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First ever Volvo B11RLE Low Entry Double Deck Coach in Malaysia

Mats Nilsson is Taking the Lead in Volvo Buses Asia Pacific



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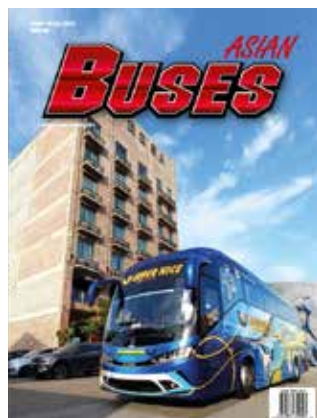
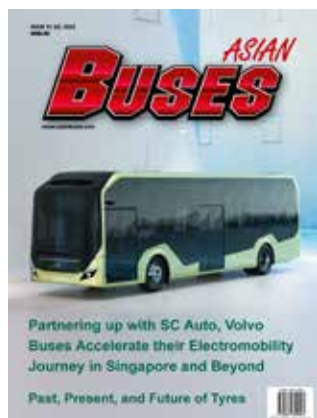
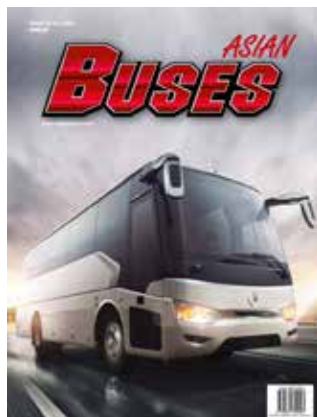
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Restarts are Never Easy

Bringing the country, and the world, to a stand-still seemed easy. Movement control orders were issued to curb the spread of Covid-19. Amazingly, most people complied, seeing the need to take this step in order to prevent even bigger harm to people and the economy. It was understood that some industries will be suffering as a consequence, but it was also acknowledged that this was for the greater good. Well, initially, it was for just two weeks that we were to be restricted.

Since March 2020, Asian Buses has reported about the effects the lock down had on the transport industry. Those selling, operating and servicing buses were hit harder than those involved with trucks. First we saw companies struggling with the expenses that they had to cover while not having any income. Eventually, their staff left, looking for ways to earn money despite the many restrictions imposed still. When the economy opened up, operators could slowly restart their businesses; however, they first needed to have the vehicles serviced after idling for an extended time. In related news we hear that Malaysia is also far behind when it comes to tourist arrivals; while tourists may not be the biggest market for bus operators, they are a crucial target market.

Left with staff shortage, bleeding money and reduced capacity, many operators are now turning to the banks to seek assistance. In many cases, I hear, the umbrella that the banks promised for a rainy day have been taken away, leaving those seeking financial support drenched. This time it poured.

One of the issues, as I learned from one industry player, is that the measures to help the economy where a one-size-fits-all approach. Employees and companies in certain industries benefitted while the bus industry did not get the full effect of the measures implemented. Initiatives to rekindle the industry might have favoured other industries, leaving our bus operators still longing for the swimming ring they so desperately need. In a recent event, Malaysia's Transport Minister also

acknowledged that many bus drivers have moved to Singapore in the hopes of finding work. These will be hard to repatriate, I assume.

My personal journey to the office also seems to have become more stressful after the pandemic ebbed off. I read about people leaving in the dead of night for work and catching up on sleep in the parking lots of their companies. Considering that the solution, BRT and more last mile transportation to connect with rail, is not only available, but a catalyst for the economy, I would hope that there will be swift action soon to ramp up public transport. Buses have already come to the rescue at KLIA, where the Aerotrain has been plagued with problems. It is kind of ironic that it is the buses that sit idle, lacking demand, would keep an airport going.

The pandemic would have been a great opportunity to re-evaluate the transportation masterplan in the Klang Valley. I would argue that the two years of standstill could have been used to get ready a massive fleet of buses to move the masses. While there was no traffic, bus lanes could have been implemented, bus stops be built and the vehicles produced. The positive effect would have been massive! Bus builders could have kept their staff, who would in turn contribute to the economy too, cash flow would have been positive, which would allow the banks now to release funding. With an armada of buses added to the pool of public transport, the highways might have been less congested and the air cleaner as a consequence of people ditching their car.

Maybe it is not so much an issue of restarting the economy, but a question of upgrading it? Bus and coach builders are still operating with a lot of free capacity and if the government decided to ramp up the public transport offering, surely nobody in this industry would object. The counterargument to my thoughts here would be that hindsight is 20:20. Who knew that it would not be just two weeks? But then I could argue that we would need to enhance the public transport anyway and that now see the effects of having fewer cars on the road, although that was an extreme.

Restart with care,

Stefan Pertz
Editor, Asian Buses

Spot the Fake: Protect Your Assets

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Date : 18 May 2023, 9:00 – 21:00
Venue : Courtyard by Marriott, Setia Alam
Register : info@asiantrucker.com **Tel:** 014 264 3267
Join : Participation is free of charge, but seats are limited

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Indeed, the system significantly cuts down fuel consumption thanks to the removal of the mirrors, which lowers wind resistance for improved aerodynamics. Smart-Vision improves manoeuvrability and minimizes the risk of collision between the mirror and tree branches or road signs, which lowers maintenance costs linked to potential damages, while enhancing the vehicle's availability.

Safety Tech will also showcase its newest ADAS solutions, BSIS+ and MOIS+, which mitigate blind spots. Blind spots are a major cause of accidents involving buses and coaches. The UN regulation R151 on Moving Off Information System (MOIS) helps avoid collisions with pedestrians or bicyclists in close proximity in front of the vehicle during driveoff. As for the Blind Spot Information Systems (BSIS), the regulation requires the system to inform the driver of the presence of a nearby cyclist who could be endangered when turning away from the driver, so that the driver can stop the bus before crossing their path.

Safety Tech has developed innovative systems that go beyond the R151 standard, to ensure maximum safety for drivers and road users. MOIS+ and BSIS+ offer a wider detection area, allow the detection of all vulnerable road users, and BSIS+ is available for both sides of the vehicle, and can be integrated in the Smart-Vision solution without any additional display. ■



Safety Tech Showcases Camera Monitor and Driver Protection Door

Following the success of its Camera Monitor System (CMS) Smart-Vision, Safety Tech is proud to present its innovative mirrorless solution to the bus and coach operators and OEMs at Busworld North America. The CMS has already been chosen by about 55 operators and by 30 bus, coach, and truck OEMs, including, among others, Irizar e-mobility, Hess, Van Hool, MAN and Prevost.

With more than 10 000 buses equipped, Safety Tech's modern driver protection door, Savaty-Door, will also be showcased, in a version adapted to the American market.

Smart-Vision is a compact system that replaces mechanical rear-view mirrors with high-definition cameras and interior displays to offer optimized visibility and enhanced ergonomics. Compared with standard rear-view mirrors, the CMS covers a larger field of vision, the interior displays eliminate glare, and the automatic adjustment of the screens' brightness ensures excellent visibility in all lighting conditions (i.e.: entrance and exit of tunnels, low light, bad weather).

Smart-Vision provides a high-quality image, night and day, and guarantees a stable image in any driving environment (no vibration). In addition to eliminating lateral blind spots, the solution offers functions such as parking and manoeuvring aid or guidance assistance allowing a shorter turning radius. Through this, Smart-Vision offers greater driving comfort, reduced fatigue and enhanced safety, but also allows a quick return on investment.



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Filling a Gap with KKM's Mobile Dental Clinic

KKM mobile dental clinic to reach Sabah's remote towns and villages with a reliable and durable Scania custom-built coach.



A Scania coach was delivered to Kementerian Kesihatan Malaysia (KKM) at a ceremony held at the Bahagian Kesihatan Pergigian, Jabatan Kesihatan Negeri Sabah. The key to the Scania coach was handed over to Guest of Honour, Datuk Dr. Rose Nani Mudin, Sabah State Director of Health and Dr Zaiton H. Tahir, Deputy Director of Health (Dental) Sabah, by Shahril Othman, National Solutions Sales Manager–Coach & Bus, Scania Southeast Asia, who represented Scania as the K360IB4X2 coach chassis provider with Khaw Soy Ou, Managing Director, Pioneer Coachbuilders Sdn Bhd as the bodybuilder. The event was also graced by Senior Dental Officers from Tawau and Sandakan along with top officials from the Health Department in Sabah. The KKM Mobile Dental Clinic that comes with the complimentary 24/7 Scania Assistance service and the data-driven Scania Fleet Management System package will be exclusively deployed for the Sandakan district. With this well-equipped Scania coach that is fuel-efficient, safe, environmentally friendly with reduced CO2 emission and comfortable, the mobile dental team will be able to reach Sandakan's remote areas and serve the public more effectively.

The KKM Mobile Dental Clinic is approved under the Malaysia Plan projects. KKM Mobile Dental Clinic is equipped with portable dental equipment and relies on the Scania custom-built coach to reach Sabah's remote regions to deliver its services to the waiting populace. A reliable, durable, fuel efficient and environmentally friendly coach is required for this job as this KKM Mobile Dental team provide outreach dental treatment in kindergartens, schools, to toddlers, the elderly, and special needs children.

As an addition to Scania's fuel-efficiency, this Scania coach comes with the Opticruise with Eco-mode as standard, enabling further fuel savings. The Scania coaches' safety features include the Electronic Braking System (EBS), the Anti-Lock Braking System (ABS) with traction control and hill hold when required. The automatic and manual control Retarder further adds to the braking system while putting less strain to the wear and tear of the brake-pads. Independent front suspension for unparalleled stability, comfort and safety. It also comes with the 3-fire alarm sensors for any emergency.

"We are constantly on the move as our waiting patients rely heavily on us to reach them as scheduled. Travelling long distances safely and comfortably with the Scania coach meets with our expectation, that a



"Scania has always been given the opportunity to support the civil service efforts in performing their duty for the Malaysian public. We applaud the KKM Mobile Dental team in their initiative to reach the Rakyat by providing the best in dental care for everyone. Scania is pleased that the Sabah State Health Department have faith in all the benefits that comes from the features that the coach carries. Scania will continue to ensure that the Scania mobile unit is well maintained for a worry-free operation."

