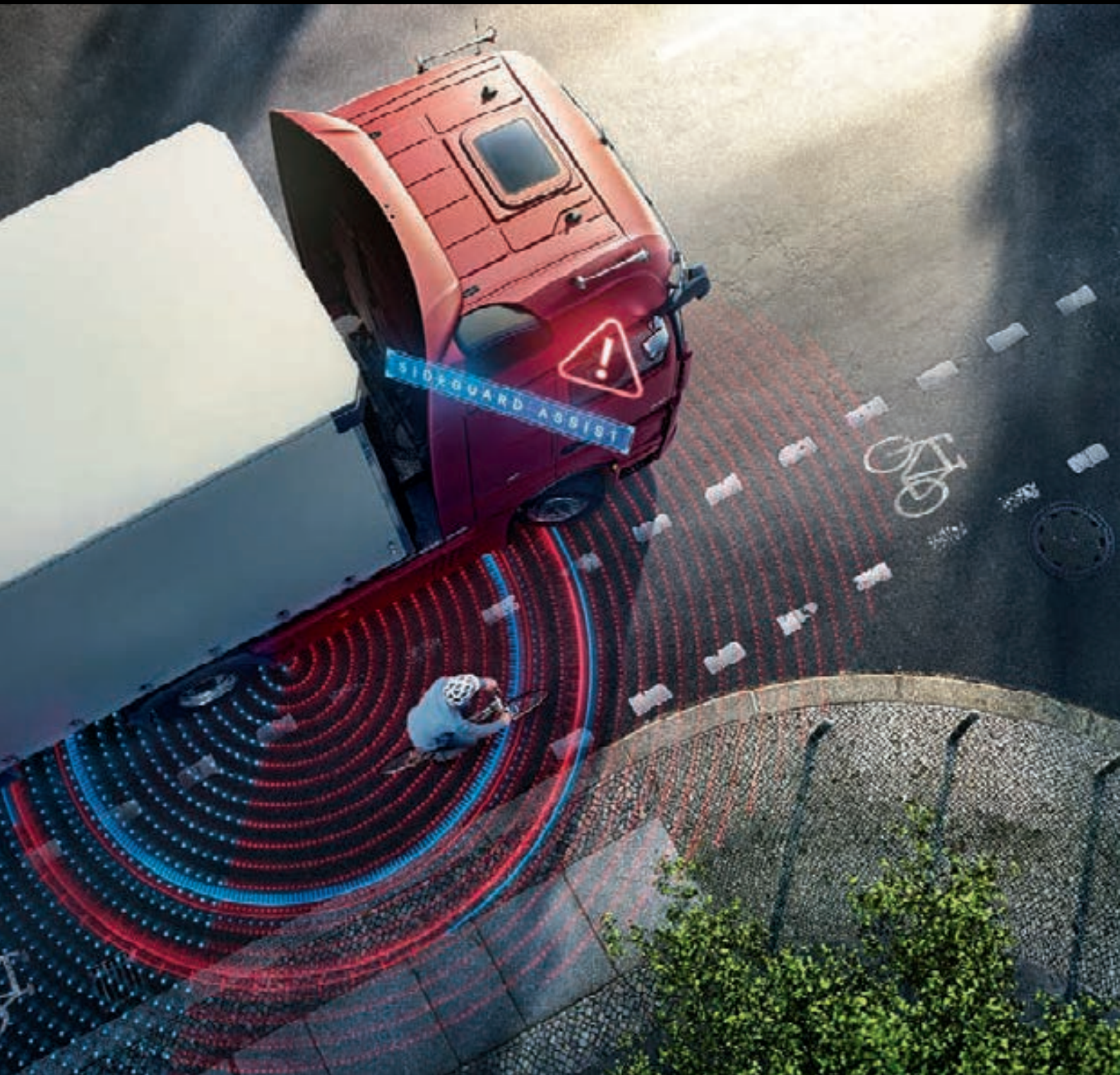
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Head to ITT Hub for SmartDrive safety tech

Fleet operators visiting the ITT Hub event in Farnborough on 30 June and 1 July will have the opportunity to find out how SmartDrive Systems can help improve their business.

The video-based software provider and FORS Associate will be using a last-mile delivery vehicle to demonstrate how they can reduce road risk.

Unlike most camera systems, which are typically reactive in nature, SmartDrive footage is analysed by experienced professionals who equip the fleet manager with driver-specific coaching insights.

The system allows fleet operators in all commercial sectors – from truck and van, to bus and coach – to improve driver safety and performance

quickly and effectively.

“Ours is a preventative, proactive system,” said SmartDrive Systems’ Managing Director, Penny Brooks. “It enables operators to identify driver behaviours which create road risk and eliminate them through objective, targeted coaching, as well as providing the benefits of collision evidence, exonerating drivers, recognising good driving and speeding up the first notice of loss (FNOL) process.”



SmartDrive Systems can help improve fleet business

“Factors such as the boom in e-commerce following the Covid-19 pandemic and the increasingly sophisticated

technology that most of us use mean the roads are busier than ever and the risks to fleet safety have never been greater,”

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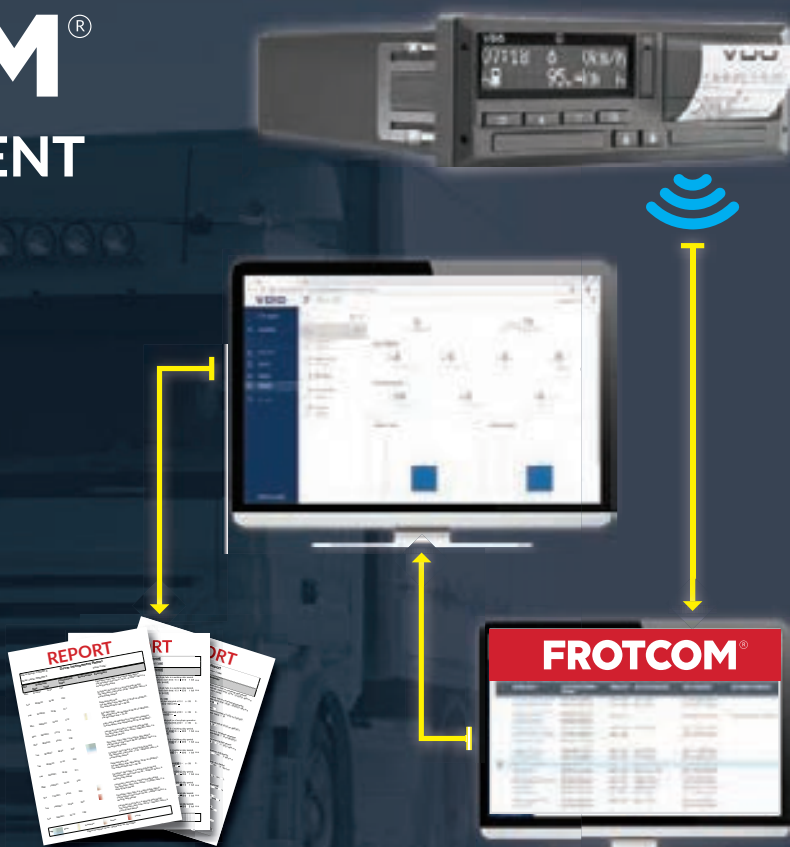
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FORS early adopter celebrations

Gold accreditation is the pinnacle for FORS and this year marks the tenth anniversary of the scheme awarding its first set of premium accolades.

FORS has recognised a group of early adopters who have held Gold status since 2011 – referred to as ‘exceptional operators committing to continuous improvement’.

Of the current 309 FORS Gold members, five have maintained this top level for 10 consecutive years. One early adopter is the City of London Corporation and the Chairman of its Environmental Services Committee, Keith Bottomley, said it had been great for the city.

“Promoting the FORS Standard to our supply chain

gives us confidence that those around us are working to the same high standard,” he said.

Meanwhile, another operator celebrating 10 years of FORS Gold is Travis Perkins.

Frank Elkins, group COO, said it demonstrated confidence to customers when operating at the highest standards.

Specifically, he highlighted areas of fleet activity such as driver training, vehicle safety, operational and management standards.

“Our industry leading fleet management allows our branches and colleagues to focus on meeting customers’ requirements.”

O’Donovan Waste Disposal has also been at the top for ten years. “The Gold standard is a well-recognised and respected

accreditation,” said Jacqueline O’Donovan, the firm’s Managing Director.

“It clearly shows our level of commitment to ensuring operational excellence in our everyday business processes.”

