

Transport News Brief

Road transport industry news from the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders

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June registrations: vans up again, trucks stable

The Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders just published June's van and truck registration data. These show the total as 23,040, down 9.7% to 232,920 for the rolling year. Within that, there were 2,901 trucks, down 29.5% to 31,885 for the rolling year and 20,139 vans, down 5.4% to 201,035 for the rolling year. "Demand in the commercial vehicle market continues to show mixed fortunes," said Paul Everitt, SMMT chief executive. "Van registrations are moving forward with another month of positive growth, but demand for trucks continues to lag behind the recovery. Road transport operators need to see the economic recovery continuing and get easier access to cash to help them invest in new vehicles."

More from Robin Dickeson on +44 (0)2 073 449 222 or rdickeson@smmt.co.uk

ULC truck strategy launched

The SMMT launched its Ultra Low Carbon Truck strategy at its International Automotive Summit in London last week. Martin Flach, product director at Iveco and a member of the SMMT's truck technical committee outlined the strategy at a session led by Jonathan Murray of the LowCVP and including Simon Chapman, chief economist, at the FTA and Jack Semple, policy director at the RHA. Flach stressed the need for bureaucrats to measure truck fuel use and carbon emissions in relation to loads moved, rather than to distance. "We need to measure fuel use and CO₂ per tonne kilometre if we are to be realistic and recognise trucks' role in society." Panellists Jason Vallint of AA DriveTech, Derek Beevor of Roadtech Computers and Dave Such of Ricardo will also contribute to the session, its debate and Q+A session.

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Big bus outlook downbeat, coaches weak and unsettled

The SMMT just published June's bus and coach registration data. These show big buses fell 36% and big coaches dropped 22%, but there was growth for 3.5 to 8.5t buses. "June saw big bus registrations fall as the sector continues in recession" so public spending cuts need careful aim "to avoid weakening already damp demand," said Paul Everitt, SMMT chief executive. For firms dependant on UK business "the outlook is downbeat; spring's seasonal lift in big coaches was from a low base and didn't last." At least the 3.5 to 8.5t sector still shows a welcome growth trend. "Finally, good news comes from the government's recent plan to spend £15m to help put more than 150 new low carbon buses to work in English bus fleets."

More from Robin Dickeson on +44 (0)2 073 449 222 or rdickeson@smmt.co.uk

RHA forces Home Office U-turn

The Road Haulage Association says that the UK Home Office has withdrawn a booklet on truck crime after questions the RHA's magazine *Roadway*. The UK's Serious and Organised Crime Association produced "Lorry Crime Prevention," supposedly helped by the UK Border Agency. The magazine asked the Home Office how it could rate operators and drivers as victims of crime from illegal immigrants yet penalise them if they were so victimised. "Drivers who notify the authorities and are found to have illegal stowaways in their trucks immediately lay themselves open to investigation," said Geoff Dunning, RHA boss, who says they risk punishment for being victims of crime.

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Leyland Trucks wins MX Awards again

For the second straight year Leyland Trucks is the overall winner in the annual Manufacturing Excellence Awards, the MX Awards run by the UK's Institution of Mechanical Engineers. The firm is the nation's only volume truck maker, building Daf trucks for the UK and export. The MX Awards are the UK's premier recognition scheme for manufacturers. This is the first time in the Awards' 28-year history that the same firm has won for two successive years. "This is a highly competitive and very prestigious award scheme in which we were pitched against hundreds of manufacturing concerns across the UK, many of a world-class standard," said Andrea Paver, MD. Leyland Trucks also won in the Business Development and Change category.

More from David Rowlands on +44 (0)2 074 948 050 or drowlands@automotivepr.com

Weight Angel launches overload protection system

Weight Angel has launched its award-winning commercial vehicle overload and load shift prevention system in the UK. To tackle the significant rise in illegal vehicle overloading on the nation's roads, Weight Angel uses a unique combination of sensors and advanced software to indicate both the load and any load shifting from inside the vehicle. Unlike other external systems, Weight Angel needs no more calibration after setup and can be fitted anywhere in the country in around an hour. The system uses the latest in Bluetooth technology to give users a visual indication as the vehicle is loaded via the wireless portable information pod. Prices start from £399.