Scania brand can fulfil. And as a bonus, this environmentally friendly coach will reduce the CO2 emissions, reducing our carbon footprint as we perform our duty for the people in the Sandakan vicinity. I am looking forward to the fuel-efficient journeys that this coach will give to our Sandakan team, lowering our operating cost consistently," stated Dr Zaiton H. Tahir, Deputy Director of Health (Dental), Sabah.

A Scania Vehicle Introduction training was held before the event at the Bahagian Kesihatan Pergigian, Jabatan Kesihatan Negeri Sabah. This training by Scania Driver Trainer, Adnan Ibrahim for two of the KKM Mobile Dental Clinic drivers is imperative in getting these drivers familiar with the controls and their functions and the necessary initial steps that they are required to do in any emergency. Essentially, getting the drivers up to speed in handling the Scania coach in the right way would prolong the life of the coach and keep it in prime condition, even more so if the coach is maintained by Scania's workshops.



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Hino and Mara Liner Collaborate to Launch a New Service Outlet in Bandar Muadzam Shah

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

HASO Inspiration

Early in 2021, Hino developed a new service network program called HASO (Hino Approved Service Outlet). This program aims to give customers 100 percent after-sales support and covering all Hino operation areas.

Commenting on the newly launched HASO, Atsushi Uchiyama said, "In the commercial vehicle industry, we are not solely focused on product sales. After-sales service is our main focus where we strive to serve our best services and ensure customer's vehicles perform at their best and contribute to smooth logistics and business operation,"

Hino Motors Sales (Malaysia) Sdn. Bhd. (Hino) has officially launched its new HASO (Hino Approved Service Outlet) service outlet; a new authorized service centre under the company's dealer development program in collaboration with one of the major industry players, Mara Liner Sdn Bhd (MLSB).

MLSB is a company wholly owned by Majlis Amanah Rakyat (MARA), which specializes in public transport, logistics services, and bus services to all states in Peninsular Malaysia.

The high point of effort between Hino and MLSB was made possible when the two parties agreed to leverage on existing commercial vehicle facilities. This collaboration will also further extend their business capabilities whereby Hino can expand its dealer service network and MLSB will be able to start commercializing, thus generating revenue through the development of its very own service centre.

Present to launch the HASO was Hino Managing Director, Atsushi Uchiyama, Hino Director, Ahmad Yasmin Yahya, MARA Chief Director, Yang Berbahagia Dato' Sri Azhar Bin Abd Manaf, as well as Chief Executive Officer of MLSB, Zachary Ismail.

"We aim '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'. With this mission,



we came up with the idea to develop HASO with the main objective to provide total support and give our best after-sales services to customers," he continued.

"Currently, we have three operating HASO. There is one in Sungai Petani, one in Pulau Pinang, and one located in Semenyih. Started in early 2021, and we are now in the development to open more HASO in other states as well," he continued.

After studying the demographic of Bandar Muadzam Shah, Hino sees the location as being convenient for customers around suburban and rural areas of the Rompin area. Also, in supporting the government's direction and approaches towards the development of rural areas, Hino and MLSB believe, that the establishment of HASO will create good employment and career opportunities for people in rural areas.

Hino is confident that MLSB, with its good track record, capabilities, and credibility, will effectively expand the reach of its objectives to benefit existing and potential customers. Both parties have mutual interests and individual strengths to


synergistically develop, deploy, and provide comprehensive solutions and support to the customers.

HASO Facilities in Bandar Muadzam Shah

Located at Lot 27 Kawasan Perindustrian Muadzam Shah, the outlet spans 43 560 square feet. The vast space is ideal for customers as there is ample parking space for vehicles that come in for servicing.

Equipped with five service bays, including two pit bays, and an extensive list of the latest equipment and tools available, the outlet is able to service up to 12 vehicles at the same time. The available equipment includes the latest HINO Diagnostic system, DX II.

While waiting for their truck or bus to be completed, drivers can relax at the customer lounge area within the facility, which offers complimentary refreshments and free WiFi. The service outlet is headed by Maintenance Repair Overhaul (MRO) Manager, Mohd Adam bin Mohd Idris, and his team of ten staff, who are well-trained to provide a comprehensive range of HINO services, including 24-hour breakdown support.

With HASO, Hino believes their service network will be further strengthened and enhance standards across the current network. At HASO, customers can enjoy the same service programs that are offered in other Hino Service Centres such as Free Service Programme (FSP). 



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First ever Volvo B11RLE Low Entry Double Deck Coach in Malaysia

After introducing the Volvo B11RLE 6x2 chassis to the Malaysian bus market, Volvo Buses is now showcasing the first ever fully built Volvo B11RLE 6x2 double deck coach and inviting customers to experience first-hand a Ride and Drive event.

// As the bridge between states and cross border travels, express coaches play an essential and prominent role in the public transportation system in Malaysia. Intercity coach travel serves areas or cities, which otherwise could be difficult to reach, providing a more flexible and economical alternative for our people. Thus, we are extremely excited to see manufacturers like Volvo working with local body build partners like Truckquip, coming up with products that are customized and specially designed to meet the local operational needs, and bring to our operators a first-hand experience of ride and drive. We believe this will encourage more efforts and investments into the local bus industry and ultimately benefit our passengers by providing a safer, more comfortable and enjoyable journey!" said YB Anthony Loke Siew Fook, Transport Minister of Malaysia.

Jointly organized by Volvo Buses and its partner Truckquip Sdn. Bhd. (TQ), Volvo's fully authorized chassis assembly factory in Malaysia, the Ride and Drive kicked off at Volvo Buses' Malaysia office in Shah Alam. The event saw participants take a tour around the Shah Alam area and enjoyed mixed road conditions, which allowed them to gain the full experience of riding for the first time the newly built Volvo B11RLE double deck coach.

"This is an opportunity not to be missed," said Mats Nilsson, Vice President of Volvo Buses Asia Pacific. "Malaysia is the only market in Asia offering the Volvo B11RLE, it is assembled and built here in Malaysia, and specially designed for Malaysia to meet our customers' expectations, passengers' requirements, and local operational needs. Today is the first time ever that we are showcasing the fully built bus and providing first-hand ride and drive experience. By offering one specific product model specially designed for one market, it shows our full commitment to the development of public transportation in Malaysia and our strong confidence in the growth of express coaches and premium tour buses in the Malaysian bus market."

The first ever Volvo B11R low entry bus featuring the ALPHA DD12 TQ body, is designed to be the king of the road, offering maximized safety with a newly integrated Advanced Driver Assistance Systems (ADAS) enhanced with technologies such as Driver Monitoring Systems (DMS), which will provide alerts against falling asleep momentarily or distractions whilst driving. In addition, the Alpha DD12 built as a wider stance resulting lower center of gravity for better stability, especially while driving on the highway, to increase driver confidence, thus ultimately improve passenger comfort and road safety.

"The partnership between Volvo Buses and TQ started as early as 2015, with bus chassis assembly for the local market, and we are proud to collaborate on this specially designed for Malaysia model Volvo B11RLE 6x2. It is a true glo-cal approach, a state-of-the-art product with global experience from Volvo, coupled with local body design meeting every need of the local requirements. TQ's technical team has worked day and night over the past year with Volvo's body building support and instructions to come up with this striking, premium double deck coach and we look forward to more such successful collaborations" shared Tan Keng Meng, Executive Vice President and Group CEO of Warisan TC Holdings Berhad.

The newly-built Volvo B11RLE 6x2 double deck is to be handed over to Sani Express Sdn Bhd (Sani). The company has signed an order for a total of 12 units, which will be delivered throughout the year and plan to put them in operations e.g. for service between Kota Bharu and Kuala Lumpur. Sani is one of the biggest bus operators from Kota Bharu, providing transportation services including airport transport, hotel shuttle, intercity and city operations. Wan Mohd Iskandar bin Dato Salleh, Group Managing Director of Sani, is confident that the newly purchased Volvo B11RLE models will elevate his fleet to a new level by providing outstanding comfort to his passengers for long distance travel.

Volvo Buses continues to place efforts in the Malaysian bus market by providing the best solutions to address the challenges that operators face in their daily operations and ultimately the best on-road experience to the local passengers! 🇲🇾





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Events & Exhibitions

Spot the Fake

Date : 18 May 2023
 Venue : Courtyard by Marriott, Setia Alam, Malaysia
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Busworld Central Asia

Date : 18 - 20 May 2023
 Venue : International Exhibition Center "EXPO",
 Astana, Republic of Kazakhstan
 Contact : <https://busworldcentralasia.org/en/contact>

Busworld is the main bus and coach event in Central Asia = the ideal place to launch and showcase your latest innovations and products. Kazakhstan is working on the renewal of their bus fleet. 1 300+ buses will be replaced by the end of 2022. Kazakhstan also supports the global trend towards zero emission public transport. Central Asia plays a central role in the New Silk Road project which will connect Europe and Asia over land. Kazakhstan is transforming into the largest business and transit hub of the region.

Automechanika Ho Chi Minh City 2023

Date : 23 – 25 June 2023
 Venue : Saigon Exhibition and Convention Center, Ho Chi Minh, Vietnam
 Contact : <https://automechanika-hcmc.hk.messefrankfurt.com/hochiminhcity/en/contact.html>

In 2022, Vietnam retained its title as Southeast Asia's fastest-rising economy, with GDP increasing by eight percent, well above earlier forecasts. The 8.1 percent expansion of the manufacturing sector was the main driver in this growth, and further analytics suggest the automotive industry will be a key segment of advancement in the years ahead[1].

In fact, many international companies are turning to Vietnam as an upswing of comprehensive Free Trade Agreements and the cost-competitiveness of operating through the country. Statistics from 2022 indicate a 13.5 percent year-on-year increase in disbursed FDI, to which the manufacturing sector saw some of the biggest gains.

The synergy of local and overseas exhibitors with showcases in the Automotive Manufacturing & Automation, Auto Service & Maintenance / Accessories & Customising, and EV & IoT zones will become an integral part of the collaborative platform.



Truck & Trailer Indonesia

Date : 24 – 26 May 2023
 Venue : JIEXPO Kemayoran, Jakarta
 Contact : <https://iibt-exhibition.net/event-info/>

After the great success of the Busworld South East Asia in 2019, GEM Indonesia will return to present Truck & Trailer Indonesia. This event has become a quality network platform from the land transportation industry to generate more qualified and potential visitors. This is a special zone for buses, trucks and supporting industries that will optimize for the exhibitors to meet the companies are connected to their business and to facilitate professional buyers to find their special needs.

