



SUMMER 2023

STANDARD MAGAZINE

SAFETY CONUNDRUM

Drug driving or bald tyres - which is more dangerous?

DISRUPTERS ATTACK

New names in electric trucks aim to grab market share

LONGER AND BETTER

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HELLO & WELCOME

The FORS message gets stronger as the months roll by as more transport managers realise its benefits

This issue we are delighted to welcome Geraint Davies on board the FORS team, joining as Concession Director from well-known UK operator John Raymond Transport. Following in the footsteps of the outgoing Ian Henderson, who has guided the accreditation scheme through the transition to a new concessionaire, Geraint joins at an exciting time for the development of FORS.

The fleet transport sector is on the cusp of an enormous period of change as it transforms a zero carbon, more sustainable future and from what I know of Geraint, his hands-on, practical leadership style will ensure FORS stays close to both Accredited Operators and Champions to support the sector in its transformation.

As this is our Summer edition, a reminder note to go safe on the roads.

The holiday season brings a lot of non-professional drivers out onto the roads as they make their annual pilgrimage to their destination of choice – often the one time of the year many of these drivers do anything more than the daily commute or kids school run.

Remind your drivers, no matter how frustrating it is, that they have a responsibility, as professional road users, to be courteous and patient with others at this time of the year. Let's strive for zero incidents and ensure everyone has a great summer break!

And finally...we are now full steam ahead with our planning for the annual FORS Conference to be held in Birmingham on 02 November at the ICC Birmingham.

This event will be packed with interesting speaker presentations and panel discussions and a very exciting

exhibition is now building alongside the conference. Please get in touch if you'd like to be part of the action and have the opportunity to present your products and services in front of the influential FORS Community.

If you haven't already, please head over to:
forsannualconference.com or scan the QR code and register your place to attend





12-14

Left: truck disruption

New truck manufacturers are stealing the scene with fresh models

30-31

Below: Truckers' nightmare

Britain lacks enough facilities to cater for long distance lorry drivers



44-45

Left: Operator profile

Safety star O'Donovan Waste improves its credentials even further



24-26

Right: on the road

Isuzu's 13.5 tonner proves a real unsung hero



32

Above: tyre talk

Drink-driving or bald tyres – which is worse?



42-43

Left: charging boost

Bonus Eventus charges ahead with help for battery boosting

48

Right: timely tips

Fleets urged to focus on tyres to improve safety and save cash



STANDARD MAGAZINE

8-10 News

Round-up of the latest topics of interest in the transport world

12-14 Meet the disrupters

New manufacturers muscling in on the established marques

16-18 Food for thought

Renault electric mixer proves the heavyweights can be green too

20-22 Operator profile

BOC identifies FORS as an 'absolute business must'

24-26 Road test

We drive Isuzu Truck's F-series at 13.5 tonnes

30-31 Driver comfort

We turn the spotlight on the lack of basic facilities

32 Talking tyres

Bald tyres prove more dangerous than drink-driving

38 Longer and better

Trailers are getting longer to save fuel and emissions

44-45 Safety star

Waste firm O'Donovan adds another safety achievement

46 Charging boost

Transport fleets get a helping hand to boost batteries

48 Top tyre tips

Some timely advice from experts at Hankook Tire

52-53 Drink and drugs

What to do when a positive result is discovered



New joiner

FORS welcomes Geraint Davies as new Concession Director **p8**

Updated programme

Five new modules added to improve FORS Practitioner programme **p8**

Conference call

FORS 2023 Conference sets its sights on the road ahead **p9**

Better safety

How AI is helping shape the design of new safety systems **p9**

All-round vision

VisionTrack delivers benefits with new safety device **p10**

Wheely good

Bus firm saves cash by bringing wheel alignment in house **p10**

Double delight

Enva achieves FORS double with the help of TruTac software suite **p10**

New Concession Director brings wealth of experience to FORS



Above: Geraint Davies – already well known in the transport sector

FORS has appointed Geraint Davies as its new Concession Director. Davies, who leaves his role as Chief Operating Officer at John Raymond Transport, is already well known in the transport sector, bringing with him a wealth of experience, including senior positions with the RHA and Logistics UK and involvement with FORS for many years. Davies will build upon the work laid down by outgoing Concession Director Ian Henderson. During his time heading the FORS team, Henderson’s work on transitioning to the new concessionaire has been pivotal to the success of FORS. He has also overseen several initiatives which have enhanced the scheme.

With an impressive CV and a staunch advocate of FORS throughout his career, Geraint Davies has most recently presided over the John Raymond Transport fleet as a FORS Gold accredited operator. He was part of the first cohort in 2012 to qualify as a FORS Practitioner and has also been a FORS auditor and FORS driver trainer. Davies has also chaired the Logistics UK Road Freight Council at Westminster and has served on the RHA Board of Directors. He has also been chair of the Wales Road Transport Advisory Group and vice-chair of the South Wales IRTE / SOE. With his associations with stakeholders across the transport sector, plus an impressive skill-set, Davies is uniquely placed to further build upon the collaborations FORS has shaped over the last 18 months. “I am passionate about FORS,” said Davies. “I’m proud to have supported the scheme since the beginning. Ian Henderson and his team have taken the scheme forward and with my previously-held relationships with industry bodies, I’m intent on building upon that success. FORS is a well-established entity and I still see huge potential for it to grow further. With a focus on safety, efficiency and sustainability, I know FORS can bring tangible benefits to operators. In fact,” he added, “I have first-hand experience of exactly what FORS can deliver.”

Have you tried the new FORS Practitioner courses?

In April, FORS launched a new way of achieving FORS Practitioner and five new courses. Now comprising a series of 15 modules, the introduction of five additional modules allows participants to adopt a more flexible route towards achieving FORS Practitioner status, with the programme also offering more career-specific content. The revamped FORS Practitioner programme is now available to book online. Course participants are still required to undertake a total of 10 FORS Practitioner modules, including six mandatory components from the pre-existing prospectus. Then, a choice from any of the remaining modules – including the new five modules – will see participants ‘graduate’ as a FORS Practitioner with a knowledge-set specific to their own career and workplace. The additional five modules have been carefully devised to reflect modern fleet management awareness, and include: Managing Drivers’ Fatigue Managing Drivers’ Hours Managing Abnormal Indivisible Loads Introduction to Fleet Auditing Road Traffic Collision Investigation. The new modules provide flexibility for participants as they pursue their goal of achieving FORS Practitioner status. The six mandatory courses that individuals must complete to achieve FORS Practitioner status are: Managing Work Related Road Risk Managing Driver Fitness and Health Managing Driver Training and Development Collision Procedures and Analysis Vehicle Serviceability and Roadworthiness Fuel Efficiency and Low Emissions The training programme has been a huge success so far. Here’s what some of those taking part had to say about it: “Excellent training session with exactly the right amount of participants. Trainer was accomplished at keeping a good pace throughout and maintaining an excellent balance between group discussion and factual teaching.” “I came away learning new things – things which I can insert into our business policy / procedures.” “My knowledge about fuel management, emissions and driver training has grown and I now have the confidence to enact training and monitoring measures.”



How safety technology is helping to prevent incidents and save lives

Latest vehicle incident statistics from the Department for Transport reveal that there were an estimated 27,450 people killed or seriously injured in 2021 on UK roads. FORS Associate Motormax co-founder and director James Haycock has highlighted how the latest technology is being designed to prevent incidents and save lives. He said: “The vehicle safety industry offers many solutions for reporting on incidents after they’ve occurred – and while there is obvious value to this, technology that is now available is designed to proactively prevent incidents. Rather than focusing solely on reporting after an incident or event, real impact to fleet safety can be achieved by leveraging the latest innovations that proactively assist drivers. “For example, Safetymax, designed and manufactured by Motormax, generates critical and potentially life-saving audible and visual alerts which are communicated clearly to drivers.” The system combines camera, viewing, warning and parking sensor technology to give drivers enhanced visibility while manoeuvring a vehicle at low speeds. It uses spoken voice alerts, rather than bleep sounds, which eliminates any confusion as to what the alert is referring to. This is combined with up to nine visual alerts such as stabiliser leg not stowed, side door open. Footage from Safetymax can also be integrated to record to a DVR, giving operators data to create driver profiles to use as a training tool. Safetymax uses up to 16 ultrasonic sensors to provide drivers with a clear indication of obstacles around the vehicle. The visual display uses a traffic light system at fixed points around the vehicle indicating safe distances while manoeuvring.



Left: Safetymax uses up to 16 ultrasonic sensors to provide drivers with a clear indication of obstacles around the vehicle

FORS 2023 conference turns spotlight on the road ahead

Following its success last year, the FORS Annual Conference returns in 2023 for its sixth edition on Thursday 2 November. With the theme ‘Building a resilient FORS Community for the road ahead’, the conference will be held at the International Convention Centre (ICC) in Birmingham. This year’s event pledges to build on the hugely positive reaction following the 2022 conference in Manchester, which received industry-wide praise from its audience of influential stakeholders from the transport sector. The conference also provides a platform for FORS Affinity Partners and FORS Associates to showcase their products and services, while presenting an unmissable opportunity to network with senior road transport professionals. The FORS Annual Conference will feature a high-profile and diverse range of speakers representing the length and breadth of the transport industry. These are set to be announced soon. Panel presentations with clearly defined headline topics will cover developments from FORS, and the transport sector more widely. These will include: An update from FORS

How the Traffic Commissioners are working to keep Great Britain’s roads safe The importance of FORS in today’s world Attract, retain, develop and grow. Building a workplace community for the road ahead. Driving change in the fleet industry Introducing Version 7 of the FORS Standard Working together with our community – GSAG panel.