More from Grant Morby on +44 (0)2 073 868 685 or grant.morby@weight-angel.com

Another award for TruckProtect

TruckProtect has picked up the prestigious Van Fleet World 2010 Security Award for its first-to-market range of van fuel anti-siphon devices (ASDs). "We're proud to be presented with an award alongside global companies such as of Daimler, Iveco, VW and Ford," says Russell Fowler, CEO at TruckProtect. "Our kits for Sprinter and Daily models are part of a wide range designed for what is a very important sector. The Van Fleet World Award joins the Killspills Safety Award "in our growing trophy cabinet." Fowler says this is "further evidence" of TruckProtect's "undisputed global market leadership" in the fuel theft prevention field.

More from Russell Fowler on r +44 (0)1 753 890 911 or russell.fowler@truckprotect.com

TransLinc in 53 truck deal for Lincolnshire

TransLinc is delivering 53 Mitsubishi Canter box vans and tippers plus 4 Mercedes Axor 18 tonne three-way tippers for contractor May Gurney. The firm is using the new trucks for Lincolnshire Council's Highways Division. They are on contact hire and maintenance deals and will do road maintenance and repair work; some have hydraulic cranes fitted to help handle heavy loads.

More from Martin Bayntun on +44 (0)1 628 526 208 or martin@nobull-communications.co.uk

EU transport ministers meet

The *Week in Brussels* reports that the UK's Philip Hammond MP, was one the EU transport ministers meeting at the Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council in Luxembourg recently. They talked about the role of transport in the Europe 2020 Strategy and the move to low-carbon transport, a strategic research agenda for transport technology and effective transport and logistics networks throughout the EU.

More from Alex Robinson on +44 (0)2 073 441 614 or arobinson@smtt.co.uk

Tachodisc to refresh operators

With all the focus on Driver CPC training, Tachodisc is launching a new two-day refresher course for CPC holders. The course will concentrate on key transport legislative areas, compliance issues and day-to-day business management procedures. "We created the new two-day refresher course specifically for Operator CPC holders that either took their qualification a number of years ago or who possibly obtained their qualification through acquired rights and therefore may not be fully conversant in all the legislative changes that have occurred over the last five years," said Karen Crispe, director at Tachodisc. "Since 2005 the industry has seen so many legislative changes so the new Operator Refresher course will cover all of these and more."

More from Samantha Stewart on +44 (0)1 746 763 576 or s.stewart@imagine-comms.co.uk

Keltruck to cut carbon

Scania dealer Keltruck plans further cuts to its carbon footprint as part of its Environmental Strategy 2010-2011. The firm says its 500 people, working to its 're-use, reduce, re-cycle mantra, will be the greatest contributors, though it has hired Inspire International UK Ltd to help improve environmental legal compliance and performance across all its 14 dealer sites. Keltruck is an Environment Agency Approved depollution centre and End of Life Directive vehicle dismantler. It has built a big domestic and export business based on recycled Scania parts.

More from Andrew Bentley on +44 (0)1 215 257 000 or andrew.bentley@keltruck.com

Dell shamed for late payment

The Forum of Private Business says it has put computer giant Dell into its late payment Hall of Shame after the firm extended the time it takes to pay suppliers by 15 days. According to the FPB Dell wrote to tell its 'valued' suppliers that it is 'standardising' its payment terms from 50 to 65 days from 10 July, citing 'current economic conditions' as the reason for the change. Dell joins Argos, United Biscuits and Carlsberg, all poor payers according to the Forum. It also says its recent research shows that 37% of late payers take between one and three months to pay, with more than £30bn owed to small firms in the UK.