Malaysia Commercial Vehicle Exhibition 2024

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

Over 8 000+ square meters of exhibition space: MCVE is the largest exhibition dedicated to commercial vehicles in South-East Asia. Back for the sixth time, Asian Trucker invites you to be part of the largest dedicated exhibition for commercial vehicles in Southeast Asia. Following the success of the past events, we are returning with the show in May 2024 with a new, more exciting fringe program.

Buyers, purchasers and operators have the opportunity to review the latest offers in terms of trucks, busses, services and components. During the show, relevant government agencies, professional societies, and associations will join the organizer to hold seminars and updates on their products, services and the latest in trucking.





Malaysia Commercial Vehicle Exhibition 2024

Strong support for 2024 instalment of the Malaysia Commercial Vehicle Exhibition as the event is poised to return with the full programme after a successful show during the pandemic.

The Malaysia Commercial Vehicle Exhibition will be back for its sixth instalment in 2024. Held 9 to 11 May, the event will be hosted again in MIECC (Malaysia International Exhibition and Convention Centre). The floor space of 8 500 square meters indoors has been filling rapidly since the announcement of a new floor plan with many of the previous exhibitors coming back.

Talking about the scheduled program, Organiser Stefan Pertz said that exhibitors and visitors can expect the usual fringe programme to be re-instated. "Obviously, we worked with constraints during our last show and the coming one will be under the paradigm of the post-pandemic ruling, which allows us to host our fringe programme again," he said. To support the fight against Covid-19, the organisers decided to skip sub events, such as the popular Asian Trucker Networking Night. However, as it stands now, all of the favourite components of the exhibition will be added back to the extensive programme. Organisers of MCVE 2024 encourage exhibitors to add their own activities as the event is offering great opportunities to engage with industry players.

Sponsorship opportunities are being snapped up already with MAN Truck & Bus Malaysia leading as the Gold Sponsor. Being a communications platform for the commercial vehicle industry in Southeast Asia, MCVE 2024 offers customisable sponsorships to cater to the individual needs of each participating brand. "We offer customisable sponsorship packages to our exhibitors. These are to meet the specific needs of each sponsor," Pertz added.

The new floor plan is to facilitate a better flow throughout the exhibition while a new website, launched in January, is to offer a better user experience too. Better space utilisation offers more brands the opportunity to partake. The website is geared to giving participating brands more visibility. Last mile transportation, electrification and automation are hot topics and it can be expected that these topics will take centre stage during the

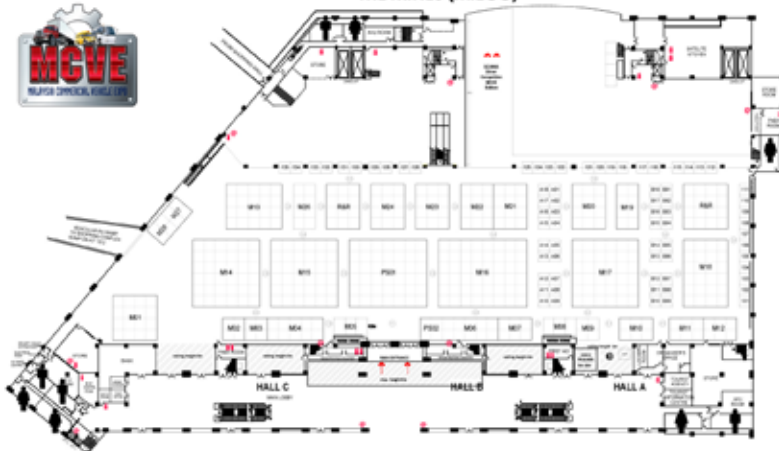
show, building upon the previously discussed and shown solutions. "We are heading into exciting times as up and coming brands are now pushing into niches that have been created," commented Pertz.

With a lot of innovations being teased and in the pipeline, the year 2024 is set to be an exciting one for the transport industry in our region. A long-anticipated legislation change may finally see EURO IV emission norms being implemented, resulting in truck and bus OEMs having to introduce new product line-ups with the higher engine specifications.

MALAYSIA COMMERCIAL VEHICLE EXPO 2024

9 - 11 MAY 2024

MALAYSIA INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION & CONVENTION CENTRE,
THE MINES (MIECC)





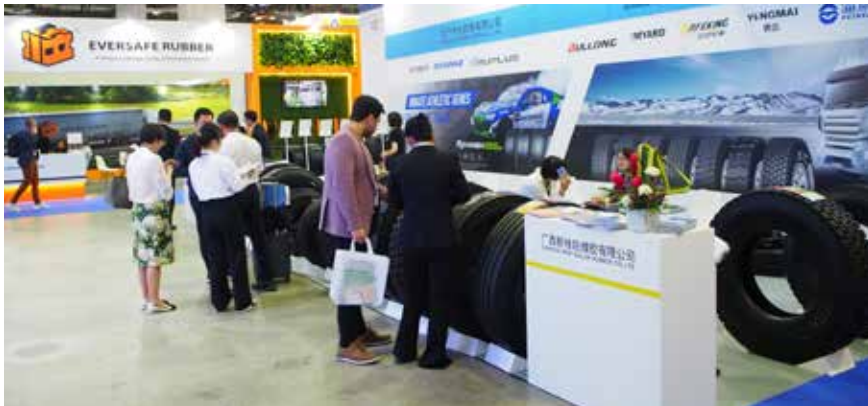
On the first day, the exhibition was supported by a conference that ran the entire afternoon. Best use scenarios, new technology and market statistics were discussed in detail. In one such session, Kit Loong Tyre presented an in-depth analysis of how retread tyres can save transporters money. According to the calculation, a retread tyre going through three lifecycles has the potential of saving 250 USD compared to four cheap, non-retread tyres. The figure would be even higher, if downtime and other factors would be added to the equation.

With a globally growing demand for transportation, demand for tyres is bound to go up in tandem. To address the need for tyres, retreaded tyres are the way forward, as presented by several speakers. Maximising capacity was one topic that was highlighted. Another German organisation, Azur, presented a European network of industry players that are set to reduce carbon emissions from tyre manufacturing altogether. One of their main concerns is that tyres are not recycled, but rather shipped to deserts in the middle east to be simply burned.

Overall, visitors and exhibitors were optimistic about the market and current demand levels as the world economy is getting back on its feet. 🇸🇬

Tyrexpo Asia

After a four-year break, Tyrexpo Asia was held in Singapore, attracting an international crowd with a line-up of global players.



The highly anticipated event was held 8 to 10 March 2023 in the Marina Bay Sands Convention Centre. With 200 exhibitors, the line-up was showcasing the global market for tyres. Industry-leading Malaysian brands were making a strong impression with their presence, while organisations, such as the Malaysian Rubber Council where also present.

Delegates arrived from all over the world to get the inside scoop on the latest trends in tyre manufacturing and top snap up offers from the exhibiting brands. Ranging from bicycle tires to highly specialised truck tyres, every market segment was covered. German trader Tyreworld showcased their services, which is a highly specialised delivery service, whereby customers can order tyres in small quantities to be shipped anywhere in the world.

Speaking to a number of exhibitors, it was learned that they are indeed selling high volumes of tyres at the show. For this event, organisers appointed Asian Trucker as partner to invite interested transporters for a hosted buyer programme, whereby interested parties were flown into Singapore to attend the exhibition. A number of Malaysian transporters could be seen in discussion with exhibitors. As part of the programme, hosted buyers were meeting pre-arranged exhibitors in private.



Automechanika Kuala Lumpur Re-charges the Automotive Aftermarket

Malaysia's leading trade fair for the automotive aftermarket returned, recharged, with its unique 'S.E.T.' (Sourcing, Training and Entertainment) concept. The show hosted 330 exhibitors across 11 071 sqm of the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre.



This year's event saw a strong participation with a record-breaking 330 exhibitors from 17 countries and regions, including Australia, China, Germany, Hong Kong, India, Italy, Korea, Lithuania, Malaysia, Mauritius, Oman, Poland, Singapore, Taiwan, the UAE, the UK and the US.

Ms Fiona Chiew, General Manager of Messe Frankfurt (HK), said: "Since the last edition in 2019, we have continued to analyse the Malaysian industry closely in view of wider automotive developments. The country is on the cusp of a wide-scale transformation; therefore, Automechanika Kuala Lumpur remains as important now as when we first stepped into the market some 20 years ago. It goes beyond a trading platform with the fringe programme navigating new opportunities from trends like digitalisation and electrification in the supply chain."

Reflecting the Rapidly Developing EV Market

This year, the show incorporated a higher focus on products, services and technologies that relate to the overall direction of the industry. For instance, the EV & IoT Zone featured showcases on charging facilities, batteries and cloud-based connectivity solutions. TechAlliance is one such exhibitor bringing their aftermarket data solutions to the show. The company's product range supports service providers through the information tools that optimise business processes and the access to technical data from manufacturers for repair, maintenance and diagnostics.

Mirroring themes across the show floor, the Digitalisation and Electrification Conference and Automotive Manufacturing and Transformation Conference explored the potential of electromobility and digital solutions in the market. The conferences hosted stakeholders from the government and private sector exploring policies, charging and battery systems, and best practices in the local electric vehicle industry.

Elsewhere, the Commercial Vehicle Zone revealed solutions that are continuing to optimise commercial transportation. Showcases include Caltex's Diesel that improves fuel efficiency by up to three percent and Delo Engine Oils for cylinder wear protection. The combination of the two products offers greater reliability, durability and efficiency. Another exhibitor, YonMing Group, a leader in the sale, distribution, maintenance and service of heavy goods vehicle parts, provides a one-stop shop for fleet and individual owners.

Events and Highlights

Accompanying the commercial vehicle zone, the Fleet Management Conference featured best practices to ensure profitability and sustainability. Speakers addressed a number of challenges with solutions for the sector's overall modernisation, including fuel efficiency, tyre management, IoT, as well as manpower and training in line with new tech applications.