VisionTrack uses AI for new 360 degree detection camera

FORS Associate VisionTrack is continuing to deliver ground-breaking road safety benefits with the launch of an AI detection camera. The VT650-AI eliminates HGV blind spots around the vehicle and enables complete 360 degree visibility to better protect vulnerable road users (VRUs). It is part of the company's growing range of AI-powered video telematics solutions that provide the most comprehensive risk detection and intervention (RDI) currently available.

Richard Kent, president of global sales at VisionTrack, said: "Traditional proximity sensors warn of a nearby road user, but typically alerts can be triggered by street furniture such as lamp posts, bollards, road signs and bins, which risks the driver becoming complacent and taking less notice of alarms."

"The best way to avoid this alert fatigue is to take advantage of intelligent and high-precision AI cameras that keep the driver engaged with accurate and useful information."

The intelligent and high-precision AI VRU detection camera is suitable for an HGV's front, side or rear using deep learning technology to detect pedestrians, cyclists, motorcyclists and people on scooters, while disregarding street furniture. With configurable safety zones, all angles can be covered, providing the precise location of nearby VRUs in relation to the vehicle. Footage is automatically displayed on an in-cab monitor, and supplemented with an audible, spoken warning.

Kent added: "We are creating a unique AI-powered video telematics ecosystem – using the latest cloud-based innovations – to provide unrivalled, real-time driver engagement, alongside the most accurate, timely and insightful risk monitoring and analysis. This integrated technology offering is designed to mitigate the impact of road, driver and fleet risk." •

Bus firm invests in AES system

PSV operator Go South Coast has invested in a wheel aligner system from FORS Associate Automotive Equipment Solutions (AES UK). The firm runs 150 bus routes in the south of England.

The company was using a sub-contractor to carry out about 60 wheel alignments per month for its fleet of 800 vehicles.

Steve Hamilton,

engineering director for Go South Coast, said: "It became apparent to us that doing our own wheel alignments had the potential to save us money. However, our in-house equipment was designed for older buses and would simply not give us the accuracy we needed on newer ones." •

For further details, visit a-e-s-uk.co.uk



Enva England has been awarded FORS Silver status

Enva achieves double FORS accreditation with TruTac

Enva England has dramatically reduced its fleet admin, boosted visibility and achieved two FORS accreditations in a matter of months since adopting FORS Associate TruTac's full software suite.

The firm specialises in waste and recycling management and operates a fleet of around 75 vehicles – mainly HGVs – many of which transport waste to and from recycling facilities.

Enva England moved to using TruTac's software in March 2022 after seeking a new system to reduce the amount of admin necessitated by its previous provider. They now use TruTac's full online suite of fleet management and compliance software, comprising TruLicence, TruControl, TruChecks, TruFleet and TruLinks.

"We were using another fleet software system which wasn't quite doing what we required," said John Stephenson, Enva England's fleet manager. "With our FORS accreditation journey in mind, I started researching alternatives."

"I researched TruTac and found it wasn't anywhere near as demanding in terms of admin. It ticks all our boxes and works fantastically for us."

The combination of Stephenson's research and TruTac's products and customer service were instrumental in Enva England achieving FORS Bronze status in July 2022 – just four months after the switch. It then topped that four months later when it was awarded FORS Silver status.

"We hit the ground running with the software and found that the accreditation was something we could get done reasonably quickly," said Stephenson. "It's a credit to TruTac and shows how useful and easy to use it really is."

According to Stephenson, the integrated modules with seamless data flow and the visibility for jobs in the workshop are among the software's biggest perks for a busy HGV fleet as it minimises admin by removing duplicate data in multiple different systems. •

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John Stephenson. Fleet Manager, Enva England.



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Words: **Steve Banner**

ELECTRIC TRUCK DISRUPTERS ON THE ATTACK

But in a conservative UK transport industry wary of unfamiliar names, will they make the grade?

Driven by legislation and pressure from customers, the rising interest in zero-emission trucks has triggered the arrival of new manufacturers determined to steal sales from the traditional players.

The advantage they have over the legacy brands is that they are all beginning with

a clean sheet of paper.

They are not trying to create an electric truck by ripping the diesel engine and fuel tanks out of an existing model and replacing them with an electric motor and battery pack. Instead, they are starting with a purpose-built platform that does not involve awkward compromises.

In doing so, however, they are trying to appeal to a conservative industry that is wary of unfamiliar brand names. While a vehicle may look attractive on paper and perform well in an extended trial, fleet managers need to take a host of other considerations into account before they commit themselves.

They want to know whether

Above: Volta has appointed Sapphire Vehicle Services as its first UK service partner

competitively priced acquisition packages are available and who is providing the aftersales back-up. Prospective buyers will also need to be assured that a new start-up firm has the necessary financial backing to bear the massive cost of designing and building a brand new truck.

A truck's environmental impact may be minimal. However, that is of little benefit if it develops a fault, there is no technician around capable of fixing it and it ends up marooned in a yard somewhere not earning its keep.

All the new brands are at different stages when it comes to delivering such vitally important support and in the development of their products, but delivering proactive fleet support is a challenge each one of them will have to address sooner or later if they want to make marketplace progress. The great strength of the established manufacturers is that they have strong dealer networks– and that is a barrier to entry that disrupters will find difficult to overcome.

HVS

UK-based HVS – Hydrogen Vehicle Systems – is the newest of the marketplace newcomers, with a 4x2 tractor unit fitted with twin hydrogen fuel cells. Capable of operating at 40 tonnes, it offers a range of up to 370 miles and can be refuelled in 20 minutes, says the company.

The unit is now undergoing pre-production prototyping. Real-world trials with operators are set to start in the last quarter of 2025 once the vehicle is ready to be assembled in volume.

HVS is busy developing autonomous models in conjunction with grocery retailer Asda and backed by £3.4m of government funding through the Centre for Connected Autonomous Vehicles (CCAV). In doing so HVS is acting as the leader of the Hub2Hub consortium.

Two models are being worked on and should begin trials next year.

One will have a conventional cab and will be tested on the public highway with a driver onboard ready to intervene if necessary. Its stablemate will be autonomous and have its cab replaced by an aerodynamic fairing and will be evaluated on test tracks with a driver in a control hub operating it remotely.

HVS says: “Together these two prototypes point to an optimised future logistics system where vehicles could be operated in autonomous mode on a hub-to-hub route, with a remote driver then taking control to drive the vehicle from the hub to its end destination.”

Tevva

Tevva has come up with an electric 7.5-tonner which has gone into series production at a factory in Tilbury in Essex. Equipped with a 105kWh battery, it is said to offer a range of up to 140 miles between recharges and is going into service with the Royal Mail, Travis Perkins and Expect Distribution among others. Founded by Chief Executive Officer Asher Bennett, a former submariner in the Israeli navy, the company expects to sell up to 1,000 electric trucks this year.

Zero-emission vehicles do not come cheap, but Tevva's offering benefits from a government plug-in truck grant that has the potential of cutting the price by £16,000. It has also been granted European Community Whole Vehicle Type Approval (ECWVTA) – good news for export sales.

Tevva is also introducing an electric 7.5-tonner equipped with a hydrogen fuel cell range extender said to be good for over 350 miles. Last year's IAA Transportation show in Hanover, Germany, saw Tevva unveil a 19-tonne version of the same model with an anticipated 310-mile range.

A key concern surrounding electric vehicles is what eventually happens to their batteries. Tevva has therefore entered into a partnership with battery recycling specialist Ecobat which covers

Below: Tevva's electric 7.5-tonner has gone into series production



the repair, repurposing and recycling of the lithium-ion batteries it fits.

Bennett said: “Ecobat has proven credentials when it comes to minimising waste, honouring resources and respecting rare earth medals. It means we’re being responsible corporate citizens by preparing for battery end-of-life.”

Delivering support is a challenge each one will have to address sooner or later

Volta

Volta has just announced that its electric Zero 16-tonner has gone into series production at the Steyr Automotive contract manufacturing plant in Austria. Distinguished by a low-slung central driving position plus a deep windscreen and deep cab door windows to make it easier for whoever is at the wheel to spot vulnerable road users, Zero is said to offer a range of from 95 to 125 miles between recharges.

It forms part of a family that will eventually include 7.5-, 12-, and 18-tonners. Like the Tevva 7.5-tonner, it has been awarded ECWVTA and the Austrian factory has the capacity to build up to 14,000 Voltas annually.

Conscious of the need to offer customers aftersales back-up with a familiar ring to it, Volta has had the good sense to appoint Sapphire Vehicle Services as its first UK service partner. With 16 workshops spread countrywide open 24/7, Sapphire has charging facilities, the tools needed to look after electric vehicles and technicians trained at the Volta Trucks Academy in London.

“The arrangement makes it easier for operators to accommodate a Volta within their existing operation because our sites may already be servicing their diesel trucks,” said Sapphire Group Commercial Manager, Grant Tadman.

Volta’s other support initiatives include cementing a partnership with Qover and Helvetia International Automotive to provide Zero operators with insurance. Volta Chief Fleet Solutions Officer Casper Norden said: “It’s yet another example of how Volta is backing its customers on their accelerated journey to sustainable and zero-tailpipe-emission operations.” ■

Below: The HVS truck is now undergoing pre-production prototyping



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Words: **Matthew Eisenegger**

ELECTRIC MIXER GIVES FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Renault's new truck proves the heavyweight hitters can be emissions free too

Tarmac has put an all-electric 27-tonne concrete mixer into service in Birmingham. The first of its type to be deployed in the UK, it is based on a zero-emission Renault Trucks D Wide E-Tech chassis.

McPhee Mixers has equipped the Renault with a 5.8 cu m mixer drum powered by the truck's traction batteries. Based at Tarmac's site in Washwood Heath, the 6x2 rigid is achieving a range of 72 miles, making up to seven deliveries of ready-mix concrete daily

around the UK's second biggest city.