Vote on van CO₂

The SMMT's *Week in Brussels* reports that MEPs on the European Parliament's Industry, Research and Energy and Transport committees voted to accept draft emission standards for new vans. Their opinions will go to the European Parliament's Environment Committee that in turn, will vote on Martin Callanan, MEP's draft report on 28 September, with further vote on 23 November 2010. Both groups want compulsory speed limiters on vans though each has different ideas on emissions limits. [More from Alex Robinson on +44 \(0\)2 073 441 614 or arobinson@smmt.co.uk](#)

Lucketts tests GITI tyres

Lucketts Travel one of the leading coach hire companies in Hampshire offering a broad choice of leisure, business and educational transport for clients across the UK in addition to an extensive British and European holiday programme. Lucketts have been testing GT Radial within their fleet of 66 coaches serviced over the past 18 months and Engineering Director Mark Jordan, quotes "consistent reliable performance." "With low road noise and consistent wear, drivers have reported no issues from the tyre change. "Feedback from the drivers is nothing but positive" [More from Peter Foulkes on +44 \(0\)1 612 661 172 or peter_foulkes@eu.qiti.com](#)

The joke's on whom?

Have you heard the one about the aircraft pilot, the cyclist, the train driver, the caravanning pensioner and the bus driver? No? Well, you can if you pick up the August issue of *Truck & Driver*; you'll find the story in which an example of each of those gets to have a go in a fully loaded 44-tonne Iveco Stralis. Each took a series of challenges including reversing and slalom exercises. Which person emerged as the best first-time truck driver? And which one ran over Jeremy Clarkson? Buy the August issue to find out, it's in the shops now [More from Will Shiers on +44 \(0\)2 086 523 721 or will.shiers@rbi.co.uk](#)

TruckProtect: First and Best in South Africa

For over three years, TruckProtect says it has led the way in South Africa with its range of fuel anti-siphon devices. "While the truck market is not the size of the UK, fuel theft is a large problem in the country," says Russell Fowler, TruckProtect's CEO and an old Africa hand. "Our product patent protection has been of particular value, as has our ability to supply kits to fit vehicles from manufacturers world-wide." This is vital as South African truck operators use trucks from Europe, Japan, USA and South America [More from Russell Fowler on r +44 \(0\)1 753 890 911 or russell.fowler@truckprotect.com](#)

ITS directive set for second reading agreement

The European Parliament's Transport Committee has agreed Danish MEP Anne Jensen's recommendation for a second reading on the Intelligent Transport Systems directive. The committee also aims to protect the interests of firms and countries that have invested in private eCall systems and will vote at an open session in July. [More from Alex Robinson on +44 \(0\)2 073 441 614 or arobinson@smmt.co.uk](#)

TopClass coaches for Canadian Navy

Daimler Buses North America has delivered three Setra S417 TopClass touring coaches to the Canadian Navy in Ottawa. The new Setra S417, specially designed for the Canadian Navy will work in the Ontario, Quebec and Prairie districts. This is the first time the Canadian Navy has taken a rear door Setra - normally, coaches for the North American market only have front access. [More from Elizabeth Cole on +44 \(0\)2 476 626 082 or elizabeth.cole@daimler.com](#)

Facelift coming for Vario

Mercedes-Benz says its Vario heavy-duty van range is getting a facelift and a new Euro 6 driveline. The firm says this will involve new exhaust technology to supplement the Selective Catalytic Reduction system used on the vehicle, which is the market leader in its segment. Production, now nearing its 15th year, will continue at the Ludwigsfelde plant, near Berlin. [More from Michael Gutzeit on +49 \(0\) 711 17 52410 or michael.gutzeit@daimler.com](#)

