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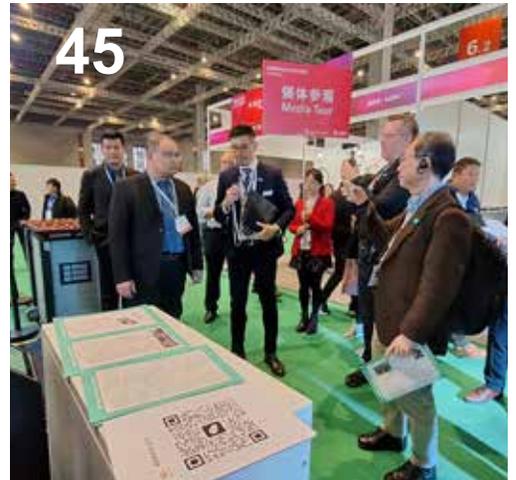
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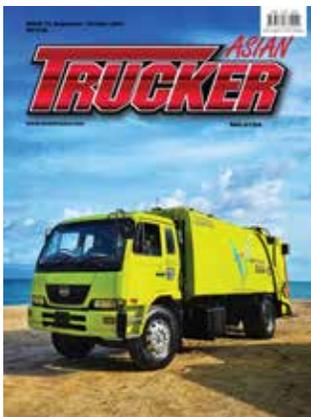
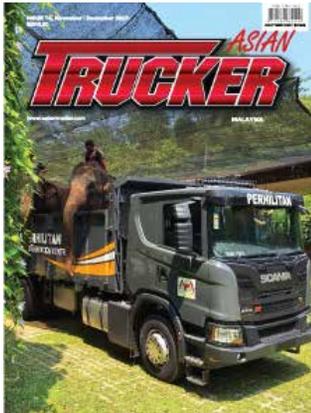
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Fresh Momentum for the Transport Industry

It had to happen eventually that the brakes will be released after several crisis having rocked the transport industry. Not only the aftermath of the pandemic, but also the impacts of the supply chain crisis following it, and the Russia – Ukraine conflict have now been somewhat resolved. What I can notice is a fresh boost of momentum for the transportation kicking in. I make this statement as I can see several trends emerging.

One of the main topics during many conversations I had in the past weeks was about the implementation of new emission norms. Almost all of the truck OEMs are now overtly talking about their coming upgrade of engine technology. Being it EURO IV or EURO V, these engines will require Diesel Exhaust Fluid and here, I feel, transporters are still having a lot of questions beyond the fact that this new technology is going to have a higher price tag. However, the change to higher emission standards means that we can also emphasise the discussion about environmentally friendly business practices.

It is that discussion about the impact on the environment that marks the starting point for another trend: the need to implement ESG frameworks used to assess an organization's business practices and performance on various sustainability and ethical issues. Gaining momentum, this idea is going to be having a big impact on the transport industry. We already see that some customers insist on transporters going above and beyond simple steps to protect the environment. From my observations, the ESG framework will soon become something that will be a deciding factor for clients to appoint their transport partners. Just like businesses needed to be Y2K compliant.

In this issue I also highlighted businesses that are creating their own success by adding onto their existing offering. While construction machinery is not a mainstay of this magazine, it had to be highlighted in the case of the portfolio expansion of the Sendok Group. Also, the new facilities Biforst is building in Seremban deserves a mention as it marks a significant step forward for the company. One of the issues the industry is facing is the driver shortage and the truck centre Biforst is about to activate is a good initiative to retain and even attract drivers.

In business, one must be calculative in order to be successful. The replacement of trucks or the addition of capacity is always a matter of cautious planning. It seems though that the industry has taken a deep breath and sprinted forward. As evident by the fact that MAN has dramatically increased their sales numbers while Isuzu adds yet another year as the bestselling truck brand in Malaysia to their long list of accolades indicates that there is something happening. Either it is transporters now being confident that their business will grow, or the existing trucks have now done their last trip and will be replaced in great numbers. If anything, newer trucks will make it easier to attract clients looking for companies having implemented ESG principles.

Confidently, we are also putting back a number of activities into MCVE. Carrying forward the momentum I see in the industry, I am looking at a show that is set to be another milestone for our Malaysian transport industry. Those having visited previous instalments will be happy to know that the show will comprise of many additional agenda items again. In particular, I am looking forward to celebrating the industry in the Asian Trucker Networking Night, which will be held on Friday 10th May. It will be powered by Hengst Filtration, who are celebrating their 10th Anniversary of their Southeast Asia operations during the gathering.

Speeding up, but not speeding,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Stefan Pertz'.

Stefan Pertz
Editor, Asian Trucker



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TCIE Delivers Eight new UD Trucks to New KC Trading Sdn Bhd



Mr AT Law, Sales Director of TCIE shared during the handover event, "First of all, we would very much like to extend our deepest thanks and appreciation to New KC Trading Sdn Bhd for their continuous support and trust to UD Trucks since 2021. We are confident that the UD Trucks will deliver exceptionally well to support New KC business needs and look forward to a fruitful partnership in the future."

The UD Trucks brand is highly notable for its Japanese craftsmanship and hands-on field approach which are key factors in creating reliable, durable, fuel-efficient, and modern-looking trucks that are built to go the extra mile. These trucks have been meticulously designed and engineered to meet the demands of the modern world, ensuring that they are not just vehicles but reliable business partners in your journey towards success.

In Malaysia, customers of UD Trucks are supported by TCIE's wide network of service centers and dealerships nationwide which provides the UD Extra Mile Support services comprising UD Genuine Service and Parts, UD Driver Training, UD Telematics Services and UD Trust Service Agreements. 

Tan Chong Industrial Equipment Sdn Bhd (TCIE) the sole distributor of UD Trucks Malaysia, have recently handed over eight new units of UD Trucks to New KC Trading Sdn Bhd to cater for its business growing demand.

New KC Trading Sdn Bhd begins its operation in 2016 as commercial fuel reseller and distributor for several major oil companies in Malaysia. Since then, New KC has seen significant growth and has been expanding their fleets of trucks. New KC disclosed their core business as supplying diesel mainly to manufacturing, marine and construction sector. The additional eight units of trucks ranging from light, medium to heavy duty enable them to cater to different customers loading capacity.

In the recent vehicle handover ceremony, Mr New Kee Chen, Managing Director of New KC Trading Sdn Bhd mentioned "This is not our first-time purchasing UD trucks and we have been very pleased with the quality and reliability of UD Trucks. TCIE's service team is always ready to attend to our trucks whenever the aftersales support is needed. The aftersales support is one of the significant factors that have added value to our business needs."

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MAN with Significant Increase in Sales in 2023

Commercial vehicle manufacturer MAN Truck & Bus achieved significant sales growth in all product areas in the financial year 2023. In total, the company delivered around 116 000 vehicles to its customers, an increase of 37 percent compared to the previous year, which was still affected by supply bottlenecks and a coronavirus-related decline in demand in the bus segment. In addition, 11 600 engines were sold.

Friedrich Baumann, Chief Sales and Customer Solutions Officer at MAN Truck & Bus SE, is impressed: "After some very challenging years, we are back on the road to success. We were able to score points with our innovative product portfolio and our customer-oriented services, which is one of the reasons why the 2023 financial year brought us record sales in some cases. Thanks to a strong team performance across all areas of the company, we were able to meet the extremely high demand in the best possible way and deliver more vehicles and engines than we have for years."

Truck sales developed particularly positively, growing by 44 percent year-on-year to around 83 700 units. Bus sales also rose, increasing by 19 percent to around 5 700 units. All segments recorded strong growth, with the market for coaches in particular, which had slumped due to the coronavirus pandemic, recovering significantly. Sales of coaches more than doubled to over 1 100 vehicles.

As MAN was able to win important tenders in the city bus business and the trend towards battery-electric vehicles continues unabated, sales of e-buses increased further. While 263 electric city buses were sold in 2022, this figure had already

risen to 771 vehicles by 2023. Together with the market launch of the eTruck in October, MAN is thus continuing to systematically pursue its strategy of decarbonizing its vehicle fleet. By 2030, half of all new MAN trucks and around 90 percent of all new city buses are to have a battery-electric drive. Work is also already underway on the electric coach of the future. The van business also increased significantly. MAN Truck & Bus even exceeded the pre-corona figures and delivered more vans than ever before.

Around 26 600 vans were handed over to customers, which corresponds to an increase of 23 percent. The external engine business can look back on the second most successful year in its history after 2014. Around 11 600 engines were sold, more than half of them to customers in the agricultural sector - for use in tractors or combine harvesters, for example. 



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Isuzu Outperforms in Market Sales, Retains Title as Malaysia's No 1 Truck Brand

Isuzu Malaysia has recorded another year of stellar performance marked by the highest truck sales amongst other brands in the market for year 2023. This achievement has secured Isuzu the No. 1 spot for overall truck brand for the 10th consecutive year and light-duty truck brand for the 14th consecutive year in Malaysia.

The continuation of Isuzu's market-leading position was cemented by a total combined retail sales of 7 209 units, including light, medium and heavy-duty trucks for last year, which represents 44.9 percent of Malaysia total Trucks segment sales figures. Meanwhile, its light-duty truck segment registered a sale of 6 864 units, which is the highest light duty truck sales in Malaysia. (Source: Malaysian Automotive Association 2023.)

Commenting on this, Chief Executive Officer of Isuzu Malaysia Shunsuke Okazoe said, "We are truly honored to have achieved this remarkable success of being the top-selling truck brand in Malaysia once again. Attaining more than a decade-long of this success has certainly surpassed our expectations."

"At the same time, we are truly thrilled to acknowledge the fact that the continuity of our market-leading position strongly demonstrates Isuzu Malaysia's commitment in offering the widest and advanced range of trucks for our customers throughout the changing industry landscape."

Registering a strong growth of 2.7 percent compared to the previous financial year, this milestone indicates a continuous progress for Isuzu Malaysia and solidifies its position as a leading player in the country's commercial vehicle industry.

"The recovery of the economy and supply chain have led to the rebound of Malaysia's commercial vehicle market especially in the light-duty segment. Our growth rate in truck sales over the years have recorded stable increase as we continuously commit to align our strategy with the broader industry trends and maximize our resources to help our customers advance in their logistics operations. This positive performance underlines our

sustained and robust presence in the market," added Okazoe. On top of Isuzu's sturdy sales performance in the light-duty segment, the company also attained a positive combined sales increment of 11 percent in the medium-duty, heavy duty & prime mover segment in 2023. Isuzu Malaysia's success has also been further emphasized by the implementation of its corporate initiative that oversaw the upgrading and revamping of several dealership outlets in bustling locations including Ipoh, Kuching, Kluang, Temerloh and Seremban throughout last year to offer visitors and customers a brand-new retail experience.

The dealership upgrading and revamping initiative involved contemporizing Isuzu's retail outlets and enhancing service offering with a host of sales and after-sales facilities for customers.

Commenting on this, Okazoe said "Isuzu's dealership network, which is the largest from a truck brand with 59 centers spread across every state and at strategic locations in Malaysia, is the backbone of our operations. Our customers rely on our dealership outlets for both sales and after-sales support. As such, we look forward to further extending our reach with the opening of additional new showrooms which we are planning for this year."

"As the industry evolves, we will continue to harness our position as a market-leading player to provide products and services that will further contribute to the overall growth and development of our customers' logistics operation. With this in mind and in support of the Government's regulatory implementation on emission standards, Isuzu Malaysia will also be introducing new Euro 4 / IV models sometime this year," he concluded. **■**

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Hino and Mara Liner Forge Strategic Partnership with Launch of Service Outlet on Langkawi

The collaboration further expands mutually beneficial relationships between the two parties, besides providing more convenient accessibility services to Hino customers.

Hino Motors Sales (Malaysia) Sdn Bhd (Hino) proudly announced the official launch of its latest service outlet, the Hino Approved Service Outlet (HASO) on Langkawi. This marks a significant milestone within Hino's dynamic dealer development program, and it is the result of a strategic collaboration with Mara Liner Sdn Bhd (MLSB), a major industry player.

The launch of HASO in Langkawi will expand its service to customers on the island. MLSB, a wholly owned company of Majlis Amanah Rakyat (MARA), specializes in public transportation, logistics, and bus services covering all states in Peninsular Malaysia. This collaborative effort is poised to expand both parties' business capabilities. For Hino, it signifies an extension of its dealer service network enhancing its reach and customer service, after launching the previous HASO Maraliner Sdn Bhd in Muadzam Shah, Pahang earlier this year.

Present to launch the HASO were Hino Managing Director, Hiroshi Takahashi, Hino Director, Ahmad Yasmin Yahya, MARA Chairman, Yang Berbahagia Datuk Wira Dr. Asyraf Wajdi bin Dato' Dusuki, MARA Deputy Director General, Yang Berbahagia Dato' Zulfikri bin Osman, MARA, Senior Director of Investment, Yahaya bin Sani as well as Chief Executive Officer of MLSB, Zachary Ismail.

HASO Aspiration

In early 2021, HINO developed a new service outlet called HASO that aims to provide 100 percent after-sales support for customers and cover all HINO operation areas, especially in the service and repair areas. Hino emphasizes that, in the commercial vehicle industry, Hino does not just sell vehicles, but also prioritizes after-sales service. This focus ensures the best services, keeps customer vehicles in optimal condition, and contributes to smooth logistics and business operations. Hino's mission is clear: 'To be Malaysia's most Customer-Centric and reliable Commercial Vehicle company and make our country a better place to live by providing Best-fit Products and Total Support', which is also where Hino came up with the idea to develop HASO. Besides the newly launched HASO on Langkawi, Hino currently has another four operating HASOs, one in Sungai Petani, one in Pulau Pinang, one in Semenyih, and another one in Bandar Muadzam Shah, as Hino aims to support customers in sub-urban areas.

HASO Facilities on Langkawi

Located at Lot 1827, KM 1, Jalan Air Hangat Kuah, 07000 Pulau Langkawi, Kedah, the outlet covers 12 000 sqft. The vast space is ideal for customers as there is ample parking space for vehicles coming in for servicing. They are equipped with four service bays and the latest equipment and tools for fast and efficient servicing. Some of the available equipment includes the latest HINO Diagnostic system, DX III. Their technicians are trained and experienced in servicing and repairing commercial vehicles which is not easily found here on Langkawi Island. While waiting for their truck or bus to be serviced, drivers can relax at the customer lounge area within the facility, which offers complimentary refreshments and free WiFi. Heading the service outlet is Maintenance Repair Overhaul (MRO) Manager, Mohd Azlan bin Abdul Latif, and his well-trained team, dedicated to providing a comprehensive range of HINO services, including 24-hour breakdown support.