McPhee's parent TVS Interfleet (TVSI) estimates that the new arrival will save 42 tonnes of CO₂ a year when compared with its nearest fossil-fuel equivalent. It has joined a 2,500-strong fleet.

During the vehicle's development

Renault Trucks, Tarmac and TVSI analysed data from existing diesel-powered mixers to see how energy usage could be reduced on an electric version.

Weight-saving initiatives drawn up with the aim of extending the battery truck's range included constructing the mixer drum out of Hardox 500 Tuf special steel.

Its hardness and strength allow a thinner gauge of metal to be used than would otherwise be the case. At just shy of 50kg the weight saving is modest, but every kilo removed helps.

Hardox 500 Tuf is in many respects the ideal material for a rotating mixer drum because it takes so long to wear out.

The drum is controlled electronically to optimise the quality of the mix while ensuring that it does not rotate unnecessarily. Energy usage is minimised as a result. The less the drum rotates, the longer it will last, cutting the truck's total cost of ownership.

Not cheap

Developing an electric concrete mixer does not come cheap, so it is fortunate that Tarmac happens to be owned by

global building materials goliath CRH.

"Back in 2021, CRH ran an internal challenge asking for ideas on how best to decarbonise the business," said Tarmac's Senior Manager, Logistics Development, Ben Garner.

Teams that came up with the most promising proposal could apply for support from a \$250m innovation fund established by the group. "Our team was the first to do so," he said – and its application for funding to develop a battery-powered mixer was successful.

E-Tech D Wide is equipped with a pair of electric motors delivering a maximum power output of 370kW/500hp with a continuous output of 260kW/350hp and maximum torque of up to 850Nm. The truck is equipped with a two-speed transmission and employs lithium-ion battery technology with a capacity of up to 375kWh.

Charging times range from under 10 hours using a 22kW AC socket to less than two hours using a 150kW DC fast charger.

The mixer costs two-and-a-half times more than the equivalent diesel says Garner, but the good news is that it costs half as much to run.

Tarmac generally changes its diesel mixers once they are seven or eight years old, primarily because of ever-tougher emissions legislation. Take a Euro V truck into some major conurbations with clean air zones and operators will be hit by a financial penalty, so it makes sense to upgrade to Euro VI.

An electric mixer produces no emissions, however. "This means we can run it for as long as we need to," Garner said.

It also means that its likely second-hand value – largely unknown as things stand – assumes less significance than it might otherwise do.

There is, alas, a regulatory barrier that may prevent some fleets from opting for battery power. While a diesel 6x2 is limited to a gross weight of 26 tonnes, a government concession designed to compensate for the weight of the battery pack and the potential loss of payload allows an electric model to operate at 27 tonnes.

Draft regulations have been published which increase the 1.0-tonne electric dispensation to 2.0 tonnes.

While that has to be welcomed, at the time of writing it looked as though



it would not benefit eight-wheelers or maximum-weight artics any more than the existing concession does, because the permitted axle loadings have not been altered.

Most of Tarmac's UK mixers feature 8.0 cu m drums on eight-wheeler chassis, so the dispensation could in fact only apply to 200 of its trucks, said Garner. "It's frustrating and a glaring anomaly."

Positive note

On the positive side E-Tech D Wide's low noise levels when compared with a diesel – a major advantage if the vehicle is operating outside normal working hours – and zero tailpipe emissions will make it increasingly more acceptable to construction sites. Furthermore, an electric truck can be driven into a major building without the need for extraction fans to be present to suck out exhaust fumes; a clear cost saving.

The electric mixer arrived in Washwood Heath in late 2022 and has been subject to a practical real-world trial ever since. The level of electronic control featured means it can generate useful data on the concrete itself, including temperature, consistency and water content.

Some of the new truck's technology could find its way onto diesel-powered mixers, including its anti-rollover system.

Almost 40 mixer rollover accidents occur in the UK each year involving a variety of operators.

That is without doubt a worrying figure that has been somewhat obscured by the far greater attention paid to the risk of tippers falling over when their bodies are raised.

Measures adopted to mitigate the risk of a mixer rollover include mounting the 350-litre water tank at a much lower level than usual to lower the truck's centre of gravity. That means improved stability.

Drum rotation can contribute to the risk of a rollover, especially if the driver tackles a bend too quickly, so controlling rotation electronically brings a safety as well as an energy-saving benefit.

An enhanced restraint system has been installed to retain the drum if there is a danger of it breaking away from the chassis and landing the truck on its side.

It now takes 1.5g of force to dislodge it. That is significantly more than the 0.5g that has been viewed acceptable on traditional mixers and is undoubtedly good news for operational safety. ■



The new arrival will save 42 tonnes of CO₂ a year when compared with its nearest fossil-fuel equivalent



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E-TECH



RENAULT
TRUCKS

Words: **Matthew Eisenegger**

BOC IDENTIFIES FORS AS 'AN ABSOLUTE BUSINESS NEED'

Safer, more sustainable and efficient logistics operations are the order of the day

BOC, the UK & Ireland's largest industrial gases business, has highlighted the importance of its ongoing FORS accreditation when it comes to new business opportunities and customer retention.

Since gaining FORS accreditation in 2017, BOC's commitment to FORS has enabled it to deliver safer, more sustainable and efficient logistics operations to its customers.

Clare Yearsley, Business Improvement Manager for Service & Training, said: "We serve a variety of markets and in all of them, it is imperative that we demonstrate a commitment to best practice operations. Our customers need to know that we will deliver on our safety and legislative obligations and that we are working hard to reduce our environmental impact. Put simply, FORS gives us and our customers peace of mind, so it is an absolute business need."

"FORS accreditation is increasingly being stipulated in contracts during the tender and re-tender process – and not just in London. BOC's commitment to FORS and what it stands for strongly supports our sales teams in their interactions with new and prospective customers."

BOC boasts Bronze level accreditation across its entire fleet of 541 vehicles, as

well as having a selection of sites with Silver accreditation at strategic locations.

Maintaining the highest standards of safety, efficiency and environmental performance across its sizeable fleet is a key priority for BOC and Yearsley believes that FORS accreditation has been instrumental in helping the business to achieve this: "FORS accreditation has helped to influence and inform the company's internal standards, policies and procedures," she said.

"Ultimately, aligning our business with the standards and requirements of FORS enables our teams to identify areas for improvement and shape operational change. We look forward to continuing our relationship with FORS in the future". ■

Our customers need to know that we will deliver on our safety and legislative obligations

BOC boasts Bronze level accreditation across its entire fleet of 541 vehicles, as well as having a selection of sites with Silver accreditation at strategic locations





We serve a variety of markets and in all of them, it is imperative that we demonstrate a commitment to best practice operations



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Total	Fuel consumption: 28,482.10 l	Distance: 109,851.3 km	CO2 emission: 75,476.8 kg	Braking events: 943	Steering events: 2343	
Quarter	Fuel consumption	Distance	CO2 emission	Braking events	Steering events	Average fuel consumption
001 -	Fuel consumption:	Distance: 5,295.0 km	CO2 emission:	Braking events: 3	Steering events: 1	
I 2022	5,295.0 km		3	1		
002 -	Fuel consumption:	Distance: 1,797.5 km	CO2 emission:	Braking events: 6	Steering events: 84	
I 2022	1,797.5 km		6	84		
003 -	Fuel consumption:	Distance: 1,291.0 km	CO2 emission:	Braking events: 0	Steering events: 5	
I 2022	1,291.0 km		0	5		
004 -	Fuel consumption:	Distance: 1,848.3 km	CO2 emission:	Braking events: 6	Steering events: 10	
I 2022	1,848.3 km		6	10		
006 -	Fuel consumption:	Distance: 835.1 km	CO2 emission:	Braking events: 3	Steering events: 18	
I 2022	835.1 km		3	18		



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Words: **Matthew Eisenegger**

ISUZU F SERIES: UNSUNG HERO OF THE TRUCK WORLD

Isuzu Truck may be a small player in the UK, but operators who buy its vehicles like what they get – a lot

Isuzu Truck has been a small player in the HGV market for years now. But what we have found is that when truck fleets make the plunge and opt for its vehicles, they like what they get and come back for more. And so Great Britain now boasts a small but loyal brand following.

Isuzu Truck is mostly known for its 3.5-tonne and 7.5-tonne rigid workhorses – but there are also lesser-known 11-tonne and 13-tonne offerings, labelled the F series. So buyers of the smaller trucks often opt for the F series when they wish to go up the weight scale, trusting the brand rather than venturing elsewhere.

Mind you, it's a great product in its own right and could well appeal to operators wishing to choose trucks at the mid-range but who, at present, are reliant on other marques. Isuzu Truck is well aware that its main problem is enticing potential customers away from the better-known manufacturers. Once that has been achieved, the firm believes operators will be impressed.

We recently spent a day in the day cab 'F' series at 13.5 tonnes gross vehicle weight with a curtainside body built by PPS Commercials complete with a Dhollandia 1,500kg tuckaway tail lift.

Isuzu is, in fact, one of the world's leading manufacturers of diesel engines and the heart of the 13.5-tonne 'F' series is the 4HK1E6H powerplant, a two-stage turbo intercooled Euro VI engine complying with the latest 'Step E' version standard. There is also an engine

braking system. This 5.2-litre engine is rated a 240PS (177kW) at 2,600 rpm and has torque of 765Nm at 1,600 rpm. Behind this engine is a fluid hydrokinetic coupling with a lock-up clutch and torque converter. This is mainly to help the match-up with the in-house MZW6P

Below: Buyers of the smaller trucks often opt for the F series when they wish to go up the weight scale



six-speed fully automated gearbox that Isuzu badges as 'Easyshift' and features an 0.72 overdrive top gear.