The final two FORS members to have achieved 10 consecutive years of Gold accreditation are Hanson UK and LondonEnergy.



Jacqueline O’Donovan

Recruitment drive

Diesel Technic UK has announced key new appointments to its sales team, designed to strengthening the company’s presence across the country. Reporting to General Manager Mark Todd, Peter Shufflebotham has been appointed Sales Manager Western Region, Jamie Deboo joins as Sales Manager Eastern Region and James Crampton takes on the role of Sales Manager North and Northern Ireland. They join Jake Morris, Sales Manager, who works out of Diesel Technic UK’s headquarters in Kingswinford, West Midlands.

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All aboard the hydrogen highway

Daimler and Volvo are the latest vehicle manufacturers to investigate diesel alternatives for long-haul applications.

By John Kendall

“

Given current technology, trucks, like cars and vans, will have to make the transition to electrical power to replace diesel

”

London truck operators won't need reminding that from 25 October 2021, the London Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) is expanding from its current area, shared with the London Congestion Charge Zone. The new, larger, area will be bounded by the North and South Circular roads, but not including either of these major routes.

This helps to bring into sharper focus the Government's aim to phase out vehicles powered by internal combustion engines. New trucks will not be included in the ban on new combustion-engined light vehicles due to come into force in 2030. However, truck manufacturers are working to meet the EU target of reaching net zero emissions by 2050.

Given current technology, trucks, like cars and vans, will have to make the transition to electrical power to replace diesel. For heavy trucks, this is likely to lead in two directions.

Vehicles covering shorter distances – such as distribution around the London area or on city-to-city routes – will probably follow cars and vans and use battery power.

For long-distance trucks, instead of batteries, the drive motors are more likely to receive electrical power from hydrogen fuel-cells. These can use hydrogen combined with air in the fuel-cell to generate electricity, leaving water as the only by-product, with no toxic emissions.

Fuel-cell facts

The advantage for long-distance vehicles is that re-



fuelling hydrogen takes about the same amount of time as refuelling with diesel. Plus, fuel-cells weigh less than the batteries that would be needed to offer a 500-mile range.

However, currently, fuel-cells are not as efficient as batteries – although they are improving. Also, a hydrogen fuelling network will be an essential requirement for vehicles.

At the moment, there are around 12 hydrogen re-fuelling sites across the UK, but these are mostly designed for cars and buses.

There is also the issue of how hydrogen is produced. It can be extracted from methane gas, but unless bio-methane is used, it would have to be sourced from fossil fuels.

Since fuel-cells are reversible, when powered with electricity, they can generate hydrogen instead. If the electricity is produced from renewable sources such as solar power, wind turbines or hydro-electricity, no fossil fuels would be used to produce the hydrogen. This 'green' hydrogen could then be used to fuel hydrogen fuel-cell powered trucks.



Range of options

Not surprisingly, the clear signals about ending the use of fossil fuels to power vehicles is driving manufacturers to assess how they will power vehicles in the future. All major European truck makers are now producing battery-powered vehicles and assessing the viability of hydrogen fuel-cells.

At the end of last year, Iveco, Daimler Truck, OMV, Shell and the Volvo Group established H2Accelerate to create the conditions for a mass-market roll-out of hydrogen fuel-cell trucks in Europe.

The project will run through the 2020s with the aim of getting several hundred hydrogen-powered trucks on the road and building a small number of high-capacity re-fuelling stations in the first phase.

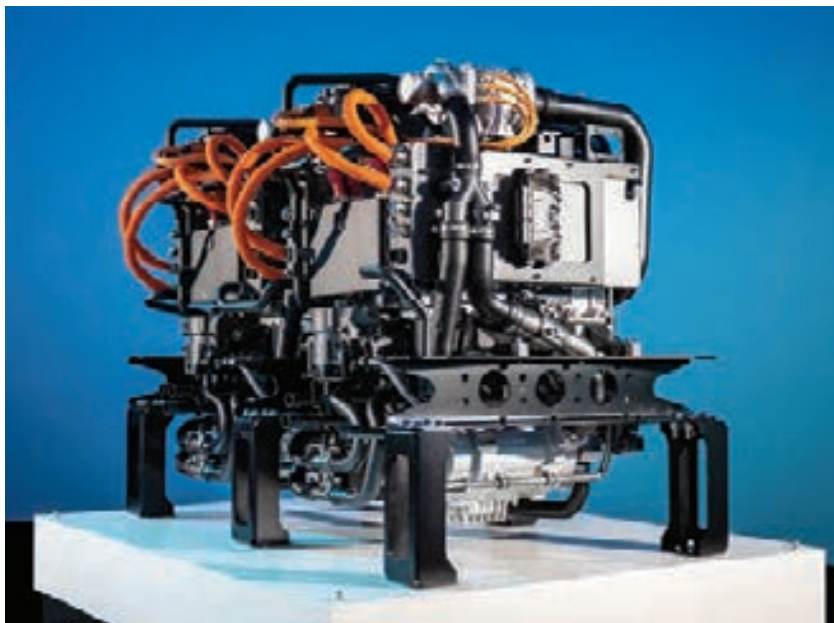
In the second phase, the aim is to achieve volume manufacture of thousands of vehicles a year to ensure there are 10,000 hydrogen-powered trucks on European roads by 2030 and then to ensure that major transport corridors across Europe have a network of re-fuelling stations.

Daimler Truck and Volvo Group have also announced a joint venture between the two companies for the manufacture of hydrogen fuel-cells. Named cellcentric, the joint venture will develop, build and market fuel-cell systems for long-haul trucks and other applications. These could include buses, coaches, trains and shipping. Both companies have researched hydrogen fuel-cells for several decades and Daimler first exhibited a fuel cell powered van in the mid 1990s.

Since cellcentric was announced at the end of April, Daimler Truck has already taken further steps. The company is in the process of separating from its parent company, with an independent stock market listing expected by the end of 2021.

In a series of steps announced in late May, the company has said it will ramp down its spending on internal combustion engine powertrains and look to partnerships to provide for its heavy-duty engine needs. The company already has a partnership with US engine maker Cummins for medium duty engines. By 2025, the company expects to have

Currently, fuel-cells are not as efficient as batteries



For long-distance trucks, instead of batteries, the drive motors are more likely to receive electrical power from hydrogen fuel-cells

redirected most of its research and development spending to zero-emission technologies.

Under these plans, it will launch the eActros, a battery-powered version of its Actros heavy truck with a 500km range in 2024.

The aim is ultimately to provide a vehicle with a range of 800km (500 miles) as well as develop hydrogen fuel-cell powered models.

To meet its goals for battery powered trucks, Daimler Truck will intensify its existing partnership with lithium-ion battery manufacturer CATL that will extend beyond 2030. The batteries will combine high energy density with ultra-long cycle life, as well as fast-charging capability, to meet the specific requirements of battery-electric long-haul trucks.

Electric's future

Battery-powered trucks will need a charging infrastructure for their specific needs and Daimler intends to kick-start the charging infrastructure in core European and American markets. It will do this through

another strategic partnership with Siemens Smart Infrastructure, Engie and EVBox Group, providing charging infrastructure for truck fleets at their depots

Just as battery electric vehicles need a charging infrastructure, fuel-cell powered vehicles will need a re-fuelling infrastructure and Daimler Truck has also announced a new partnership with Shell to provide a European hydrogen refuelling infrastructure from 2024.

This network will start with a 1,200km 'hydrogen corridor' between Rotterdam, Hamburg and Cologne, with Shell providing 150 hydrogen refuelling stations along this route. Daimler Truck has committed to supplying hydrogen trucks for customer use by 2025 and plans to have 5,000 in use by 2030.

Independent of Daimler Truck, the MultiHyFuel project, a public/private partnership with EU backing, is covering a range of activities including the design of hydrogen fuel dispensers to ensure a standardised pump/vehicle connection and to set safe re-fuelling standards, as well as education and consumer awareness.

Hydrogen Europe, established in 2008, will co-ordinate the project with participation from Air Liquide, ENGIE Lab CRIGEN, INERIS, Kiwa, Snam, Shell and ZSW, with HSE and ITM Power from the UK. MultiHyFuel's results will be used to publish a report in 2023.

If progress can be made as planned by all these projects, major cities around the world can look forward to some measurable improvements in air quality.



RIGHT: eActros, a battery-powered version of the Actros heavy truck with a 500km range, will be available in 2024

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Waste not, want not

FORS Gold member LondonEnergy is to be applauded for recycling a hundred thousand tonnes of North London's waste – putting it to good use.