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Roda Dimensi Makes Breakthrough Delivery



The re-focusing of the business to distributing new trucks is starting to pay off as KYH Industrial Auto Parts bags an order from a key customer.



Quietly, KYH Industrial Auto Parts in Port Klang has been making inroads into the market with their Sitrak branded vehicles. Following a re-orientation of the business in 2021 (Asian Trucker reported), selling these China-made trucks now make up the bulk of the business for KYH Industrial Auto Parts. Just before the end of the year, a prominent haulier took delivery of two Sitrak vehicles, in what is a breakthrough order for the truck distributor.

On 27th December, Mr Eric Tee of KYH Industrial Auto Parts Sdn Bhd, handed over a total of six trucks to Swift Logistics. The order comprised of four re-build European trucks and two new Sitrak prime movers. The trucks are to be used as car carriers and are additional units as Swift is confident that there will be an increase in demand for this particular service. "Initially, our client was asking for all re-build trucks. However, we managed to convince them to give our Sitrak a chance. We are obviously ecstatic about the fact that such a prominent player in the market gave us their trust in the China trucks," Tee said. He further said that the European trucks fit in with the rest of the fleet as they are a mainstay of Swift's business. The trailers were assets from a company that Swift had recently taken over.

Tee is confident that the Sitrak vehicles will perform to expectations. "Maybe the specifications inside the cab of a European truck might be higher, but when it comes to the driveline, we think we are on par," he said. Sitrak's power plant are MAN engines, which Tee says have long since been tested and proven in the Malaysian climate. With 390 Hp, air suspension and a Sinotruk AMT gearbox, the 4x2 trucks would be well equipped to deal with the road conditions in the country. The routes for

these trucks would be short haul as well as long distance all across the country with the strenuous Karak Highway thrown in as a challenging stretch of road. According to Tee, the Sitrak should have sufficient power as the GCW is only 26 000 Kg.

The Sitrak being brand new, they also come with a comprehensive service and maintenance package provided by KYH Industrial Auto Parts. Offered with Euro III engine, there would not be a shortage of spare parts. In 2023, KYH Industrial Auto Parts managed to sell 20 units. "If you compare this with other China trucks, the Sitrak uses more European parts, for example the clutch or cable harness." Sitrak are also equipped with European-made air bellows. With many components being supplied by MAN, there is an abundance of spare parts. Besides this, Tee stated that a good argument for the Sitrak is the fact that they are competitively priced and cost about the same as rebuilt European trucks.

To familiarise the drivers with the new vehicles, KYH Industrial Auto Parts also provided training. "Ultimately, it is the user that needs to be happy with the vehicle. Sure, the management makes the decision, but if the drivers are unhappy with the vehicle, it will only create problems." With service centres in Port Klang, Johor Baru and Kuantan, Tee does not hesitate to say that they are in a good position to have the trucks' services well covered. He emphasised that "Selling a truck is easy, but keeping them running is what keeps both happy: the driver and the fleet owner." With the steadily increasing numbers of Sitrak sold, Tee is also looking at expanding the service network in the North, hoping to attract more customers in that region. **F**



ONG BROTHERS MARKETING SDN BHD



WANLI

PRODUCT BROCHURE





Delivering 60 Trucks for 99 Speed Mart

Local mini market chain 99 Speedmart takes delivery of 60 units Foton Aumark S BJ1088 for business expansion and distribution efficiency improvement.

Being it for daily grocery needs or when we travel within Malaysia needing basic supplies, we are never far from a 99 Speedmart.

99 Speedmart starts a journey with 60 units Foton Aumark S BJ1088 with Angka-Tan Motor for its new business platform – 99 Bulk Sales. As a home grown brand, the chain of convenience stores has since become a business with significant need of transportation services. It was founded by Lee Thiam Wah in 1987 as a traditional sundry store in Klang, Selangor. After the rebranding of 99 Market to 99 Speedmart in 2000, the company expanded with a new store opening at Batu Belah, Klang.

Growth in Tandem with Logistics Needs

Today, 99 Speedmart is a rapidly growing chain of refreshing mini-markets (mini supermarkets) that meet consumer's needs for groceries and services, offering superior value and convenience by offering a product range that caters to a diverse population. 99 Speed Mart always strive for perfection and efficiency, ensuring that its customers can shop in an environment that is accessible and welcoming.

Management of the chain store has the ambition for the brand to be one of Malaysia's market leaders in the retail groceries sector; 99 Speedmart aims to fulfill its customer's needs by providing a wide range of daily use products in its concept-oriented mini markets. This is where transportation plays a pivotal role: 99 Speedmart's vision

is fully supported by the vast network of distribution centres and advanced logistics system to complement the outlets, resulting in an increase in economic efficiency and reduced costs. By incorporating both elements of saving time and money of customers, 99 Speedmart is achieving its promise to be NEAR n' SAVE.

New Offering Needing Trucks

This year, 99 Speedmart is and will be expanding their number of outlets, and improvement in efficiencies is one of their key deliverables in 2024. To do so, they acknowledge the need for a strong partner in logistics and that is how the partnership with Angka-Tan Motor and FOTON came about.

The partnership marks the beginning of a journey together with a new online sales and delivery platform called "99 Bulk Sales" which is advertised on all the 60 units of Foton trucks operating in the



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Klang Valley. Both parties expect that, soon, there will be more trucks needed as the partnership gets stronger and is expected to expand to other states, including East Malaysia.

Why 99 Speed Mart Sdn Bhd choose Foton

The underlying need for in-house transportation capacity is 99 Speedmart's recently introduced new platform, 99 Bulk Sales, which is part of its business expansion plan. To meet the distribution fulfilment needs for this new service catering to customers within Kuala Lumpur and Selangor, 99 Speedmart calculated that they would need 60 trucks. The decision for Foton Aumark S BJ1088 supplied by Angka-Tan Motor was made after careful evaluation of various truck brands available in the market. The strict evaluation includes product and pricing, aftersales network and support, and people support rendered by the manufacturers.

According to Mr. Lee Thiam Wah, Managing Director of 99 Speed Mart Sdn. Bhd. Speed and efficiency is very important for their business. "Angka-Tan Motor, with the FOTON trucks, has delivered an outstanding performance in delivering their vehicles to us to support our online initiatives," he said. As a result, "We have created a whole new image with these new trucks and customers are more confident in buying from us and are sure that we are delivering their merchandise to them on time."

On behalf of Angka-Tan Motor, Michael Chew Yoke Tong, Chief of Business Unit of Angka-Tan Motor Sdn Bhd stated that he and his team are very pleased to have met the stringent business requirements of 99 Speed Mart Sdn. Bhd. "This is a true testament of customer who are logistics experts demanding intelligent high-efficiency and requiring on-time arrival for urban delivery." He reiterated that the Foton Aumark S BJ1088 is one of the most technologically advanced light-duty truck, set to raise the benchmark in the industry.

Emphasising that "This Foton six-wheeler light duty truck is developed in utilising the globally renowned high-performance Cummins ISF powertrain, ZF gear box, WABCO brake solutions and other leading global innovations. It is a light-duty super truck that will deliver on its pledge as a Foton SUPER truck offering safety, being utilitarian, power,

efficiency and reliability. And it has undeniably pushed the boundaries of what a light-duty truck should be." With the delivery of the Aumark S units to 99 Speed Mart and the continuous focus on offering strong aftermarket services, Chew is confident that Angka-Tan Motor will provide an exceptional service to strengthen the business partnership with 99 Speedmart. Present during the handover ceremony as special guest was Tan Keng Meng, CEO of Warisan TC Holdings Bhd. 



The Foton Aumark S

The Foton Aumark S series of light-duty trucks are developed under the Foton Super Truck program, and is one of the culminations of Foton's collaboration with members of the "Super Truck Global Innovation Alliance". The alliance was established with world leading truck technology players including Cummins, ZF Friedrichshafen (ZF), Continental Automotive Electronics, WABCO, Bosch and more.

Powered by the latest generation Cummins ISF 3.8l engine, the Foton Aumark S BJ1088 model is capable of serving 115kW of power and 500Nm of torque. Turbocharged and intercooled with a Bosch fuel injection system, the Cummins ISF engine provides the truck with a premium powertrain that's not found on any other light-duty trucks.

Perfectly optimizing the Cummins engine is the 6-speed manual transmission gear by ZF, which has smooth shifting and high transmission efficiency. The light-weight aluminum alloy casing and optimized gear ratio also effectively reduce fuel consumption, while the optimized turbinate gear design can effectively reduce noise.

Safety stands as a highly important hallmark of the all new Foton Aumark S series light-duty super truck. Built with European safety standards through, the Aumark S series is designed and equipped with both active and passive safety features that have been tested in full compliance with ECE's automotive safety regulations.

The Foton Aumark S series also boasts updated chassis design that is built with high strength steel, two-piece driveshaft and leaf springs which are more stable and more load-bearing.

Built based on the European standards for vehicle body structure, the cab is stamped and formed, where more than 80% of the cab is welded with high precision by double-sided galvanized sheet for high strength against frontal impact and top crushing. The cab doors and frames have hinge reinforcement plate and high-strength tensile for maximum protection against side impacts.



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Feeling the PULSE of SMEs in Transport



As the industry has evolved, PULSE has identified the need for training and education. According to Dr Puvaneish, the association is planning to set up its own training centre. Beyond transportation, there are related services supporting the logistics industry. What has been observed is that companies related to the logistics industry would hire foreign workers. “There is nothing wrong with that as such, however, we have to realise that this means that the knowledge is not transferred to people that would remain in Malaysia. Foreign workers would eventually go back home after a few years and take all their wealth of skills and knowledge with them,” she explained. PULSE is to create programmes to highlight the need to train local staff on areas where there is a gap.

People do not want to take up this job as it is not perceived as a career with progression

Among those professions that require more attention are the drivers. Dr Puvaneish said that research has shown that people do not want to take up this job as it is not perceived as a career with progression. PULSE is aiming to set up programmes for business owners to assist in identifying those drivers that could be moved onto a career path beyond being truck drivers. In this connection, Dr Puvaneish highlighted that there are not enough spaces for truckers to park their vehicles overnight when they are on the job. “The industry is growing, however, even now there is not enough space for truckers to park. We see how they park along the road on the highway. This is another point we will push.”

Held on 8th of December 2023, Persatuan Usahawan Logistik Semenanjung Malaysia (PULSE) brought the industry together for one final dialogue session of the year. Overall, PULSE is looking back at a very successful year, with the highlight being the appointment to the Taskforce by the Ministry of Transport (Asian Trucker reported). Although the year was coming to an end in a celebration, the event also served as a channel to make known the issues that the industry will need to address from PULSE’s point of view.

In a dialogue session with PULSE president Dr Puvaneish Subramaniam, issues and updates about the association were discussed. Particularly, she highlighted that PULSE is focused on SMEs and that the smaller companies are faced with challenges that are burdening them more than bigger industry players would feel. “For instance, SST is a heavy burden for SMEs when it comes to the purchase of trucks.” As a result, those companies with limited access to capital would oftentimes opt for re-build trucks.

However, these trucks may not be featuring the latest technology and therefore be as environmentally friendly as a new truck. Newer vehicles may be tax exempted as they are using “green engines”, which is also aligned with the government’s ESG goals. In addition, the risk of breakdowns with used trucks is higher, again resulting in pressure for the small players as they try to service their clients. “Compromises will be made to reduce operating cost, however, we have to question whether this is safe and effective.” This is one point on the agenda of PULSE to be discussed with relevant stakeholders.



41 | ASIAN TRUCKER MARKET UPDATE

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MANTAP Winning the Hearts and Minds of Truckers

MAN Truck & Bus (M) Sdn Bhd (MAN Malaysia) sees its MANTAP (MAN Test and Prove) trucker appreciation and test drive event as key to winning the hearts and minds of a very important target audience – truckers.

The event series allows truckers who have not had the opportunity to test drive the new Euro V-powered MAN TGS prime movers, to have an up-close and personal experience with the German marque and understand what the MAN brand stands for.

“At MAN, we believe that truckers play an important role in a truck purchase decision by a business organisation. That is why, we always believe in engaging with them and ensuring that they are well looked after. Truckers who bring their trucks in to our service centres can always look forward to a comfortable and welcoming environment with plush sofas, an assortment of refreshments and large screen televisions for entertainment,” said MAN Malaysia Managing Director Andrew O’Brooks.

At the recent year-ending MANTAP 2023 at MAN Port Klang, more than 60 truckers, fleet owners and truck enthusiasts attended the fun-filled event.

Aside from test-drives, the participants had the opportunity to take part in various challenges such as parallel parking, cab-tilting and spare tyre release. Those who completed the tasks in the fastest time took home attractive prizes. There was also a free-flow of local favourites such as pasembor, ice kacang, putu mayam, char koay teow and lok-lok to keep everyone happy.

Abdul Rahim bin Kodir, his twin brother and two friends drove all the way from Jerantut, Pahang specifically for the event. All four are truck enthusiasts who plan to take their commercial driving licenses this year and embark on new careers as truckers.

“We have been following MAN Malaysia’s activities for the past year on social media and were delighted to know about MANTAP. It is good that we are able to see and experience the new MAN TGS up-close. All of us love the design and the simple but spacious cabin,” he said.

Trucker Zulbari Awang, 51, who had never driven a MAN Truck before and took the opportunity to do so at MANTAP 2023.

“I like the powerful engine and smooth transmission. The suspension of the new MAN TGS is very comfortable, and you won’t feel aches and pains after long drives,” he said.

A city bus driver, Wan Mohd Adib bin Wan Hussein, 43, was also aiming to transition to a new career as a trucker and grabbed the opportunity to check out the new MAN TGS.

“I like that the MAN Truck has very good pick-up and torque with quick throttle response. Very nice and powerful drive. I intend to apply to companies that have the new MAN TGS in their fleets,” he said.

Marrapan a/l Kandasamy who has been driving trucks for the past 32 years, came directly from Bentong for the MANTAP event.

“I own and drive the previous generation MAN TGS 6x4 and carry timber from the interiors in the East Coast. It is powerful and reliable, allowing me to cross rivers and the toughest terrains even in the worst weather conditions. Fuel consumption and maintenance cost are low. The advanced retarder system means that I use the brakes only 5 percent of the time!” said the sprightly seventy-year-old, who finished second fastest in the parallel parking challenge.

MAN Malaysia is planning to organise more MANTAP events this year. 



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the Asian Trucker Networking Night by Hengst Filtration as a platform to honour their customers, business partners and users. "The event will start at 6pm with a line-up of entertainment. We welcome delegates, exhibitors and anyone that is involved in the land transportation sector. As always, the Asian Trucker Networking Night is open to anyone and it is also free of charge to join," Organiser of MCVE Stefan Pertz said.

