

Renault still invests

RENAULT

Renault Trucks will continue its plans to invest in its UK network despite the economic downturn, according to its UK head Laurent Farman.

'We are opening a new distributor site in Coventry and a new headquarters in Dunstable next year,' says Farman. He admitted, however, that sales in the coming year would be difficult to forecast,

even if Renault's own position had strengthened in the past 12 months. 'We are quite happy with what we have achieved so far as market share goes. We have seen a growth to 5.5% by the end of the year,' he said, adding: 'For me personally I think the 2009 market will be down between 20% and 50% over six tonnes.'

Farman says that reduced sales will allow Renault to concentrate on other areas of activity next year.

'Our focus will be on the quality of our service, our parts business and our network coverage in the UK.'

Meanwhile, in France, Renault Trucks will temporarily close three production plants for an initial 90-day period from January 2009.

The move comes as a response to reduced demand for its products. In the first half of 2008 daily production was at 310 vehicles, while from the start of the new year this will be scaled down to 190.

NEWS IN BRIEF

The RHA Centurions Scheme Winners for November 2008 are: 1st prize – £125.00 – R Hatfield, Worcestershire; 2nd prize – £75.00 – J Parkinson, Lancashire; 3rd prize – £50.00 – R Cullimore, Gloucestershire.

Seafeld Logistics company, Ken Thomas Logistics Ltd, has announced a three-year distribution and warehousing deal with Brunner Mond, a major international chemical manufacturing company.

TomTom WORK has announced the availability of a new truck satellite navigation system. It will help drivers avoid low bridges, weight restrictions, small town roads and narrow residential areas where possible. Drivers enter their vehicle's parameters – measurements, axle weight and total weight – into the software and it does the rest. The system comes with maps of the UK and Central and Western Europe and retails at £119.00 (ex-VAT).

Chatfields Commercials has supplied five new Iveco Stralis AS Super³ tractor units to the Widdowson Group fleet. The Leicester-based haulier's 150-strong fleet has been 100% Scania for the last three years.

Fuel-saving lubricant

BORPOWER

A London-based company is claiming its US-developed BORPower engine lubricant additive is the first to be scientifically proven in the UK to improve fuel consumption by over 10%. It says tests conducted at MIRA confirm its claim. BORPower contains the chemical element boron and nanotechnology.

The company says the raw boron goes through the nanotechnology process and becomes boron diamond powder (MCDP).

The product works by building up boron metal films on the engine's bearing surfaces, which prevents direct contact between the frictional surfaces responsible for abrasion, friction and heat.

Under high pressure between two metal surfaces, the MCDP crystals are pressed into the material to form a coating. This coating is near diamond-hard, but at the same time very slippery. The nano boron forms a low-friction, solid lubricant film between these coatings. MCDP is not integrated into the



metal surface but acts like microscopic ball-bearings, which further reduces friction and abrasion lowering the frictional forces within the engine.

BORPower claims its product does not invalidate the manufacturer's warranty.

ROADWAY has asked BORPower to supply it sufficient additive to conduct an operational trial with one heavy truck. If you are interested in participating in this trial please contact the editor.

Danes trial 60-tonners

LHVs

A three-year trial assessing the impact and practicalities of 60-tonne modular trucks was introduced by the Danish government on November 24.

Figures from the Danish Transport and Logistics union, DTL, estimate that if 25.25 metre trucks were given unconditional coverage on all Danish roads, CO₂ emissions would be reduced by 70,000 tonnes per year.

However, the current trial has been limited to certain stretches of highway and motorways and 1000 vehicles are expected to take part.

Around 145 million Danish kroner (£15 million) has been injected from the government for extra road construction.

JUST

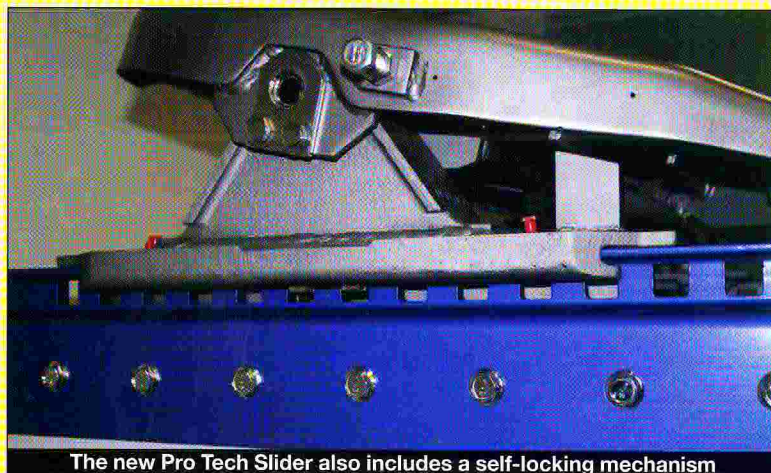
Safer lighter slider from Jost

Jost's latest sliding fifth-wheel coupling is aimed squarely at the UK market.

The Pro Tech Slider is said to be 55kg lighter than a conventional slider and also includes a new self-locking mechanism.

Jost claims it is impossible for the blocking pieces to come loose, no matter what the circumstances, which prevents inadvertent sliding. The profile of the slide frame is also surrounded on both sides, which significantly increases safety and stability.

The Pro Tech Slider is available in both a Direct Mount version – where it is screwed directly on to the side of the frame – and a traditional Outboard



The new Pro Tech Slider also includes a self-locking mechanism

version, where it is screwed on vertically. Special application models allow the mounting height to be easily changed while the two-position slider is only lockable in its end positions, making it ideal for refrigerated artics.