Country pavilions scattered throughout the venue highlighted the capabilities of individual regions. For instance, the Hong Kong pavilion showcased digital transformation in the commercial vehicle industry, highlighting smart solutions that enhance public and goods transport. Meanwhile, the Singapore pavilion demonstrated how the strategic location of the country can be utilised to support local warehousing and spare parts distribution as the city state is placed in the centre of ASEAN.





Final Dash: Last Mile Journeys

E-commerce and connectivity spur last mile A changing lifestyle and use of technology spur last mile journeys. We look at this ecosystem in detail. . We look at this ecosystem in detail.

Amidst the excitement about the electrification of transportation, another global mega trend will need to be increasingly focused on. Only in recent years has the general public been exposed to the term, however it is not a new concept. It just needed to find its way into the transport industry. The notion of the “last Mile” is a problem that has originated in telecommunications where the last mile connection, the last stretch that connects individual households with the hubs, has posed significant issues, especially in densely populated spaces. The term applies equally to both, passenger and freight transport, however, here we will emphasise on the land transport of goods.

Back When

The idea of on-demand delivery of goods may have risen to prominence during the pandemic as an answer to a tricky problem: how to supply people’s homes with goods that they need for their survival when they cannot leave their house. The author remembers a time when services were offered by local stores that could have also been described as last mile delivery. The local bakery store would have a converted van driving on a specified route through the village and stop when people could come out of the house to purchase the wares on display, making it a mobile bakery shop. Quiet a number of scones, tarts, chocolate bars and donuts were consumed by the author’s younger version. One would have also walked the last two kilometers to school to save on the bus for that last bit to get to school after a ride on a train.



Today, we associate last mile solutions with buses. However, certain cities can also embrace trams, which may not offer a great deal of route flexibility, but have other advantages. One such famous tram is operating in Hong Kong since 1904. The Hong Kong trams offer a lot more than cheap transport: they can be booked for private parties and there is even a provider that transforms it into a restaurant. Most often we are discussing last mile transportation as a means to move locals who need to get to work or their homes. However, re-purposing the trams or buses can also make them a tourist attraction.

A New Infrastructure

Drastic urbanisation, the changing demands on the workforce and increased purchasing power have changed consumer behaviour. Today, we would need to schedule a trip to the supermarket or to the mall. The vehicle to get there is also chosen based on reliability, accessibility and cost of getting from one place to another. In theory, we should be able to take public transport after work, get to the shops and then home. In urban areas, such as Singapore, Kuala Lumpur, Bangkok, Hong Kong or Tokyo, we are never farther away from a mall than a mile.

There are a number of aspects that need to be considered though in terms of infrastructure that allows us to use public transport to align our chores with work:

- We need to have access to dependable, cost effective means of transportation.
- Mixing scheduled traffic, e.g. buses, with on-demand delivery will generate more congestion and the road system needs to be adjusted accordingly. In essence, it means that more space within cities needs to be allocated to road transport.
- With many cities now banning Diesel-fuelled vehicles, different fuels need to be offered within city limits in order to ensure that buses keep on running. The increased demand for last mile delivery may have accelerated the development of electric transport systems, however it has also boomeranged to city planners and legislators as this new technology requires wide-ranging decisions: should in-road induction charging be used or overhead lines? Will these technologies be soon obsolete with batteries offering more range?
- There will always be personal transportation and legislation and planning needs to respect this despite giving preference to public transport.



The increased demand for last mile public transport requires infrastructure beyond roads and fuels to be enhanced. For instance, traffic lights need to be operated in flexible ways to manage the flow of traffic. Dedicated bus lanes may eat into the space available for roads to be used by personal transport. Information required by passengers will need to be conveyed using high-speed internet, giving the public ample input to plan their journeys.

Transportation being an ecosystem, one needs to also look at how goods transport impacts the movement of people. Restricting movement of goods vehicles (such as imposed in Kuala Lumpur) have been proven to pose a tremendous problem for the transporters. Such restrictions also increase risks for smaller vehicles, such as minibuses, in traffic.

Need for Smaller Vehicles

Last mile transportation adds complexity to the business of passenger transport. Operators focused on last mile transportation will need to have a range of vehicles available. With some routes seeing only a few passengers in one street, delivery vehicles may need to be smaller and nimbler. The need for the people to be moved quickly will require the transporter to have a sufficient number of smaller vehicles on hand. This in turn will necessitate smart planning, backed by AI, to be deployed to ensure that delivery routes taken are the most effective. Urban areas may be off-limits for larger goods vehicles, but they may also be restrictive by being too narrow to operate coaches and articulated buses in without having to prohibit them.

A great example of how such smaller vehicles fit into an overall transportation blueprint are Hong Kong's red and green minibuses. Seating just about a dozen passengers, these minibuses have a high frequency and short routes to get people to the next bigger hub. Green minibuses are greater in number, and follow more stringent regulations. This means that they adhere to a more concrete route, more defined operating times, and they have proper bus stops. Red minibuses are less regulated and mostly privately owned.

Moving people is also an opportunity to tag goods transport onto. In recent years a surge of brands offering small delivery vehicles can be observed. Cargo bikes, drones or micro vans have made an entrance. Combined with mobile applications, ride hailing is now possible and the size of the goods moved can be scaled down drastically. Again, the increased number of such vehicles needed will impact the overall traffic flow in cities. Going to work using such a vehicle now offers the possibility to earn some extra cash by moving goods. A number of brands involved in last mile delivery have since also disappeared again as their business was not sustainable beyond an initial excitement.

Often, we ask the established brands why or when they will extend their portfolio by offering solutions to address the emerging needs. Typically, the answer is that a different expertise is needed to produce transport solutions that handle the last mile. The established players may have adopted the stance that they do not want to be a "Jack of all trades; master of none," but rather excel in narrower, highly specified, applications.





In Focus: A Synergistic and Complementary Partnership

Driven by the same mission to decarbonise professional mobility, Renault Trucks has joined forces with Kleuster, a Lyon-based electric cargo bike manufacturer, to accelerate the production and distribution of the Freegônes e-cargo bikes. These cargo bikes will be assembled at the heart of Renault Trucks' Vénissieux industrial site and distributed through the manufacturer's European network. Through this partnership, Renault Trucks is adding last mile delivery solutions to its electric vehicle range.

With the expansion of low-emission zones (LEZ), booming demand for last mile delivery, and increased environmental awareness, agile and decarbonised transport is clearly the future in urban areas. To address this pressing need, Kleuster launched its pioneering Freegônes professional e-cargo bike 8 years ago.

Renault Trucks is equally committed to developing decarbonised transport modes. The manufacturer is gradually electrifying its vehicle ranges for customers operating in cities. To respond to the demands of urban logistics, Renault Trucks has entered the field of cycle logistics by partnering with Kleuster to produce Freegônes at its Vénissieux plant. These e-cargo bikes are now being sold through the French Renault Trucks network and in its European network from 2023.

By joining forces with Kleuster, Renault Trucks is sharing its expertise, industrial infrastructure, and large-scale production capacity. Freegônes' assembly and logistics have moved to a 2,100 m² building in Renault Trucks' long-standing Vénissieux site, which also boosts the regional economy.

Renault Trucks has already put in place a production team of around a dozen people to meet increasing demand. In the very short term, production capacity will increase fivefold in comparison to 2022. This partnership reflects Renault Trucks' desire to strengthen its positioning in urban logistics and prepare its plants to take on new future-looking activities.

Kleuster's Freegônes is an outstanding product developed through years of research and adaptations based on feedback, with an active portfolio of key accounts working

primarily in last mile delivery. Nearly 200 Freegônes are currently pedalling all over France, some for more than 7 years, a testament to their reliability and durability.

By integrating Kleuster products as a complement to its range of electric vehicles, Renault Trucks is providing professionals with an effective and innovative solution for last mile delivery. Renault Trucks is now the only European manufacturer with such a wide range of electric vehicles, varying between 650 kg and 44 t GVWR.

A Partnership to Benefit Both Users and Urban Mobility
The sharing of a common clientele also motivated this partnership on the commercial side through the distribution of a cyclo-logistics solution in the Renault Trucks network.

Using the truck manufacturer's distributors in several European countries allows Kleuster to take full advantage of a dense and local network to guarantee top-notch sales and after-sales services. Renault Trucks, for its part, is adding another string to its bow and opening up to potential new clients by covering the entire logistics chain. Freegônes take over where trucks stop.

"E-cargo bikes can be a great option for customers in urban environments that need to access zero emissions zones. Through this partnership with Kleuster, Renault Trucks is differentiating itself and taking the lead in offering even better solutions to our current and future clients," says Bruno Blin, President of Renault Trucks.

Kleuster Freegônes: Reliable, Durable, Cost-effective
Not only can Freegônes access roads, cycle lanes, pedestrian zones, and LEZs, their small size and agility mean they can get close as possible to delivery sites, and therefore, customers. With its 80 km range, this e-cargo bike can be more productive than a utility vehicle and more cost-effective, thanks to its low carrying cost.

Built on a single body chassis, Freegônes is the only cargo bike on the market that offers 5 modules (dry box, refrigerated box, food service, flat bin, and refuse skip), each with its specific features. While the Freegônes dry box has unmatched carrying capacity (350 kg payload and 2m³ of useful volume), the Freegônes refrigerated box is the only e-cargo bike to offer ATP-approved temperature control ranging from -25°C to +4°C. The refuse skip is the only e-cargo bike that can automatically unload into a tipper truck or container in less than 20 seconds.

This modularity makes this e-cargo bike ideal for a variety of uses, from collecting or delivering packages or groceries, courier services, the craft trades, waste collection, green space maintenance, and the food sector.

"Renault Trucks is the ideal partner to support Kleuster's growth. The two companies are both committed to providing the best possible urban mobility solutions in very densely populated environments. Joining forces with Renault Trucks benefits both our companies and contributes to environmental targets while also meeting the needs of our current and prospective customers," says Gérard Têtu, founder and CEO of Kleuster.

The Big Rigs

In the context of the last mile delivery system, the movement of large volumes of passengers is important as people need to be transported over large distances to the distribution hubs. Modern buses need to be ever more powerful, yet fuel efficient to keep the cost down in this ecosystem. At the same time, the buses need to be more reliable. Dependability is crucial as most last mile journeys promises are often offering 24-hour service. It is indeed a marvel that a modern transportation network incorporates so many various means of transportation.