MAN Truck and Bus Customer Dinner

Another German brand, MAN Truck and Bus will utilise the event to celebrate with its customers. Hosted on opening day, Thursday 9th May 2024, is by invitation only. The dinner promises to be a fun-filled and exciting gathering of industry stewards and leaders.

Presentations and Gatherings

Throughout the hall, Asian Trucker will create spaces for delegates to discuss, connect and network. The R&R, with its returning sponsor Hengst, will be the biggest space set aside for visitors and exhibitors to take a time-out or to retreat for discussions. Supported by MIROS, Dr Rich Hanowski, Director, Division of Freight, Transit, and Heavy Vehicle Safety at Virginia Tech Transportation Institute, will be joining MCVE to present about road safety.

MCVE 2024 Fringe Program

The Malaysia Commercial Vehicle Expo 2024 (MCVE) will not only be a showcase of products and services as exhibits, but also a meeting point for the industry. As such, the organisers are bringing back a number of activities to round out the fringe program. During the last instalment of the exhibition in 2022, the organisers skipped these in accordance with the directives to fight Covid 19.

Drive in – Guest of Honour

It is always a delight to see the very vehicles in action that are showcased at the event. The Drive-In of the guest of honour, as part of the opening ceremony, is going to deliver our VIP from a nearby location by way of using a truck. Equipped with radio and video broadcasting equipment, the trip will be shown as a live stream into the exhibition hall. During the ride, the guest of honour will be experiencing a selected truck from the insight as he will be the co-pilot for the short trip.

Part of the opening ceremony will be the VIP Walk-About whereby the guest of honour will be exploring select booths during a tour of the exhibition. Following it will be the press conference and media lunch.

Networking Night

One of Asian Trucker’s flagship events, the Asian Trucker Networking Night is a highlight of the show. Held on Fridays, it offers an opportunity to mix, mingle, network, exchange ideas and wind down after a long day. This year, the event will be powered by Hengst Filtration. Celebrating the 10th anniversary of their Singapore office, handling Southeast Asia, the German marquee will be utilising

Events & Exhibitions

Malaysia Commercial Vehicle Expo 2024

Date : 9 – 11 May 2024
 Venue : Malaysia International Exhibition & Convention Centre
 Contact : www.mcve.com.my

Malaysia International Exhibition & Convention Centre (MIECC) in Kuala Lumpur. Over 8 000+ square meters of exhibition space: MCVE is the largest exhibition dedicated to commercial vehicles in South-East Asia.

During the show, relevant government agencies, professional societies, and associations will join the organizer to provide updates on their products, services and the latest in trucking, bus business and public transport.

Tyrexpo Asia Bangkok

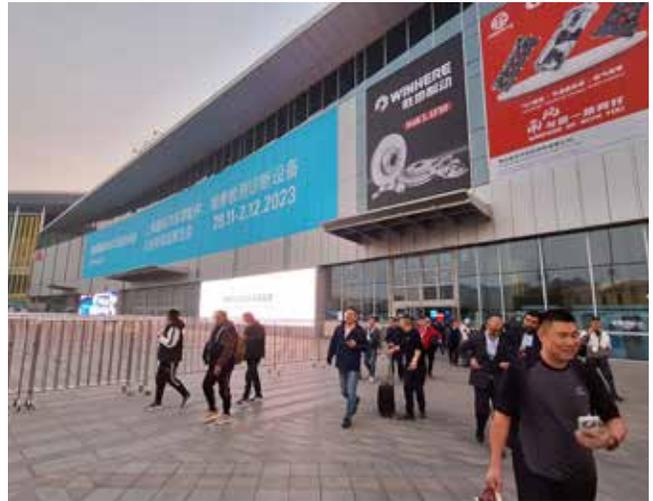
Date : 15 – 17 March 2024
 Venue : BiTEC | Bangkok international Trade & Exhibition Centre, Bangkok, Thailand
 Contact : <https://www.tyrexpoasia.com/>

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Automechanika Kuala Lumpur

Date : 1 – 3 August 2024
 Venue : Deutsche Messe, Hannover, Germany
 Contact : <https://automechanika-kualalumpur.hk.messefrankfurt.com/kualalumpur/en.html>

With economic growth, electric vehicle (EV) adoption and industrial transformation accelerating at an unprecedented rate, Messe Frankfurt extends its support to the Malaysian market by confirming a yearly edition of Automechanika Kuala Lumpur. The once-biennial event has been a gateway for trade between the country and the rest of the world for over 20 years. In this time, its format has shifted from a purely business-centric platform to one that incorporates activities and showcases for participants.



The 29th Taipei International Logistics & IoT Exhibition

Date : 21 – 24 August 2024
 Venue : Taipei Nangang Exhibition Center, Taiwan
 Contact : <https://www.chanchao.com.tw/logistics/en/contact.asp>

Sectors participating: Vehicles: Logistics Transport Vehicles: Truck, Refrigerated Truck, Trailer, Tractor, etc. Handling & Lifting Equipment: Forklift, AGV, Pallet Truck, Transportation Cart, Trolley, Roll Container, Crane, Truck Crane, Overhead Crane, Aerial Lift Vehicle, etc.

Packaging Systems & Equipment: Transportation related System & Equipment, Intelligent Transportation System (ITS), Satellite Navigation Management System, Warehouse Management System(WMS), Enterprise Resource Planning, etc.

IoT System & Equipment: Warehouse Building Material & Equipment Component : Freight Forwarder & Logistics Service Provider: Port & Customs Service, Shipping Agency, Ship Company, Aviation Industry, Sea & Air Freight Forwarding Industry, etc.



TRATON GROUP Identifies Megatrends Shaping the Future of Transport



Global megatrends such as sustainability and technological disruptions around digitalization and software are leading to major changes in the transportation industry. The TRATON GROUP is aiming to be at the heart of this shift, which is reflected in its Company purpose: ‘Transforming transportation together. For a sustainable world’.

Imagine the harshness of a world without transportation. In this reality, supermarket shelves remain barren, and the vibrant hum of a global industry has been silenced. Transportation, the cornerstone of our interconnected world, grinds to a halt, bringing the wheels of commerce and trade to a complete stop. Once dynamic, interconnected cities would be starved of vital supplies in the absence of logistical infrastructure.

While this vision is undoubtedly a harrowing one, we needn’t envision a future without logistics. We do, however, need to consider – and build – an emission-free logistics ecosystem if we are to leave a healthy world for future generations. New technologies are accelerating this transition, and although some challenges remain, the TRATON GROUP is actively working to deliver solutions.

Powering a sustainable world through electrification

Rising demand for eco-friendly transportation has highlighted the importance of electrification within the industry. The transition to battery electric vehicles (BEVs) supports environmental objectives, presenting companies with the opportunity



Andreas Kammel, Senior Manager
Alternative Drivetrains at TRATON GROUP



to take the lead in shaping a more sustainable future. The commercial opportunities for operators are also hugely enticing.

However, the electrification journey is facing several challenges. One of the biggest factors is insufficient charging infrastructure, particularly in terms of high-performance fast-charging facilities for heavy-duty commercial vehicles. In addition, the complexity of navigating a range of emissions standards for both diesel and zero-emission vehicles across global markets presents additional hurdles, as it requires investment in both old and new technologies.

Beyond these factors, the current supplier and production network must undergo adjustments to accommodate the mass production of BEVs, and sales and service capabilities must align with the evolving reality.

TRATON recognizes the opportunities presented by electrification and is strategically investing in its battery-electric product portfolio. This also brings investments in new facilities like Scania's new battery assembly plant, while MAN Truck & Bus will manufacture up to 100 000 battery packs per year at its Nuremberg site from 2025 onwards.

The TRATON GROUP is advancing in its brands' products as well. Scania has been a key player in advancing electric trucks and buses, emphasizing sustainable transport solutions, and offering hybrid alternatives for improved fuel efficiency. In October 2023, the Company introduced major updates for its urban BEV solutions, with e-adapted chassis, new batteries and optimized auxiliary systems. Meanwhile, MAN has developed the Lion's City E electric bus, which is tailored for urban people transport, and production of its eTGX for long-haul transport will start in 2024. And with the e-Delivery, Volkswagen Truck & Bus (VWTVB) offers the first 100 percent electric truck that has been produced in Latin America.

These examples already show how the Group is positioning itself to play a pivotal role in the transition to a fossil free world. Addressing the challenge of charging infrastructure, TRATON is actively investing in this through the joint venture Milence – which is focusing on high-end Megawatt Charging System (MCS) chargers for long-haul heavy-duty trucks and coaches traversing Europe – to facilitate the widespread adoption of electric commercial vehicles. The Company is confident in embracing the shift to electric transportation, citing substantial energy cost savings that can ultimately deliver benefits to customers.

"We're investing billions into our electrification efforts and plan to sell the majority of our trucks beyond 2030 as fully electric vehicles, wherever the infrastructure allows for it. We have already rolled out our last major diesel engine. We are investing heavily in charging infrastructure and charging services," explains Andreas Kammel, who is responsible for TRATON's strategy regarding Alternative Drivetrains.

The digital disruption: Navigating the data highway

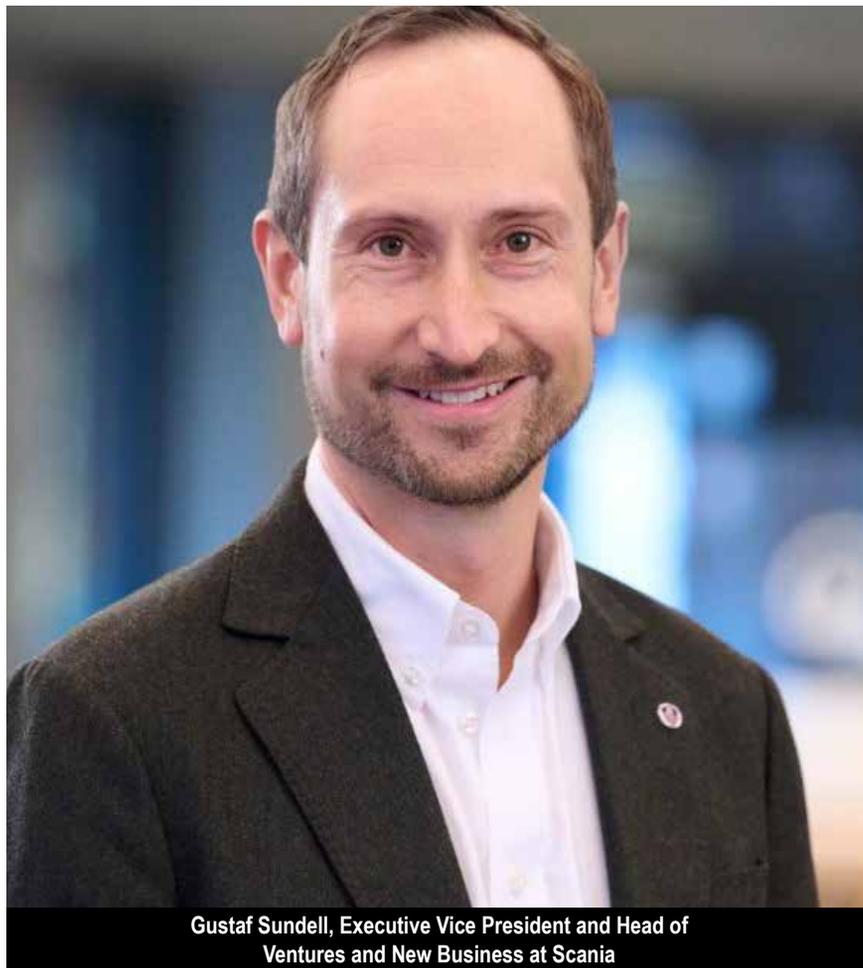
The increasing importance of digital technologies presents a significant opportunity for new business models and solutions for customers. Companies that embrace digitalization can harness the power of real-time data to optimize fleet and transport management, monitor and improve vehicle performance, and contribute to broader industry advancements.

"We're seeing a shift in focus towards digitalization and software – areas that are not traditionally our core competencies. Therefore, we must investigate potential partnerships with companies that are strong in these areas," explains Malte Schmitz, Head of Strategy and Business Operations in the TRATON GROUP.

Autonomous driving: Paving the way to efficiency

The global move towards electrification converges with the prospect of autonomous driving, promising increased efficiency and safety in freight mobility. Autonomous trucks, once integrated into regular operations, have the potential to revolutionize the industry by reducing operating costs and enhancing overall efficiency and safety. Moreover, the integration of autonomous driving technology also stands as a promising solution to the ongoing challenge of driver shortages.

Before widespread autonomous driving truly becomes a reality, the industry must overcome a number of challenges, including the complexity of achieving full autonomy and the recalibration of initial timelines. The industry has witnessed a reassessment of expectations, emphasizing the intricate nature of achieving autonomous driving and the need for extensive testing.



Gustaf Sundell, Executive Vice President and Head of Ventures and New Business at Scania

TRATON and its brands are already preparing for this new age of transportation. "We are developing our system as one joint team to create customized customer solutions with a modular approach for all brands within the TRATON GROUP," says Peter Hafmar, Vice President and Head of Autonomous Solutions at Scania. In this role, he is responsible for coordinating autonomous solutions within the Group.

There are several activities ongoing within the on-road segment. Scania has been driving daily autonomous tests on public highways since 2021, transporting both internal and customer goods. These tests have contributed to the improvement of logistical flows as well as data collection, which will increase the speed of future development.

In the ATLAS-L4 sponsorship project, MAN and twelve partners have achieved key milestones towards the development of self-driving trucks for hub-to-hub automation on German highways. Practical testing on the highway is planned for 2024, with the project aiming to address driver shortages, improve efficiency, and enhance road safety.

In the field of confined spaces, there have been several successful projects across the Group. In Ulm, the ANITA (Autonomous Innovation in Terminal Operations) project, led by MAN and its partners, successfully developed and tested the use of self-driving trucks in a container terminal. The autonomous MAN TGX 18.510 truck, equipped with state-of-the-art sensor technology, demonstrated fully automated actions, achieving project goals and suggesting a 40 percent efficiency potential in freight handling.

Scania and Rio Tinto have established a long-term research and development collaboration to continually advance autonomous technology. Under this partnership, Rio Tinto's Channar mine became the first active partner site for

Scania's autonomous mining solution. The new trials on Scania's 40-ton-payload autonomous mining trucks were launched by Rio Tinto and Scania, swiftly achieving a key milestone: driverless operation.