The 13.5-tonne range has three wheelbase options ranging from the short wheelbase at 3,790mm mainly aimed at the tipper / skip market, the medium wheelbase at 4,360mm with a maximum recommended body length of 5,950mm and, finally, the long wheelbase at 4,990mm.

The 'F' series has a body and payload allowance of 9,350kgs based around a 4,990mm wheelbase with a day cab, which is one of the better payload allowances in the market. The front axle has a plated weight of 5,000kgs and the rear 9,000kgs leaving a load latitude / tolerance of just 500kgs, which is a little tight compared to some competitors. The maximum permissible towing capacity is 3,500kgs leading to a gross train weight (GTW) of 17,000kgs. The 4.9m wheelbase has an overall length of 8.4m. This allows for a recommended body length of 6.8m and a body width of 2.55m.

Isuzu Truck uses a traditional chassis set-up with a parallel ladder type channel section and straight side rails and riveted flanges. The front axle features a reverse Elliot I-beam which

is suspended by multi taper-leaf steel springs with an anti roll bar and shock absorbers, and a fully floating banjo type rear axle has a four bag air suspension with height control. Finally, there is a 140-litre fuel tank and 16-litre Adblue tank.

Unlike many of its competitors, Isuzu Truck fits 370mm x 150mm drum brakes all round, linked to a full air dual circuit system. Of course, it also features the standard array of electronic braking / safety systems such as with ABS, EBD, EVSC, ASR and a lane departure warning system.

The 'F' series has an all steel 2,195mm wide day cab and electrically-operated large heated door mirrors and windows, as well as central locking with remote keyless entry and immobiliser. Inside there's a driver's fully adjustable Isringhausen air-suspended seat with head restraint and a fixed passenger seat, between is a rigid centre seat with two-point seat belt.

On the road

Climbing the three steps into the 'F' series cab is easy enough and once inside the instrument panel has two large dials for speed and revs either side of a LCD panel offering information on items such

Below: The F series cab sits relatively low on the chassis, so consequently visibility is excellent



It's a great product and could well appeal to operators wishing to choose trucks at the mid-range

as water temperature, gear selection, fuel consumption and if you are in 'normal' or 'Eco' driving mode.

The centre panel houses the heating and ventilation controls, including the air conditioning unit, and above that is a Kenwood DAB radio with Bluetooth, Sat Nav is available as an option. Finally, the smart tachometer is on the far left of the centre panel and right at the bottom is a variable engine idling switch.

To the left, in between the drivers and the centre seat is the Easyshift gear lever and the short stub for the handbrake, which has to be said is slightly awkward to reach.

After starting up its engine, which is surprisingly quiet, it's just a matter of selecting 'D' for drive and moving off. The engine appears to like low revs and for most of the time the vehicle was in

'Eco' mode, which speeds up the gear change and prevents the vehicle hanging onto the gear for too long, helping to improve the fuel consumption as well as reducing the in-cab noise.

The cab sits relatively low on the chassis, so consequently visibility is good, aided by a large front windscreen, side windows that slope towards the front and large door mirrors to help rearward vision.

Verdict

We found the fit and finish a tad 'last generation' but there's no faulting the payload, all-round vision and the general driving experience. Operators who don't give Isuzu Truck a try when considering buying new vehicles may well be missing a rather large trick or two. ■

Below: The middle seat folds down to make a handy desk



Below: The engine of the F series is surprisingly quiet



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Words: **Trevor Gehlcken**

TRUCK DRIVERS FACE OVERNIGHT NIGHTMARE

Lack of secure facilities leads to 'degrading and embarrassing' situations



A severe lack of proper overnight parking and facilities for Britain's truck drivers has come under the spotlight following a damning Government report that revealed how bad the working life of an average driver can be.

The country has a massive shortage of drivers at present and one reason younger people shun the job, especially among women, is the thought of bedding down on the side of the road with no basic amenities.

The Department for Transport (DfT) published a massive report entitled 'The National Survey of Lorry Parking Spaces' in September 2022, an update of an

original survey that went back to 2017, and concluded that the provision of on-site overnight parking was at a critical level, leaving thousands of truckers to spend the night in laybys or at industrial sites.

In the survey, there was a total of 16,761 on-site overnight spaces and 21,164 vehicles parked up on both on-site and off-site locations, meaning there was a 27 per cent shortage of proper overnight spaces offering meals, beds and washing facilities etc.

An online driver survey was carried out as part of the study and well-maintained toilets and showers proved a key feature when choosing an on-site stop. Also deemed important were CCTV, security and fencing.

Rather surprising, maybe, was that only 54 per cent of drivers said they preferred to park at a paid-for truckstop overnight, while 24 per cent said they preferred industrial sites and laybys. The rest preferred to park near to free facilities.

A driver focus group was also formed and flagged up clean showers, good food, social mixing spaces and reasonable value for money as their main concerns.

The report said: "It was apparent that one of the biggest concerns from drivers is the lack of parking spaces available as it makes it very difficult for drivers to plan ahead where to park as part of their journey. It was generally felt that on-site parking facilities often represented

poor value for money and there was a preference for independent sites. There was a strong feeling within the group that European facilities were good (even basic ones) and the UK ones are poor in comparison."

Publication of the report drew comments from groups representing both drivers and haulage companies.

The GMB trade union said truckers were suffering from a 'degrading and embarrassing' lack of proper toilet facilities.

The union's annual congress in Brighton was told that a lack of public toilets left drivers forced to 'go' anywhere – or urinate in a bottle.

Mike Tinnion, a GMB delegate from London, said: "This is a health and safety issue for professional drivers.

"Can you imagine being stuck behind the wheel and needing to use a toilet knowing there isn't one you can use? It's degrading and embarrassing.

"I have heard of some real horror stories about what drivers are forced to do when they cannot find a toilet to use – and it's worse for women. Access to sanitation is a basic human right."

The Road Haulage Association (RHA) waded into the discussion too.

Tom Cornwell, RHA Public Affairs Manager, said: "There are simply not enough facilities on our roads, leaving countless lorry drivers parked up overnight without access to a toilet or shower.

"Often the facilities they do find are in a terrible state. It's a dehumanising experience for commercial vehicle drivers – they deserve to be treated with more respect."

Key industry figures delivered a petition to No10 Downing Street recently calling for more safe and secure parking and better standards at truckstops.

Parliamentarians have signed a letter co-ordinated by the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for Road Freight and Logistics, which says improved facilities should be central to the Government's plans to recruit, train and support commercial vehicle drivers.

Greg Smith MP, APPG Chair, said: "A key element of the issues around driver recruitment and retention is the poor state of our roadside facilities. It is imperative the UK ups its game, ensuring drivers have safe, secure, comfortable and affordable options that they know they can rely on."

The RHA estimates that 11,000 more parking spaces for HGVs are needed. ■

Modern sites pull out the stops to cosset truckers

While the comments regarding the general lack of decent facilities for Britain's truck drivers are certainly true, some modern truckstops go to amazing lengths to keep the country's drivers fit, healthy and relaxed.

TheStop at the Hollies in Staffordshire, for example, has been taken over by Certas Energy and the site has just been given a major upgrade.

Mike Heaton, Head of Estate Development, said: "We recognise the vital role that HGV drivers play in keeping our economy moving and believe they deserve more from roadside services. The acquisition and refurbishment of our truckstop is the first step towards delivering on our promise to provide safer, more secure, more comfortable – and importantly enjoyable – spaces for HGV drivers to rest and refuel."

The Watling Street site, which is the oldest truckstop in the UK, now boasts a café, bar, 15-room hotel, washroom facilities, gaming area, launderette, truck wash and HGV refuelling bunker. It also has improved parking facilities, with 230 secure HGV parking spaces per night, as well as CCTV monitoring.

Staff at the truckstop recently raised over £600 during a charity drive and handed over the money to the local Cannock and District foodbank.

Alex Wolfe, Commercial Director for Roadside Services at Certas Energy UK, said: "We are committed to helping to raise the bar in roadside services – and where better to start than the UK's most famous rest stop. This site has served the transport industry for almost 100 years and our vision is for TheStop at The Hollies to become the

number one truck stop in the UK, as well as the oldest.

Another site that raises the bar when it comes to luxury facilities is the Formula truckstop at Ellesmere Port. Standard Publisher Matthew Eisenegger paid a visit recently and had this to say about it.

"If you have not been to Formula Truckstop, you are missing a treat. You'll find fantastic food, laundrette facilities, work stations, a gigantic TV, brand new showers, conference and network areas and much more. "An immaculate kitchen prepares tasty food from a traditional full English breakfast all the way through to an amazing steak dinner.

"The laundrette facility has washing machines, tumble dryers, irons and ironing boards. It gets even better, as for drivers who prefer to cook their own food, there is a fully-equipped dining area with microwave ovens where drivers can sit and dine in peace. The social side of the driver's life is also well catered for, with a TV lounge that is more akin to a business class lounge in an airport, with deep, comfortable seats and a deck area in front of a gigantic TV.

"In the same area, there is a bank of PCs situated in individual work stations. Drivers also get full use of massage chairs, table tennis, AirHockey and a pool table. All of these areas are bright red, which makes the facility look stunning.

"The showers are again decked out in red (with exception of one which is blue) and the shower cubicles and general washing area would put a premiership football club facilities to shame." ■

Below: Staff from TheStop at the Hollies raised over £600 during a charity drive



Below: The Formula truckstop at Ellesmere Port boasts, among other things, gym facilities and a pool table



Words: Trevor Gehlken

DRINK-DRIVING OR BALD TYRES – WHICH IS WORSE?

The answer may surprise many transport operators

Driving with worn tyres can increase stopping distance seven times more than drink-driving, a new study has found.

Researchers at Cardiff University also discovered that even tyres on the legal limit of 1.6mm could increase braking distances by over a third, compared to tyres in good condition with 4mm or more of tread.