By John Kendall

Greater London is one of the largest cities in Europe, with a current population estimated at 9.4 million people. In other words, it has a similar sized population to the state of Israel, slightly less than Sweden and almost double the Irish Republic – all packed into 607 square miles. As a result, there are a large number of people all acquiring, using and ultimately disposing of a massive number of items every year within a relatively small area.

Some of those items can be reused, much of it can be recycled.

Such a large amount of waste also opens up other possibilities, too. Waste contains a fair amount of combustible material and LondonEnergy, which handles and treats almost 750,000 tonnes of waste

from North London every year, uses some of it as fuel to generate electricity.

As a result, the company supplies power to over 80,000 homes every year. LondonEnergy claims to divert more than 90 per cent of waste away from landfill each year, bringing a saving equivalent to almost 30,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions annually.

Eco Park power supply

LondonEnergy's operations are based in north London, near Edmonton, where the company's 40-acre Eco Park head office site includes the Energy Centre. It is here where the heat from incinerating waste is used to heat water in five boilers to drive steam turbines to generate the electricity. Around 85



per cent of the electricity generated is exported to the national grid, with the remainder used to power the facilities on the Eco Park site.

Waste incineration can be controversial and the Energy Centre is regulated and monitored by the Environment Agency to ensure that emissions are kept as low as possible. Particulates are removed from the exhaust gases electrostatically, while flue gas treatment is used to minimise other regulated emissions.

Aside from the Eco Park site, LondonEnergy operates the Wembley Transfer Station in London NW10 and the Hornsey Street Waste Recycling Centre in N7. It also runs six reuse and recycling centres across North London, achieving a recycling rate of over 70 per cent.

Those six centres are operated on behalf of five London local authorities. These include Camden Council's Regis Road site, the South Access and Kings Road sites for Waltham Forest Council, the Hornsey Street site for Islington Council, Western Road site for Haringey Council and Summers Lane site for Barnet Council.

Waste items collected and considered suitable for reuse, as well as those donated by members of the public, are transported to the Waltham Forest Kings Road site in Chingford. Here, they are sold through

the site's Second Time Around shop. Items could include furniture, sports equipment, clothes and other household objects.

Fit-for-purpose fleet

Clearly all the activities around handling and sorting waste involve transport and LondonEnergy – one of the first fleet operators to achieve FORS Gold accreditation – operates a fleet of four light commercial vehicles and 31 heavy trucks to handle these operations

To transport items to Second Time Around, LondonEnergy uses an electric Renault Master ZE large van. "We are planning on moving all our vans over to electric power," says Katie Blowes, Transport and Logistics Manager, LondonEnergy.

"We've just placed an order for another two fully electric vans, which will see the end of all our diesel-fuelled vehicles."

The plan is for these vehicles to be in operation by the fourth quarter of 2021, depending on manufacturer availability.

The two new vans will be a Maxus e Deliver 3 and a Renault Kangoo ZE, ensuring that LondonEnergy's fleet will boast small, medium and large electric van models. In addition, the company also uses a small electric LCV from the French electric vehicle manufacturer Goupil. "That stays on site and is used by the maintenance team to move equipment," explains Blowes.

Gearing up for the future

At the end of last year, LondonEnergy's transport team moved to a new depot, which has been equipped with seven electric vehicle charging points. These will enable four vans and two electric cars to be charged on site and provide spare capacity too. Not many vehicle operators can claim to have switched to electric vehicles and also generate their own electricity to charge them with.

To collect and deliver the large bins used for recycling the separated materials at the six local authority centres, the company operates a fleet of Volvo FM eight-wheeled hooklift vehicles. In addition to these, the other HGVs – Mercedes-Benz Arocs tractor units – are used for bulk transport and recycling.

"These transfer waste between the transfer stations and the Eco Park," explains Blowes. "Then we've got another part of the fleet that runs recycling products. Anything that we can recycle, we take out of the waste to send off to third-party processors."

“We are planning on moving all our vans over to electric power. We've just placed an order for another two fully electric vans, which will see the end of all our diesel-fuelled vehicles”



The introduction of the Direct Vision Standard (DVS) last year has ensured that nine of the Mercedes-Benz Arocs are fitted with mirror cameras to ensure compliance with the standard. The entire HGV fleet is also equipped with 360° camera systems and left-turn audio warnings. "We've recently paired up with PeoplePanels, so we've had them fitted on all the side under-run bars on the entire trailer fleet," says Blowes.

Reducing emissions further from the diesel-powered HGV fleet is a challenge – and

LondonEnergy's solution has been to operate the entire fleet on Shell GtL (Gas-to-Liquid) fuel.

Instead of producing diesel fuel from crude oil, the GtL fuel is produced synthetically from natural gas. The advantage is that the synthetic fuel can be used in the trucks without any need to modify the engines.

GtL is virtually free of sulphur, which is the principal cause of particulate formation in diesel exhaust. It is readily bio-degradable and will begin the combustion process more readily than conventional diesel. The company has been trialling GtL since last November and is still assessing the operational results.

The 45-strong transport team has the support of a part-time administrator. Their main role is to manage the FORS Gold accreditation requirements to ensure that all necessary training is carried out and processes are followed.

Another landmark for the LondonEnergy Transport team has been the arrival of its first HGV driver apprentice, who was taken on earlier this year.

The addition of an apprentice will enable the transport team to develop the specific skills they need for their drivers with an individual who is beginning their driving career with them. That looks like a golden opportunity for both driver and team.

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Building for the future

Construction specialist L Lynch goes from strength to strength, helped by FORS Gold. **By John Kendall**

“Providing the best possible service to our customers means investing in the safest and most efficient vehicles”

Even just a few minutes spent browsing the L Lynch Plant Hire and Haulage website provides a very good first impression of the company. It offers a large and diverse range of construction services, operating with a high degree of professionalism. A wide variety of documentation can be downloaded, covering a long string of accreditations, company policy documents, as well as brochures and guides. Among the accreditations is the company's FORS Gold certification.

While plant hire and haulage are the core of the business, L Lynch's project work has ensured that it has extended its expertise into a number of related areas. All this from a company founded 41 years ago by one man with one piece of machinery.

Company founder Liam Lynch is the managing director today and still at the heart of the company's operations. The board of directors includes his sons Rob and Merrill, extending the Lynch 'Can Do' attitude into another generation for the company.

Those operations extend into plant hire, road haulage, heavy haulage, machine guidance and automation, telematics for clients, soil analysis and large infrastructure project work. The company finds time to campaign about safety issues too.

DVS details

The latest safety campaign reflects the company's concern about vulnerable road users and tipper trucks. Last October, Transport for London (TfL)

introduced the Direct Vision Standard (DVS) and safety permit for trucks operating across Greater London. Hemel Hempstead-based L Lynch undertakes project work nationwide, including across the London area.

The company has campaigned on safety issues for many years and Rob Lynch has made it his personal mission to ensure that a incident-free culture is part of the company ethos.

Introducing low-entry tipper cabs has been a natural extension of the health and safety campaigning. It is also one that fits well with the introduction of the DVS. The company recently took delivery of its first five Scania tippers, equipped with low-height L-series cab.

The cab is one that would typically be fitted to a refuse collection or recycling vehicle. It is mounted as far forward as possible to provide as low a mounting as possible, serving two purposes. Firstly, it makes it much easier for the driver and any passengers to get into and out of the cab, because it is lower, reducing the chances of injury if the driver were to slip off a step. Secondly, it brings the driver's eyeline down much closer to that of vulnerable road users such as cyclists, motor cyclists and pedestrians. As a result, it is easier to make visual contact in busy streets.

Since higher ground clearance is needed when the vehicles are working on the rough ground of construction sites, they are all equipped with factory air suspension which allows the cab to be raised by 120mm when needed.

Scania safety spec

All five of the vehicles have been specified to achieve TfL's five-star DVS rating. Therefore, they include Scania's City Safe window, mounted in the passenger door of the truck and designed to enhance the safety of vulnerable road users by providing the driver with additional nearside visibility.

Other safety equipment fitted to the vehicles includes left turn alarms to alert vulnerable road users at junctions and a 360° camera system and high voltage alarms to warn if the tipper body is likely to make contact with an overhead cable while





tipping. Also included are tipper overload indicators, an automatic tailgate with an additional safety latch and high visibility PeoplePanels to the sides.