Big buses also need to offer faster boarding and alighting, high-speed connectivity to allow for track and trace and longer service intervals. The design specifications that are imposed are exciting and challenging at the same time. Meanwhile, the pressure on the driver will increase as it is he, who is now directly responsible for keeping the promise of the government offering safe and efficient transport between the three spaces we live in: home, work and leisure.

Innovative approaches

Spurred by the consumers' demand for short trips and ultra-fast service, innovations are springing up all around us. The bus driver might come





back into play as a bus, being it a coach or a stage bus, could also be part of the last mile goods delivery system. Airlines have long since supplemented their income from passenger transportation with carrying of mail and goods. Similarly, a bus could carry goods between distribution hubs or along a delivery route.


Transferring the concept of E-Hailing to commuters, we may even see people as carries of good for the final meters. Commuters may collect goods on the way to / from work and drop them off. With a branded shirt from bus makers, they could become part of the transport solutions offered.

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Indicating the Health of your Brakes

Local outfit SHINVENGO offers brake wear indication systems that are easily retrofit to your vehicle, offering a convenient way to assess the remaining life span of your brake pads and linings.

Brake failure (or just the possibility of it) is costly and time consuming for car manufacturer. According to National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) (2020), General Motors is recalling an additional 14 620 trucks and SUVs because their brakes may suddenly become difficult to use. In June 2022, Mercedes-Benz recalled nearly one million older vehicles worldwide because of a problem that could cause a potential problem with the braking system.

There are vehicle owners out there who don't consider brake maintenance a priority until something goes wrong. In most vehicles, the front two wheels have a braking apparatus that depends on what are known as rotors: metallic discs found behind each wheel. Above each of there is a clamp-like device called the calliper. When you hit your brake pedal, the callipers start to close, squeezing the disk from both sides. This action produces friction, which cause the wheels to spin slower until they come to a complete stop. Brake pads are the removable surfaces that callipers use to make contact with the rotors during this process.

But when is the right time to replace your brake pads?

These brake pads won't last forever. The friction will inevitably wear the brake pads down over time. Let the brake pads get too thin, and your brakes won't work as effectively as they should. For safety's sake, it's imperative that you get new brake pads installed at the first sign of trouble.

The presented invention is a brake pad wear indicator, which is a smart indication system for vehicle brake pads or brake shoes. SHINVENGO Brake Pad Wear Indicator provides a simple solution, replacing manual checks, saving

you and your drivers time, and is thus reducing delays of deliveries. Using this system's indicators of accidents caused by poor brake performance can be prevented by scheduling on-time maintenance.

The key features of this brake pad wear Indicator include:

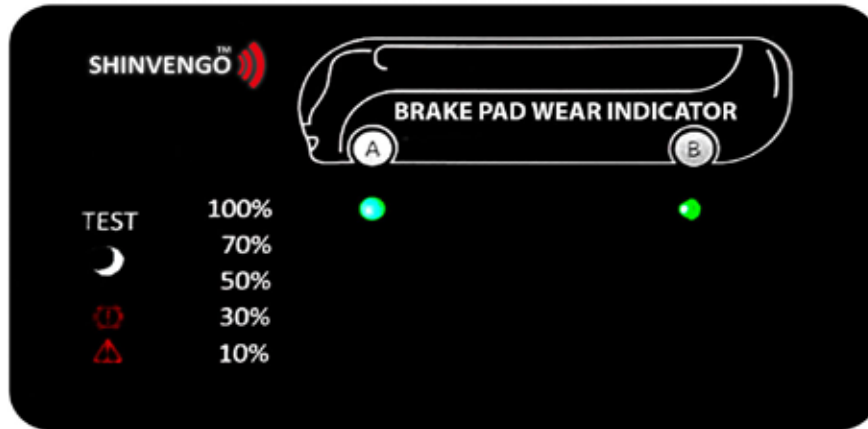
- Both drum and disk brakes can be retrofit with the system
- Alerts to the driver when brake pad wear reaches a critical point
- Reduces additional repair costs caused by disc or drum damage
- Avoids time spent performing monotonous, time-consuming manual checks
- Using full service life, lowers maintenance costs
- Easy planning of maintenance periods
- Reduces risk and costs related to potential accidents caused by poor brake performance

Easy Installation, Effective Functions

The electronic control unit extracts the wear and thickness of the friction material of the brake pad or brake shoes from the sensor, and the wear level provided by the display is divided into different level. Each brake pad equipped with a sensor sends an alert to the smart board. The driver is alerted via a warning light on

the smart board. As the brake pads on each axle wear differently, the system will indicate the thickness of the pad / shoe that is worn out more. Once one of the pads on one axel has reached the replacement level, both sides would then need to be replaced.

And imagine, if this system prevents an accident, it has more than paid for itself.



According to Bernard Pang, Director, Sales & Marketing, SHINVENGO (M) Sdn Bhd, the system introduced by the company would be best suited for trailers and older trucks. "Modern trucks might already be equipped with such systems by the OEM. However, many trailers have multiple axles and most likely, these do not feature such systems." He told Asian Trucker that the ease of installation and the resulting timesaving when checking the brakes of a trailer will be strong arguments for the addition of this system.

Currently looking for distributors in Malaysia, SHINVENGO is ready to take orders. Pang states that the installation is easy and the replacement of the sensors can be done by any qualified workshop personnel handling the servicing of commercial vehicles. "And imagine, if this system prevents an accident, it has more than paid for itself."

Numbering the Problem

According to Department of Statistics Malaysia (2022), 4 539 and 4 634 deaths were recorded in 2021 and 2021 respectively. Selangor recorded the highest number of road accidents with 108 564 cases followed by Johor and W.P. Kuala Lumpur with 49 559 and 40 237 cases, respectively.

The number of road deaths in Malaysia this year is set to surpass that of the pandemic era, with the figure for January - September recording a 52 percent increase over last year. (FMT, 2022)

Malaysia has the third highest death toll from road accidents in Asia and Asean, behind Thailand and Vietnam. (Asia Insurance Review, 2019)

Between July 7 and Aug 17 this year alone, 10 fatal accidents involving heavy vehicles were reported. As reported, brake failure was cited as the main cause of the accidents concerned.





Pioneer Coaches Steps into Post-Covid Recovery

After the pandemic forced the bus industry to a grinding halt, it is now time to re-build this industry sector. In this Asian Trucker exclusive, we learn how Pioneer Coaches goes about it.

The pandemic hit the bus industry hard. Supply chains were disrupted, factories closed initially and the demand for new buses and coaches just vanished. In addition, the buses in operation for public transport were shunned as people were afraid to get infected when riding on the bus. While the economy was shut down very quickly, the recovery is not as easy as we learn from Khaw Soy Ou, Managing Director, Pioneer Coachbuilders Sdn Bhd, in this exclusive interview, conducted at the extended premises of the company.

During the lockdown, there wasn't any space left in the yard of Pioneer Coachbuilders. Ready buses and coaches were readied for delivery, however the clients would not take delivery as they either had no funding or were not allowed to operate. However, Khaw said that the company had been very lucky as a large order from PRASARANA was half-way completed when the lockdown was ordered. "Eventually, we obtained the licence to continue operating as we are classified as essential service. Operating intermittently, we managed to deliver these buses, completing the order by end of 2021. You can say that we have been very lucky." In April 2022, the economy re-opened and business came back. While this order from a GLC might have been a godsent, he is critical of the assistance put in place. "The soft loans were minimal and could not really be utilised to keep a big operation such as ours afloat. Also, the moratoriums are tricky as they result in additional burdens from the increased interests to be paid." Khaw thinks that there could have been better ways to support the industry than putting them on a drip-feed that will increase financial burden later.

Coachbuilding is a labour-intensive task. Pioneer Coachbuilders depend on foreign workers that have been trained accordingly. Here, Khaw found himself between a rock and a hard place. Letting workers go would mean his expenses are reduced. However, workers that were let go would likely not come back and they would need to be replaced by new staff that would have

to be trained first. "The subsidies we received from the government really helped as we decided to keep as many staff as possible. We wanted to be ready when the economy would open up with sufficient capacity and the required skills." As the situation demanded, Khaw was forced to let go of about half of his staff, having no choice but to do so.

In the early stages of the lockdown, full sanitisation of the entire premises were required upon the detection of a single case of Covid-19 infections. This was another burden that the industry was saddled with. Cost for



the sanitisation and the resulting downtimes added up to some 300 000 RM in cost. "We have decided though, to continue with sanitisation of our premises. Actually, it is a good practice and we encourage others to also keep up such a routine." Khaw explained that the factory is sanitised twice daily, the worker's quarters once daily and a deep cleaning for the hostel is carried out once a week. According to him, the strict enforcement of rules has resulted in an extremely low rate of infections among his staff. "Ironically, the infections we experienced were sparked by interns that have joined us and who were not part of our permanent crews."

A shift in demand for buses saw Pioneer Coachbuilders still producing during the pandemic. This demand came from palm oil plantations, where operators wanted to manage the movement of their staff by using own buses. This echoes the stories told about people avoiding public transport as people were afraid of being around strangers. Khaw observed various scenarios panning out: companies went bankrupt and could not take delivery of their buses. Others struggled to keep afloat, but were not able to honour their purchasing agreement and thus the vehicles had to be sold to others. Another group of customers struggled, but would eventually take delivery of the buses, although severely delayed. "We learned something very important in this situation: that is that the vehicles that were stranded with us could be sold easier if they were built on certain chassis. Some brands are easier to sell if we have to sell them to another customer after the original buyer could not take them. Other chassis are much harder to sell like this."

During the pandemic, HEPA filters and other means of sanitising buses were introduced. However, as these items are significant cost positions, the market has not made these a standard item to be installed. Khaw was hoping that the sanitation devices, being it HEPA filters, plasma or Ozone would have caught on as they help to improve the overall safety of passengers, even outside a pandemic.

