

AT THE **HEART** OF THE MARKETPLACE

Commercial Motor

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- AS 24 ● Asset Alliance Group
 - Brigade Electronics UK
 - Close Brothers Asset Finance
 - Crick Trailer Sales ● IMS
 - MAN Truck & Bus UK ● Merridale
 - Premier Pits ● Renault Trucks
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BUYING GUIDE

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A digital revolution

Technopoly's Accelerator fleet and workshop software allows operators to manage their fleet's documents and other data from one place

SOFTWARE

Commercial Motor Ask any fleet management specialist and they'll likely tell you there are still plenty of operators who favoured the old-fashioned way. Be it pen and paper or wax tacho discs (yes, *CM* has it on good authority that they're still in use), manual methods are alive and well.

There are clearly reasons to adopt digital document and management processes, and plenty of businesses have because of their speed, efficiency and superior compliance. Technopoly's Accelerator fleet and workshop software – 20 years in the making – allows operators to do exactly that and manage their fleets' documents and other data from one place.

The system is scalable and can be tailored to suit large fleets, individual workshops and everything in between. For the former, the haulage desk function

gives operators a comprehensive view of cargo movements including time of arrival, weights and the mileage covered by individual vehicles. Users can also import and monitor fuel card data and employ the software to set up advanced vehicle inspections, as it allows them to generate bespoke inspection templates, service sheets and driver check routines.

Workshop users benefit from a recovery desk function, which gives them control over the whole recovery process from start to finish and records elements such as times, mileages, job details and parts used. Maintenance contracts can be set up using the fixed price contracts tool, covering single vehicles and fleets. Advanced inspections can be developed – as with the fleet version – and the ATF lane function

allows your DVSA contact access to the system, along with a display on the main desk of any ATF lane preparation work that needs to take place.

Crucially, both the fleet and workshop forms of Accelerator link to Technopoly's unique Go Mobile function, which allows users to access it from anywhere and via the majority of mobile devices. Every piece of information is available instantly including vehicle details, accident records, service history, parts information, inspection data and documents, among other elements, and users need only log into the system's online portal via a smartphone, tablet or laptop.

GO MOBILE

Both configurations of the Go Mobile software allow users to access technical data from anywhere, while the fleet version extends to remote driver functions, such as digital driver check cards with a full-history database that employees can access from their devices. It also provides a total view of all parts and their locations and users can also see VOR reports, defects, reminders and look up the details of any vehicle.

Workshops can also set-up similar services for their customers, granting them access to their own vehicle information so they can identify whether or not they have any reminders due or outstanding faults, the main benefit being that the workshop doesn't have to repeatedly send email reminders to custom-



ers. It is also extraordinarily convenient for mobile technicians, who spend much of their day on the road and could do without a trip back to base simply to fill in some paperwork. □

● **For more information visit www.clever-accelerator.uk or call 0844 375 4315 for a free online demo**



In the Pilot's seat

The PASSango toll box from AS 24 offers swift and seamless transit across much of Europe enabling toll collection, secure parking and more

GPS SOFTWARE SYSTEM

Commercial Motor

Thanks to intelligent GPS tracking functionality, users of the EuroPilot option within the PASSango toll box from AS 24 can drive significant operational efficiencies and make substantial financial savings.

As a trusted partner to the transport industry for many years, AS 24 has an in-depth understanding of the challenges faced by transport operators when travelling throughout Europe.

As a solution to the organisational headache, AS 24 has been offering the PASSango toll box to its customers since 2017. It's offering swift and seamless transit across five countries for now and more to come. By incorporating a sensor which is detected when passing through any electronic toll booths or collecting and mapping GPS localisation with taxable network maps (depending on the country), PASSango enables simple and convenient toll collection.

Moreover, hardworking drivers can also pay for secure HGV parking using their PASSango system in some countries.

Four versions of PASSango are available to AS 24 customers:

- One covering only France and the Liefkenshoek Tunnel;
- France Iberic covering France, Spain, Portugal and the Liefkenshoek Tunnel;
- Europe – an all-in-one box that covers with an OBU (on-board unit) France, Spain, Portugal, Belgium, Austria, the Liefkenshoek Tunnel, the Storebaelt Bridge (Denmark) and the Öresund Bridge (Sweden), and soon Germany; and
- EuroPilot covering the same as Europe but with additional added-value services.