The study was carried out by the Centre for Automotive Industry Research and found that consuming alcohol increases reaction time by 18 per cent, or 120 milliseconds on average. At 70mph, this would lead to an increased stopping distance of 12.4 feet.

However, the difference in stopping distance between tyres in good condition and worn condition with just 1.6mm tread is an additional 89 feet – up by 36

tyres – would have the largest impact on stopping distance as the figures have never been compared before. To demonstrate that worn tyres increase stopping distance seven times more than alcohol is a significant finding. The research also highlights how dangerous supposedly legal tyres are when it comes to grip levels. In my opinion the current legal limit is too low.”

And the study found that it isn’t just braking distances that are impacted by worn tyres.

The professor added: “Braking distances are an indicator of general levels of grip. So, if worn tyres increase braking distances by a third, we can reasonably assume that general levels of grip in the tyres are reduced by this amount too.

“Therefore, worn tyres will also have a significant impact on control on the road in other situations, such as cornering. This means it is more likely that drivers will lose control in the first place if they have worn tyres.” ■

Worn tyres have a significant impact on control on the road in other situations, such as cornering

per cent. But a vehicle with this level of tread is technically legal and would pass an MOT test.

Professor Peter Wells, of the University of Cardiff, said the study demonstrated that the current legal limit on tread was too low.

Professor Wells said: “When we began the research, we didn’t know which of the two factors – alcohol or worn



Above: Driving on bald tyres is substantially more dangerous than drinking and driving

Below: Worn tyres can affect the driver's ability to control a vehicle



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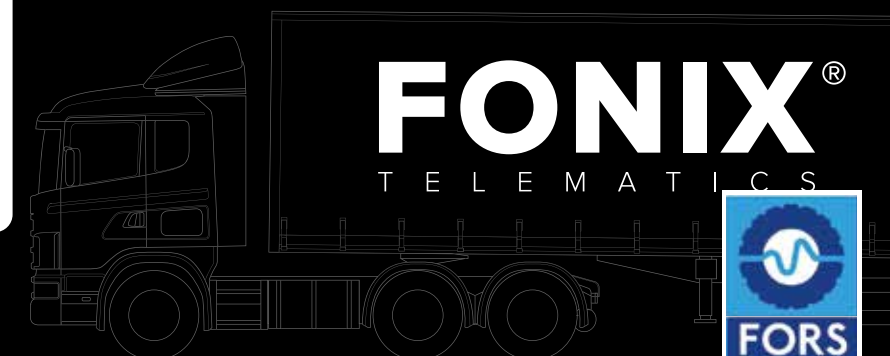


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DRIVERS FACE A FINE FOR RUNNING OUT OF FUEL

Running out of fuel while on the road can be a frustrating experience, not to mention a dangerous one. But now it has been revealed that drivers who do this are liable to be slapped with a fine too.

While running out of fuel isn't illegal in itself, drivers can be fined a minimum of £100 and three penalty points if their vehicle obstructs the road as a result of an avoidable breakdown, or if running out of fuel is deemed to result in careless or dangerous driving.

And if a vehicle causing an obstruction is found to be at fault for a collision, the penalty can be more serious.

The Highway Code reinforces this. Rule 97 of states: "Before setting off. You MUST ensure – that you have sufficient fuel for your journey, especially if it includes motorway driving."

Edmund King, AA president, said drivers can have genuine reasons for running out of fuel such as a faulty gauge or undetected fuel leak. He also said that lengthy traffic jams due to bad winter weather or disruption from Channel

ports can pose risks – hence, the advice to always have at least one quarter of a tank of fuel. Likewise, some EV drivers might run low or out of charge if several chargers aren't working.

King said: "One would hope that police officers would be reasonable in those circumstances. But where drivers negligently run on fumes, leaving themselves and others in danger on the road, the weight of the law can be

brought to bear on them. Don't be a fuel gambler by running on fumes.

"Most of the out-of-fuel cases the AA sees are a result of driver misjudgement and the police have the power to give a warning or a penalty if it is deemed to be careless driving or causes an obstruction." ■

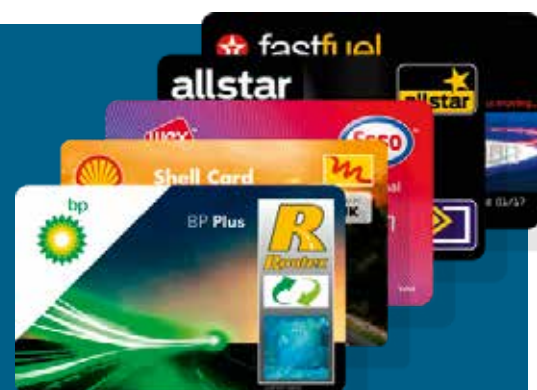
Below: Running out of fuel could result in a £100 fine and three licence penalty points



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- Work when you want to: run reports, view transaction and invoices online 24/7.



To Register



Video



Words: **Matthew Eisenegger**

SURVEY SHOWS SHORTAGE OF ELECTRIC VEHICLE TECHNICIANS

Worrying fact could hold back sales of green vans and trucks

As more and more transport operators are opting for electric vans and trucks (EVs), a worrying new fact is emerging when it comes to maintenance that could hold back sales of green vehicles.

Working on EVs is a totally different matter from repairing diesel-engined vehicles and requires a whole new training regime. But new figures reveal there are huge gaps across the country in the availability of qualified technicians. And, of course, if vehicles are off the road, they aren't earning money.

Research from the Institute of the Motor Industry (IMI), shows that despite an increase in EV training in the last year, qualified technician availability is still inconsistent across the UK.

The findings have been published in 'Electric Evolution: Examining the Triumphs, Trials and Roadblocks of the UK's Electric Vehicle Aftermarket'.

It examines the proportion of technicians that are EV qualified compared to the total technician workforce in each UK local authority.

Only seven local authorities across England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland have 10 per cent or more technicians qualified to work on electric vehicles.

Worryingly, more than 150 local authorities have fewer than 2 per cent of technicians with the necessary qualifications to work safely on electric vehicles.

The top local authorities with EV technicians were Croydon (18.9 per cent), Redditch (14.4 per cent) and West Lancashire (11.5 per cent).

The bottom local authorities were

Thanet (0.2 per cent), Shetland Islands (0.2 per cent), Rossendale (0.2 per cent) and Redcar and Cleveland (0.2 per cent).

Emma Carrigy, Research Manager at the IMI, said: "Our data reveals the greatest proportion of EV qualified technicians in the automotive aftermarket workforce in some obvious locations such as London and the south-east.

"However, it is a concern that there are also some big gaps in much of the central part of England as well as a number of London Boroughs."

The IMI is currently predicting that 77,000 IMI TechSafe qualified technicians will be required by 2030, increasing to 89,000 by 2032.

The IMI also analysed the availability of EV qualified technicians in relation to where the greatest number of public charge points are located – a good indication of workforce matched to demand. Again, there are some serious gaps.

"While the top two local authorities for public charge points – Westminster

and City of London – probably don't have a huge demand for technicians, the fact that all other local authorities with the most public charge points have less than 2 per cent of their automotive workforce qualified to work on electric vehicles could seriously damage public confidence and undermine the transition to zero," said Carrigy.

However, she said this issue could be addressed. "There are more than 235 centres in the IMI network that can deliver EV qualifications, providing a significant opportunity to fill the skills gap and keep technicians safe."

Technicians who have met the IMI TechSafe standards – endorsed by the Office for Zero Emission Vehicles (OZEV) – can showcase their credentials by joining the IMI's industry-wide professional register. ■

Below: There is currently a severe shortage of technicians qualified to work on electric vehicles



Words: Trevor Gehlken

LONGER TRAILERS SET TO CUT EMISSIONS AND BOOST ECONOMY

But operators will have to add extra safety checks and training

As part of efforts to cut emissions and grow the UK economy, government has changed regulations to allow longer semi-trailers (LSTs) on Great Britain's road network.

LSTs, which measure up to 2.05 metres longer than a standard 16.65m semi-trailer, are towed by a conventional tractor unit and subject to the same 44-tonne weight limit as vehicles using standard trailers.

According to the new legal requirements, operators will be expected to put in place extra safety checks including driver training and scheduling, trailer loading, record keeping and training for transport managers and key staff.

Roads Minister Richard Holden said that a strong, resilient supply chain was key to government plans to boost the economy.

"That's why we're introducing longer semi-trailers to carry more goods in fewer journeys and ensure our shops, supermarkets and hospitals are always well stocked," he said. "These new vehicles will provide an almost £1.4 billion boost to the haulage industry, reduce congestion, lower emissions and enhance the safety of UK roads."

Eleven-year trial

The move follows an 11-year trial of the trailers, which involved more than 300 operators.

There are currently almost 3,000 LSTs on the road, with some of the biggest organisations in the UK due to roll out their extended use, including Greggs, Morrisons, Stobart, Royal Mail and Argos.

"We welcome the introduction of LSTs into general use," said Gavin Kirk, supply chain director at Greggs.

"Since 2013, Greggs has been operating LSTs from our national distribution centre in Newcastle. We were early adopters of the trial as we saw significant efficiency benefits from the additional 15% capacity that they afforded us.

The new double decks have helped us to achieve fuel savings and offer the most competitive service to customers

Maximum conversion

"We have converted 20% of our trailer fleet to LSTs, which was the maximum allowable under the trial, and these complement our fleet of double-deck trailers. Our drivers undertook additional training to use these trailers and we have monitored accidents, finding that they are as safe as our standard fleet.

"Due to the increased capacity, we have reduced our annual kilometre (km) travel by 540,000 km, and saved 410 tonnes of carbon per year from LSTs. This supports

our wider ESG agenda."