In addition, VWTB is testing autonomous technology to be used by harvesters in fields and sugarcane crops in São Paulo.

These examples highlight TRATON's commitment to advancing autonomous technology. By engaging in real-world testing and collaborative efforts, the Company is actively contributing to the realization of autonomous driving within the commercial vehicle industry.

The Group's efforts are gaining recognition; MAN's autonomous truck trials have been so successful, that they contributed towards the company receiving the 'Truck Innovation Award 2024' from the International Truck of the Year jury. The accolade recognizes MAN's ANITA and ATLAS-L4 autonomous trucks projects.

"I envision autonomous driving will become an important asset for transportation across the globe in the upcoming decades. However, I am cautious in predicting when exactly we will see a significant ramp-up of autonomous operations," says Schmitz.

A transformative shift in business models

"When you look at electrification, digitalization, and autonomy, what becomes clear is that the entire industry will need to evolve their business models to accommodate these trends. In the dynamic European truck market, characterized by its fragmentation and where the average carrier typically owns only about seven trucks, a new set of risks is emerging alongside the ongoing trends. It is crucial for us to assist carriers in effectively managing and navigating these challenges. Turning our attention to handling these risks not only safeguards against potential pitfalls but also presents an opportunity for us to provide valuable support," explains Gustaf Sundell, Executive Vice President and Head of Ventures and New Business at Scania.

"When you look at electrification, digitalization, and autonomy, what becomes clear is that the entire industry will need to evolve their business models to accommodate these trends."

He recently announced a joint venture (JV) for Scania with sender. The new Berlin-based company called JUNA will introduce an innovative pay-per-use model for electric trucks, together with a utilization guarantee. The pricing includes access to Scania electric vehicles, repair, maintenance, insurance, digital and analytics services. The ambition is that JUNA will clear the way for the large-scale adoption of electric vehicles by removing the obstacles currently hindering the industry. These include high upfront costs, residual value, and technology risks. In return, the JV will provide commercial predictability through guaranteed incomes. This initiative aims to decarbonize the industry and showcase the potential for sustainable electrified transport.

With the development of autonomous technology, the concept of Transport-as-a-Service (TaaS) can evolve where transportation functions as an on-demand service rather than an owned asset. This could develop over time with OEMs needing to carefully position themselves within the ecosystem. Through digital platforms, businesses can connect with external logistics providers, outsourcing their transportation needs. This model offers flexibility and cost-effectiveness, allowing companies to pay for transportation services as required without the burden of owning and maintaining a dedicated fleet.

The TRATON GROUP is actively shaping the future of transportation and logistics through its TRATON Way Forward strategy, diversifying revenue sources and exploring innovative business models.

With the launch of TRATON Financial Services in 2023, the Company offers comprehensive captive financing solutions to meet the demands of new technologies and business models.

"The future of transportation will be worlds apart from our status quo in terms of emissions, more efficient across the board – therefore also cheaper – and safer. We will move from a model high in operational costs to one high in capital costs, which, for intensively used applications, tends to be a very favourable trade-off," says Kammel.

"We will be supplying the vehicles required for the underlying disruptions – chiefly electrification and autonomous driving – but we will also help our customers in terms of the entire ecosystem that surrounds them."

Through the upcoming articles in this series, experts across the TRATON GROUP will explore in detail the opportunities and challenges associated with the future of transport. They will reveal how TRATON and its Scania, MAN, Navistar, and VWTB brands are driving industry efforts towards decarbonization, enabling easier access to innovative mobility solutions through captive financing, and consider the importance of lobbying governments to spearhead change. **T**

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A Fulfilling Calling



It is a short drive for Firdaus Bin Habib. The 39-year-old is married with a 13-year-old daughter living near the freight yard of Seri Harmoni Haulage Sdn Bhd where he has been employed for 13 years by now. Firdaus grew up in Kuala Lumpur, where the many trucks moving about has sparked his interest in the profession of a truck driver from a very young age.

Telling his story, he reveals that he wanted to be a truck driver since young is because his family was poor, and they could not afford to send him for further education. Being more mechanically inclined, he also did not take a liking to the mostly theoretical material taught in school. "So being a truck driver is a good way to make a living," he said. Unlike today, where it is a major investment, the truck driving license was cheaper when he was young, which meant a more affordable entry into the profession for him.

Taking it step by step, Firdaus started driving small trucks; slowly taking different grade licenses, driving bigger and bigger trucks. After marriage he settled down near his current workplace. "So, I just tried my luck asking for a job and got it." Today, he is driving a truck with an extendable platform, moving mostly heavy goods. He carries mainly heavy, bulky, oftentimes oversized, items for constructions projects. He is spending the daytime to load these at the factory and during the night delivering them. The biggest items he has delivered are pre-cast bridge segments that require escorts to ensure safety on the road.

As delivery and loading times vary, most times he does not go home between loading and delivery, unless the route happens to be bringing him close to his house. "Typically, it does not make sense to go home when the goods are loaded, so I will get some sleep in the truck, my little one-room apartment. Ahead of every delivery there is a detailed safety briefing and discussion on the delivery schedule, where to stop for breaks and expected disruptions along the way at the factory. "This is crucial as we are moving oversized, extremely heavy goods and safety on the road is all-important," Firdaus emphasized. Although the items will be loaded by the people at the factories, it is ultimately he who will have to ensure items are secured. Prior to departure Firdaus will double check the lashing together with the safety team.

He loves his job as it is very challenging and every time a job is safely and successfully completed he feels a sense of achievement and satisfaction. Firdaus has made it a routine while waiting for goods to be loaded to make plans for route, and delivery schedule. Part of the route planning are to ensure regular rest stops to avoid fatigue and he will usually eat at one of the many R&R. "We do not always have escort vehicles, which makes it easier to plan my stops." Among the many roads he is plying, the fave route is the Plus highway, all the way from the very North to the southern tip of the peninsular. Simply because it is a straight road, one that is easy to navigate and drive. His Most memorable events? When driving as part of a convoy with other truckers, which he claims to be fun over long distance.

The day-to-day jobs are usually problem-free. "There is not much trouble as it usually just a tyre puncture that impacts the delivery." As he is mostly driving at night, there is less traffic, which means that he does not have to worry about traffic jams or other participants on the road so much. What he noticed is that his wife is understanding of his work schedule as she was aware of what his job entails even before marriage. Interestingly, he observed that other drivers on the road are understanding too, as he is carrying heavy goods. If given a chance, he would like to drive his MAN truck across the border too. "Language could be a problem though!" This particular MAN truck is his favourite truck as it is equipped with a number of safety features, such as the intarder.

The pandemic and the lockdowns had an impact on him. Since the goods he carries are non-essential products and most of the construction projects were halted, he was grounded at home. Although he had to depend only on his basic salary during that time, he had a good time as he spent it with his family. "I did not go looking for other job as I preferred to spend time with my loved ones. Seeing where I have come from, I would not recommend my daughter to be a trucker, although this is a job that is now accepted for ladies. My goal is to provide the opportunities for her to be able to get into higher education." During his free time, he will bring his family around to see different things. 





UD Trucks Hosts CSR Event for Children of Shelter Home

The activity drives home road safety message with UD Quester truck, Zoo visit, and overseas pen pal programme among activities organized.



The event at Shelter Home kicked-off with a brief introduction given by Supriono Madayin, General Manager, UD Trucks Hub Malaysia, to the caregivers and children in attendance. In the introduction, he shared that the CSR initiative is a reflection of UD Trucks' corporate purpose of creating better life for the people.

Shelter Home, which has been in existence since 1981, helps abused, abandoned, neglected or at-risk children in need of a safe place to live. Shelter Home also provides the children with education and counselling support. At present, the home is a safe haven for 35 children comprising boys and girls whose ages range from five to 18 years old.

The staff from UD Trucks Hub Malaysia, with participation from sole distributor Tan Chong Industrial Equipment Sdn Bhd (TCIE), recently held a year-end corporate social responsibility (CSR) event that brought much merry and unique experiences for the children of Shelter Home in Petaling Jaya, Selangor.

The half-day event was filled with a variety of experiential activities which included a 'get-to-know-a-truck' road safety awareness, a live virtual tour of Singapore Zoo and a pen pal program with children from orphanage homes in the Philippines and Japan, where similar CSR event was also simultaneously held by UD Trucks' staff in the region.

"A part of UD Trucks' 'Better Life for the People' means to engage with the less fortunate communities around us. One of the main activities we have been consistently conducting around the world is a traffic safety program for school-going children, with the aim to educate and impart awareness on ways to prevent traffic accidents, particularly those involving trucks. The children

learn and participate in activities with actual heavy-duty trucks to demonstrate blind spots, be aware of the sheer size of the truck and the space required when turning corners,” shared Supriono.

An actual UD Quester heavy-duty truck was brought in by TCIE and stationed at the event to give the children a hands-on experience so as to help them understand the risks and safety precautions around trucks. The children’s interests were piqued throughout the activity which began with basic explanations about the truck’s chassis anatomy and the features inside the driver’s cab. The children were brought around the truck so that they could experience blind spot education at the rear, front and side of the vehicle.

Following a safety briefing on the correct way to get up and down from the driver’s cab, the children were then given the chance to climb onto the truck’s cab for a driver’s view to see what can and can’t be seen when driving a large truck. Their excitement was evident when they made a beeline for it.

Alongside the ‘get-to-know-a-truck’ session, they were also showed various animated road safety videos to further

instil in them the basics of maintaining road safety rules and good pedestrian habits. The youngsters also participated in a simple and fun truck road safety pop quiz where everyone received a goodie bag.

Bringing further cheer to the children was a live and interactive virtual field trip to the Singapore Zoo guided by a ranger for the children to explore wildlife and get the zoo experience from their respective locations. The virtual tour brought the children to view up close the various animals like orang utans, giraffes, rhinoceroses, tigers and zebras, and the opportunity to learn about the animals’ habitats, diet and lifespan.



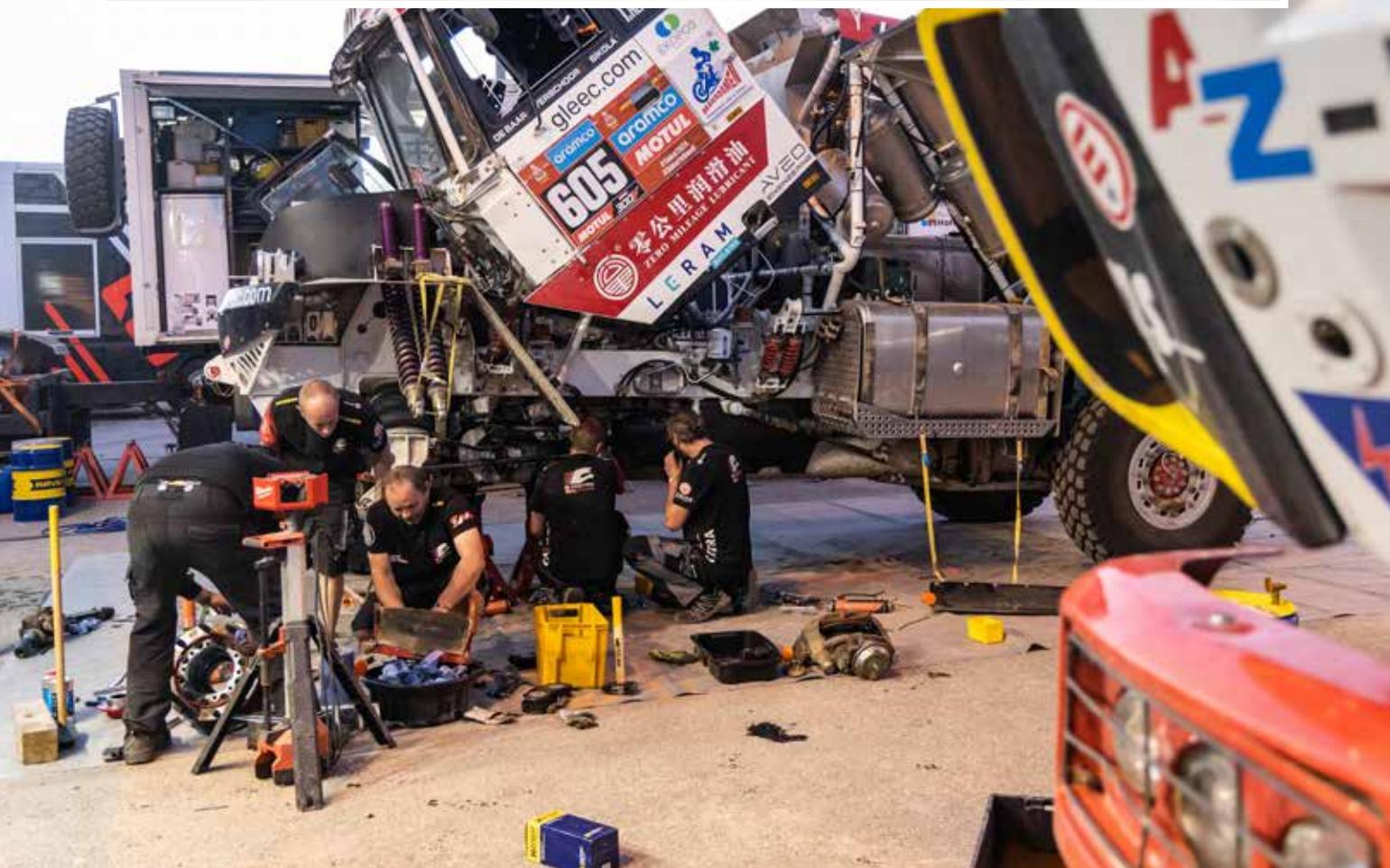
“Our aim in collaborating with the Singapore Zoo for the live and interactive virtual tour was to give children outside of Singapore the opportunity to explore the zoo as it may be difficult for them to physically visit it. It is also intended to bring fun and encourage them to develop an interest and appreciation of wildlife,” said Supriono.

In addition, a pen pal program was also organized for the children where they made new friends from the Philippines and Japan. “We took the opportunity to create a regional pen pal program for the children by matching each kid with another in the participating countries based on age group. They then get to meet and greet each other virtually, as the start of a new friendship that will be followed by letter exchanges. Our aim is to provide a wonderful opportunity for the children to make friends from other countries and offer support to each other. It is also great way to inspire cultural exchange and instil diversity in them,” he said.

GP Joseph, Senior Home Manager, Shelter Home shared, “One of our core missions is to help our children overcome their initial trauma and restore self-acceptance, dignity and trust in humanity. By doing so, we want to develop our children into well balanced, mature and positive members of society. We are very pleased that companies such as UD Trucks and TCIE have approached us to organize the activities for our children, which contributed towards their well-being.”