"Providing the best possible service to our customers means investing in the safest and most efficient vehicles," comments Stephen Bremner, Lynch Fleet and Health & Safety Director. "Scania's L-series design has enabled us to achieve the highest possible TfL DVS rating and supports our collaborative goals of improving road safety in urban environments."

Going for Gold

The low-entry tippers obviously help with L Lynch's FORS Gold accreditation. The company achieved Bronze accreditation in 2013 and first reached Gold in 2019. Compliance Manager Gabby Lawrence believes the benefits of Gold accreditation go far beyond unlocking the door to tendering for projects. It also means that the company's drivers benefit from regular training – some of which is done on site so drivers can practice their skills in a safe environment. Better skilled drivers mean fewer incidents and better control over insurance premiums and if drivers feel valued, they are more likely to stay for longer.

The Scania tippers are going to work on the HS2 rail project, operating on the Euston Station site. There, they will help to shift some 96,000 tonnes of material from the site. Around 99 per cent of the material will be recycled.

Other recent and current projects have included

the former Foyles book shop site in Charing Cross Road and the A14 Huntingdon to Cambridge project. The trucks have also removed hazardous and non-hazardous waste from the Thames Tideway site at Greenwich Pumping Station and provided aggregates to various sites in the project, including Tilbury and Northfleet.

L Lynch has also been involved in various aspects of construction on the Thames Tideway project. These include sinking shafts for this project to build a new super sewer to ensure that sewage is prevented from entering the River Thames. Lynch vehicles also removed over 500 loads of material from the Battersea Power Station site and the company has been involved in the M23 smart motorway project on the 11-mile stretch of motorway near Gatwick Airport.

The company's latest Komatsu dozer is now working on the Hinkley Point power station site. It was transported there by the L Lynch heavy haulage combination of Volvo FH 16 750 8x4 heavy haulage tractor and Faymonville extendable intermodal trailer. Like the Scania tippers, the Volvo is equipped with a 360° camera system and left turn alarm.

The company has also introduced electric excavators and dumpers to its operated and self-drive plant hire fleets, offering the benefits of zero exhaust emissions as well as much reduced operational noise.

Operators, site workers and nearby residents will all benefit from the reduced noise and emissions from these machines.

The Scania L-series cab brings the driver's eyeline down much closer to that of vulnerable road users such as cyclists, motor cyclists and pedestrians

Tideway's tunnel vision

All around the UK there are many major construction and engineering projects that require the help and support of FORS members.

Steve Banner finds out about one of the biggest taking place in London

The project has got 24 work sites, three of which feature deep shafts down which have been lowered big, heavy tunnel boring machines

Transport operators with FORS Silver accreditation are making a major contribution to a massive construction project that will benefit the UK's capital. Representing a £4.2bn investment and stretching for 20 miles under London, the Tideway Tunnel is a super sewer designed to prevent raw effluent from being discharged into the River Thames.

"The current sewage system isn't big enough to cope with the population's waste," explains Gordon Sutherland, Traffic And Road Logistics Manager at Tideway. "The aim with the new tunnel is to intercept the overflow, thereby helping to clean up the river."

Construction began in 2016 and should finish by the end of 2022, with a further two years required to commission the project. Once it is completed the giant sewer, which will follow the line of the Thames, will run from Acton Storm Tanks in Ealing in the west all the way to Abbey Mills Pumping Station in Newham in the east. The scheme also includes two connection tunnels.

"The project has got 24 work sites, three of which feature deep shafts down which have been lowered big, heavy tunnel boring machines," explains

Sutherland. "Some of the machines are up to 100m long." As a result, a lot of soil has to be removed.

"Fortunately 11 of the work sites are close to the Thames, which means we can use barges," he says. "As a consequence we've been able to reduce what would have been one million truck movements by 72 per cent, to 280,000."

London logistics

While that is a substantial cut, it still means a lot of loads for tipper operators to handle. The construction work has been subcontracted to three joint-venture contracting consortiums which, among other things, are responsible for procuring transport.

"We have a set of contract requirements that mean that any operator involved with the project must meet FORS Silver as a minimum," Sutherland says. "That applies to everybody – including owner-drivers – in order to reduce any risk to vulnerable road users."

Compliance is not a nice-to-have option, Sutherland stresses. It is a legal requirement in line with the project's Development Consent Order and is also in line with the Construction Code of Practice.

Although Silver is mandatory, the approach taken is not inflexible. "If a company happens to be FORS Bronze then it is given six months to get up to Silver and FORS will help it to do so," states Sutherland.

Faith in FORS

A long-standing FORS supporter, Sutherland was involved with the scheme when it was first established. He is a member of the FORS Governance and Standards Advisory Group (GSAG) and of the FORS Executive Group, which he chaired for two years.

Specifying FORS Silver accreditation obliges operators to investigate and analyse any road traffic incidents and near misses that involve their vehicles to prevent recurrence and minimise road risk. They must also conduct and comply with a noise impact assessment at operating centres and sensitive locations to minimise the effect of noise on





local communities. This consideration is especially important where construction work is being carried out close to housing.

To meet the Silver requirements, businesses must commit to reducing fuel consumption and harmful vehicle emissions for the good of the environment. Trucks must be fitted with enhanced safety equipment with the need to protect vulnerable road users in mind.

Driver development

A further obligation involves a commitment to professionally develop drivers and other staff involved in running vehicles. This is where FORS can help, points out Sutherland, with a variety of training opportunities.

Some of the courses count towards the mandatory 35 hours of Driver Certificate of Professional Competence training, which has to be undertaken every five years.

Courses include FORS Professional Safe Urban Driving. "If you've been driving a tipper in and out of a quarry in Lincolnshire for the past three years and get transferred to London, then you are going to be working in a very different environment," Sutherland observes.

Topics covered in the theory section include the changing streetscape – "which includes more cycle lanes," he remarks – while the practical section involves hopping onto a bike so that the driver can experience busy urban traffic from the cyclist's viewpoint.

At the time of writing, training was restricted by limitations imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic and the need to socially distance, with a number of manager courses conducted online.

Online learning opportunities

FORS offers an online webinar recording to support its members through the process of gaining or renewing FORS Silver.

Lasting for an hour, it covers the application process, how to upload evidence, what the FORS compliance team checks for and the most common reasons for failure.

Advice is offered on how best to avoid pitfalls, and easy-to-comprehend guidance covers the numerous tools available to help prepare for the application.

Typically grossing from 32 to 44 tonnes, the trucks servicing the Tideway project include concrete mixers and tractor units hauling flatbed semi-trailers laden with steel as well as tippers. Abnormal loads weighing as much as 130 tonnes operating under STGO heavy haulage rules have to be accommodated as well.

"They all have to be booked into the work sites, with confirmation that they are operated by a FORS member required before they are allowed to enter," says Sutherland.

"As far as abnormal loads are concerned, a copy of the movement order has to be produced," he adds. Such movements can require the relevant bodies, including the highway authorities and the police, to be given up to five working days notice.

The aim with the new tunnel is to intercept sewage overflow, thereby helping to clean up the river

“We've been able to reduce what would have been one million truck movements by 72 per cent, to 280,000”

Solar panels mitigate those range problems for electric chiller vans



“Our solar panels are designed to offer a robust solution, with a fit and forget principle”

Aspoeck systems, Europe's largest manufacturer of commercial vehicle lighting systems, has always stood for innovation and quality in a marketplace where return on investment and maximisation of assets is critical.

This philosophy has seen recent success, yet again, for the Austrian manufacturer – this time through the integration of its market leading solar cells into fully electric chiller vans. The cells, part of Aspoeck's Fabrilcar range, come directly from Canada.

Working with Hireco, one of the leading commercial vehicle rental specialists throughout the UK and Ireland, the solution is to ensure maximum range potential in London's low emission zone on 'final mile' delivery services.

The challenge

The challenge faced by any operator of EVs (electric vehicles) is maximising the range of the vehicle. This, when coupled with a 'chiller' style operation drawing energy from the battery, is the perfect application for solar.

"Range anxiety is a major concern for most fleet operators of electric vehicles," states Adam Mitchell,

Aspoeck UK's technical manager, "and this is where solar has an instant benefit, acting to mitigate the loss of range associated with additional energy consumers on the vehicle. This is the challenge we decided offered best return on investment."

The solution

Aspoeck's solution to the problem is to utilise the dead space on the roof of the vehicle, installing panels and routing them to the 12v battery already installed in the vehicle. 100w solar panels, linked through a highly efficient controller directly to the existing battery bank, ensures the system offers the maximum possible return on investment.