Having made it through all of this, Khaw is now facing another set of challenges. "It is the banks that are not helping by being too conservative. We need financing tools to be made available in order to get the industry back up on its feet," he said. Now, clients are ready to order, but the banks are hesitate to release loans. Banks are now very selective and demand for a lot of documentation, thus delaying the projects, Khaw said. What used to take six to nine months may now take a year, thus slowing down the recovery of the bus operators. For instance, banks might ask for a healthy cash-flow. "How can I demonstrate that? We are just coming out of the pandemic and many of us have zero income!" he emphasised.



What can be observed is that those still being supported by the banks are companies that are financially strong and Khaw noticed that it is typically diversified companies that do not rely on transportation alone. With the moratoriums ending now, interest payments will kick in, thus putting another layer of stress on the industry. This is further compounded by the impending implementation of EURO IV emission norms, resulting in the cost of the vehicles to significantly jump up. "We actually should jump to EURO V. No point going to EURO IV when we have the technology and products to comply with higher emission norms." Khaw questions if the country is even ready to jump to higher emission norms. Infrastructure, supply of Diesel Exhaust Fluid and Diesel in the right quality are issues that need to be addressed first



in his view. "We note that Europe is phasing out Internal Combustion Engines (ICE). That means that the cost for ICE will increase." Also, with the advent of electric vehicles, the question is if the higher prices for ICE-powered vehicles is a deterrent to push for electric vehicles.

Khaw discussed the issues around EV and EURO V in length. Summed-up, electric vehicles are surely the way forward, but for now the suitability of the vehicles using this new propulsion system is limited to cities and urban areas with long distances still requiring ICE-powered vehicles. When it comes to the implementation of either, EURO IV / V or EV, Khaw is questioning if the government is aware of the added cost that either one means for the operators. Clear positions should be made known on the financing and subsidising of new technologies. While the underlying ideas are good, there has to be a blueprint that helps execute these ambitions.

In terms of capabilities, Pioneer Coachbuilders is also ready to supply electric buses. Having build the first ones in 2019, the factory is ready to respond to demand, should customers opt for the new technology. However, some chassis makers have already exited Malaysia again, leaving the market with limited options.

With the backdrop of MRTs, East Coast Rail Link and other means of transportation being ramped up, Khaw expects further disruption to the bus industry. Express buses will see a significant drop in demand while tourism will still require buses. Factory and school buses will also remain a staple for the coach builder as the serve specific purposes outside of public transport. ■

Newly Developed Setra MultiClass 500 LE Inter-city Buses



Unique and exciting design, exceptional variance and flexibility, maximum profitability, top safety and practical solutions down to the smallest detail – the completely newly developed Setra MultiClass 500 LE sets new standards among low entry inter-city buses.

Extended program: New Setra MultiClass quartet

Shortly after the premiere of the next generation of the fascinating Setra ComfortClass 500 and TopClass 500 touring coaches, Setra is now opening a new chapter in this segment with the completely newly developed low entry inter-city buses from the MultiClass 500 LE series.

The MultiClass 500 LE range includes regular-service bus models with lengths from 10.51 to 14.52 meters and two as well as three axles. They cover applications ranging from peri-urban to long-distance inter-city transport in sparsely populated regions. This means that the new bus generation is proven and tested in the traditional regular and school transport sector, providing shuttle services or feeder and company travel.

Unique design: iconic look

Setra is synonymous with fascinating yet durable design – even with a practical low entry vehicle. The exterior of the new MultiClass 500 LE is already deliberately divided into two vehicle sections. Both segments are connected by a wide vertical profile. The clear division of the passenger area as it were into front and back seats make the outside of the new inter-city buses appear less weighty. Thanks to the rounded A-pillars with dark trim at the front and the equally shaped corner profiles at the back, the conventional square angles resolve into soft and flowing shapes. The roof seems to float above the body of the inter-city bus. The result is a unique, airy and lightweight design.

At the front, the MultiClass 500 LE takes on the new Setra distinctive look that the brand introduced with the current touring coaches. On the left and right above the front wheels, the characteristic brand element points to the origin of the new MultiClass 500 LE – it is a genuine Setra. This is also demonstrated by the brand logo on the equally strikingly shaped rear end.

Versatile: Passenger compartment, cockpit, driver assistance systems

The extraordinary variety of the new Setra MultiClass 500 LE starts with the choice of doors. For entrance one, a single-leaf door is available in two widths and - a new addition - an even wider double door can also be selected. Entrance two can be customized as a single-leaf or double door. All models can be supplied with a third door behind the rear axle on request.

Completely low-floor front section, platforms on the left, right or both sides in the direction of travel – the new Setra MultiClass 500 LE has almost no limits when it comes to passenger compartment designs. The interior is practical yet welcoming, from the full and half-height glass partitions in different designs, smooth wall coverings with decorative foils or cozy needle-fleece surfaces to the combination of light and dark paneling. The seating is just as diverse, with designs ranging from urban to touring requirements.

The driver cockpit is just as diverse as the passenger compartment. There are three variants to choose from: Cockpit City (city) in accordance with





the specifications of the VDV (Verband Deutscher Verkehrsunternehmen, Association of German Transport Companies) and Cockpit Basic City (city/inter-city) or Cockpit Basic (inter-city) at touring coach level. Regardless of the cockpit, the new MultiClass 500 LE supports driving personnel. This begins with the standard rain and light sensor and continues with the standard electronic parking brake. The optional 360° camera system offers perfect all-around visibility when maneuvering and in tight spaces. Thanks to this system, passers-by, cyclists and obstacles that are otherwise difficult or impossible for the driver to see can also be detected. The ambient lighting for reversing is also available as a significant support for maneuvering.

Predictive Powertrain Control in inter-city operation

In conjunction with the fully automated GO 250 8 PowerShift manual transmission, the driver is supported by the latest version of the smart, fuel-saving Predictive Powertrain Control (PPC) cruise control. It integrates a driving style into the automatic gearshift system which has been adapted to the topography. The map material now covers almost all extra-urban roads in Europe in addition to highways and main roads. PPC takes into consideration intersections and traffic circles, and is linked to adaptive cruise control. Based on the stored maps, PPC automatically reduces the speed when entering towns, before country road bends with a tight radius or obstacles such as traffic circles and stop or right-of-way points.

Preventive Brake Assist 2

Every Setra is also a genuine safety bus. An example in the new MultiClass 500 LE is the Preventive Brake Assist 2, the next generation of the world's first active brake assistant for specialized regular-service buses. Preventive Brake Assist 2 uses a combination of close-range and long-range radar sensors and a camera to respond to stationary and moving objects, including pedestrians and cyclists. The system can process multiple objects at the same time. Within system limits, detection of objects outside the roadway is improved and false warnings are minimized.

The driver assistance system warns of a collision with stationary or moving objects. In addition, it simultaneously initiates a braking maneuver with partial braking. The series of warnings and brake application have been designed precisely for use in regular service and thus to protect standing passengers. Preventive Brake Assist 2 will be available as an option from spring 2024.

Outstanding profitability: From drive to digitalization with unique services

The drive of the Setra MultiClass 500 LE is based on tried-and-tested and economical components. At the rear of the two-axle vehicle, the OM 936

six-cylinder in-line engine operates with a displacement of 7.7 liters. It is available with an output of 220 kW (299 hp) and 260 kW (354 hp). The three-axle MultiClass S 518 LE is fitted with the OM 470 six-cylinder in-line engine with a displacement of 10.7 liters. It has an output of 290 kW (394 hp). Depending on the model, the wide selection of transmissions includes a manual transmission, a fully automated manual transmission and converter automatic transmissions made by Voith and ZF.

The MultiClass 500 LE with the OM 936 in combination with the optional drive unit is even more economical. An electric motor between the engine and transmission operates as an alternator in overrun or braking mode and generates electricity without fuel consumption. It is stored in two storage modules on the roof. In load situations, such as when moving off, the 14 kW electric motor supports the combustion engine with this energy. It therefore consumes less fuel.

Continuous start: Program Available in a Few Months

Like the predecessor series, the new Setra MultiClass 500 LE is also manufactured in the Daimler Buses Hossdere plant near Istanbul in the European part of Turkey. The start of production for the traditional two-axle vehicle sizes with lengths of around 12 and 13 meters is planned from autumn 2023. The compact S 510 LE and the three-axle S 518 LE are expected to follow from the beginning of 2024. ■



Mats Nilsson is Taking the Lead in Volvo Buses Asia Pacific

With renewed energy after the pandemic, Asian bus markets are re-emerging. Volvo Buses is aiming to capitalise on current trends with Mats Nilsson taking a double-take to identify growth areas.

Taking on more responsibilities, Mr Mats Nilsson has just been appointed as Vice President of Volvo Buses Asia Pacific. With the new role, he is planning to have a fresh view of the markets now under his responsibility. In this exclusive interview we learn first-hand what he has planned going forward.

To provide the context, one must look at the reach of Nilsson's new responsibility. Volvo Buses has divided the markets into three distinct clusters: APAC South, which comprises of Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific nations. APAC Central, being ASEAN excluding the Philippines. Finally, APAC North, made up of Philippines, Hong Kong, Taiwan, South Korea, and Mainland China. APAC South is currently handled by Mitch Peden, who handled Volvo Truck's business in Malaysia before assuming his current role. Nilsson moves up from being responsible for APAC Central. APAC North is headed by Emmanuel Jupet, who



has extensive experience in the global bus industry and working experience in Asia. "What is interesting to see is that these three clusters should be about equal in terms of vehicle sales."

Having managed the Truck portfolio for Volvo – and other of the Group's brands – for many years, Nilsson also knows that Trucks and Bus segments are fundamentally different. Buses are more customised and personalised, even more B2B centric with governments being large buyers of buses.

Nilsson stresses the importance of the Singaporean market, having had a presence for over 40 years in the island state. "We have a long and proud history with Singapore and actually, we have the highest number of vehicles on the road here as well as an important regional inventory of spare parts." Nilsson values the connectivity offered by Singapore in combination with the predictability of rules and legislation. In terms of economies of scale, Volvo Bus can also draw support from the other business units that have made Singapore their regional headquarters, too. Singapore is also known as a strategic location as an innovation hub. Volvo Bus demonstrated this with its collaboration with SC Auto for the development of fully electric buses, which were recently launched (Asian Buses reported).