The event concluded with everyone treated to a lunch. Those interested in donating or visiting Shelter Home can call 03-79550663 or 011-26110663. 







Dakar 2024: Masters of the Dunes

The 46th edition of the Dakar, the 5th to be organised in Saudi Arabia, has finished after more than 4 700 kilometres of specials and a total distance of almost 8 000 kilometres, which tested the riders, drivers, co-pilots and crews, from the ancient city of AlUla to the shores of the Red Sea, passing through the oceans of dunes in the Empty Quarter.

The major winners of the 2024 edition have each, in their own way, taken advantage of teams capable of building success based on their collective strength. Thanks to Martin Macík, the truck category witnessed the Czech Republic's grand return to the summit of the rally, 23 years after the

country's last triumph was earned by Karel Loprais, whose nephew Aleš Loprais finished as runner-up to Macík.

In total, 239 vehicles (versus 340 that took starter's orders) reached Yanbu, including 96 bikes (vs 132), 7 quads (vs 10), 55 Ultimate class cars (vs 70), 3 Stock class cars (vs 3), 29 Challenger class cars (vs 42), 28 SSVs (vs 36) and 21 trucks (vs 47). The 4th edition of the Dakar Classic, which brought together 78 vehicles, finished with 71 crews. Spaniard Carlos Santaolalla Milla won the race for regularity. The Mission 1000 terrains challenge enabled 10 vehicles powered by innovative alternative engine technologies to tackle the of the Dakar and look ahead to the future. **T**





Not surprisingly, an interview with DAF President Harald Seidel quickly focuses on the remarkable growth of the Dutch truck manufacturer over the past decade, its ambition to grow in the rigids and vocational segment and on being the first to apply the new European masses & dimensions regulations. In addition, DAF has a clear-cut vision when it comes to sustainable transport solutions. “There is no one-size-fits-all technology that meets all demands.”

The interview with DAF’s president takes place in the historical boardroom at the DAF head office in Eindhoven. The wooden panelling, the decorative chandeliers – complete with LED lightbulbs now – and the beautifully finished ceiling all illustrate the company’s rich heritage. “If these walls could speak,” Harald Seidel begins, “we would learn a lot about board decisions taken over the past few decades, going back to the 1950s when the company was still headed by its founders Hub and Wim van Doorne. And look where we are today. DAF has developed into a leading European truck manufacturer. Last year we built over 70 000 medium and heavy-duty commercial vehicles, a record in our 95-year history.”

Numerous awards

In Harald Seidel’s own words, 2023 was “a wonderful and exciting year”. The production of the 50 000th New Generation model, the 250 000th MultiSupport Repair & Maintenance contract, the start of construction on the new PACCAR Parts



Distribution Center in Germany and the launch of the New XD Distribution truck represent only a few of DAF’s 2023 milestones, not to mention the opening of the new Electric Truck Assembly. “After winning the prestigious International Truck of the Year Award twice in a row, this year we also won three other awards in recognition of the industry-leading fuel efficiency and sustainability of our New Generation DAF vehicles. Something to be very proud of.”

Time to grow in rigids is now

With the focus now on building upon the company’s success, the question is where DAF believes the biggest opportunities lie. “One of these key

areas is the vocational and rigids segment,” says Harald Seidel. “I am aware that we have been advocating this objective for quite a while but we now have the best products on offer ever. Take, for instance, our new Construction vehicles, which according to our customers are exactly the kind of trucks they have been looking for. In addition to delivering best-in-class products, it’s all about the ease of doing business, both for the customer and the body builder. As a result, new initiatives are being taken, including plug-and-play solutions, ready-to-go vehicles, additional engineer capacity and, of course, a good relationship with the body builder. Huge progress has been made in this respect and the time to grow in rigids is now.”

Euro VII – bigger fish to fry

Harald Seidel says that DAF’s vision and mission have been redefined to include technology leadership, customer success and sustainable transport solutions. “The latter goes further than just achieving the lowest CO2 emissions with our New Generation DAF trucks,” he continues. “We are committed to contribute to a more sustainable world by providing even cleaner transport solutions to our customers. Therefore, developing and marketing alternative drivelines is a key priority. And yes, new Euro 7 legislation has been announced, but that would mean a very big investment for a relatively small environmental gain. It is far more effective to replace the Euro III, Euro IV and Euro V vehicles on the road instead of pushing the industry towards the Euro VII norm by the end of the decade, when electrification will also come into play. We have bigger fish to fry.”

From dozens to hundreds per quarter

“DAF has always been a frontrunner in sustainable transport solutions,” stresses DAF’s president. “In 2010 we were really ahead of our time with the first hybrid vehicle. In fact, we were even way too early. However, we obtained extensive experience with electrification, which benefited the development of our New Generation DAF electric vehicles for which a brand new assembly plant has been commissioned. This year we will start delivery of the first of these new electric vehicles to customers, with production ramping up to thousands of vehicles per year.”

50 000 public charging stations needed

Despite growing interest from transport operators in electric trucks, and availability of BEV vehicles by OEMs, there are still major challenges for its high-volume adoption. Harald Seidel: “Having BEV trucks available is only one part of the story. Availability of charging infrastructure and cost parity will be the key factors for success. If I am driving from Amsterdam to Madrid, where can I charge? If I am willing to invest in electric chargers at my depot, when can I get my connection to the grid? These are the questions that transport operators are asking. We need massive investments in green energy infrastructure, and that requires a masterplan at the European level. To give you an indication of what’s required: in order to meet the 2030 CO2 reduction goals set by the EU for the truck industry, we would need the same amount of green electricity as 17 million households. Three years later we would need double that amount. And that’s only for the transport industry. Seven years from now we are going to need 280 000 chargers of which 50 000 public charging stations. The adoption curve of battery electric trucks by transport companies will depend on the speed of these infrastructure investments. DAF is committed and ready for zero emission trucks. To solve the chicken-and-egg scenario, we need a concerted effort with local governments and the energy sector to make it happen.”

Challenge too big to bet on one horse

“A range of technologies for a range of applications’ is DAF’s credo when it comes to sustainable road transport.”

“Apart from battery electric trucks, DAF invests in hydrogen as a promising zero emission technology. Hybrid technology is also interesting to de-risk the infrastructure challenges, when combined with HVO and e-Fuels”, confirms Harald Seidel. “HVO is a biodiesel that is made from waste products such as vegetable oil and waste fat. It is ready to use in existing trucks, it supports a circular economy and brings an immediate 90% CO2 reduction benefit. Unfortunately, HVO does not count towards the 2030 CO2 targets for the truck industry. These kind of inconsistencies in European legislation are not helpful. Fact is, we are going to need all available technologies to decarbonise road transport: HVO, hybrid, electric and hydrogen. The sustainability challenge is too big to bet on one horse, we need all the horses in the race.”

In the meantime, 2024 has arrived. What does Harald Seidel expect from this year’s market? “Well, I don’t have a crystal ball,” he replies. “The 2023 market was very strong, with a total volume up to 330 000 units in the heavy class, which is not surprising given the supply constraints in the years before. For 2024, we expect the market to be between 260 000 and 300 000 trucks. That is still a strong market, especially when you view it from a historical perspective. With our multi-award winning New Generation DAF vehicles, our comprehensive range of services and our professional dealer network we are ready to prolong our success this year and in the years to come. So that Hub and Wim van Doorne, the founding fathers of our company, would feel extremely proud if they were around to see us celebrate 100 years of DAF in 2028.” **TF**



FAW: Future-ready with EURO V

The transport industry is under scrutiny as ESG principles are emphasised and being able to just move goods is no longer good enough. FAW may be ahead of the curve after a bold move to introduce EURO V engines ahead of time.



At the Malaysia Commercial Vehicle Expo in 2022, FAW also showcased their EURO V trucks. Then launched stealthily, without much fanfare, the truck has had a few critics, saying that it could be the wrong product to bring into Malaysia, seeing how the country would next move to EURO IV emission standards. However, Albert Wong, General Manager, NBG Industries, was steadfast in his decision that this is the right technology to bring to the market. In an exclusive interview with Asian Trucker he revealed insights about his strategy and the success of the truck thus far.

Wong explained that the decision to opt for EURO V was based on the uncertainty around the implementation of EURO IV emission norms. "What we have seen is that EURO III was supposed to be good until 2025, however, now the government is fast-tracking the implementation of EURO IV unexpectedly," he told Asian Trucker. Taking European trucks as a benchmark, Wong observes that most of the world is already using either EURO V or EURO VI. "Our neighbours have all moved to the higher specs already. We don't see a reason why we should offer something that is not as good for the customers."

On issue he and his colleagues encountered however is the resistance to the new technology as it means added cost in the form of higher initial cost for the vehicle and operational cost as Diesel Exhaust Fluid (DEF - Commonly referred to as AdBlue) is needed. Wong stresses that one should not try to tamper with the technology though. Many have asked if one can circumvent the need to use DEF. "What we observe is that DEF is now widely available, and the cost is coming down drastically. This trend will continue with the increased demand." FAW trucks will continue to run when the vehicle runs out of DEF with reduced power. The advice is to have a small canister of DEF in the toolbox of the truck as it is easy to store, safe and cheap. NBG's customers can depend on their truck supplier to have sufficient supply of DEF. "We encourage customers to embrace change and new technologies. Which is why we were the first Chinese brand to introduce this technology in Malaysia.

According to Wong, EURO III and IV trucks are no longer selling in China. As a consequence these trucks may eventually end up being more expensive as the low production volumes mean that the economies of scale no longer kick in. Wong opined that the lower spec'd trucks will soon become exotics and that they may be abruptly become unavailable. With that, spare parts supplies are also becoming an issue. FAW trucks are already sold in big markets, thus the manufacturer is achieving economies of scale for the new technology.

Pointing out the long heritage of the engine manufacturer, FAW DE, Wong is confident that the vehicles are more than appropriate for use in Malaysia. Originally a manufacturer of Diesel engines for the military, the business was bought by FAW, insourcing some 80 years of know-how and expertise. Having produced engines during WWII, these engines were previously only found in military applications.

Only recently, these engines have been made available to the truck segment. One of the brands using these engines

is Kato (cranes). Looking at the engines, the 13-Liter power plants may not be tuned to their maximum output, however, this is deliberately done so. Offered in 460 hp and 500 hp, the engines are designed to have lower output than technically possible as this means they going to last longer. “FAW’s philosophy is that a bigger engine is better as a smaller engine would have to operate at the limit for longer, being overstressed, thus wearing them out faster.” Another benefit is that these bigger engines also run smoother and quieter.

With the output limited to 500 hp, FAW is saying that this is the optimum output, which will be sufficient for most applications found in Malaysia. As such, the engines can be expected to run quietly for a long time while being fuel efficient, doing its part to contribute to the ESG efforts of the owner. Besides the engine being at the forefront of technology, the FAW trucks parked in NBG’s yard also pack a punch when it comes to the drivetrain and cab. Admittedly, FAW trucks are not the cheapest, however, Wong also defends their approach as the race to the bottom by discounting the vehicles is not the right way.

“Again, I am modelling my approach after what I observe with European vehicles, which offer dependability, service and high-end parts.” Those looking for a higher spec’d, quality truck may find NBGs offering attractive. Components like Traxxon ZF gearboxes, Wabco ABS and Bosch air conditioning. Following the success of the first two FAW models being sold in Malaysia, NBG is poised to extend the offering to rigid trucks as well as medium duty trucks to offer a comprehensive line-up of EURO V trucks. Right now, the offering is limited to 6x4 and 4x2 options, whereby the trucks can also be equipped with Fast gearboxes as an alternative to the ZF-supplied ones.

Cabin versions include a flat-floor high cab which allows for unobstructed movement within the cab. The other option is a low-cab, which will have a “hump” between the two seats. This variant is offered for specific industries where NBG found out that a high cab is not suitable for the business. For instance, low loaders may operate in areas with obstacles that would obstruct a truck with a high cab. NBG promises

to have new trucks delivered to Malaysia within 60 days after placing the order. Once the trucks arrive in Malaysia, they are receiving a special treatment: all lubricants and fluids will be drained and replaced with fresh ones that are specifically formulated for the Malaysian market. This is a precaution to protect the vehicle as, for example, the radiator may originally be filled with anti-freeze as it will have to be driven to the port in minus 20 degrees, however, the same fluid could result in damages to the vehicle used here.

Having made a case for the vehicle, Wong brought the argumentation back to the issue at hand: why would customers want to opt for a EURO V truck when the government is not asking for that. In short, Wong stated, that there will be an increased demand for ESG compliance. Those transporters that have bought EURO IV vehicles may find themselves excluded from tenders and access to clients which demand the highest possible emission norms to be complied with. Secondly, Wong urged to consider that a truck will be in use for many years and that the Malaysian government may decide shortly to move to EURO V, in which case many operators may find themselves having to purchase vehicles yet again, having just spent good money on the EURO IV version of the trucks. He concluded by asking if it wouldn’t make perfect business sense to immediately opt for vehicles that will offer peace of mind by being future-proof. **F**



Digging It: Sendok Group adds Excavators



To compliment the existing product range, Shandong Lingong excavators will now be distributed by SGMM, a Sendok Group company, offering synergies for Sendok Group's customers.

Known for a comprehensive range of products on offer, comprising of vans, buses and trucks for various applications, Sendok Group recently added excavators to their arsenal. Part of Sendok Group's offering are off-road trucks, designed for construction sites and mining operations. This is where the newly added machinery finds a synergistic place in the line-up of the company.

To serve this new market segment, Sendok Group set up a new subsidiary in 2023, SGMM Sdn Bhd. Asian Trucker spoke to Kit Wei Luen, Assistant General Manager about the excavators made by Shandong Lingong (SDLG) in China about the motivation to incorporate these as well as how the business is set to shape up here in Malaysia.

In business for 52 years, SDLG hails from China. In 2006, Volvo Group purchased a 70 percent stake in the company. With this controlling stake, a lot of Volvo's technology is finding its way into the machinery. This is especially significant as the heart of the machine, the engine, is supplied by Volvo. Prior to 2021, the brand was not actively looking to expand outside of China. However, with increasing competition, new markets were sought. One such overseas market is Malaysia, where Sendok Group has been picked the chosen partner. The SDLG branded excavators will be imported as CBU units for now. Within the Sendok Group, assembly capabilities are available, which Kit can utilise once volumes reach a critical mass.