Last year, Suffolk-based The Bartrum Group took delivery of six new SDC double-deck 15.65m longer semi-trailers, which are used on its Pallet Track Network services.

Second deck

The new longer curtainsiders are fitted with a second deck, which provides increased capacity and more efficient operations for the group's Pallet Track Network services, transporting palletised orders throughout the UK daily, and trunking to hubs in Wolverhampton at night.

The tri-axle curtainsiders feature an EN 12642-XL design, with an FS1 sloping roof to minimise drag, LED lighting and wrap-around curtains.

Robert Bartrum, managing director at The Bartrum Group, which has a total fleet of 250 trailers, said: "We are committed to providing the most efficient service to our customers and Bartrum's latest delivery of high-volume double-deck curtainsiders reflects this.

Special spec

"We worked with SDC to develop a specification that would minimise our carbon footprint while also increasing the capacity of each vehicle by up to eight additional pallets.

"The new double decks have helped us to achieve fuel savings and offer the most competitive service to customers."

According to government, the introduction of LSTs is an affordable measure to continue to reduce CO2 emissions from without significant technological and infrastructure development, as it continues to work closely with the sector to ensure all new HGVs are net-zero by 2040. ■

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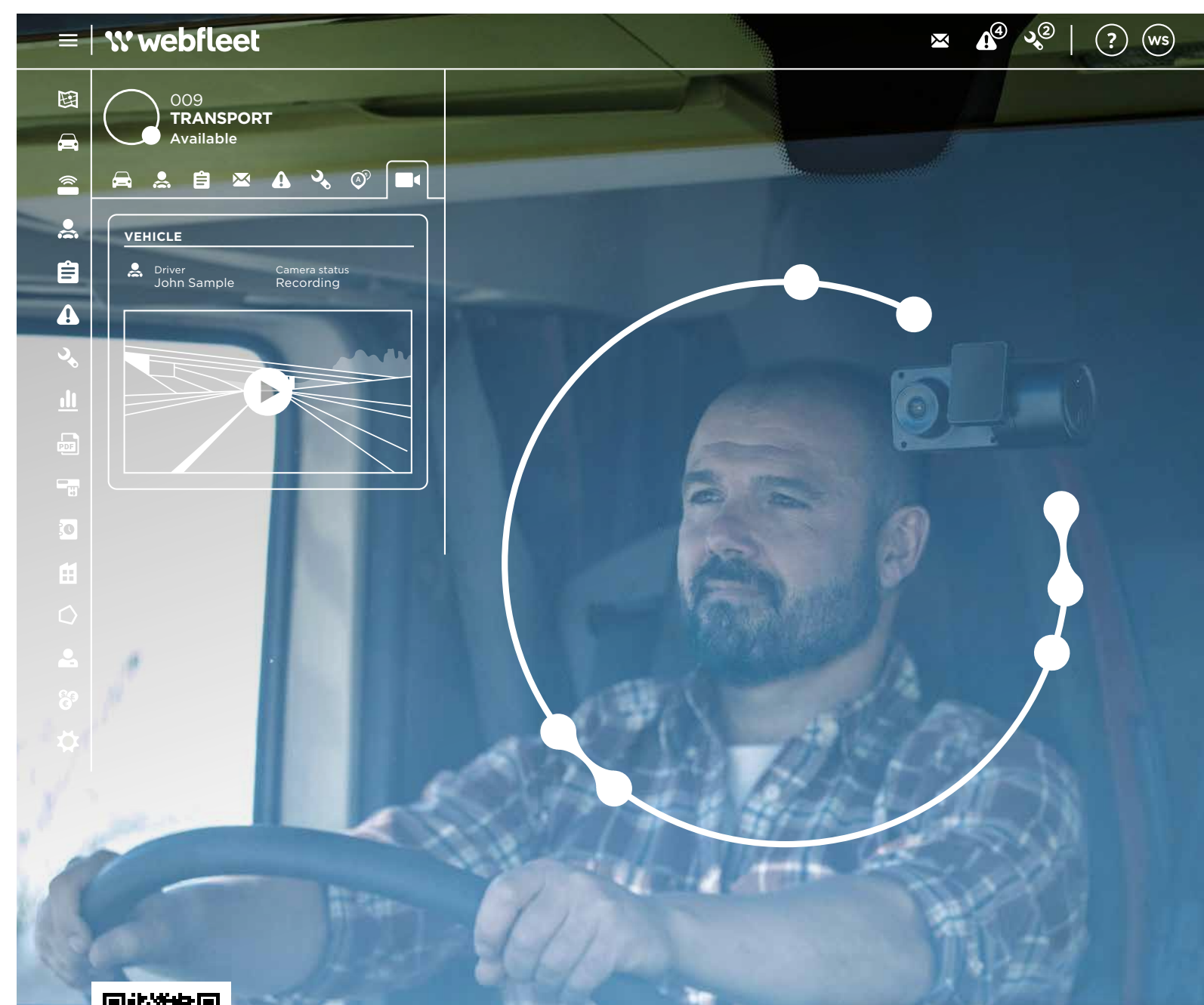


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Volkswagen's ID. Buzz Cargo is one of the latest electric vans on the market

Words: **Steve Banner**

CHARGING AHEAD TOWARDS A GREENER FUTURE

Transport fleets get a helping hand when it comes to providing electric top-up facilities

Electric vehicles represent the future and the government has set out a clear timetable for their adoption.

Sales of new cars and vans powered solely by internal combustion engines will be banned from 2030 onwards – no more than two replacement cycles away, if that. The same fate will befall non-zero-emission heavy trucks grossing at up to 26 tonnes come 2035, with a complete ban scheduled for 2040.

By 2050 all vehicles must be fossil-free.

In this scenario, there may also be a role for vehicles powered by hydrogen fuel cells given the range they can offer, especially if they are trucks used on long distance intercity runs. The only

emission fuel cells produce is water vapour.

In the meantime, pressure is being heaped on fleets to go zero-emission electric by emission restrictions imposed by local authorities – Oxford, for example, has designated some streets as ZEZs (Zero Emission Zones) at certain times of the day.

Going electric involves a lot more than acquiring half-a-dozen battery-powered vans and hoping for the best. Electric models require a supporting infrastructure if they are going to operate efficiently and operators are going to have to get involved in its provision.

That is likely to involve providing charging facilities at their premises.

“If you use Office for Zero Emission Vehicles (OZEV) approved installers, then you can get a £350 voucher towards a charging point,” Laszlo Daragics told FORS webinar delegates in a recent presentation.

Heavy involvement

Now heavily involved in the provision and smooth running of charging points, Laszlo and Melinda Daragics founded Bonus Eventus Maintenance in 2015. Bonus Eventus means ‘a good outcome’ in Latin.

A FORS Associate, the Surrey-based company was originally set up to plan, repair and maintain HVAC (heating, ventilation and air conditioning) systems for commercial and residential customers

– and continues to do so.

“We can support landlords, property management companies and even individuals when it comes to keeping their HVAC systems in good working order, saving them time and money,” Laszlo said. “We’ve now worked with over 50 schools, a wide range of care homes, pubs, restaurants and housing associations, and some of the biggest shopping centres in the country, like Westfield and Brent Cross in London.

“We’ve also worked with the David Lloyd health clubs,” he added.

With this sort of background, and given that it operates electric vehicles itself, it made sense for the company to set up Bonus Eventus Charged. OZEV-approved, it installs and maintains charging points for business clients countrywide and has now worked on hundreds of installations.

“We’ve got highly qualified electricians

We have pledged to support the environment in any way we can

and technicians on hand to solve any problems companies may come across,” he observed. “We’ve invested heavily in equipment and training to ensure we are perfectly positioned to help support the government in achieving its ambitious electric vehicle goals and give businesses the tools they need to be a part of the solution.”

Appreciating that customers may not be certain about the type and number of charging points they will require, or whether the premises in question has the power supply needed to support them, Bonus Eventus Charged offers an initial consultancy and a site survey before installation takes place.



Above: Operators running electric vans may have to redesign delivery routes to take into account their range

“For FORS operators, we can offer free advice over the phone plus a free site survey,” said Laszlo.

A host of issues need to be taken into consideration by fleets heading down the zero-emission route.

Costs involved

Clearly, the cost of installing the supporting infrastructure will have to be budgeted for, he pointed out, and operators running vans may have to redesign delivery routes to take into account their range and how frequently they will need recharging. Businesses will have to address the challenging question of whether they want to charge their vehicles overnight, or whether they want to use a fast-charger instead and possibly use it every day.

On the other hand, electric models can offer savings. Though front-end prices remain high, they can be cheaper to run than their diesel and petrol counterparts, plus servicing costs are likely to be lower.

“Bear in mind too that government subsidies are available to firms buying electric vehicles,” Laszlo said. “They offer up to £8,000 off the purchase price of an eligible electric van and up to £3,500 off an eligible electric car.”

There are road tax savings to be had too. Furthermore, the charging points could be made available to third parties when the operator’s own fleet is not using them, thereby generating useful extra income.

A phased approach to changing to electric vehicles could be the best bet, Laszlo suggested.

Driving change

“For example, companies could introduce one or two into their fleets and provide employees with the chance to drive them,” he advised. “Firms also need to decide whether they are going to provide staff with any form of benefit, incentive or support to go electric, and offer training if needed.

“Above all, make sure you are communicating with them about making the switch, what it will mean for them and the positive impact it can have on the environment and on the business,” he said.

Operating costs could shrink further if vehicle batteries can be recharged using solar panels. Again, this is an area where Bonus Eventus can provide assistance and can also help ensure that the premises the fleet operates from are being run efficiently and sustainably.

“We have pledged to support the environment in any way we can and we are committed to being one of the first and best at creating zero-carbon buildings,” Laszlo said.