CONTROL YOUR MOBILITY

Incorporating geolocation, EuroPilot offers quasi-real-time monitoring of vehicles and a set of alerts to give significant cost savings for its users. Accessible from the Customer Portal or via the Fleet Manager mobile app, EuroPilot uses advanced GPS tracking technology to

provide a variety of added-value services for its customers.

Firstly, through EuroPilot, fleet operators can accurately track their vehicles from the beginning to the end of their journeys. Data on individual vehicles, including their registration number, their precise GPS co-ordinates as well as regular updates on their progress, can be accessed via the map.

Furthermore, using PASSango's EuroPilot combined with an AS 24 fuel card, transport managers can identify potential misuses of fuel cards by drivers. The transport manager will receive an alert if a vehicle is filled in another location other than EuroPilot's GPS co-ordinates. By improving accountability in this way, operators can take control of their costs and make significant financial savings.

Users can access the most intelligent and efficient route simulator for HGVs, that takes vehicle constraints into account. After inputting the characteristics of your fleet, EuroPilot will work out the best route possible depending on the type of vehicle being driven to calculate associated costs (fuel and tolls).



The multitude of benefits that integrating the EuroPilot option within PASSango into your operation are clear – but what about the price? Fortunately, the cost to your business will be minimised thanks to the unique price for each customer, depending on how many PASSango boxes are installed, how many countries are visited and the usage per month.

For a truly intelligent transport partner that keeps you firmly in the driver's seat, contact the expert team at AS 24 about PASSango EuroPilot today. □

● **For more information visit www.AS24.com or call 01923 801060**



Covering the bases

In addition to supplying vehicles, Asset Alliance Group offers a suite of flexible finance options which it lends from its own funds

EQUIPMENT AND FINANCE SOLUTIONS

Commercial Motor When it comes to sourcing new or used trucks and trailers, Asset Alliance Group covers all bases. The firm ensures that new and used vehicles are immediately available and both the stock and finance options are in place to make fleet and vehicle upgrades as cost-effective and as fast as possible.

It buys more than £100m worth of new vehicles each year for fleet customers including from most truck manufacturers. They are typically returned between two and four years later and are sold on as low-mileage products via the company's main sales outlets in Wolverhampton, Lanarkshire and Ipswich. All three sites also retail a broad range of new and used trailers, from reefers to flatbeds and everything in between.

The Group was founded in its current form in 2011, but the retail businesses have been established for more than

30 years. ATE Truck and Trailer Sales was a founding part of the business and rebranded to Asset Alliance Group in 2019, while Hanbury Riverside, with almost 40 years in the industry, joined the Group in 2018. Each site also has workshop facilities to carry out maintenance, refurbishment and servicing.

FLEXIBLE FINANCE OPTIONS

In addition to supplying vehicles, the company offers a suite of flexible finance options and differentiates itself from other finance houses by lending from its own funds. It also offers a broker service and can call upon more than 20 banks and other financial organisations, which means it can secure the most competitive rates. That saves clients the time and legwork of scouring for cheaper finance and also means they don't have to take secured lending from their own banks.

If conventional funding such as hire purchase or outright purchase are not suitable, then the company has a series of

alternatives including contract hire, leasing and long-term rentals. The latter types are often associated with new stock, but it also offers leasing agreements with nearly new equipment, which the team says can be a cost-effective method of upgrading a fleet. For those up and running with their vehicles, the company also has an award-winning 24/7 fleet management arm, which currently keeps more than 4,000 client vehicles on the road.

ALTERNATIVE FUEL VEHICLES

The firm has also made moves into alternative fuel vehicles. While Euro-6 diesel remains the clear low-emission choice at present, Asset Alliance Group is supplying and financing gas and electric buses and advising clients in the heavy goods sector about strategies and timings for transitioning away from conventional fuels.

The Group claims to offer a unique proposition in the supply of commercial vehicles and counts both the country's largest and smallest fleet operators among its clientele. The volume of new equipment it supplies makes for a steady flow of used assets from existing customers, which speeds up availability of nearly new products, while its suite of finance, leasing and contract hire options were enough to bag it Finance Provider of the Year in both the 2017 and 2018 Commercial Motor Awards. □

● **For more information visit www.assetalliancegroup.co.uk or call 01902 625330**





The clock is ticking

Brigade Electronics UK advises on how fleet managers can ensure their vehicles comply with Direct Vision Standards

REGULATIONS

Commercial Motor With less than a year to go before Direct Vision Standard (DVS) comes into effect in central London, Emily Hardy, a road safety expert at Brigade Electronics UK and one of the consultants on the new regulations, discusses how fleet managers can ensure they are fully prepared for the new legislation.