"Our panels, despite being only 3mm thick, offer industry leading levels of energy conversion," says Mitchell. "This is achieved by using cutting-edge materials and technology and the know-how to ensure they are utilised in the best possible way for our industry demands – not to mention our climate conditions!"

Mitchell adds: "Our solar panels are designed to offer a robust solution, with a fit and forget principle – no need for constant telematic monitoring or servicing – just install the panels and controllers and have the peace of mind you need."

Proven technology

This development is just the latest in a long line of successful installations of the panels, everything from sea going buoys to trailer fridge battery backup, caravans to electric chiller vans, with over 200,000 panels installed globally.

With a range of panels and chargers to suit any application, Aspoeck's position at the forefront of the electrical revolution is assured.

LEFT: Solar panels are the perfect solution for maximising the range of electric vehicle chiller vans



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Go greener with new technologies

Like most truck manufacturers, Volvo Trucks is keeping its powertrain options open as the industry continues to clean up its act. **By Steve Banner**

Volvo Trucks is wholeheartedly committed to cutting emissions and driving down the CO₂ footprint of its products, says UK Managing Director, Christian Coolsaet. "Zero-emission electric trucks will account for 35 per cent of our output by 2030," he says. "Never forget that we all have an obligation to future generations. We have to make this planet sustainable."

The Swedish truck manufacturer already has battery-powered models on sale. The FL and FE Electric were the first to appear, while an FL Electric 16-tonner is being operated by DHL in London.

"We should sell 700 electric trucks across Europe

Volvo has just launched its latest diesel-dominated FH

this year and we're now talking about ranges of up to 300km between recharges," explains Coolsaet.

Furthermore, a battery-driven FH should appear in 2022, with an electric FM in the pipeline for 2023. In other EV-related developments, earlier this year Volvo agreed to buy 60 per cent of Designwerk Group, a Swiss engineering company that specialises in building customised electric trucks under the Futuricum banner.

What Volvo is not doing, Coolsaet stresses, is selling an electric truck to a customer, then waving goodbye. Support in terms of advice and the provision of the necessary infrastructure is essential, he says. "We employ specialists who will look at your routes and the charging arrangements you will need," he says. "They will tell you if using electric models is viable or not."

To cement its commitment to battery power, Volvo has appointed zero-emission energy expert Amy Stokes as UK head of e-mobility.

Exploring other avenues

Yet while ranges are undoubtedly increasing, battery-propelled 44-tonners capable of handling long-distance intercity trunking work hauling heavy loads such as glass and steel remain a long way away from series production, if indeed they ever appear at all. Trucks powered by fuel cells may turn out to be a better bet for long-haul routes – the only emission they produce is water vapour – and Volvo has entered into a joint venture with Daimler to develop the technology. "We could see fuel cell Volvos by 2024/25," Coolsaet says.

But the environmental credentials possessed by LNG – and BioLNG in particular – can't be ignored. Over 750 Volvos powered by the fuel are now in service and 15 Volvo outlets spread UK-wide have the facilities required to support them. This has meant a £50,000 to £100,000 investment in each location.

"LNG is moving from an alternative to a mainstream fuel," contends Volvo's UK Director of New Vehicle Sales, Hannah Burgess. She says more government incentives will be required to encourage operators to opt for electric trucks grossing at above 16 tonnes. In addition, a "medium-term roadmap" is needed, as well as help for hauliers going in and out of London to meet the requirements of the Direct Vision Standard.

Post-Brexit business

A major motivator behind Volvo's rush to go green is European Union legislation – still relevant to





Britain despite Brexit. EU regulations will oblige truck builders to cut the CO₂ output of new trucks by 15 per cent on average from 2025 and by 30 per cent from 2030 compared with 2019 levels. Volvo intends to implement a 50 per cent fall by 2030 and to market a completely fossil-fuel-free line-up by 2040.

By 2050 the Volvo parc will emit no CO₂ emissions whatsoever, the manufacturer promises.

Diesel deliveries

In the meantime, diesel continues to hold sway and Volvo has just launched its latest diesel-dominated FH, FH16, FM and FMX models.

A key advantage of the new range is enhanced fuel economy, Coolsaet states. "The FH is on average three per cent better on fuel than its predecessor," he reckons. The improvement has been achieved courtesy of a variety of detailed software changes plus improvements to the cab's aerodynamics.

Elsewhere, driver comfort has not been neglected

– the FM's cab offers one cubic metre more interior space than the previous cab did – and nor has safety. Descent Control sets a maximum speed when descending a steep incline, while Adaptive Cruise Control works at all speeds down to zero.

The new line-up is being supported by a suite of service contracts along with greater stress on connectivity and remote monitoring. A Volvo Connect app for drivers' smartphones allows remote checks to be carried out on fuel levels, batteries and door locks among other areas of the vehicle.

While electric trucks require up to 30 per cent less servicing than their diesel counterparts, diesel Volvos will be around for many years to come.

Community investment

Away from the vehicles themselves, Volvo is addressing other industry issues. Acutely aware of the national shortage of skilled workshop technicians capable of looking after them, the OEM is continuing to invest in its apprenticeship

Christian Coolsaet:
Never forget that we all have an obligation to future generations. We have to make this planet sustainable"



An FL Electric 16-tonner is being operated by DHL in London

“

Over 1,500 apprentices have been trained and we've got 330 in the programme at present

”

► programme under the auspices of the Volvo Truck Academy.

“Over 1,500 apprentices have been trained and we've got 330 in the programme at present. Ninety new apprentices a year are being taken on and dealers are retaining them for five years on average after they graduate,” says Volvo's UK Director For Service And Retail, Andrew Goodwin. “It's worth noting, incidentally, that 75 per cent of the network's workshop supervisors are academy graduates.”

The academy is now working in conjunction with Remit Training. Its activities include helping to deliver structured automotive apprenticeships. Not surprisingly, there will be greater focus on electric vehicles.

Delivery dilemmas

The bad news in all of this is that operators will have to wait until the first quarter of 2022 before they can take delivery of most of the new Volvo models referred to earlier. Component shortages plaguing all manufacturers are responsible for the delay. “We can't get the semi-conductors we need,” says Coolsaet.

Matters have been made worse across the entire truck industry because factories that were temporarily shut at the height of the Covid-19 pandemic last year lost production. They are having to play catch-up.

The situation isn't much better in the second-hand market says Volvo's UK Used Truck Director, Carl White. Unable to obtain new vehicles, fleets are hanging on to the ones they have got. Second-hand stocks at dealerships are low as a consequence, and prices are rising. “Supplies will ease when the semi-conductor issue resolves itself,” he says.

On the brighter side, new Volvo models powered by LNG look set to arrive earlier than the diesels because they are not so badly affected by the parts shortfall. “We'll be able to deliver them during quarter three of 2021,” confirms Coolsaet.

All this pre-supposes that hauliers will have drivers available to climb behind the wheel of all these new trucks given the ongoing shortage.

Autonomous for the people

One means of addressing the shortfall is to build trucks that are capable of driving themselves. Volvo Group has set up Volvo Autonomous Solutions to accelerate the development, commercialisation and sale of autonomous vehicles and a prototype autonomous tractor unit is now on trial.

Zero-emission technology looks set to absorb far more investment for the foreseeable future however. Legislators certainly want emissions cut, but are not pushing for trucks to become driverless.

“So sustainability is a higher priority than autonomy,” Coolsaet remarks. One way for transport companies to attract and retain drivers is to make them feel like kings of the highway – and Volvo is continuing to offer one of the mightiest diesel trucks in production today.

Like its predecessor, the latest FH16 is available with up to 750hp on tap; and 750hp models are responsible for around 100 British sales annually says Coolsaet.

There are no plans to introduce a much-rumoured 800hp FH16 however, he admits, which would give the manufacturer the most-powerful diesel model on the market. Volvo's long march to a fossil-fuel-free future would probably make this model a step too far, despite the excitement it would generate.

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Access all areas

Campaigners have argued for many years that everyone should have access to bus and coach services. Finally, the legislation has been passed, reports **Steve Banner**

A 49-seater Panther that meets PSVAR requirements has joined Warrington, Cheshire-based MP Travel

Travellers who use wheelchairs have long struggled to access buses and coaches. It was pressure from that group – and from their representative organisations – that resulted in the introduction of the Public Service Vehicle Accessibility Regulations 2000. However it has taken more than two decades for the regulations to come fully into force. Even now, operators still have plenty of work to do before they can be said to have been properly implemented.