“We can advise on heat pumps and any other energy-saving initiatives,” he continued. “So far as building maintenance enquiries and emergency callout charges are concerned, we can offer a 50% discount to FORS operators from the first initial call-out charge.

“We repair what other trades people refused or failed to do, turn up when other providers can’t, report accurately and advise promptly and thoroughly,” he concluded. “That way, we can save our customers money – and more importantly, time.” ■

Words: **Matthew Eisenegger**

WASTE MANAGEMENT FIRM HITS ANOTHER HIGH

FORS Gold-accredited O'Donovan Waste adds yet another achievement to its impressive portfolio



The company had to demonstrate and evidence exemplary levels of compliance based on safety, efficiency and environmental improvements

Having earned FORS Gold-accredited status for the 12th consecutive year this year, London-based O'Donovan Waste has reached yet another landmark. It has become the first dedicated waste management firm to achieve ISO 39001 certification from BSI – the British Standards Institution – for the fifth consecutive year.

With the aim of reducing the number of deaths and serious injuries caused by road traffic accidents annually, ISO 39001 evaluates the way in which a business manages its approach to road safety. To achieve certification, a company

must provide evidence of the approach it pursues, show that this approach is consistent in all its operations and demonstrate that it meets the standard's requirements.

Managing Director, Jacqueline O'Donovan, said: "I am thrilled that we have achieved this goal. It strongly demonstrates our ongoing dedication to the welfare and safety of all road users, as well as that of our own drivers."

"We continue to prioritise safety and the highest working standards across all areas of our business, ensuring that our operations not only meet necessary requirements, but exceed statutory

regulations."

The ISO 39001 accolade neatly complements O'Donovan Waste's impressive FORS Gold track record. In fact, it was the first independent transport company to reach the Gold standard.

To be granted this status, a fleet operator must demonstrate and evidence exemplary levels of compliance based on safety, efficiency and environmental improvements and exceed best-practice benchmarks.

"We're committed to being a FORS Gold-accredited business and achieving this certification for 12 consecutive years shows our dedication to ensuring operational excellence in our working practices across the board," O'Donovan said. "The level of determination and effort that our team demonstrates on a daily basis contributes to our standing and reputation as a supplier and employer of choice as we strive to continuously surpass standards and deliver an exemplary service to our clients."

With the aim of significantly mitigating the impact of its activities on the environment, last year saw the firm switch its 100-strong fleet of trucks to Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) in what it says is a first for the waste sector.

Drop-in replacement

A drop-in replacement for diesel and derived from recycled waste fats and oils, it is said to eliminate up to 90% of net carbon dioxide emissions compared with fossil-based diesel. HVO can cut carbon monoxide emissions by up to 90%, particulate emissions by up to 86% and NOx (nitrogen oxide) emissions by up to 30%, O'Donovan Waste points out.

O'Donovan said: "It's obvious from the catastrophes we're seeing in terms of extreme temperatures, fires and flooding worldwide that we're not a moment too soon in our switch to HVO. We have to face facts and step up as business leaders. The climate change crisis needs immediate action and we all have a part to play."

"I would hope that our bold move will spur other companies to follow in a bid to minimise their environmental impact."

"There is no doubt that our switching solely to HVO will have a colossal effect on the Scope 3 supply chain emissions of our clients and will greatly assist them to reduce their carbon impact massively."

In this day and age, there is no room for complacency and procurement



Above: The ISO 39001 accolade neatly complements O'Donovan Waste's impressive FORS Gold track record

departments need to concentrate on the companies that are placing the environment at the heart of their business strategy."

Scope 3 emissions are those produced not directly by a business but by its suppliers and by customers who use its products.

A finalist in the 2023 Awards for Excellence in Recycling and Waste Management, O'Donovan Waste believes that HVO has a vital role to play in reducing greenhouse gas emissions now while the necessary improvements to vehicle availability and charging infrastructure are put in place to support the introduction of a fully battery-electric fleet.

It is also worth noting that as a FORS Gold accredited operator, the firm requires its drivers to complete a FORS Professional LoCITY driving course.

It concentrates on minimising the environmental impact of vans and trucks by reducing emissions through such measures as pre-journey planning, vehicle checks and fuel-efficient driving.

The fact that O'Donovan Waste's trucks were seen sporting green ribbons

earlier this year is not related to its environmental initiatives, or to its Irish heritage.

It was to show its praiseworthy support for Mental Health Awareness Week 2023, which this year focused on anxiety and how it can be combated.

The firm recently entered phase two of its internal wellbeing strategy known as the Dynamo Welfare Project.

It underlines its commitment to prioritising the workplace wellness of its employees alongside their physical safety while valuing the person as opposed to the role they play in the business.

In-house training

Innovative in-house training assists staff in maintaining positive health and wellbeing by teaching self-awareness techniques and the tools to manage a range of challenging emotions, including anxiety.

The interactive programme increases the ability of participants to maintain their composure and stabilise emotions as they face day-to-day challenges in their work and private lives.

The wellbeing strategy is part of a holistic and inclusive approach to prioritising the health and wellbeing of everyone and has resulted in a safer, more efficient and engaged workforce operating at the highest standards, said O'Donovan.

"We were the first company in the waste sector to introduce a wellbeing strategy back in 2019 and the timing could not have been better," she said.

"Our team are our biggest asset and the training they had undertaken stood them in good stead when it came to facing the challenges and uncertainties brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic."

"Now it is time for the next phase and we are delighted to update the training content, which continues to focus on supporting the resilience and mental health of our colleagues."

"We consider safeguarding the physical and mental health of our colleagues to be a top priority. The ongoing investment in this type of interactive training demonstrates to staff that their wellbeing continues to be of paramount importance." ■

BIGGER CHARGING AREAS NEEDED FOR ELECTRIC VANS

Government shells out cash to provide top-up points suitable for LCVs



Above: At present, charging areas are only suitable for cars and small vans

One of the problems facing transport operators who want to choose electric vans (EVs) is that, at present, public charging bays are not big enough to accommodate

many light commercial vehicles.

Now, local authorities are being urged to ensure new charge points are suitable for electric vans after the Government pledged new funding for councils.

The Department for Transport (DfT) announced it was expanding its Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) pilot, with 16 more councils receiving funding to deliver new charge points.

The LEVI pilot scheme is aimed at delivering a commercial EV charging infrastructure, from faster on-street charge points to larger petrol station-style charging hubs.

In total, £22 million of Government funding for the pilot areas is supported by an additional £17 million of private sector investment and £2 million from public funds across local authorities.

Transport Minister Jesse Norman said the new funding will help deliver up to a

further 2,400 charge points.

Meanwhile, it has emerged that insurance for electric vehicles is expected to keep rising unless manufacturers produce more easily repairable battery packs and provide third-party access to battery cell data. In the majority of EV collisions, there is no way to repair even slightly damaged batteries after accidents, forcing insurance companies to write off vehicles. The trend of low-mileage zero-emission vehicles being written off with minor damage is growing, according to news agency Reuters. Battery packs are now 'piling up in scrapyards', the agency says.

"We're buying electric vehicles for sustainability reasons," said Matthew Avery at Thatcham Research. "But it isn't very sustainable if you've got to throw the battery away after a minor collision." ■

Words: **Ciara Waterfield**

ASPÖCK UK LTD WINS AN INAUGURAL KINGS AWARD FOR ENTERPRISE

Aspöck UK, based in Great Hallingbury in Bishops Stortford, has received one of the inaugural Kings Awards for Enterprise in the innovation category, for an invention that is set to change the face of commercial vehicle safety



Above: The Aspöck team shows off a cake baked to mark the Kings Award for Enterprise

time and money, avoiding having to repair damaged vehicles after a collision. Not only that, the RADAR could be instrumental in improving the overall safety of a vehicle.

The RADAR had been in development for some years before its release to market and its entry into the Kings Awards. A special mention must go to Mark Toghil, sales manager at Aspöck UK, who engineered this project and brought the RADAR into fruition.

Aspöck UK is entering its 21st ground-breaking year and what a way to remember it. Managing Director, Lee Rush, reflects on the success of Aspöck UK and what it means to win a Kings Award.

He said: "We are immensely proud that the RADAR has been recognised under the Kings Awards. Aspöck has been leading the way in commercial vehicle lighting in the UK for many years, and we are very excited that we have now been able to apply the talents and knowledge of our employees to help improve safety in other areas of the industry. We hope to rewrite the standard for safety with this product, as well as forging long lasting relationships." ■



• For more information on Aspöck UK and to get in contact, visit www.aspoeck.com or email sales@aspoeck.co.uk. Find Aspöck on LinkedIn as **Aspöck UK**.

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Regular checks can reduce costs, increase safety and lower truck emissions

Commercial vehicle drivers can maximise the life of their tyres by carrying out regular tyre maintenance and by ensuring the right product is fitted for the use of the vehicle.

For example, fitting long haul tyres for European destinations as opposed to regional, or mixed-used tyres which are less suited to long stretches of highway. It is also important drivers carry out daily safety inspections to ensure sufficient tread and look out for any damage to the tyre.

This may include, but is not limited to, cuts, bulges and irregular wear. Other checks to maximise the life of their tyres include tracking, wheel alignment and brakes. Third parties should carry out fleet inspections monthly and tyres should still be twinned and turned on the rim.

Tyre pressures should be checked monthly as a minimum guideline, or if the vehicle is used frequently or is expected to cover significant mileage,

weekly checks are advised. The more frequently, the better!

Correct tyre pressure is vital to on-road safety as under- or over-inflated tyres affect handling and grip and have the potential to cause unstable vehicle performance. Under-inflated tyres are also more likely to suffer from unexpected rapid deflation, which can be hazardous, especially when reaching higher speeds. Making sure tyres are always kept at the correct pressure for the load will lower fuel bills, increase tyre life, increase vehicle safety, reduce CO2 emissions and generally reduce vehicle running costs.