"We see synergies as our current customer base is similar to those needing construction equipment, such as excavators. In certain businesses, you need offroad trucks, on road prime movers, and excavators," Kit said. However, Kit acknowledged that the business of selling and maintaining construction machinery is very different from trucks or buses. The key difference



between the two segments is that the excavators would have to be serviced on-site. Bringing in excavators to a workshop using a low-loader is costly and time consuming while the excavator by itself could not be driven to a workshop like a truck. Kit is confident that his team will be able to provide good service to new customers as there is a lot of knowledge about Diesel engines within the group. What Kit's colleagues will need to learn about is hydraulics and the propulsion system, being a caterpillar track.

SDLG is no stranger in Malaysia as the company has been selling affiliated products here for about ten years. According to Kit, the purpose of setting up a separate company, SGMM, is to keep all excavator-related issues within one confined organisation. For instance, right now teams are being trained up to deal with the service and aftersales for the excavators. He hinted that there are a lot of job opportunities as there needs to be multiple teams, ready to be deployed all over Malaysia. For technical support, SGMM can rely on staff from SDLG being stationed in Malaysia. In addition, Kit explained, SDLG has a sophisticated online support system to assist with parts orders and troubleshooting.

Although excavators are off-road vehicles, they still need to be registered, complete with number plates and PUSPAKOM inspection. However, there is less paperwork involved and a brand-new excavator could be put to work within a few weeks, even if it has to be ordered from China. The assembly

and shipment of an excavator will take approximately six weeks. Unlike trucks, excavators offer very little options for customisation. What can be changed is the tool, ranging from grabbers to breakers, shovels to buckets. These tools can be changed with relative ease, depending on the tool. "We have stock and are ready to ship," Kit stated.

Some customers may be worried that the European technology used may mean that the excavators will be more expensive. "We can assure that the cost will be competitive as these excavators use Volvo engines, however, these are engines that are EURO III and have been in production for a long time. Thus, the cost associated with them is relatively low." Selling a vehicle, being it a truck or excavator, is one thing. Keeping them running is paramount and SGMM is importing around 50 000 RM worth of spare and wear and tear parts with every unit of the excavator. Building such a stockpile of parts ensures that clients will have access to parts when needed. The stocks of slower moving parts is imported based on data provided by SDLG on breakdowns. "And in case we don't have a part and it is needed urgently, we can always airfreight it in."

Digging in, SGMM launched the SDLG excavator in December 2023, attracting some 200 guests to get acquainted with the latest offering. "We even got one order already from the event," Kit exclaimed. **T**





FAW TRUCKS and Shell Re-launch Starship

FAW TRUCKS and Shell officially unveiled the Starship China, a new concept truck created by the two companies. The launch of this new concept truck marks another breakthrough in their innovative collaboration in the road transport industry, aiming to meet the growing demand for logistics in China, while being green and efficient.

Combining the cutting-edge ideas and technological advantages of FAW TRUCKS and Shell, the Starship Concept Truck is specially designed for China's road transport industry, aiming to improve transport efficiency while minimising carbon emissions, and to promote energy efficiency upgrading and green transformation of China's road transport industry.

The truck takes into full consideration the actual situation and needs of China's road transport industry, integrates industry-leading concepts and advanced technologies, and covers a full range of upgrades from vehicle design, intelligent manufacturing, power systems to energy use, bringing users the dual value of improved efficiency and reduced energy consumption.

Specifically, the Starfield Concept Truck achieves innovation in the following four areas:

Aerodynamically optimised design: An industry-leading aerodynamic suite is used to minimise wind resistance and improve the truck's stability through cockpit design

and vehicle rear improvements. These improvements result in the Starfield Concept truck having a significantly lower wind resistance than comparable models, resulting in improved fuel economy.

High fuel economy: The use of low rolling resistance tyres, Shell's advanced lubrication technology and Shell's special diesel fuel will improve the truck's high fuel economy across the board. These measures will reduce rolling resistance and improve the overall fuel economy of the powertrain.

Low carbon and environmental protection: Shell Renewable Diesel is used to reduce carbon emissions. In addition, the installation of solar panels provides green electricity and reduces the energy consumption of the engine.



There is also Shell's supply of recyclable bio-based Garrity polyether polyol for use in car seat manufacturing, reducing the overall carbon footprint.

Intelligent: The Starfield Concept Truck is highly intelligent, equipped with the FAW TRUCKS Smart Cockpit, which integrates a number of functions such as L2 Smart Driving, Smart Maintenance, 360-degree Surround View and Smart Power Distribution. In addition, the electronic rear-view mirror and electronic blind-fill mirror effectively reduce the driver's blind spot and improve driving safety.



In addition, the Starfield Concept Truck adopts the H Powerfield Route Technology of the FAW TRUCKS Intelligent Powerfield, the P2 Configuration Power Architecture, the Oil-Electric Hybrid Energy Management Architecture, and the Waste Heat Recovery Thermal Management Architecture, thus realising the ultimate in energy efficiency and conservation. The release of this truck marks the gradual application of these industry-leading technologies in daily road transport, and the truck will also undergo a series of practical application activities such as road testing next year.

In the future, FAW TRUCKS and Shell will continue to work together to explore more possibilities for the sustainable development of China's road transport industry with advanced concepts and leading technologies. This cooperation will promote energy efficiency and green development in China's road transport industry, contributing to a sustainable future. 





How does the Fuel Delivery System Work for Hydrogen Ice, Hydrogen Fuel Cell and Natural Gas Vehicles?

The fuel delivery system is one of the most critical components in a vehicle and is the heart of a vehicle's power generation process. The fuel delivery system serves a similar function to a fuel tank in diesel-powered vehicles.

However, the fuel delivery system is specifically designed to handle gaseous fuels like hydrogen and natural gas, both of which are stored at high pressures.

This article explores key details of fuel delivery systems for hydrogen internal combustion engines (ICE), hydrogen fuel cell vehicles and natural gas vehicles.

FUEL DELIVERY SYSTEM IN HYDROGEN INTERNAL COMBUSTION (ICE) AND HYDROGEN FUEL CELL ENGINES

Storage Tank

Hydrogen-powered vehicles such as transportation trucks are equipped with a specialized fuel delivery system that is engineered to handle the high-energy content and low density of hydrogen fuel. Central to this system is the storage tank, a cylindrical vessel made from carbon fibre. This storage tank is designed to hold hydrogen safely at high pressures that can reach up to 700 bar or 10 000 psi. This pressure refers to how tightly the hydrogen is squeezed inside the tank. So, the higher the pressure, the harder it is to keep it stored! This tank must therefore be able to endure the open road and the refuelling process while maintaining its structural integrity.

On-tank Valve

The on-tank valve is another key component of the hydrogen fuel delivery system. It uses an electrical solenoid to regulate the flow of hydrogen to the engine or

fuel cell injection system. It is also a vital component during the refuelling process, ensuring that hydrogen can be refilled quickly and safely. This feature is especially important for on-highway commercial trucks that operate on tight schedules and may need to refuel at different stations along their route.

Important safety devices are also integrated into the on-tank valve, which help mitigate the potential risks associated with hydrogen fuel and its storage. The thermal pressure relief device (TPRD) is a temperature-sensitive valve that safely vents the fuel to the atmosphere when activated. This helps to avoid explosion or fire, ensuring the safety of the vehicle, its cargo and the driver. Additionally, the on-tank valve has multiple mechanical valves that can refuel the system or prevent fuel flow out of the tanks which enables the safe troubleshooting and servicing of the fuel delivery system.



to ensure accurate fuelling regardless of application demands and driving conditions.

FUEL DELIVERY SYSTEM IN NATURAL GAS ENGINES

Natural gas vehicles are increasingly popular for transportation, particularly in delivery trucks that operate in urban areas with frequent stop-and-go traffic. A fuel delivery system for natural gas has the same components but also a few distinct characteristics compared to the fuel delivery system for hydrogen vehicles.

Storage Tank

The storage pressure for natural gas is lower than that of hydrogen. However, the fuel delivery system still needs to be capable of storing and handling high-pressure gas. Typically, natural gas is stored in the fuel delivery system at pressures up to three hundred bar or 4 000 psi.

On-tank Valve

The type of on-tank valve used in natural gas fuel delivery systems is different than those used in fuel delivery systems for hydrogen vehicles. In natural gas vehicles, mechanically operated on-tank valves are commonly used, whereas electronically controlled valves are found in the fuel delivery systems for hydrogen vehicles. Like hydrogen on-tank valves, natural gas valves may still possess integrated features such as TPRDs and bleed valves for safety and serviceability purposes.

High-Pressure Regulator

Like hydrogen fuel delivery systems, a high-pressure regulator is used with natural gas to reduce the fuel supply

pressure to an appropriate level for delivery to the engine – typically 4 to 10 bar. Since most natural gas on-tank valves are mechanical devices, the high-pressure regulator may also be integrated with a shut-off valve which is an electronically controlled valve that stops the flow of fuel to the engine when the vehicle is shut-off.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR FUEL DELIVERY SYSTEMS IN NATURAL GAS ENGINES VS HYDROGEN ICE AND HYDROGEN FUEL CELL ENGINES

Natural gas fuel delivery systems are well-established in the market today. However, hydrogen fuel delivery systems are a new technology with greater complexity. There are a few considerations to keep in mind when it comes to choosing the fuel delivery system for hydrogen internal combustion engines (ICE) and hydrogen fuel cell engines.

Sealing techniques: Hydrogen molecules are smaller than natural gas and therefore, more difficult to seal. Selecting the right sealing mechanisms and choosing materials with low porosity (fewer voids in the material) will help ensure a robust seal. Elastomeric seals (rubber-like polymers) have lower porosity which helps ensure a more robust seal.

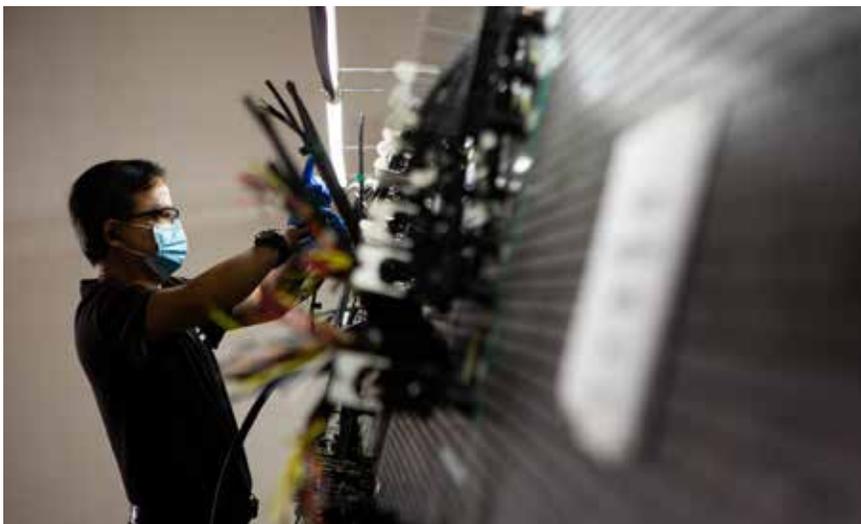
Material selection: Hydrogen can cause embrittlement. Embrittlement is when metals become brittle over time as they absorb hydrogen. Therefore, proper material selection is critical. Stainless steel and anodized aluminium are good materials for hydrogen. Appropriate polymer selection for sealing is also important to prevent material degradation.

Material coating: Because hydrogen is a gaseous fuel, it does not provide lubrication for internally moving components in the way that diesel fuel would. Special materials and coatings between moving components can be used to minimize wear from two materials sliding against one another.

Testing: Hydrogen fuel delivery systems are subject to rigorous certification testing dictated by many global standards (e.g. – ECE R134, EC79, HGV 3.1, etc.). Depending on the market you are looking to serve, understanding the regulatory norms, and identifying capable test partners to validate those norms is critical. 

High-pressure Regulator

The high-pressure regulator of the fuel delivery system works on conditioning the hydrogen. It reduces the pressure of the fuel to a level that is suitable for energy generation at the fuel cell stack or engine. This is typically up to 20 bar for fuel cells and 50 bar for hydrogen ICE. Depressurizing hydrogen is not only a matter of safety but the accuracy of delivery pressure allows the engine to operate efficiently and effectively. For example, in a hydrogen ICE-powered vehicle, the regulator must consistently provide the correct delivery pressure



Navigating the Shift towards Electric Buses and Trucks

Addressing Key Concerns with HELLA's Innovative Solutions

By: Dr. Andrew Heng (Head of Asia Pacific Marketing) and Albert Susanto (Head of Special Application)



On one hand, the rapid adoption of EVs in the passenger car segment in Malaysia is driven by a number of factors, including government incentives, environmental concerns, and the increasing availability of EV models. As of 2023, the EV adoption rate in Malaysia has reached one percent of total vehicle sales, which is not too far compared to a global average of 6 percent.

On the other hand, the adoption of EVs in buses and trucks is still in its early stages in Malaysia. However, the government has set ambitious targets for EV penetration in these sectors, with the aim of having 60 percent of all new buses and 30 percent of all new trucks powered by electricity by 2030.

The Passenger Car EV Revolution and its Implications for Buses and Trucks

The rapid adoption of electric vehicles (EVs) in the passenger car segment is poised to have a significant impact on the bus and truck industry. As electric mobility gains traction, bus and truck operators are facing a series of challenges that need to be addressed to ensure a smooth transition to this sustainable and efficient technology.

1. Range anxiety: The limited range of EVs is a major concern for bus and truck operators, particularly in long-haul applications. HELLA addresses this challenge by offering a range of intelligent lighting systems that effectively reduce energy consumption without compromising illumination. These systems utilize high-efficiency LED technology and advanced lighting control systems to optimize energy usage, maximizing the vehicle's range and extending its operational capabilities. Additionally, HELLA's expertise in smart charging solutions can help operators efficiently recharge EVs during downtime, providing a seamless and convenient charging experience that minimizes range anxiety and maximizes operational efficiency.

2. Weight optimization: Weight plays a crucial role in the performance and efficiency of EVs. Every kilogram shaved off the vehicle's weight translates into improved fuel economy and range. However, heavy batteries can significantly impact the weight of EVs, particularly in buses and trucks. To address this concern, HELLA Shapeline lighting system, is designed with weight optimization in mind. Its compact and lightweight design minimizes the overall vehicle weight, contributing to enhanced fuel efficiency and range. Additionally, the modular design of the system allows for easy replacement of individual components, further reducing weight and maintaining optimal performance without the need for extensive recalibration or system overhauls.