The PSVAR rules require all buses and coaches designed to carry more than 22 passengers – and used on local or scheduled services – to be fully-

accessible to people with disabilities, including people in wheelchairs.

Different categories and ages of vehicle have come within scope on a succession of different dates over the past twenty-odd years. The slow roll-out reflects the fact that buses and coaches have long working lives, often cascading through three or four different owners before being scrapped.

By 1 January 2020 all vehicles, including older coaches, on local or scheduled work were covered according to the letter of the law. However, the practicalities have worked out rather differently.

The long wait for legislation

Local and scheduled services include home-to-school and rail replacement services, with schools and rail companies obliged to use PSVAR-compliant vehicles under the Equality Act 2010. The nature of the work means that coaches are regularly deployed, especially where rail replacement involves a long journey – and too few of those coaches currently on the road comply with the rules.

The shortfall is largely the consequence of the coronavirus pandemic. The near-overnight disappearance of tour and excursion work has hit coach company revenues particularly hard. In addition, retrofitting a PSVAR wheelchair lift to a coach is an expensive exercise.

In some cases it can be installed in the front passenger door footwell, with a bridging plate used to allow the wheelchair user to access the passenger saloon. In the majority of instances, however, it involves mounting the lift in an underfloor luggage or ski locker, which, of course, steals space that would otherwise be used to carry cases or skis.

If this is the approach taken, then an additional door has to be let into the side of the coach's body that the wheelchair user can go through when the lift platform is raised.

Fitting the door cannot result in the vehicle's structure being made weaker. It still has to comply with rollover legislation. Whichever approach is taken, the operator is likely to face a bill totalling several thousand pounds.

A temporary fix

As a result, the Department for Transport (DfT) has decided it has no option but to grant temporary PSVAR exemptions which are intended to expire during the course of this year. In response, the Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee (DPTAC) has suggested that the DfT should put together an expert panel to see whether a more



cost-effective way of making coaches accessible is feasible.

At the time of writing, the exemption was set to last until 31 July – as far as schools are concerned. Train operators providing rail replacement services are exempt until 30 September.

PSVAR exemption is not automatic, says the DfT. If you are a rail company, for example, then a special authorisation has to be applied for and granted. It will only be awarded if the business making the application can show that it has made every effort to track down a PSVAR-compliant vehicle to handle the work.

If one is not available, then people with disabilities must be offered an appropriate alternative such as an accessible taxi.

“Operators should not expect there to be indefinite exemptions from the regulations,” says the Confederation of Passenger Transport. “The plan is for the industry to work with the DfT to develop a workable, sustainable approach that is fair to them, but that also shows clearly to disabled people that the industry is committed to enabling them to travel like anybody else.”

Fleet upgrades

None of this should be taken as suggesting that operators have been idle. A growing number of them are making the necessary investment, despite the financial pressure the sector faces. Some of them are acquiring new vehicles built in accordance with PSVAR.

Among those companies is Norfolk-based Sanders Coaches. It has recently taken delivery of a fully-accessible 49-seater Plaxton Panther based on a Volvo B8R chassis. With space for up to five wheelchairs, the newcomer will be used primarily to transport county residents with additional mobility needs to events all over the UK.

With 85 vehicles on its books, family-owned Sanders runs buses as well as coaches. Mainly servicing north Norfolk, its bus network stretches from Kings Lynn to Great Yarmouth.

A 49-seater Panther that meets PSVAR



requirements, this time on a Volvo B11R platform, has also joined Warrington, Cheshire-based MP Travel.

Coach firms that do not want – or have insufficient funds – to buy a factory-fresh vehicle that fulfils the PSVAR rules can always opt for a second-hand one instead if they do not have one already in their yard suitable for conversion.

Scania has arranged for 20 used two- and three-axle Scania Irizar i6 coaches to be retrofitted with PSVAR equipment by body builder Irizar at its plant in northern Spain. The exercise involves fitting a Masats wheelchair lift, plus tracking and a restraint system to ensure the wheelchair's occupant stays safe while the coach is in motion.

“The coronavirus pandemic has effectively put the industry back a year so we decided to act proactively to help operators upgrade to OEM-specification PSVAR vehicles right away,” says Scania Great Britain Used Bus and Coach Sales Executive, James Morgan. “Building up a stock of used PSVAR coaches means our customers are able to see, touch and feel what they will be buying before committing.

“Furthermore, they can be secure in the knowledge that whatever they acquire has been retrofitted to the highest-possible standard.

Buyers include Deveron Coaches of Macduff, Aberdeenshire, which has acquired two i6 53-seaters since 2016. “They will allow us to tender for rail replacement contracts and we’re also seeing other customers, such as the cruise lines we service, stipulate PSVAR,” said Albert Milne, MD at Deveron Coaches. “I firmly believe it’s the future.”

Norfolk-based Sanders Coaches has taken delivery of a fully-accessible 49-seater Plaxton Panther based on a Volvo B8R chassis

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Talking transport at ITT Hub

The inaugural ITT Hub event and conference at Farnborough International represents the entire commercial vehicle sector

Innovation & Technology in Transport – ITT Hub – is a groundbreaking event that supports the Government's decarbonisation of transport plan. Taking place from 30 June – 1 July at Farnborough International Exhibition and Conference Centre, ITT Hub will be the first European B2B event in the road transport sector for commercial and passenger transport post-lockdown.

The venue has a vast amount of outdoor space, which lends itself perfectly to creating a Covid-secure environment. With 70 per cent of the exhibition outdoors and robust measures in place, guests can feel safe and confident at the show.

A diverse range of vehicles from leading manufacturers will be on display – both indoors and outdoors. For example, there is a three-mile ride-and-drive route, which allows visitors to experience vehicles for themselves.

Post-pandemic, the UK economy will take a huge amount of rebuilding and transport is set to play a crucial part in the recovery, as well as hitting the net-zero target by 2030. ITT Hub has this recovery at the heart of its agenda – it's an event that the industry deserves and needs more than ever.

Feature areas

Feature areas within the hall include the first-ever live appearance of the EV Café, supported by myEnergi, with guests and live stage content each day. Another feature area is the Bus & Coach Lounge, with industry experts on hand to answer questions and deliver short presentations throughout each day.

Meanwhile, there is also the ITT Expert Insights feature area, with the Electric Mobility Theatre by Webfleet and Bridgestone, bringing visitors up to date with 'most know' subjects. The 'Government Hub' in the heart of the hall has 10 participants and the Sub-National Transport Bodies' stand will have a further six regional authorities taking part.



Outside, a large display with National Grid features elements of its Net Zero activities across its business, including the launch of its own electric bus.

Conference

A high-profile conference programme will take place alongside the exhibition on both days of the event. The conference has nine sessions over the two days and the line-up features more than 30 speakers. Content covers a wide range of innovation and technology, which is core to the event. The conference is in a standalone large and airy theatre, offering panoramic, runway views. It will be opened by a keynote address from astronaut Major Tim Peake CMG.

The strong programme of relevant sessions, addressing the key challenges shaping the industry today and in the future, will be delivered by thought leaders, innovators and experts representing a wide range of businesses and stakeholders.

Conference participation is free and open to all delegates registering to attend.

All sessions are on a first-come first-served basis, with the 800-capacity reduced to 300 to enable social distancing.

To comply with Covid regulations, there will also be a need to clear the conference theatre after each session.



● All sessions will be recorded, and available to ITT Hub attendees only. Advanced registration for the event and conference is required. This, along with full details of the event and conference, is at www.itthub.co.uk



Be smart – be Van Smart

One of the FORS eLearning modules for LCV operators and drivers has recently been updated. **Steve Banner** explains what's new and why the changes have been made

Fuelled by an explosion in home delivery, thanks mainly to the Covid-19 pandemic, Britain's van population is booming. Some 4.6 million light commercial vehicles are currently on the highways, according to figures compiled by the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders. That large number – the highest figure on record – has major implications for road safety.

For drivers who hold a car driver licence, there is nothing to stop them getting behind the wheel of a 3.5-tonne Luton-bodied Ford Transit, even if the biggest vehicle they have ever driven is a Ford Fiesta. They do not have to take a separate test and are not required to hold a Driver's CPC (Certificate of Professional Competence).

Nor does an employer have to possess an O licence. Unlike heavy trucks, the van operation is

largely unregulated, although truck operators who also run light commercials and overload them – or fail to maintain them – will rapidly incur the ire of the Traffic Commissioner. That will be the case even though vans are not specified on O licences.