Tyres incorporate many material components within their construction and are designed and built to work in unison with the vehicle's steering, braking and suspension, if correctly inflated to the required operational tyre pressure and not exceeding the accepted maximum load as indicated by their Load Index.

If the maximum load is exceeded or the inflation pressure used is inadequate

for the load being carried, it will result in reduced service life, increased fuel consumption and in severe cases the risk of tyre failure that could cause the loss of control of the vehicle.

Tyre maintenance is the responsibility of the driver. There may be the possibility of ignorance by some drivers towards the responsibility of vehicle safety and road worthiness because the vehicle they drive may be company owned, leading to the opinion of the driver that maintenance and safety is solely down to the company.

It is a sobering thought that drivers found using a vehicle with illegal tyres can face fines of up to £2,500 and three penalty points for each illegal tyre found, no matter if the vehicle is company owned or not. Therefore, the correct care and maintenance of tyres is a very important factor to the safety of not only the driver or passengers, but also to other road users, no matter what type of vehicle is being driven. ■

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Words: **David Whiffin, OdiliaClark**

WHEN A DRUG TEST PROVES TO BE POSITIVE

Next steps to take along the road to tackling this major headache

In the spring edition we explored the workplace test, what happens if something is found during the drug testing element of the test and what would happen after the results come in from the laboratory.

To recap, once the point of care testing equipment has indicated the presence of a substance, a non-negative result is declared. The reason the result is declared as a non-negative is that neither the substance nor the amount

of substance present can be identified. Further samples are then sent back to the laboratory for confirmatory testing. Typically, we expect one of two results back – negative or positive. The employee who has provided the sample should ideally be stood down from any safety critical duties until the laboratory has confirmed what is in the sample.

If the result is negative, the employee is reinstated. Reasons for a negative result can be many and varied, ranging from a

false positive reading on the equipment (very rare provided high-quality equipment is used), to a cross reactivity with something in the donor's system.

Unfortunately, this is the nature of testing. The best way of mitigating false positives is by using a quality testing device, ensuring employees are correctly educated and the test is conducted in accordance with the procedures defined for testing. While the best-in-class testing devices and training are more expensive, they are nowhere near as expensive as losing an employee for three working days.

At OdiliaClark, we see lots of clients who want to either move over to a more time-efficient sampling method or may be seeing a high rate of non-negatives, only for the result to be confirmed as a negative result at a laboratory. OdiliaClark only uses the best-in-class testing equipment as we know the huge impact a false positive can have. The Draeger range of testing equipment we use was recently ranked as the top testing equipment on the market with the lowest rate of both false positives and false negatives in a National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) in the USA.

Without diving too much into the detail, the Draeger devices are the only devices on the market that meet both the American, Roadside Testing Assessment (ROSITA) and European, Driving Under the Influence of Drugs, Alcohol and Medicines (DRUID) organisational recommendations for sensitivity, specificity and accuracy.

Back to dealing with results

If the result from the laboratory is positive, it is completely normal for the client to be concerned and unsure as to what the next steps might be and how to both protect the business and the

individual with the positive result.

Once a call has been held with the OdiliaClark team to explain the results and what they mean, the initial step is to launch an investigation, starting with an interview with the employee to ascertain the circumstances around the positive sample. In some situations, the ability for the organisation to deal with the issue may be taken away as the organisation may have to refer the finding to a regulator and may involve the medical that may be responsible for signing off a licence or permit to work.

In these situations, a Medical Review Officer (MRO) may be required to write a report on the substances found within the donor's system and the impact those substances would have had.

The organisation may have little choice but to remove the employee from operational duty and put them on light duties or begin disciplinary procedures. In other situations, the organisation may be freer to manage the finding in a way that suits it.

It is important that all these steps are taken following specialist Psychoactive Substance HR advice.

The follow-on steps are dependent on the circumstances surrounding the substance that has been found. Both what was found and how much was found will inform the investigation. It is important to reiterate the position OdiliaClark takes as an organisation, that no employee wants to repeatedly report



Above: The best way of mitigating false positives is by using a quality testing device

key questions – was the finding down to a hangover, a lapse in judgment that morning on the way into work, an addiction or dependency issue or a medical issue that has been undeclared?

Until this is understood, it is difficult to understand how the organisation should respond. Also, character, past-history and job role must be taken into account. Is this an employee who has been in the organisation for 25 years and has an exemplary record, do they perform a safety sensitive role (this should be defined in the company drugs and alcohol policy)? While in-house managers and HR will have a role

Decision to be made

Ultimately, the organisation will have to make the decision – do they keep the employee in the organisation or do they release them from their employment? Neither is an easy option as releasing the employee comes with risks. Was the testing process robust, open and transparent, does the policy support the testing that has happened and have all chain of custody and HR steps been taken in accordance with laid down procedures?

Ultimately if the employee raises a grievance or moves to challenge the decision, will the process withstand challenge? If dependency or addiction is an issue, what will the optics look like both internally and externally to the organisation? What message does this send employees who may have a similar issue and may want help, does this impact safety, does this drive undesired behaviour underground and create an issue waiting to happen further down the line?

Keeping the employee in the organisation may present more challenges. The trust may have gone with the employee. How do you monitor them and ensure they are fit to perform their duties into the future?

If dependency or addiction is an issue, how can the organisation support the employee and retain confidence in that employee? OdiliaClark has options that are significantly lower cost than releasing and recruiting new employees while giving the organisation confidence its operations remain safe and the welfare of staff is kept in the forefront of the organisation's activities. ■

If dependency or addiction is an issue, how can the organisation support the employee and retain confidence in that employee?

for work or perform their role under the influence of a substance.

As discussed in previous issues, the repeated use of a substance in the workplace is possibly symptomatic of a deeper problem in the employee's life. Our ultimate aim is to protect the organisation by ensuring employees are flourishing in the workplace. This means we may need to help them in areas outside of their work lives.

Meanwhile, the investigation should be trying to determine answers to some

in establishing these facts, it is recognised that addiction is a deceitful disease. The person under investigation may well be lying to both themselves and those they are speaking to. It is for this reason that OdiliaClark only uses specialists with decades of experience when we are involved in these investigations. Through no fault of their own, we have seen first-hand how much damage can be done when an initial investigation is carried out by those who don't have experience with addiction.



20mph limits save lives, new figures prove

The introduction of 20mph zones in London has proved unpopular with some local residents, but new figures have proved that it does actually save lives. Collisions resulting in death or serious injury decreased by 25% after speed limits were lowered in London.

The decline was recorded at sites monitored on the Transport for London (TfL) Road Network (TLRN), where the speed limit has been lowered to 20mph.

The TfL figures also show that collisions involving vulnerable road users decreased by 36%.

Lowering speed limits is a key part of the Mayor's Vision Zero goal to eliminate death and serious injury from London's transport network and to enable more walking and cycling in the capital.

In March 2020, TfL introduced a 20mph speed limit on all of its roads within the central London Congestion Charging zone as part of its Vision Zero commitment to eliminate death and serious injury on the capital's roads by 2041. Currently, more than half of London's roads have a 20mph speed limit, of which almost 68 miles is on TfL's network.

Will Norman, London's Walking and Cycling Commissioner, said: "Sadly, more than 4,000 people are killed and seriously injured on London's roads every year. Lowering speeds is one of the most important things we can do to reduce road danger." ■



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.

Try using the FREE SvTech Load Distribution Analysis (LDA) program to help you stay within your weight limits.

www.svtech.co.uk/lda



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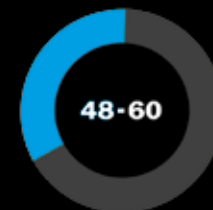
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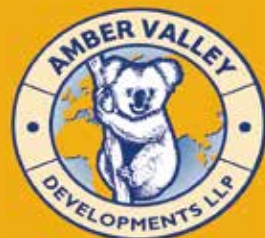
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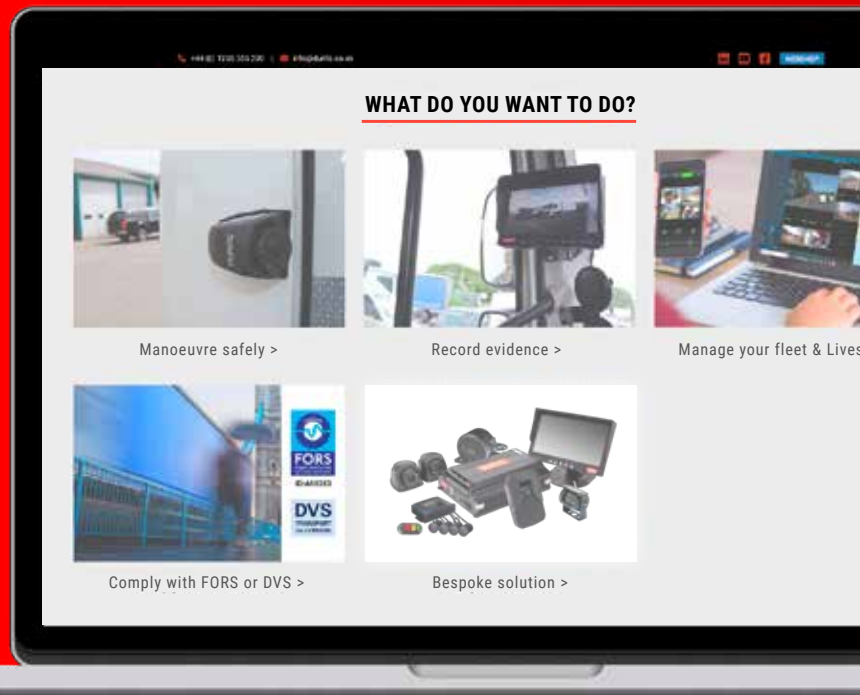
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