Now that October is with us, fleet managers are turning their attention to the implementation of the first stage of DVS, as permits became available at the beginning of the month.

DVS, which was passed by TfL earlier this year after a consultation process with road safety charities, companies and manufacturers, will apply to HGVs weighing more than 12 tonnes GVW that enter or operate in Greater London. It is hoped that through implementation of this safety initiative, deaths and serious

injuries from road collisions will be eliminated from London's streets by 2041.

Fleet operators might be wondering what this means for them, and what they need to do to ensure their vehicles comply with the new standard.

Vehicle manufacturers will issue a star rating in accordance with the DVS system – a series of approved technical protocols, which will be applied to HGVs to make an objective assessment of visibility from the driver's position.

Initially, it will be the fleet operator's responsibility to apply for the necessary permit by confirming their vehicles' star ratings with the vehicle manufacturers.

Fleet operators will need to contact vehicle manufacturers to confirm these ratings. If a vehicle is rated one star or above, it will automatically be eligible for a permit.

However, operators of vehicles that automatically qualify for a permit will still be encouraged to review and enhance their vehicles' safety features.

In the event a vehicle has a zero-star visibility rating, or has no rating, it will need to meet the requirements of the Safe System – a series of vehicle safety measures designed to improve visibility and reduce the risk of collisions with vulnerable road users.

MAIN POINTS INFOGRAPHIC

To help simplify the process for fleet operators, Brigade Electronics has produced an easy-to-follow infographic outlining the main points of DVS and the equipment fleet operators will need to fit to zero-rated vehicles to ensure they meet the Safe System standards. For vehicles rated at one star or above, it is

recommended that fleet operators review vehicle safety systems and fit supplementary safety features as soon as possible.

Fleet operators should be aware that one- and two-star vehicles will need to comply with the Safe System standards by October 2024, when permits for these, and zero-rated vehicles, will expire. Permits for star ratings of three and above will be valid for 10 years. All permits will be provided free of charge. Vehicles found to be in breach of the permit scheme will be issued with a penalty of up to £550. □



● For more information and to access the infographic, visit www.brigade-electronics.com or call 01322 420300



● **Operating lease:** Similar to a finance lease, an operating lease allows you to rent the asset from us while you need it. The key difference between the two is that an operating lease is only for part of the asset's useful life. This means you pay a reduced rental because the cost is based on the difference between the asset's original purchase price and its residual value at the end of the agreement.

TYPES OF ASSETS FINANCED

The beauty of asset finance is its flexibility – it can be used to fund any asset, including trucks, trailers, LCVs, tippers, tankers, specialist bodies, cranes, cars, and garage and MoT test equipment.

It makes the otherwise unaffordable affordable because it gives businesses access to the vehicles and equipment they need without incurring the cashflow disadvantage of an outright purchase.

Agreements can also be customised to the business's needs, with flexibility on both the term and repayment schedule.

WHY CLOSE BROTHERS ASSET FINANCE?

We are the largest, most successful and longest-established asset finance

funder in the UK with more than 30 years' experience working with SMEs through all economic cycles – the fact is, there's very little we haven't seen or experienced.

Our team of transport finance specialists – many of who have transport industry backgrounds themselves

– work with businesses across the UK to provide funding for both new and used transport vehicles and equipment. As sector experts, they understand how vital it is that you have the right tools at your disposal, so whether you are looking to expand your range of equipment or replace it, we can help. □

● **For more information visit**
<https://www.closeassetfinance.co.uk/asset-finance>

Making good sense

John Fawcett, CEO, transport division, Close Brothers Asset Finance, takes time out to demystify asset finance for the transport sector

FINANCE

Commercial Motor John Fawcett has been working in asset finance for so long now that he takes it for granted that everyone knows what it is; yet, in Close Brothers Asset Finance's quarterly survey of 1,000 UK SMEs – which it call its 'business barometer' – the percentage of 'yes' responses to the question 'have you heard of asset finance', has remained stubbornly at around 40% – since 2013.

WHAT IS ASSET FINANCE?