FORS has 1,957 operators with one or more vans (31,018 vehicles) and 531 operators have van-only fleets (7,626 vehicles).

A better understanding

FORS stands ready to help and has just updated its Van Smart eLearning module. The upgrade has been designed to make the knowledge delivered even easier for drivers to digest, as well as thoroughly embed best practice into everyday driving.

The issues that the module addresses start before

the individual gets behind the wheel, says FORS Head of Quality Assurance and Compliance, Graham Holder. "You need to ask yourself if you are actually fit to drive," he says. That includes recalling when you last had your eyesight checked – a check should be taken every six months in line with FORS Bronze requirement D6, warns Holder.

Drivers also need to be sure that their vans are fit to be driven.

"That means carrying out a daily walkaround check, which covers everything from the condition of the windscreen wipers and the tyres to ensuring that the lights and indicators work," he says.

A mechanism should be in place to ensure that any defects, including bodywork damage, can be reported and rectified.

Attention to detail

Load security is another issue. Is the cargo likely to come adrift during the journey – and has it been evenly distributed?

If it hasn't, then you could end up with an overloaded front or rear axle. That could spell trouble if the van is pulled over by the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency and weighed.

"The module also points out that van speed limits are not the same as car speed limits," says Holder. In the majority of cases, light commercial vehicles are restricted to 50mph on single carriageways, 60mph on dual carriageways and 70mph on motorways.

For cars the limits are 60mph, 70mph and 70mph respectively. The limits apply unless there are signs showing otherwise.

Vans are not usually fitted with tachographs and are not subject to heavy truck Drivers' Hours rules.

However they are subject to the GB Domestic Hours Rules, which, among other things, mean drivers cannot drive for more than 10 hours during the working day and must take periodic breaks.

"The Working Time Directive is still in force too," Holder points out. Many van drivers often have little or no knowledge of either.

Any other business?

Other elements addressed by the module include safe and efficient driving techniques – including avoiding engine idling – and route planning. The latter is the responsibility of the company's management, working in conjunction with its drivers. Careful route planning can lead to lower fuel consumption and emissions while ensuring that goods and services are still delivered on time.

A questionnaire at the end of the module assesses

how much the driver has understood. The module takes 30 to 35 minutes to complete, says Holder. It should be undertaken every 12 months for best practice and to keep knowledge fresh. It can be taken at home or in the office using a tablet, laptop, desktop computer or smartphone.

Put the training into practice

With easy-to-comprehend learning points and a comprehensive list of Dos and Don'ts, the module forms just one part of the FORS Professional Van Smart training package.

As well as including a toolkit for managers, the package embraces a detailed driver's handbook and a classroom-based course, which has a practical element. Drivers take to the highways on cycles to experience traffic from the viewpoint of vulnerable road users.

"When you're driving, it's as though you are encased in armour," Holder remarks. "You feel as though nothing can harm you, but attitudes tend to change when the armour is removed."

The classroom content addresses a variety of areas including defensive driving techniques. Cycling helps make drivers more aware of the importance of fitness and health, as well as the risks taken by people who ride bikes daily.

The course meets the requirements of FORS Silver and the CLOCS standard and is worth six Continuous Professional Development hours.

The manager's toolkit encompasses support for what are known as toolbox talks – informal discussions with the drivers about particular safety issues.

“For drivers who hold a car driver licence, there is nothing to stop them getting behind the wheel of a 3.5-tonne Luton-bodied Ford Transit”



Careful route planning can lead to lower fuel consumption and emissions

Half-a-dozen posters are also included to help reinforce key Van Smart messages. They can be put up in driver rest areas, canteens and workshops.

Extra learning

Mention should also be made of the separate

3.5-hour FORS Professional Fleet Management Essentials course for staff involved in running van and car fleets.

FORS developed this course to support its members and equip delegates with the knowledge and skills needed to perform the duties of a "responsible person" who is maintaining continuous and effective control of the fleet, as required by section M3 of the FORS Standard.

Conducted remotely at the time of writing, it should be attended once every five years, Holder says. Also of relevance is the seven-hour LoCITY Driving training course. This course is targeted at truck drivers and is Driver CPC accredited.

It has much to teach van drivers as well when it comes to topics such as pre-journey planning and fuel-efficient driving.

Worth noting, too, is the vital importance of safety, security and counter-terrorism training, which should be conducted every two years.

A van can be a lethal weapon in the wrong hands, Holder points out; and it can easily be stolen if the driver leaves it unlocked with the keys in the ignition and the engine running while delivering a parcel.





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Going in the light direction

It's important for operators not to breach vehicle weight limits, but it's also essential that other components such as tyre pressures are monitored. **By Richard Drinkwater**



to see how a goods vehicle can be driven. A recent enforcement check of a 3.5-tonne recovery vehicle found it to be in excess of 50 per cent overloaded.

Stopping statistics

Factors to consider when undertaking an emergency stop will be speed, weight and adhesion (the amount of contact the tyre has with the road).

Taking the actual loads these tyres will see – and the benefits to braking in both wet and dry weather conditions – the recommended tyre pressures would be those specified by the tyre manufacturer.

There is no justifiable reason why the motorhome manufacturer rates the tyres to 75-80psi on the front, as they provide no benefit to the vehicle. If anything, they give a greater stopping distance in wet braking performance due to a lower adhesion rate.

European Tyre & Rim Technical Organisation (ERTTO) and tyre manufacturers only recommend the CP (Camping Pneumatic) rating and higher pressures for rear tyres. To put that into context, the CP-rated tyres came about due to a number of tyre failures where the motorhome had been overloaded above tyre design limit.

In brief, the CP deals with tyre overloading better than a standard C-rated tyre, however, irrelevant of the vehicle type, the load index rating of the tyre is the number to be aware of.

Pressure problems

It is worth noting here that an underloaded tyre, with a pressure set to the maximum 80psi, gave a stopping distance in wet performance test that was 3m longer than the same tyre with the pressure set to 55-60psi. Therefore, in relation to overloaded vans, it is crucial that the driver is aware of his tyre pressures.

And, in many cases, they will be travelling with incorrect settings, leading to longer stopping distances at the higher speeds many travel at. Alloy wheels must be checked to ensure they have the correct load rating. In addition, every van should now be checked on a weighbridge (each axle independently), to cross-check actual load versus axle design weights and actual load versus load ratings. Those checks could just save lives.

At SvTech we deal with a lot of overloaded vehicles – it's our business to uprate vehicles in order to avoid axle and GVW overloading. We are faced with many individual cases but, in essence, the most important factor is safety.

In the event of a road traffic incident, an overloaded van will not be insured. A full investigation will be carried out after the event – not just on the overload in weight, but also the effect on other parts of the vehicles. This means the brakes and tyres, the tyre pressures at the time of the incident, the load rating of the wheels and tyres and the stopping distances involved.

It's interesting to make a comparison between vans and motorhomes. We deal with around 200 motorhomes a month and are often asked about the wheels and tyres.

In many instances, alloys and tyres are not fit for purpose in an overloaded condition. The tyre pressures are often too high – typically at the maximum recommended by the vehicle manufacturer as opposed to the tyre manufacturer. This is where the problem lies.

But what makes a motorhome so much different than the same platform being used to transport goods? Both are just a box with (typically) four wheels. Generally, though not always, goods vehicles are driven under harsher brake and acceleration conditions than a motorhome.

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In many instances, alloys and tyres are not fit for purpose in an overloaded condition. The tyre pressures are often too high

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Direct Vision Standard





The importance of DVS implementation

With thousands of fines imposed since enforcement began in March, it seems some sections of the industry have yet to get to grips with the Direct Vision Standard.

By Richard Simpson

Three months after Transport for London (TfL) began enforcing penalties for breaches of its Direct Vision Standard, it is clear that the legislation has either not been fully understood by some operators, or is being ignored by them. Penalty charges of up to £550 are imposed for each offence, and TfL has issued over 7,000 since enforcement commenced in March.

Primary enforcement is by ANPR cameras, which record the registration marks of all trucks over 12 tonnes gvw and compare them with a database of registered compliant vehicles. TfL inspectors are also examining vehicles which are on the database to ensure that they are actually compliant, and in some cases have issued penalties against those that are not.

Vehicles must be registered with TfL and hold a permit to enter London.

The original objective of the Direct Vision Standard was to do 'what it said on the tin' and ensure that the drivers of all heavy vehicles entering London had direct vision of the area immediately around the cab to enable them to see vulnerable road users.