London Freight data

Transport for London says the London Freight Data Report 2009 is now out. It gives London freight transport statistics, taking data from many sources to identify the trends, problems and priorities for TfL. These include the rapid growth in van traffic, up 33% in 10 years and the rapidly worsening spot check prohibition rate for UK and foreign trucks, 39% and 50% respectively. It also shows the 74% prohibition rate for overloaded vans, causing big worries for road safety. You can find the full report via TfL's website www.tfl.gov.uk

More from Glen Davies on +44 (0)2 030 540 367 or glendavies@tfl.gov.uk

Webasto to warm Play Bus

Southampton-based Qualiti Vehicle Conversions is to fit a Webasto Thermo HL90 diesel-powered interior heating system to a new Play On Wheels coach conversion built for Swansea City and County Council. The new Play Bus, based on an Irisbus Scolabus 25, is the result of a £160K National Lottery grant. Swansea Children's Play Team applied for the cash in 2007.

More from Keith Reynolds on +44 (0)1 302 322 232 or kreynolds@webastouk.com

BP Gas links I-Sync and Dynafleet.

PB Gas has put six new Volvo FL 4x2 rigid tankers to work. They are the first trucks in the BP Gas fleet to use both Volvo's I-Sync automated gearbox its Dynafleet system. The latter is part of Volvo's Total Transport Solution. According to Willie Anderson, logistics support engineer for BP Gas, better fuel use and driver safety are the main reasons for the firm's decision. Dynafleet uses tracking data to improve vehicle and load security and includes driver training to cut fuel use. It also uses tachograph data to check drivers' hours and availability.

More from Nigel Hanwell on +44 (0)1 926 414 210 or nigel.hanwell@volvo.com

Safer-sounding car

Brigade Electronics will take its "safer-sounding car" to join the Bridgestone Eco Rally, convoy of eco-cars from Brighton to London's Hyde Park on Wednesday 7 July. Brigade's electric car, with broadband movement sounders, will show how the firm's audible warning systems can alert people to danger without causing a noise nuisance. "From start to 20mph, electric vehicles move silently; in supermarket car parks, city streets and pulling out from a kerb, for example this can have fatal consequences. An unmistakable environmentally friendly sounder is vitally necessary," said Chris Hanson-Abbott, chairman at Brigade Electronics. The firm makes and very successfully sells the world's' only "white sound" reversing alarm; its sales growth now exceeds that of the conventional reversing alarms that are generally very unpopular with the public.

More from Emily Randall on +44 (0)1 322 420 350 or emily.randall@brigade-electronics.com

Citroën wins big PH Jones deal

PH Jones, which says it is one of the UK's largest property maintenance and utility-metering firms is putting 850 Citroën Berlingo and Dispatch vans to work as part of a complete fleet replacement deal. Before it did the deal, the firm worked with Lloyds TSB Autolease to do a vehicle review that showed that the Citroën Berlingo and Dispatch, met all of PH Jones' needs. The firm will run the new vans on 42 month, 70,000 mile contract hire deals with Lloyds TSB Autolease. The Dispatch and Berlingo vans have internal racking and other kit fitted by Chambers Vehicle Conversions.

More from Phil Reed on +44 (0)2 086 684 048 or leadingpr@aol.com

Mayor and TfL aim to improve cycle safety around trucks

The Mayor and Transport for London just announced new ideas to help cut collisions between cyclists and trucks on London's roads. They will fit 39 'Trixi' cycle safety mirrors, on a trial basis at junctions in London. These should give truck drivers a better view of suicidal cyclists as they undertake. The first 30 mirrors should be in place by mid July. There is also a new awareness campaign to warn cyclists against passing trucks on the inside and a deal with the FTA to help improve cycle safety in London.

More from Nancy Ryder on +44 (0)2 071 261 469 or nancyryder@tfl.gov.uk

And finally

New Scientist's Feedback column says that one of its readers, Brian Collie was puzzled by the warning on his sachet of Tchibo hot chocolate: "Caution: contains a source of milk." When he opened it, would a cow jump out?

More from www.newscientist.com

Transport News Brief

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