Asset Finance is an alternative form of funding used by businesses to obtain the equipment, vehicles, or capital they need to expand, explains Fawcett.

Common examples of asset finance products are:

● **Hire purchase (HP)** allows the customer to buy the equipment on credit. The finance company purchases the asset

on behalf of the customer and owns the asset until the final instalment is paid.

● **Refinancing (capital release):** The finance company purchases the asset from your business and finances it back to you, releasing the equity raised into your cashflow. Repayments are calculated in line with the income stream that will be generated by the asset; at the end of the refinancing term, you own the asset.

● **Finance lease:** The full value of the equipment is repaid to the finance company, plus interest, over the lease period. At the end of the term, the company can choose to:

- continue to use the asset by entering a secondary rental period;
- sell the asset and keep a portion of the income from the sale;
- return it.





The right steer

Specialising in distributing trailer steering systems, IMS has broadened its product range following demand from operators running in tight city streets

TRAILER STEERING SYSTEMS

Commercial Motor With London's Direct Vision Standard and clean air zones popping up left, right and centre, it's easy to lose sight of the fundamental aspects of navigating urban areas – such as the practicalities of driving around them. IMS specialises in the distribution of trailer steering systems and has recently broadened its product range following increased demand from operators up against tight city streets.

Advanced steering equipment for semi-trailers is IMS's USP, as it claims that such set-ups can manoeuvre every bit as well as smaller rigs and increase utilisation due to the trailer's greater capacity, slashing the number of journeys the operator has to make.

The company supplies three products – the first of which is SAF-Holland's self-steering axles, which are specifically designed for urban delivery applications. Available in disc and drum forms and for

any wheel and tyre combo, the system uses an internally sprung stabilising damper, which allows the wheels to self-centre and stops them from fluttering. Along with superior manoeuvrability, claimed benefits include lower tyre wear and reduced fuel consumption, a more comfortable ride and a greater residual value for the trailer.

The second is the SEM single-bar and double-rod mechanical steering system, comprising a steering wedge connected to the tractor's fifth wheel, which allows the driver's inputs to be directly transferred via a rod that spans the length of the trailer. Built in-house by SEM in the Netherlands, the system is said to be quick to manufacture and easy to adapt to bespoke specifications; the end result is a much-improved turning circle, lower tyre wear, better fuel economy, less maintenance and more consistent handling regard-

less of whether or not the trailer is full, and reliability.

The third of IMS's trailer steering offerings is the VSE Electro-Hydraulic Trailer steering system. Arguably the jewel in the crown, it affords 13.6m trailers the same levels of manoeuvrability as rigs and small urban equivalents, meaning operators can reach previously inaccessible areas with much greater load capacities.

JEWEL IN THE CROWN

Claimed to be lightest hydraulic steering package on the market, VSE's system works with one-to-three steered axles, semi-trailers and specialised equipment and does not compromise the load carrying capacity of the trailer body. The ETS electro-hydraulic trailer steering system uses a contactless magnetic angle sensor within the trailer's kingpin to detect the articulation angle with the tractor unit. When the sensor moves, it rotates a potentiometer, which sends a signal to an ECU so the wheels – not the axles – turn accordingly, so vastly improving manoeuvrability. This increases stability, while a hydraulic cylinder, built into each axle via a separate circuit, can lock the wheels in the straight-ahead position. Both systems have a fail-safe disabling mode so the trailer steers like a conventional one if there's a hydraulic or electronic failure.

The chief benefit is that bigger loads can be delivered into areas formerly the preserve of much smaller vehicles, but it's also easy to install, requires no lubrication so maintenance is minimal and it's lighter than other trailer steering systems, which further promotes fuel economy. □

● **For more information visit**
www.imslimited.com
or call 01509 600185





A MAN of our times

MAN Truck & Bus UK has an extensive product range, from the 3-tonne TGE van through to 250-tonne 8x4 haulage TGX tractors

PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

Commercial Motor MAN Truck & Bus UK offers a comprehensive range of trucks, vans, buses, coaches and industrial engines to operators and companies in the UK.

Its aim is to be recognised as the most reliable road transport service provider by customers and business partners, and achieves this through a clear understanding of customers' needs that will be satisfied by focusing on the innovative principal of uptime and unique fleet management solutions.