However, the only heavy trucks that actually provided this vision were specialist vehicles built primarily for refuse collection.

Existing refuse collection vehicle (RCV) designs were adapted for other applications, but numerous practical problems were present including cost, ground clearance and suitable transmission

“
Vehicles must
be registered
with TfL and
hold a permit
to enter
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types and final drive ratios. Given the time and resources needed to develop new cabs and the lifecycles of trucks in service, an overnight change to manufacturers' line-ups was not a realistic option in the timeframes given either.

The rating game

A star rating system from zero to five was drawn up, with most longhaul trucks falling into the zero category, low-entry RCV designs such as the Dennis Eagle and Mercedes Econic being awarded five stars, and other trucks (usually with narrow cabs and on lower chassis) falling in-between.

TfL's strategy was to ban the 'worst first', then gradually tighten restrictions to exclude trucks with the lowest star ratings, but the proposed schedule was still ahead of what could be realistically achieved.

So a compromise has been reached, with trucks that do not have sufficient glass to meet the DVS requirements being acceptable in London providing they are fitted with a so-called 'Safe System' to enhance driver awareness through indirect vision, and provide external protection and warnings for vulnerable road users. Currently vehicles with zero stars require a Safe System to enter London. In 2024, the bar will be raised to a minimum of three stars before entry is allowed without a Safe System.

Installing a Safe System does not change the vehicle's star rating, but does enable it to enter Greater London. Currently, the Safe System requirement is closely aligned with that of the Silver level of the FORS standard.

The Safe System includes: Class V and VI mirrors

Sideskirts for pedestrian protection and information warning signs are part of the current Safe System



or cameras to provide close-up vision to the cab front and nearside; camera systems monitoring the nearside length of the vehicle, nearside proximity alarms that warn the driver of the presence of vulnerable road users, an external left-turn audible warning activated by the nearside trafficator to discourage cyclists from 'undertaking' the turning vehicle, sideguard protection to reduce risk to pedestrians and cyclists, and warning signs encouraging cyclists and pedestrians to stay clear of danger areas



Meeting requirements

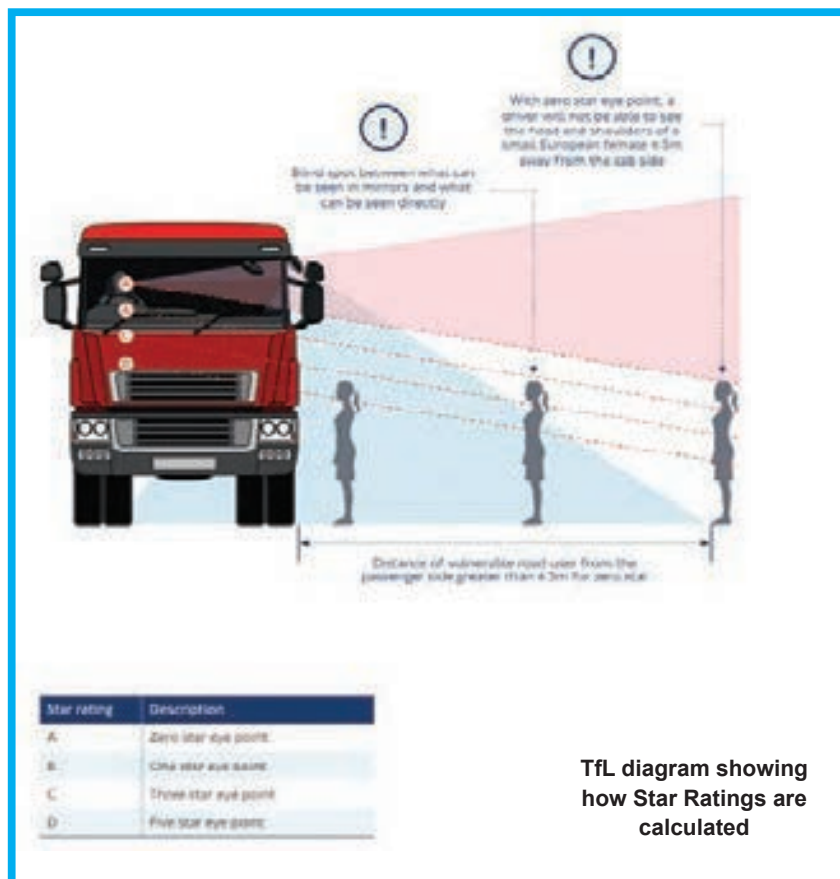
The DVS Safe System does not currently include the FORS Silver requirements of a reversing alarm and a reversing camera.

Technology in the field is advancing at quite a pace, and in acknowledgement of this progress, TfL is to open consultation on a Progressive Safe System, which will demand more sophisticated equipment later in 2021. The Progressive Safety System is expected to become a requirement in 2024, with operators using a current Safe System to access London having to upgrade. This point will coincide with the raising of the threshold for installation from one to three stars, bringing a large number of additional vehicles into scope.

Several possible options are being discussed – including no change at all, if the current system is deemed sufficiently effective in 'real-life' practice and the cost of alternatives is prohibitive.



Other possibilities include full alignment with FORS Silver by making the fitment of reversing aids compulsory, the introduction of digital recording for the current suite of cameras together with event recording, or matching the requirements of the European Commission's General Safety Regulation, which will include technologies such as intelligent speed assistant to aid conformance with posted speed limits, an alcohol lock, and drivers being



TfL diagram showing how Star Ratings are calculated

monitored against distraction and drowsiness. The retrofitting of such a system into existing vehicles would be challenging to say the least.

Frequently asked questions

How do I find out my vehicles' Star ratings?

The concept is simple, but the calculation is complex depending, as it does, not just on the truck's cab glass area but also the driver's eye height above the road.

This, in turn, is determined by the truck's ride height, which depends on factors such as suspension options and wheel and tyre sizes.

Initially, only the truck manufacturer/importer could issue a Star Rating calculated from the truck's build specification recorded against its VIN number, but TfL now has an online checker that requires only the truck

registration number to provide a star rating for many trucks and start the permit application process.

Can I improve a truck's Star Rating by retrofitting additional cab glass?

No, not unless the modification is recognised and approved by the manufacturer.

For example, the kerb view doors offered by Truck Door Windows have been approved by Mercedes-Benz and can be used to retrospectively enhance the ratings of Mercedes trucks. But the installation will have no impact if it is completed on other makes.

How much does a permit cost?

The permits are currently free of charge.

Where can I obtain a Safe System?

There is no list of 'approved suppliers' but many specialist companies can provide all or part of a system. Suppliers are listed at: <http://www.fors-online.org.uk/cms/suppliers-and-supporters-offers/>

What areas of London does the DVS apply to?

DVS operates on the same area as the London Low Emission Zone.

Log on to: <https://content.tfl.gov.uk/direct-vision-standard-map.pdf>



FOR FURTHER INFORMATION
AND STOCKIST DETAILS CONTACT

Amber Valley Developments LLP
+44 (0)116 240 2968
sales@amber-valley.co.uk
www.amber-valley.co.uk

What is DVS?

The Direct Vision Standard is new safety legislation from Transport for London.

From 1st March 2021, HGVs over 12T will need a Safety Permit to enter Greater London.
Visit tfl.gov.uk for more info.

When?

Apply for permit now!

0 - star vehicles need a Safe System to apply

1-5 star vehicles can apply

1st March 2021 law in effect

0 - star HGVs without Safe Systems will be banned

HGVs WITHOUT PERMIT ENTERING GREATER LONDON WILL BE FINED UP TO **£550 PER DAY**

A variety of timer and on/off modules are available!

FIT THIS - AVDVSS1

Standard DVS kit contains:

AVBS1S - Blind Spot Take Care Label

AVBSK1 - Blind Spot Kit

AVCAMSYS1 - 1 Side Camera + 7 Inch Monitor



FIT THIS - AVDVSS2

Superior DVS kit contains:

AVBS1S - Blind Spot Take Care Label

AVBSK4 - Blind Spot Kit + Alarmlight

AVCSWL03/04 - Square/Circle LED Cycle Light

AVDEL07 - Push On/Off Instant Module

AVCAMSYS2 - Side & Rear Camera + 7 Inch Monitor



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- 2) Simpler to fit as plug & play, never need to go behind the dashboard again.
- 3) Fault finding is simpler in the eventuality of a breakdown.

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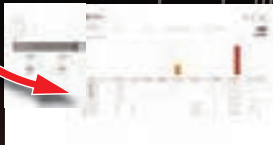
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