"We are looking at evolution more than revolution. Now that we can travel again after the pandemic, we would need to get to the ground and see how we can close gaps in the product line-ups offered in the individual countries," Nilsson explained when asked about his ideas, having a fresh pair of eyes looking at the markets. He promised that Volvo Buses will continuously improve, acknowledging that there is always room for development. These improvements are dependent on the markets and their needs. Overall, Volvo Buses is aiming to ramp up efforts to bring sustainability more to the foreground. For instance, lifecycle environmental impact considerations will have to have a bigger share of attention in the future. According to him, the effort is to inject such thinking by informing and supporting various stakeholders to understand and consider these areas when drafting tender documents.

One way to gain insights from being on the ground, where the action is, would be to take a long bus tour. One such tour that Nilsson would like to embark on could be to travel across Vietnam as the country encapsulates a lot of aspects of the various markets he is handling. "Just like many of our markets, this is a country that is developing, there are regional differences, and the applications are highly varied."

In line with his new role, Nilsson would also have to shift gears when it comes to managing teams. Although Volvo Buses, like many European organisations, has a flat hierarchy, there are still clear processes in place; Decisions need to be validated and confirmed. "Smart delegation might sound like a cliché, however, if you are handling markets of this size, you cannot get involved in every little detail of the business, but you have to empower and trust in the ownership each employee has in their role." Ideally, Nilsson would like to see the organisation as an inverted pyramid, whereby the leader of the organisation carries the broader numbers of staff that execute their many, various functions. Within Volvo Buses, the leadership is to walk the talk and be seen as coaches and mistakes or challenges should, in principle, be perceived as opportunities to learn, not to instil fear in the teams.

With the re-opening of economies post-pandemic, OEMs expected that demand would have picked up in 2022. However it has taken until now for the demand for buses to be picking up again. Private operators are now also starting to purchase buses again. "We note that in Malaysia, banks seemed a bit conservative, which might have stifled the enthusiasm to some extent." What Nilsson is observing is that countries recover at different paces. This in turn triggered Volvo Buses to address these situations with tailored solutions. Whenever possible, financing solutions will be offered, whereas in other cases vehicle health checks are what is needed.



Buses have long since taken the lead in the electrification of transport. This global trend is another focal point for Nilsson now. "It is about creating cleaner cities and the idea that the emissions could be taken out of urban areas is a key driver." Although many cities and countries are very ambitious, the entire ecosystem needs to be adjusted accordingly. Here, Volvo Buses will be leveraging on its extensive network of partners. With the rise of electromobility, new entrants made their debut. Nilsson underlined that it is the solid support network, and the long history and global experience of Volvo is what will eventually prevail in the bidding war for public investments. "The support to our customers has been a key decision maker for many of our clients for many years and I expect that this will result in a change in the competitive landscape in the next five to ten years."

A challenge going forward will be to continue forging partnerships with suitable partners in the various markets. Electromobility requires stronger networks and partners that understand the business and intricacies of the new technology. "It will be a challenge and a commitment from different stakeholders to balance short term gains from exploiting obvious opportunities and long term commitments." ■



Scania IKTBNBDT Collaboration

Scania and IKTBNBDT sees first batch of apprentices passing the SKM Level 2 in the collaboration to produce technical excellence.

Scania, the First Heavy Commercial Vehicle Manufacturer in Malaysia to be accredited as the National Dual Training System/Sistem Latihan Dual Nasional (NDTS/SLDN) Centre by Ministry of Human Resources Malaysia has produced its first batch of 10 apprentices that had successfully passed the Sijil Kemahiran Malaysia Tahap 2 (SKM Level 2).

NDTS or SLDN is a method that is based on industry-driven training concept which is operated through collaboration between companies and training institutions. 'Dual' means training in two learning situations such as the SLDN Accredited Centre in Scania Malaysia that covers 70 percent to 80 percent practical training (hands-on performance), and the IKTBNBDT academic learnings which cover 20 percent to 30 percent of theory (knowledge).

Congratulations to the successful nine technicians who are presently attached to the Bukit Jelutong and Port Klang workshops, and an external student that was undergoing training in IKTBNBDT.

"I am thrilled to get my first official certification, the SKM Level 2 with the Scania/IKTBNBDT collaboration. I believe this will open the path towards my career progression in Scania," said Wan Mohd Zakhran bin Wan Ismail, Repair Technician, Scania Malaysia Workshop, Bukit Jelutong.

"I was nervous about getting through the final SKM Level 2 exam, but when I found out that I passed, it boosted my confidence and my commitment to perform better in my present post," said Izzat Syafiq Ahmad Tarmed, Repair Technician Scania Malaysia Workshop, Port Klang.

Getting the SKM Level 2 is good. Now, I'm just waiting for the SKM Level 3 Scania/IKTBNBDT collaboration again which will increase my chances in my career progression," said Mohamad Norhafiz bin Mohd Ibrahim, Maintenance Technician, Scania Malaysia Workshop, Bukit Jelutong.

"I am truly happy that I took the SKM Level. I am grateful for this chance to improve my skills through the Scania/IKTBNBDT collaboration," said Mohamad Razmi Shadam bin Rasid, Maintenance Technician, Scania Malaysia Workshop, Bukit Jelutong.

"The SKM Level 2 certificate has given me the confidence to be a better technician and compete for a better position in Scania Workshop network,"

said Muhamad Azami bin Nordin, Repair Technician, Scania Workshop, Port Klang.

"I like working in Scania because all my colleagues at the workshop are quite generous with their knowledge. However, passing with the SKM Level 2 certificate has opened my mind and made me hungry to go for the SKM Level 3 as this will make me develop even more," said Mohd Sukiman bin Ibrahim, Maintenance Technician, Scania Malaysia Workshop, Port Klang.

"Congratulations to all the nine successful candidates from Scania that completed the National Dual Training System with the SKM Level 2 certification and passed the final examination. A big thank you to IKTBNBDT and its trainers/lecturers. I am really proud of our technicians for having the tenacity to succeed," said Heba El Tarifi, Managing Director, Scania Southeast Asia. 🇲🇾



Buses in Movies

Just like Snakes on a plane wouldn't work without a plane, there are some movies that couldn't be made without having buses involved. These vehicles play roles that are more or less important to the story. Wikipedia lists 39 movies about buses.

Take for instance the Greyhound buses that Lee Child's Jack Reacher depends upon. Not willing to drive (there is a deviation from the book), he takes buses everywhere. In one scene, the movie character even makes it a point how accessible the bus terminal is and how he could easily be in the wind within the hour using one of the fabled buses that criss-cross the country. Similarly, The Fugitive has to have a bus in it as the main character escapes on one. Forrest Gump is telling his story while waiting for the bus. There is something romantic about the idea of sitting in the sun, waiting for the bus and whiling away looking at the landscape or chatting up strangers.

When we watch Speed, the entire plot revolves around the bus that our heroes are sitting in. What has always irked me a little are the tiny issues. For instance, why was it so easy to place that bomb in that bus? Would the yard not have some sort of security? Also, it appears that anyone can just easily become a bus captain with instant knowledge of how to drive, use all the functions while not getting tired after driving for hours.

Recently, I watched The Takeover. I should think that there are some people who don't like the idea of bus travel in the first place and that flick could have easily put them off forever. While autonomous buses are still somewhat futuristic and Sci-Fi, they are being deployed and are serving specific routes already. In the movie, it was not only super-simple to hack into the bus and to hijack it, but also, there seemed to have been no safety feature that could allow the people on board to intervene and safely stop the vehicle. Just hop on to YouTube and watch some videos about modern buses are equipped with LIDAR and other systems that will automatically stop a bus should it be heading towards an object that it could crash into.

I am a little frustrated when movie makers go to great lengths to get many things right, but not the issues around buses, public transport or road transportation in general. Surely, movies are to entertain, but should that be a carte blanche for film directors and producers for creative freedom? Remember the movie Dunkirk? There the director went to get original, working fighter planes to do the aerial fighting scenes in order to be authentic. Many movies feature buses to transfer prisoners. While I have been on one or accompanied such transfer, I am sure that the actual transfers happen in a much different way and breaking out from one is not as easy as the movies want to suggest to us.



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Depicting buses could also be a great opportunity to promote tourism or alternative travel. I remember that I wanted to see Angkor Wat after having seen Tomb Raider. Just like many others that have seen the movie, I had to see the place for myself (after researching a bit more about the history and significance of the complex). The scenes around the temple were not very long, however, that had enough impact to boost tourism. Many movies involving war machinery are sponsored by the military as a means to recruit youngsters into service. Perhaps the transport industry could also pour some money into Hollywood to subtly polish the image of drivers, buses and bus travel.

Strangely, the commercial vehicle brethren, called trucks, also have more iconic vehicles listed: Mad Max's Fury Road has seen a number of custom built trucks. Why are the transformers cars and trucks, but not buses? 🚚

Flexibility and Profitability in the Workshop with Drive-on Lifting Systems



A four-post drive-on lift helps to significantly improve the safety and efficiency in a workshop. We take a closer look at Rotary's lifting systems for commercial vehicles.

workshop when it comes to increased efficiency during general vehicle maintenance, alignments, and multipoint inspections—especially when you add their Shockwave technology for rises and descents that are twice as fast.

The technology embedded in Rotary Lift's four-post lifts make them the world's most trusted and fastest Lift. Rotary Lift's exclusive Shockwave technology produces rises and descents that are twice as fast as standard lifts. And with its Spotline laser that shoots down the hood and dash, centring a vehicle couldn't be easier.

HDC Series in Focus

Rotary offers a range of drive-on lifts, suitable for passenger cars and heavy trucks. In particular, their HDC36 / 50 / 60 series are of interest for workshops handling trucks. These drive-on lifts have lifting capacities of 36 000 to 60 000 pounds, as their product code indicates.



A key advantage of using a four-post lift in a workshop is that the premises do not need to have a pit. The addition of a pit may not only signify substantial investments, but it is also a safety issue that needs to be addressed as there is a possibility that staff may get hurt if they fall into it.

Fast Four Post Lifts

Four post lifts make jobs easier all the way around. For easier vehicle spotting and compatibility with today's most advanced alignment systems, you need a four-post lift. Rotary's four post lifts can create significant value for your



Being battery operated with an on-board charger, the Rotary lifts offer numerous benefits as this set-up generates at least 1.5 x faster lift cycle times. When installing the lift, no special AC wiring is required, keeping costs down. Thanks to the low electrical usage, the lifts easily compare against pits when it comes to operating cost. The system remains fully functional when the power goes out.