COMPREHENSIVE RANGE

MAN's product range starts with the 3- to 5.5-tonne TGE van, available in a range of panel vans, differing wheelbase and height options, chassis cabs, chassis cowl, a range of manufacturer approved tippers, dropsides and Lutons and, since April, a UK-converted minibus, all supported by a 69-strong nationwide dedicated

commercial vehicle 24/7 dealer network.

The award-winning MAN truck range includes the 75-tonne TGL, the medium-weight TGM through to the 44-tonne TGS and flagship TGX. MAN also offers specialist transport solutions for demanding operations such as emergency services and heavy haulage prime movers, which can operate up to 250 tonnes. In conjunction with the



MAN vans, MAN trucks share the same dedicated and highly focused commercial vehicle dealer network.

Also available in the UK are two MAN bus products – the CitySmart and the EcoCity. The EcoCity runs on both compressed natural gas (CNG) and biodiesel and has been awarded low carbon emission and carbon-neutral status. Finally, to complete the product range, MAN NEOPLAN luxury coaches offer the ultimate experience in passenger luxury.

BESPOKE PRODUCTS

Supported by bespoke customer-tailored and integrated business focused after-sales products, MAN trucks, vans, buses and coaches set the benchmark for the highest levels of efficiency, reliability and cost-effectiveness. Through its in-house finance function MANFS (MAN Financial Services), all MAN vehicles are offered with a range of competitive, efficient and customer-focused vehicle leasing and insurance solutions. MAN Digital Services supports customers with a choice of telematics solutions which have been designed to offer both outstanding functionality and tangible business savings, ensuring low cost of ownership across the vehicle range.

Once a new MAN vehicle enters operation in the UK it attracts a highly complete manufacturer's warranty. The TGE is offered with an inclusive three-year, unlimited-mileage warranty, the TGS 8x4s attract an industry leading four-year warranty and MAN TGX tractors come with a three-year fully comprehensive warranty up to 450,000km.

MAN's philosophy is to partner its customers, offering them a long-term, trusted vehicle and related services solution. So it's easy to see that with more than 100 years of history, MAN trucks, vans, buses and coaches prove the following: "For MAN efficiency is more than just a trademark?" □

● For more information visit www.truck.man.eu/uk or to configure your next truck visit www.truck.man.eu/konfigurator



Don't fuel around

Merridale specialises in fuel pumps and management software which can be configured to suit the needs of any business

FUEL PUMPS AND MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE

Commercial Motor

Fuel is the driving force behind any fleet, but with the cost of the stuff being an ever-increasing concern for business owners, high-quality accurate fuel pumps and management systems make all the difference to the bottom line.

They can help to cut costs by serving up the all-important data needed to nip and tuck the operation and reduce the chances of fuel theft – then there's the knock-on environmental benefit of slashing the amount of fuel used by vehicles.

Merridale specialises in fuel pumps and management software and offers a series of products that can be configured to suit the needs of any business, be it a heavy-hitting blue chip fleet with multiple depots or a single site.

Its range includes storage tanks, tank management and pump systems and

software. Designed in-house, the latter mentioned digital platforms allow users to monitor fuel usage, efficiency and stock, predict restocking requirements and evaluate their environmental impact, which also means that anyone using it adheres to FORS reporting standards.

FUELWORKS

Known as FuelWorks, the flagship web-based reporting software has become increasingly popular with the company's existing customers. Due to its ability to be accessed through a web browser on any device, the system gives the user complete flexibility and accessibility, eliminating the need for it to be installed on physical devices. That said, the firm also offers six other digital management packages, including

versions to suit businesses that prefer to work on a closed-network basis or only require access on certain computers.

Away from the digital side of things, Merridale has built and supplied made-to-order fuel pumps since 1994. According to the company, it uses "only the best, tried and tested components [and] refuses to use cheaply made, counterfeit or recommissioned parts, instead sourcing the highest quality possible from trusted manufacturers, so there is no compromise on build quality."

It offers four core systems: the MX heavy-duty diesel pump, MX-P twin pump, MX-P twin-hose pump and the MXN DEF pump. Each one includes a six-year bodywork warranty and has a variety of delivery speeds, among other specifications.