AVAS

Bi-LED Essential



3. Maintenance costs: The unique operating conditions of buses and trucks necessitate lighting systems that are not only efficient and durable but also easy to maintain. High maintenance costs can strain fleet budgets and reduce the overall profitability of EV operations. To overcome this concern, HELLA LEDayFlex III combination lamp and HELLA Valuefit Blade auxiliary light system, are designed to withstand the harshest environments. These systems incorporate high-quality materials, advanced sealing techniques, and corrosion-resistant coatings to ensure long-lasting performance and

resistance to dust, dirt, and extreme temperatures. Additionally, the modular design of these systems simplifies maintenance procedures, reducing downtime and minimizing maintenance costs.

4. Safety enhancements: The need for enhanced safety features becomes paramount as EVs become more prevalent. Advanced driver-assistance systems (ADAS) play a crucial role in improving driver visibility and reducing accidents. However, integrating ADAS technology into EVs can be complex and expensive. HELLA addresses this challenge by offering a suite of advanced lighting features that support the functionality of ADAS systems. These features can include dynamic brake lights, lane departure warning indicators, and adaptive brake lights that illuminate in response to braking intensity, providing enhanced visibility and improving the overall safety of EVs.



Rain-Light Sensor



LEDayFlex III

A more Sustainable Approach in Reducing the Environmental Impact

As the world transitions towards a more sustainable future, the bus and truck industry is playing a crucial role in reducing the environmental impact of transportation. One of the key challenges facing the bus and truck industry is the need to reduce emissions.



Bi-LED SlimLine



Valuefit blade



ShapeLine

In the non-passenger car segment, halogen headlights are only slowly being replaced by LED variants; in bus, truck and other commercial vehicles, the market share for halogen variants is still up to 80 percent. In buses, too, only one in three headlights is equipped with LEDs. Traditional halogen headlights are a major source of emissions. This is because halogen bulbs are less efficient and have a shorter lifespan than LEDs. The emission of a HELLA LED bus headlight perform 30 percent better than those of the halogen variant. HELLA LEDs are much more efficient and require much less energy to operate, so that over the life of the luminaire only 40 kg of CO₂ are produced instead of a good 100 kg for the halogen version.

Sustainability is not just the responsibility of businesses and governments; it is also the responsibility of individuals. We can all make a difference by making small changes in our everyday lives. By working together, we can create a more sustainable future for bus and truck transportation.

Conclusion: Collaborating for a Sustainable Future

HELLA, a global leader in automotive technology and part of FORVIA, the 7th largest automotive supplier in the world, is at the forefront of providing innovative solutions to these challenges, paving the way for a future of electric buses and trucks that are not only environmentally friendly but also operationally efficient.

As the demand for sustainable and efficient transportation solutions grows, the bus and truck industry is poised for a significant transformation towards electric mobility. HELLA, with its extensive portfolio of lighting, electronics, and safety systems, is well-positioned to support this transition. HELLA's commitment to safety, sustainability, and innovation makes it a trusted partner in shaping the future of electric mobility for buses and trucks, enabling a transportation ecosystem that is both environmentally friendly and operationally efficient. With its innovative solutions and commitment to the future of mobility, HELLA is helping to pave the way for a sustainable future for the bus and truck industry. **F**



Scania's new Biogas Engines

New powertrains based on Scania's 13-litre biogas engines offer five percent fuel savings and all the range needed for long-haul operations.

Scania first hinted about its new biogas engines at last year's IAA fair, but when the state-of-the-art engines arrived, they came with a twist – they are now paired with two-thirds of the successful Super-based powertrain. The well-composed and harmonised trio – the new biogas engines plus the G25 gearboxes and axles from the diesel sibling – work so well together that fuel savings of five percent in long-haul are noted and confirmed.

"When we paired these components, it soon became obvious that we had a hit in the making," says Ola Henriksson, Senior Product Manager for Renewable Fuels at Scania Trucks. "Just as the Super engine benefits from the increased spread in the G25 gearbox, so do the biogas engines. When paired with the Scania Opticruise gearbox and the new axles, the biogas engines can operate very close to their 'sweet spot' most of the time. Put together, it results in five percent fuel savings from this powertrain."

The interest for locally produced biomethane fuels for trucks (such as Bio-LNG or Bio-CNG) is rapidly increasing. Many companies and transport buyers have the ambition to decarbonise their road transports here and now. Biomethane-based solutions are readily available via rapidly growing fuel-station networks and the CO₂-emissions can be reduced by up to 90 percent from a well-to-wheel perspective.

"Biomethane fuels are definitely the solution for those customers who want to start a decarbonisation journey without any delay," says Henriksson. "Our biogas engines cover a wide span of industries and applications. A 40-tonne tractor-and-trailer combination can achieve ranges of up to 1 800 km when specified with the biggest Bio-LNG tank solutions that we offer. Add the 460 hp and the 2 300 Nm our

OC13 engine offers to the equation, and you have a perfect tool for European long-haul."

Networks of biogas filling stations are expanding rapidly across Europe, driven by increased demand and by major players in the fuel industry. Reducing the CO₂ foot-print is no longer something only 'green' companies are doing for winning public acclaim: it is a pure necessity for most kinds of serious transporters and all available means must be used.

The new biogas engines are based on the renowned 13-litre gas engine that Scania has offered for several years. By increasing their engine power levels and preparing them for future legal demands, Scania is demonstrating its intention to gain an even bigger market share in the quest for decarbonisation.

"With the CO₂ reductions, the driveability and the ranges we offer now, I am convinced that more customers will recognise what a great solution this is," says Henriksson. "There are so many obvious pros and virtually no cons at all. And the driver can also enjoy a significantly lower noise level." **T**



Mr Oliver Nabrotzky, Group Vice President Aftermarket Sales (l) and Christoph Schings, Group Director Marketing & Communication (r)

Hengst: State of Filtration

We take a look at filtration and how current development shape Hengst's approach to offering comprehensive solutions.

Oftentimes, filtration in commercial vehicles is associated with oil and air filters only. With the rapid technical and societal changes however, filters play an important role in more applications than just these. In an exclusive interview, Oliver Nabrotzky, Group Vice President Aftermarket Sales, Hengst SE, shared insights about their immediate future of filtration.

A common misconception, according to him, is that filtration will no longer be needed in commercial vehicles powered by electricity instead of fossil fuels. However, he said that one segment that may still require the traditional filters is the off-road segment. Simply put, electric vehicles may not work in all environments and the vehicle populations may not be large enough to support development of specialised solutions to replace Internal Combustion Engines (ICE). "We should also point out that Hengst is not just limited to those filters found in engines, but that we are a filtration expert, covering many applications outside commercial vehicles as well," Nabrotzky said. Especially in Asia, Hengst sees a lot of potential for their products to be in high demand.

Born out of the need to fight the Corona virus, Hengst has developed new solutions, such as face masks, and filters for the passenger compartment of buses. A number of these products, although developed for a specific need, have since found their way into the standard product portfolio, underlining the fact that filtration is not limited to oil and air in the engine compartment. Beyond this, Hengst, through the acquisition of Rexroth's hydraulic filtration business, is now able to offer solutions for hydraulics in trucks, construction equipment and plant machinery.

Giving impetus to research and development, Hengst is following megatrends. Beyond what could be classified as traditional filtration, engine oil and air, Hengst is also involved in the development and production of filtration solutions required for modern, sophisticated vehicles. One such application are cabin filters. Today, such modern filters clean air coming into the cabin by way of applying electro-static and other means to increase the efficacy of the filtration paper as a filtration medium. In doing so, Hengst can achieve filtration levels for cabin filters that are almost on par with HEPA filters. "The protection of health of humans is becoming more and more important and thus, these filters play a crucial role."

Hengst has also realised that the quality and composition of lubricants directly affects the performance of filters. Therefore, "We have long since started offering oils that work in perfect harmony with our filters, thus giving us an extra edge." Besides the

enhanced performance of the filters, the ability to integrate lubricants is a highly important aspect for the German brand as they are specialised in filtration modules that are diecast in their own production facilities. For maximum performance, the flow of lubricants inside such module is vital and being able to engineer the module, filter and the flow of the lubricants in-house gives Hengst an edge when offering these solutions to the market. As Nabrotzky puts it, "there is a story behind this and therefore it makes sense for us to offer oils as part of our product range."

Although Hengst is a German company, it has spawned globally with strong presences around the world. In 2024, Hengst celebrates its 10th anniversary of the Singapore office, which is responsible for the Asian region (excluding China). Hengst operates production facilities around the globe, which has been proven as a strategically important step: this is to ensure that filtration solutions are manufactured close to where they are needed, when they are needed, rather than shipping them half across the globe. Further, the dispersed production facilities allow for swift reaction to fluctuations in demand in local markets. As Nabrotzky explains, this makes Hengst highly flexible with production capacities being tapped into when there is one market with a surge in demand for example. With Weichai and Sinotruk being key customers in China, the approach has been successful. Considering that these are considered Asian applications, market acceptance has been very high. Hengst's philosophy is to produce where the parts are needed. 





Trying new Ways with HAMMAR Sideloaders

Striking a balance between being cautious and experimenting with new equipment, BS Logistics is finding new missions for the business amidst economic constraints.

With connections to the port and the nearby Thai border, Prai has long since been established as a thriving logistics hub. Among the younger players, BS Logistics Sdn Bhd, is gearing up for increased volumes of freight to

be moved now that both, pandemic and supply chain issues have been left behind for some time. Adaptation is in the DNA of the company: what originally started as a provider of tyres and related services has since grown into a diversified group of companies.

With a total of 30 trucks, now mostly Shacman and Volvo trucks, the business has vast experiences in moving containers. As Mr Phuah Jia Chen, Corporate Manager, BS Group of Companies, explains, the business started with the mission of moving goods coming from the northern neighbour Thailand. “Interestingly, we did not start with the movement of goods locally, but handling rubber, timber and other goods coming across the border.”

However, looking at the competitive landscape, Phuah identified barges, rail and other road transport players entering the market as competition, triggering a diversification into other areas of road transport. Oftentimes, Phuah also found that road transport will only be used in case there is not enough capacity available from other modes of transport. “Suddenly, you have an order for 30 containers that have to be moved quickly. If we reject such job, we risk that these customers will not consider us again.” Using the past experience as a foundation, BS Logistics diversified into moving bulk cargo, such as waste plastic and scrap metal.

With tightened controls imposed by the government, plastic waste and scrap metal is becoming less and less of a commodity that Phuah is moving. Having seen this trend emerging about three years ago, he yet again took a leap to diversify further. “We used to put all our eggs in one basket. First, we put all our trucks towards the goods that needed to be moved from Thailand. Now, we no longer focus on one specific segment.”

Now I can park the containers using Sideloaders, immediately returning this special trailer to the next job.

Utilisation of assets is an important issue for Phuah, where he is trying to find a balance: too many trailers mean that capital is tied up, too few means he cannot service his clients in a satisfactory manner. When handling wood and wooden products, inspections by Malaysian authorities are required. From experience, Phuah knows that such inspections can take up to seven days, during which his trailers would not be available for other jobs, thus significantly reducing the capacity of the operation. To overcome this hurdle, BS Logistics tested a HAMMAR Sideloader. “Now I can park the containers using Sideloaders, immediately returning this special trailer to the next job.”

Pointing out that the family-owned and run business is rather small in comparison to some of the key players in the industry, Phuah said that dependability is a major issue. Initially, he equipped a re-build truck with a PTO to be coupled with the HAMMAR Sideloader. However, frequent breakdowns of the truck made it difficult to fully utilise the Sideloader. Hence, now Phuah recommends using new trucks when using the Sideloader. Luckily, the PTOs could be swapped, thus reducing cost for the switch to new prime movers.

Another issue BS Logistics was facing is the dependency of the company on third party providers. Orders that could not be handled in-house would be subcontracted to other transporters, however Phuah found that these would have their own priority and thus his jobs could be delayed. As Sideloaders are not commonly used in Penang and Prai, Phuah had very few references. By his estimation, there are only about 20 Sideloaders in use locally. Part of the equation is that there are surcharges for the use of Sideloaders that transporters most times cannot claw back from their customers. “The fee structure in Port Klang is different, more favourable to Sideloaders,” Phuah said. In the case of BS Logistics it is about the drastic increase in efficiency though. To move the same number of containers, Phuah would have to

purchase an extra 30 skeleton trailers. With that would come the added admin and cases of trailer theft and other issues.

With the purchase of their first Sideloader, BS Logistics hired a driver already experienced with this equipment. Being happy with the results, the purchase of more Sideloaders was planned and Phuah implemented a training program for a number of drivers to use the trailer. In a bold move, BS Logistics opted for a HAMMAR Sideloader able to handle 45-foot containers, the first in the area to his knowledge. Although there might not be a lot of demand for the transport of the longer containers via Sideloader at the moment, Phuah would want to be prepared in case this changes. Where the conditions don't allow for the longer Sideloader, Phuah is always able to send the shorter, his first HAMMAR to handle the goods.

According to Phuah, users of HAMMAR Sideloaders in specific industries should be aware of the intricacies of running these trailers. For instance, some shippers abroad may overload containers, especially scrap metal shipments. Sometimes, this may only be 100 kg, other times it could be several tonnes, which may have a negative impact on the structure of the Sideloader. Sideloaders are, of course, designed to perform to specific parameters. When loading such container, the transporter may only know about the extra weight when heading to a weighbridge. To address this, Phuah has opted for the new HAMMAR 119HS unit, which has a build-in “weighing system”, a with a PLC CANBUS-computerized system supporting a weighing mechanism that calculates the weight through its sensors.

Asked about any intentions of buying more HAMMAR Sideloaders, Phuah is cautiously optimistic. While he is confident that the addition of his two Sideloaders to the fleet has put him in a positive competitive position, the initial cost of purchasing another HAMMAR needs to be justified by an influx of orders. “As this is a costly piece of equipment, one cannot just add to the fleet and not utilise it, although once they are running at full capacity, these Sideloaders make a difference in the operation,” Phuah concluded. **F**



Biforst Set-Up ARMADA Complex – Ready for Capacity Gear-up

A strategic facility, the newly constructed Amada Complex is a ground-breaking initiative by Biforst with the ambition to become an industry role model.



Armada Complex is the first of its kind and designed to cater for more than 500 trucks parking for any given time. With, in line with ESG inspirations, Armada Complex is positioned to facilitate EV Trucks Eco-system with Charging Stations. In addition, the complex is to be accessible 24/7/365 with a full service offering and cutting-edge technologies such as IOT and Knowledge-Based Operations which is relevant to IR 4.0 level of advancement.

Arriving at the site, it was a flurry of actions. A recently acquired plot of land is being transformed by Biforst Logistics Sdn Bhd (referred to as Biforst in the market) to become their flagship fleet centre. Called Armada Complex in TechValley Sendayan, this modern facility is to be a showcase of how transporters can achieve improved efficiency while at the same time tackle a number of problems that have been irking Biforst’s management, mainly welfare for Drivers.