PUMP IT UP

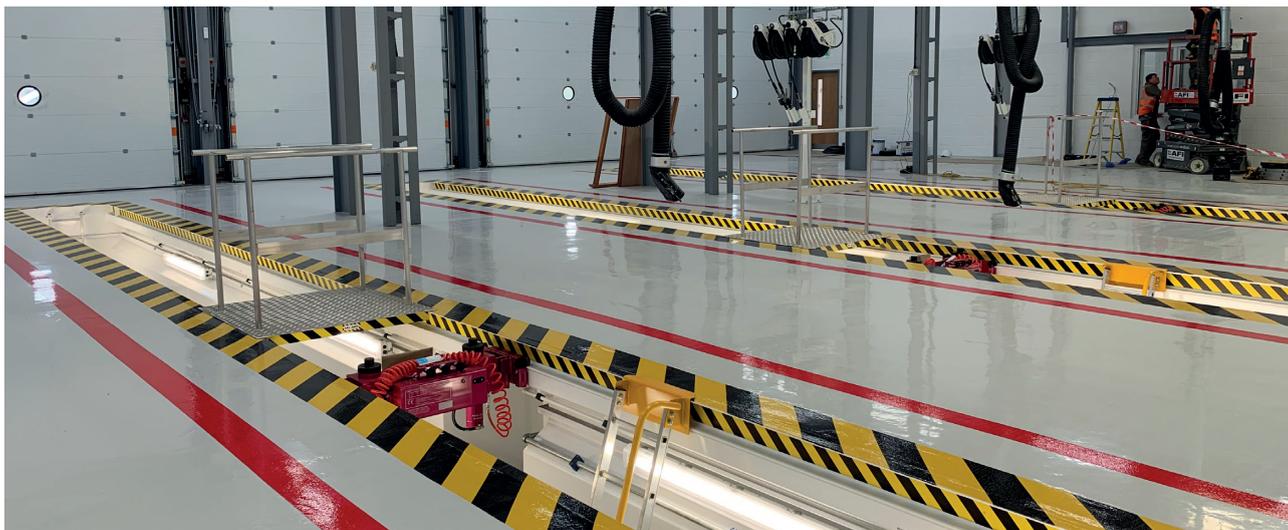
The pumps are built to achieve a minimum life of 10 years as well as meeting ATEX EU safety standards for high-risk equipment, while the housing units are designed to ensure that internal components are easily accessible for maintenance and repair, and simple to update, instead of replacing the whole system.

Beyond the pumps themselves, the firm also offers a comprehensive after-sales care and support package. In the wake of installing new fuelling equipment, it provides customers with access to software and technical support helplines and conducts inspections and calibration services, repairs and ongoing updates as and when they arise.

Merridale systems are installed at more than 4,000 sites across the UK, Ireland, Channel Islands and Europe and used by some of the UK's biggest fleet operators, some of which have relied on the firm for their fuel management for more than 20 years. □

● For more information visit www.merridale.co.uk or call 01902 350700





In pole for pit stops

Premier Pits has installed 4,000 prefabricated steel pits and offers a consultancy-style service beyond building and fitment

PIT SUPPLY AND INSTALLATION

Commercial Motor Premier Pits is the longest-established pit specialist in the UK, having built and installed 4,000 prefabricated steel pits over the past 40 years. The range includes inspection, maintenance, rail, ATF, washdown pits and under-chassis, along with ramps, a series of accessories and health and safety equipment. All of the aforementioned products comply with CE and BS EN 1090-1:2009 plus A1:2011, BS OHSAS 18001:2007 SSIP standards.

The firm supplies to workshops across the UK and internationally and, according to marketing manager Matt Dilley, offers a consultancy-style service beyond building and fitment. “We advise customers on the best types of pit to install for the task at hand and give them feedback about the modifications and accessories they will require for working on specific vehicles.

“Our experienced design engineers use the latest CAD design facilities and can provide design support to architects, structural engineers, and contractors. We’re constantly tweaking the products, adding new features and options, as well as improving installation methods.”

SPECIALIST FITTERS

The company directly employs teams of specialist fitters, who are tasked with

handling not only the installation itself, but also subsequently cleaning the area and removing any waste material that results from fitting.

It also conducts a final inspection after all installations and the clean-up – but before the premises is handed back to the customer, to make sure everything is up to scratch.

In addition to installing pits, the firm is also the UK distributor for Brake-Mate – an elevated platform for servicing heavy vehicle brake disc assemblies. The system is said to eliminate the majority of manual lifting during disc brake maintenance and generally makes it that much quicker, more efficient and cost-effective. It also enables an individual to complete the whole process, rather than it being a two-person job. □

● For more information visit www.premierpits.com, call 01775 821222, or email info@premierpits.com





Ready, steady GO!

If it's an out-of-the-box, bodied construction vehicle you're after, then Renault Trucks' Ready for Business range is just the option for you

READY FOR BUSINESS RANGE

Commercial Motor

Renault has paired up with a number of bodybuilders including Boughton Engineering, Johnston, McPhee, PPG, Thompsons and Wilcox to develop a series of mixers, skip-loaders, 8x4 hook-loaders, sweepers and other models. The idea is that operators faced with the most physically arduous of tasks can quickly and easily find an off-the-shelf vehicle, ready to tackle the likes of brick and block, aggregate delivery or hoisting hefty and awkward loads.

Renault Trucks launched its extended version of the Ready for Business offer earlier this year at CM's Tip-ex and Tank-ex event, featuring the Range C, which is available in tipper, tipper grab, aggregate tipper, mixer and hook-loader guises. Designed specifically for the construction sector, they're available with Renault Trucks' range of Euro 6-compliant DTi engines and Optidriver 12-speed transmissions. The Range C



can tackle the roughest of jobs on- or off-road, courtesy of its robust chassis and easy body mounting combined with a solid driveline, large payload capacity and high ground clearance, and it has been adopted by numerous operators in need of something on the rugged side.

Renault Trucks has offered Ready for Business vehicles to the market for a while now, but now with larger volumes and product variations the ultimate goal of the Ready for Business Range is to help customers by taking away lead-times by being able to supply new vehicles when they may need them most.

Since the launch in 2013, Renault Trucks' current vehicle range has established an excellent reputation with operators all over the country running both Ready for Business and custom-built trucks and vans.

Among them is Loughran Rock Industries, which uses Range C mixers and tippers to deliver ready-mixed concrete and crushed stone. Hardcrete employs the Range C 6x4 tridem concrete mixer to tackle London streets and the south east, transporting 8cu m loads. Similarly, Evenheights uses a Range C 8x4 tractor unit to navigate tight spaces and transport leggy materials like railway tracks for the capital's Underground network.

MEETING CHALLENGES

TF&S Ryan's Range C520 tricked-out tractor unit is fitted with a 100-tonne crane that can hoist the heftiest of loads – portable buildings, boats, helicopters, earth-moving equipment, generators and hot tubs among them. Elsewhere in the south of England, Comley has tasked a Range C 8x4 hook-loader to scoop up waste materials from some of the most challenging sites in the region.

Further north, Buxton-based RT Mycock & Son's volumetric mixers are often the first vehicles on sites across the north of England and the Midlands, making full use of the Range C's rough-and-tumble durability. Similarly, John Vannet's Range C tipper delivers Breedon's quarry products including sand, gravel and hardcore to locations across the Tayside and Angus regions, and has become the go-to aggregate tipper for many national operators.

In addition to the wide variety of Range C variants, Renault Truck's Ready for Business range also incorporates the smaller Range D 4x2 models in sweeper and skip-loader guise. The former is bodied by specialist Johnston Sweepers, available with either a 9-speed manual or an Allison 6-speed automatic transmission and optimised for construction and municipal applications. □

● For more information visit www.renaulttrucks.co.uk



Seeing is believing

Harness VisionTrack's camera and recording systems and you have the opportunity to run a safer fleet and cut your insurance costs

CAMERA AND RECORDING SYSTEMS

Commercial Motor Anything with the potential to make a fleet safer and reduce insurance costs has got to be worth a look, and that's the aim of VisionTrack's camera and recording systems. The VT2000 is one of three forward-facing cameras offered by the firm and this particular one has the ability to connect to external telematics systems and supply its own vehicle tracking feed.

The unit records images in 1,080-pixel HD, which isn't just for show, according to MD Simon Marsh, as a higher resolution equals more accurate images and less dispute of anything captured on the feed. It's also kitted out with a built-in G-shock sensor and GPS receiver to both sense and immediately transmit footage of incidents, which is instantly uploaded to a cloud platform.

Ultimately, its function is to speed up

first notification of loss (FNOL), which is the clincher for minimising the time and cost of insurance claims. The sooner an operator and insurer find out something has gone wrong, the better, and the unit issues an alert as soon as it detects a jolt strong enough to be considered an accident.