During the soft launch on 21 January 2024, Asian Trucker took the opportunity to speak with Dato’ Paduka Hamie Appala Nakkiah to find out what exactly this fleet centre is to become and how it will be a strategic asset for the company.

Practical Approach

The transportation industry has been growing rapidly in Malaysia. With such growth came the increase in truck populations. Consequently, the space for trucks to park has become a major concern. When travelling along the highways, one can oftentimes witness how trucks are parked along the highway. This, as Biforst puts it, is a necessity to take it seriously to comply to Government initiative to facilitate capacity building and growth as advocated by Ministry of Transport (MOT), although they are aware of the safety risks and the fact that it is illegal. “What are truckers to do? If they don’t stop to rest, they are also putting their life at risk and break the law.”



The Amada Complex by Biforst is to address a number of issues related to this situation. As Hamie points out, city councils are now also cracking down on commercial vehicles parked in residential areas, where they can become obstacles or pose safety risks. Besides, as he points out, trucks are at risk of being broken into, especially when they carry precious cargo. By having a guarded space for the trucks to be parked, this risk is also eliminated.

Strategic Location

Biforst's Armada Complex is located in between Bandar Enstek and Sendayan which is within the corridor of Malaysia Vision Valley, for strategic reasons. More and more manufacturers are locating their facilities in the Bandar Enstek industrial areas. With easy access to the highways, reaching ports and airports is easy while the cost of land or warehouses are lower than in the Klang Valley. Companies moving their production out of the Klang Valley is a trend Hamie has observed. "First, companies moved from Petaling Jaya to Shah Alam, then to Bukit Jelutong. Now they re-locate to Bandar Enstek and we are following them to ensure that we are close to our customers."

Resort-Style Accommodations and Facilities

Part of the Amada Complex are living quarters named as "Bayan Villa" with adequate recreational facilities. Certainly, trucks have improved by leaps and bounds when it comes to comfort on board. However, sleeping in the cabin is not as comfortable as spending the night

in a fully furnished room with bedding and facilities. At the Armada Complex, truck drivers will find rooms ready for them to use as their home away from home. Besides rooms to stay, Biforst will provide recreational facilities, including game rooms. Think pool tables and barbecues.

Nowadays, truck drivers are often recruited from small towns all over the country with immediate accommodation challenges. This means that they cannot go home after work and thus, they need an appropriate home away from home. "Our pride will be the bathrooms. I make it a personal mission to ensure that these facilities are top-notch. At home and in our office, we have nice toilets. Why can't drivers enjoy the same?" Living quarters are constructed from containers and thus expanding them is an easy task.

An Integrated Facility – A One-Stop-Center

Besides the Amada Complex being living quarters and a secured yard to park the vehicles, it is also the workshop where trucks will be serviced. Spacious service bays are equipped with tools and stocked with spare parts to manage scheduled maintenance and repairs when needed. Having their own workshop on site is to ensure faster turnaround and control over the work performed.

As an added benefit, the workshop is now co-housed with offices, the yard and drivers' quarters, thus all strategic facilities are located in one spot rather than being dispersed across the Klang Valley. Acknowledging that Biforst is a logistics company and that the management of workshops is not a core competency. Hence, Big Fleet Sdn Bhd will be tasked with the management of the workshop and complex.

An Industry-Lead Innovative Initiatives

Speaking about the benefits that the Amada Complex will bring to Biforst, Hamie is convinced this particular space can become a blueprint to nation and to other transporters. "As an industry leader, we have to look at how we can improve, how we can stay competitive. Just look at the issue of driver shortage: we have been able to retain our drivers for long time as we ensure their well-being and comfort."

Hamie hopes that other transporters will look at the Amada Complex as an impetus for them to follow this example. In his view, having similar fleet centres is the way forward to improve the industry by tackling multiple issues with one fell swoop. He opined that there are many ways industry players can compete and Dato' Paduka would be more than happy to share insights into setting up such fleet centres as he hopes that this will elevate the industry. "We can be proud of this fleet centre, even though it is not yet fully operational, and I sincerely hope that we can be a model for others to copy," Hamie said before attending the grill to prepare food for his colleagues gathered for the handover of the complex to Big Fleet. 





LiftBoxx introduces LiftBoxx Docks

LiftBoxx Docks is a new transport system where loading containers can be loaded and unloaded at any level between street and dock height (160 cm).

LiftBoxx is a successful distribution system with loading boxes that can be picked up and moved by a van chassis with a U-shape. With the new LiftBoxx Docks variant, the U-chassis can hinge vertically using a hydraulic system. The driver then brings the container to the desired height for loading or unloading. The loading platform remains locked to the chassis during lifting and lowering and is always level.

With this unique Docks system, LiftBoxx has developed a solution for the use of loading units in situations with multiple types of drop-off stations. The LiftBoxx Docks are suitable for use in construction companies, hospitals, the automotive industry, catering and recycling, for example.

LiftBoxx loading boxes can be disconnected and dropped off. Thanks to this exchange system, multiple boxes with one chassis can form a logistics solution. Because a tailgate is not required, loading and unloading is very efficient. A LiftBoxx system is particularly advantageous for rides with many stops.

The LiftBoxxes are available with loading lengths between 4000 and 5500 mm. The internal width of the loading space is 1800 mm. The internal height is a maximum of 3000 mm. A Liftboxx chassis can transport boxes with a variety of lengths.

The LiftBoxx Docks are powered by a Fiat Ducato cab with a diesel, petrol, LPG or CNG engine.

The gross vehicle weight of the LiftBoxx Docks is – according to the customer's wishes – 5 000 to 6 600 kg. The net loading capacity can vary from 1 500 to over 3 000 kg. **T**



ESG and P/L Aim to Achieve the Same

In the early days of Asian Trucker, we interviewed a tyre maker. Their managing director admitted that there has to be an impact on the environment in producing and using tyres. Has to be. The issue for them was to reduce that impact though. Meanwhile, ask anyone running a truck fleet and they will tell you that they are always looking for ways to reduce cost. In other words, suppliers and users are aiming to be sustainable. A definition of ESG I found on the internet reads: “Environmental, social and governance (ESG) is a framework used to assess an organization’s business practices and performance on various sustainability and ethical issues.”

Especially third parties, road transporters, would have to have an ESG statement. Remember Y2K Compliance? Or ISO 9000? We are now entering an era where the ESG approach will be a determining factor for clients to choose their transporters. I might be a bit critically here as an ESG approach should be the very fundamental of a business. Rarely do I see a hotel advertise that they have beds. That’s what they do, offer a place to sleep. Why do I think that the ESG and P/L are the same? I assume that any businessperson would try to maximise profit. If you reduce cost, you maximise profit. Hence, if you are looking for ways to reduce the environmental impact, you are, by default, aiming to increase profit. Should a business be wasting money by applying practices that don’t utilise assets in the best possible way, the business will be wasteful and no longer be sustainable. The two best examples in the transport industry are probably tyres and fuel consumption. Admittedly, a new truck would likely set back the owner by a good amount of money, but any new engine would always be more fuel efficient, hence the asset is more sustainable. A tyre that lasts longer, i.e. can sustain longer, will result in lower total operating cost (TOC).

Ethics in business are a big topic. When we mention ethical behaviour, likely most people might think of corruption. It is one of many facets of ethical behaviour. Any kind of unethical behaviour is likely to only produce short term gains. In the long run, a company that is not behaving ethically will suffer and become unsustainable. One may, as an example, underpay drivers and ask them to drive more hours than legally allowed. Naturally, these drivers may eventually leave and tell others about how they have been treated. Eventually, the company will not be able to attract good drivers or any drivers at all, thus becoming unsustainable despite them trying to squeeze as much out of their drivers as possible. In blunt terms, crime also don’t pay in the long run. Right now, I am sure, there are business owners weighing the option to cut corners, move a little into a dark-grey area. However, I am sure that most would do the right thing,



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as they are looking at the implications of their actions in terms of the P/L sheet. A business owner going to jail typically puts a quick stop to a business being able to sustain itself.

Shakespeare asked, “What’s in a name?” in Romeo and Juliet, referring to the idea that names themselves are a convention to distinguish things or people, but themselves do not have any worth or meaning. When it comes to the business practices aspect of ESG, I think we have seen this before under the name of Kaizen, the Japanese business philosophy concerning processes that continuously improve operations by involving all employees. Kaizen too, therefore, would be aiming to ensure sustainability. I argue much of such continuous improvement comes naturally. Today, we don’t use Telex anymore. The ability to communicate (swiftly) is linked to the ability to generate income. Ergo, Kaizen would have the same purpose as one looking at improving the P/L sheet.

In academia, one talks about “lenses”, the idea of looking at a subject from a certain perspective. Essentially, ESG could be just that: looking at the P/L sheet with a new filter, a different lens. What we know already is that the ESG approach will become a deciding factor for businesses to continue attracting clients that have an emphasis on these matters. Those failing to re-phrase their efforts will be left behind. 

NSLOA Invites for AGM



As the President of Negeri Sembilan Lorry Operator's Association (NSLOA), Mr Lee Hung Yang, would like to thank all members for their

enormous support to make the past year a successful one. The AGM and ensuing business networking event has always been a highlight for the association as members connect our suppliers, other members and customers again. This year, the AGM of NSLOA will be held on February 25th and Lee hopes that this event will also present an opportunity for the industry players to know us better, especially new members. Being one of the oldest Lorry Operators' Association, NSLOA would like to set an example in terms of being a progressive association with full commitment to its members.

With the current office bearers, NSLOA is pursuing its vision, which is "To be the leading Lorry Operators' Association in Malaysia to help our members to be competitive and to enhance the standard of trucking industry." NSLOA's missions are to Negotiate, Synchronise, Lead, Organise and be Active. Negotiate with government to help the local transport companies improve and compete internationally. Negotiate with suppliers to provide cost efficiency and quality. Synchronise all trucking companies from various sectors such as general cargo, tanker, tipper, low-loader, curtain sider, mixer and light trucks. Once NSLOA has members from the various sectors, it will have better representation when having discussions with government, suppliers and customers as well. Lee and the board of NSLOA are looking forward to hosting a successful AGM whereby key decisions will be made for the year ahead. **F**

Sale of Siemens Commercial Vehicles Business Successfully Closed

The sale of Siemens Commercial Vehicles business to Meritor closed successfully in Q4 2023. In May 2022, Siemens had announced the contract signing to sell Commercial Vehicles business to Meritor, Inc. for a purchase price of around €190 million (Enterprise Value). "The successful sale of our Commercial Vehicle business to Meritor, which has now become part of Cummins, is

another demonstration of how Siemens focuses on portfolio optimization and the best-owner principle. We are proud to have found Meritor and Cummins as the ideal new owner for our Commercial Vehicles business to continuously foster the unit's technology and growth story," said Ralf P. Thomas, Chief Financial Officer of Siemens AG. **F**

FUSO's All-electric Light-duty eCanter Truck Introduced in Hong Kong; First Asian Market Launch Outside Japan

Mitsubishi Fuso Truck and Bus Corporation is pleased to announce that the all-electric eCanter truck has officially begun sales in Hong Kong in January 2024.

It marks the first overseas release of the new generation eCanter in the Asian market outside of Japan, highlighting FUSO's strong commitment to the electric truck market in Hong Kong and its significant step towards meeting the increasingly critical standards of eco-friendly freight transport. The vehicle is available for purchase in three models with seven variants, covering a gross vehicle weight (GVW) of 5 to 8.55 tons. Exported out of the MFTBC Kawasaki Plant as BU (built-up) trucks, they will be locally fitted with various body applications to cover diverse business needs. The trucks

will also be installed with advanced features such as Active Sideguard Assist 1.0 and Active Attention Assist, to support driver and pedestrian safety in Hong Kong, which is one of the most densely populated urban areas in the world.

Hong Kong is currently operating on Euro VI emissions standards for trucks and has set forth its roadmap toward carbon neutrality before 2050. As transportation makes up approximately 20% of carbon emissions in the city, the popularization of electric vehicles such as the eCanter is expected to contribute significantly to carbon neutrality. To push the uptake of electric commercial vehicles, the Hong Kong government has set up a \$1.1 billion (HKD) New Energy Transport Fund to subsidize their integration into existing fleets. **F**

Iveco Group Chooses BASF as First Recycling Partner for Electric Vehicle Batteries

Iveco Group announces the selection of BASF as its first partner to provide a recycling solution for the lithium-ion batteries of the Group's electric vehicles.

This decision is part of Iveco Group's circular economy strategy which follows the 4R Framework - Repair, Refurbish, Repurpose and Recycling - to increase the lifetime of the batteries while decreasing their overall environmental impact and ensure compliance with the Extended Producer Responsibility policy, which

holds producers responsible for the entire life cycle of the products they introduce on the market, from their design until end-of-life.

BASF, which has recently inaugurated Europe's first co-located centre of battery material production and battery recycling in Schwarzheide, Germany, will organize and manage the entire recycling process for the lithium-ion batteries used on Iveco Group electric vans, buses and trucks. The agreement includes the collection, packaging, transport, and recycling

of batteries, in various European countries including, among others, France, Germany and UK. After collection, BASF will mechanically process the batteries to black mass, from which critical raw materials – such as nickel, cobalt, lithium – can be extracted and recovered for use in the manufacturing of new batteries. Thus, BASF will establish the full battery recycling value chain in Europe to locally provide recycled metals with a low carbon footprint for the battery industry. 

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Thermo King AxlePower with BPW ePower Axle Wins European Transport Award for Sustainability 2024

Thermo King, a leader in transport temperature control solutions and BPW Bergische Achsen KG, a leader in running gears and mobility services for transport, won in the "Components and Aggregates" category of the European Transport Award for Sustainability 2024. The jury recognized Thermo King and BPW for AxlePower, the smart energy generating system that stores energy generated from rolling or braking of the trailer in a high voltage battery and reuses it to power the refrigeration unit.

"Winning the European Transport Award for Sustainability 2024 for AxlePower confirms our belief that we have created a solution set to become a pivotal component of environmentally conscious trailer refrigerated transportation,"

said Laurent Debias, product management and marketing leader at Thermo King. "Within the ongoing transition from diesel-based to electric technologies, our customers receive a proven and tested way to drastically reduce carbon emissions, noise and operational costs of their trailer fleets."

"Sustainability plays an important role in both our companies. We are therefore delighted to receive this award, which recognizes not only the products but also the sustainable practices and strategies of companies. At the same time, it is proof of our successful collaboration on the breakthrough of zero-emission refrigerated transport," adds Thore Bakker, General Manager Business Unit Trailer Solutions and Mobility Services at BPW. 

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