FILM REVIEW

It may be nothing more than a hefty pothole, which is why the subsequent footage is first reviewed in the firm's call centre, but any recording that constitutes an accident is immediately emailed to a pre-agreed list of recipients, such as the transport manager or even a contact at the fleet's insurer. Marsh tells *CM* that those using the service have, on average, seen an 18% reduction in the cost of

claims and a 24% drop in incidents.

The VT2000's telematics system supplements the video recordings with a full report on each event, including a breakdown of drivers by alert grading, location and the time and date. That has the knock-on benefit of flagging-up areas to be addressed by driver training programmes, which ticks the corporate social responsibility box.

PICTURE PERFECT

"A camera adds the final dimension to telematics, because a picture tells a thousand words," says Marsh. "If you're looking at telematics data, you might have behavioural indicators saying that your driver has accelerated or braked harshly, but you won't necessarily understand why. With a camera, you can see if he was accelerating to get out of somebody's way or if he hit the brakes because someone jumped out in front of him, and that's very well recognised by insurers.

"They encourage it, because it allows them to protect their costs and, if there is a claim, they can start reducing those costs by acting quickly. At the end of the day, a claim to an insurer is like an egg timer – the longer it goes on the bigger the cost."

Supporting the camera system is the VT4000 digital video recorder, which can soak up feeds from up to four cameras, again in 1,080p HD. Like the VT2000, it uses a 4G mobile connection, but it can also be used hardware-style with SD cards and it's fitted with an external panic button to trigger emergency events. □

● **For more information visit www.visiontrack.com or call 01246 225745**





Tip top tipper trailer

Crick Trailer Sales' sliding bogie tipper trailer offers a 50% greater payload than a rigid while also cutting pollution, traffic and costs

SLIDING BOGIE TIPPER TRAILER

Commercial Motor Most of us think rigid when it comes to tippers, and it's easy to forget about trailers. Crick Trailer Sales – the specialist division of Dennison – has developed the sliding bogie tipper trailer, which is designed to square up against a standard 8x4 rigid vehicle, promising superior carrying capacity and a steadier body.

The company published a report in which it compared the results between operating a Volvo FMX 8x4 rigid tipper with a Volvo FM 6x2 artic and the bogie tipper trailer. Broadly, the trailer was reported to offer a 50% greater payload than the rigid with 30% less in the way of vehicle movements.

The latter element in particular has been cited as a concern by operators who are worried that trailers offer less in the way of stability than rigids and are more likely to topple over mid-tip, but the sliding bogie employs an extra wide tipping hinge bar and, in its shortened body position, measures up at 6.99m

from the centre of the rear axle to the kingpin – that's about 30% shorter than the average fixed artic tipper and roughly the same length as a fixed 8x4, which it can out-maneuvre in tight spaces.

The firm is keen to shout about the safety aspects of the trailer and points out that it remained lodged on the ground at 8.5 degrees during stability tests, during which it exceeded the requirement for IRTE class A certification by 13%. All of the tipping controls are located inside the cab, so the driver doesn't have to leave his/her seat.

There's a big efficiency benefit too, in

that its payload is almost 50% greater than that of an average 8x4 rigid tipper. Based on a tractor combo with a GVW of 44 tonnes, it can haul 29.5 tonnes – that's 9.8 tonnes more than the 8x4's 19.7 tonnes. Crick claims the ultimate difference between the two is that, on average, operators need make only seven journeys with the sliding bogie trailer, compared with 10 with a rigid.

THE FIGURES ADD UP

In its report, the company also worked out that, journey cycles aside, there are cold, hard cash savings to be had from the trailer. A year of purchase, running and depreciation costs saw the Volvo artic and trailer combo come out £1,297 cheaper than the rigid option, while Crick estimated that the former would be worth £11,500 more after five years of operation.

And if that weren't enough, the bogie and artic option is even claimed to increase operators' earning potential. The firm once again compared it with a rigid based on their respective maximum payloads, carrying six loads per day, within a 20-mile radius, at a rate of £3.50 per tonne and over a 47-week working year. The upshot was 49% lead for the sliding bogie, which could rake in £141,141 per year compared with the rigid's £91,791.

In addition, a 2018 study for Transport for London by consulting engineer WSP claimed that using larger articulated lorries for construction deliveries in the capital instead of rigids, would cut pollution, traffic and cost. □

● **For more information visit**
www.cricktrailersales.com
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