The manufacturer prides itself in offering one of the most operator friendly systems. Exclusive features offered with the Rotary four-post lift make it faster and easier to use than similar lifts offered by others. The HDC series offers visual confirmation of each column's status and lift height. The lifts are capable of level lifting within 1" at each column and there is an oversized "E-Stop" emergency stop button at every column. The audible descent alarm for added safety. The HDC Series battery operated lifts are inexpensive to own with an on-board charger requiring only 110v electricity. With no complicated or expensive electrical installation, no cables, chains or sheaves to maintain, these fully hydraulic lifts allow you to operate the lift from any column, saving valuable time.


- Operate lift from any column
- Available in three lengths and capacities
- Clear floor design for open work area
- Surface mounted and anchored
- 28" wide runways
- Folding ramps with automatic rear chocks
- Standard internal airline connections

Optional mobility wheel kit provides portability for each column adding movement within your shop. Other options to add on include LED lights and optional 25K rolling bridge that can be attached to the runway to create various lifting options to make it even more versatile. As not every shop floor is perfect, using optional shims during installation ensures a lift is level and operates at optimum performance.

Beyond Lifting

The Rotary four-post lifts are designed with versatility and enhanced profitability in mind. Using modular kits, the lifters can be adjusted to various wheelbases. Adding a wheel alignment system to the lifter transforms the unit, thus eliminating the need for a separate station for wheel alignment. Efficiency will be further enhanced as most service and maintenance tasks can be performed in one station without having to drive the vehicle around in the workshop.

Environmentally-friendly

Nathan Vagg, Business Development Manager – Asia Pacific, explained that all Rotary Lift equipment is tested way beyond the required minimum, thus ensuring that it lasts really long, no matter how tough the working conditions are. "However, we also think about the protection of the environment during the entire life span of the equipment. More than 98 percent of the column lifters are recyclable. They are also compatible with all bio fluid hydraulic oils. In addition, we offer optional high efficiency LED lighting." 

Rotary is part of the VSG Group, which is a global, publicly listed Fortune 500 company. The company maintains production facilities in the US, its home market, China, Italy and Germany. The main products offered are capital investment goods, ranging from vehicle lifts and wheel service to collision repair equipment. Established in 1925, the company looks back at decades of innovation and a passion for providing market leading solutions for the automotive industry.

In local markets, Rotary partners with domestic markets in order to ensure that customers get the best service possible through appointed distributors and dealers on the ground, as that ensures swift responses to any enquiries or requests to troubleshoot. "In Malaysia, we partner with Lubetrans for the wheel service and vehicle lift programs as well as the collision repair equipment. The installation and aftersales service offered by Lubetrans is on par with our market leading equipment.

A cornerstone of our philosophy is that we need to provide an excellent aftersales service, which is provided by Lubetrans since 2010," said Nathan Vagg, Business Development Manager – Asia Pacific. The promise given by Rotary exceeds the strong commitment to being a provider of high-quality products. The value proposition encompasses efficiency, safety and low cost of ownership. Of these, safety is to foremost priority. Longevity is a hallmark of Rotary's approach in going to market, which requires the support of partners that share this vision in order to provide end-customers with top-rated services.



What Motivates Enforcement Agencies and Officers?



by: YS Chan, Kuala Lumpur

Ministries are set up to govern, regulate and contribute to the smooth running and development of our country. If so, the success or failure of various government agencies could be gauged by the health of sectors under their charge.

Hence, they must carry out both promotional and enforcement exercises regularly and effectively. Their policies and activities ought to be publicised to facilitate legitimate businesses to thrive, and to deter shady dealings and illicit trade.

While the types of promotions may vary greatly, enforcements could only be carried out as stipulated under the law and summonses issued based on specific sections under Acts or Enactments. If compoundable, offenders would rather pay a lighter fine than contest in court.

When caught, offenders are likely to deny they were in the wrong and hope to be let off, failing which they would attempt to prevent summonses from being issued by suggesting on-the-spot settlement or wait for the enforcement officer to state an amount and then try to reduce it.

This is because integrity is lacking in our society and offenders prefer to pay less and avoid the inconvenience of having to settle compound fines later. For traffic offences, the maximum compoundable fine is RM300 but the standardised rates for many violations are lower.

However, the police officer could imply that the fine is RM300, which is normal in any 'seller-buyer' negotiation, with sellers hoping to get the highest possible price and buyers trying to pay the least. Money change hands when both sides agreed to an amount.

The many motivations of enforcement officers include holding on to their jobs and pensions, carrying out assignments in special operations or on patrol duty, and issuing summonses to meet or exceed a quota. Such encounters also present opportunities to line one's pockets.

But corruption is unlikely to happen if enforcement officers and offenders do not meet physically. This may explain why the various agencies are not keen to carry out enforcements extensively using video recordings, which have proven to be effective in many countries.

At a public forum on road safety in 2003, I mooted the concept of "privatised massive surveillance" and was widely reported. I proposed that private companies be appointed to assist enforcement agencies in surveillance to deter traffic offences and street crimes.

The concessionaires are to hire and train camera crews and station them at strategic spots at city streets, busy roads and along highways. They are to wear bright uniforms and be highly visible as a deterrence, and not hide behind pillars to record as much offences as possible.

The videos are to be submitted to the respective enforcement agencies for summonses to be issued and concessionaires paid accordingly. In this way, the government does not have to spend a single cent and the agencies do not have to wait until there is adequate funding.

The fines collected would add substantially to the government's coffers and large number of retired but relatively young soldiers could be gainfully employed as camera crews nationwide by the concessionaires.

If implemented 20 years ago, it would have saved thousands of lives and prevented countless number of injuries from road accidents and deterred many snatch thefts, making our streets safer. It would have also collected billions of Ringgit in fines for driving and parking offences.

However, our ministries and agencies were more interested in receiving additional allocations and spent them all to justify asking for more. Apart from corruption, many ministries are riddled with leakages, pilferages and wastages, as reported by the Auditor General every year.

Soon after the Automated Enforcement System (AES) was introduced on Sept 22, 2012, I pointed out that the first 14 cameras deployed captured 63,558 offences within the first eight days. This worked out to 567 offences per day for each camera.

At this rate, 830 cameras would record a staggering 171 772 650 offences per year, which led to a public outcry. The agreements were not only lopsided, but the government also had to compensate the two concessionaires for terminating the agreement.

A new concessionaire was scheduled to reintroduce the AES in the first quarter of 2016 covering 350 locations. But it did not happen, and I proposed the use of dashboard cameras or dashcams as the most effective tool to capture traffic offences and street crimes.

This would allow thousands of private and commercial vehicles to participate by fitting high-quality dashcams and submit evidence of traffic violations, bribes and crimes.

Dashcams are superior to AES cameras that are fixed at known locations and cannot capture dangerous driving, tailgating, overtaking at double lines, driving on emergency lanes, and obstructing traffic by double parking.

Motorists and motorcyclists would naturally be in their best behaviour as the vehicles behind may be fitted with dashcams, and rear-facing cameras can record even more offences.

In the Klang Valley, a good way to start is by installing dashcams and rear-facing cameras on all Rapid KL buses, including those used for MRT feeder bus service and Go KL free city bus. The offences captured would include vehicles parked or waiting at bus stops and street corners.


But would enforcement officers be diligent in issuing summonses or notification of traffic offences recorded by cameras? Those who do ought to be saluted. And before that, would the various ministries and agencies step up a gear to conduct surveillance and enforcements?

Disclaimer: Any views, thoughts, and opinions expressed by the author named in this article are solely that of the author and do not reflect the views, opinions, policies, or position of Asian Trucker Media. ■

Hydrogen-powered Buses now on Roads of Beijing Winter Olympics Co-host City



After the global sports showpiece last year, Zhangjiakou has continued to actively explore the practical application of hydrogen vehicles, taking advantage of its rich wind and solar energy resources, according to Wang Hewu, executive director of the Zhangjiakou Hydrogen Energy and Renewable Energy Research Institute.

Hydrogen can be produced from various sources of primary energy, including coal, natural gas and renewable energy, through power generation. The hydrogen produced from renewable energy such as wind and photovoltaic power is called green hydrogen -- making it one of the most eco-friendly technologies. 



Nearly a year after the city of Zhangjiakou in north China's Hebei Province co-hosted the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympic Games, 444 hydrogen-powered buses have become the preferred mode of public transport for locals, Xinhua reported. These buses were first used for the Olympics.


The hydrogen-fueled vehicles can start quickly in the low winter temperatures of minus-30-degrees Celsius in the high-latitude city, some 160 km to the north of Beijing.

Epic Bus Journey

Any road tripper worth their salt would love to indulge in at least one excursion on a bus. Adventure Overland has you covered, as they offer two ground-breaking Epic Bus Journeys. Hop onto the longest bus journey in the world, Bus to London or the exciting Bus to Singapore, for an experience to remember.

It is not often that one gets a chance to be a part of something truly historic and unique. How would you feel about undertaking a cross-border bus journey that takes you from India to Singapore, crossing the land borders of Myanmar, Thailand and Malaysia along the way? Covering a distance of 4500 kilometres and traversing five countries in 20 days, Bus to Singapore promises to be a ground-breaking journey that will leave an everlasting impression on your life. As part

of the expedition, you will get to cruise upon the silky tarmacs of Asian Highway 1 – the longest highway network in Asia – explore thousands of pagodas in Bagan, witness Burmese culture and sample their exotic cuisine in Yangon (Rangoon).

Add to it all the buzzing vibe of Bangkok and relaxing blue waters of the beach town of Krabi, and what you have is one matchless experience indeed. You will also get to admire the scenic beauty of Mount Jerai and Cameron Highlands in Malaysia, spend time in the lap of luxury in Kuala Lumpur and finally cross the border and conclude the journey in the charming city of Singapore. After reaching Singapore, the bus will embark on its maiden journey back home, taking the same route to reach India. 


Geotab and Synop Announce EV Charging Integration

Geotab, a global leader in connected transportation solutions and Synop, the electric vehicle operations platform that maximizes fleet uptime and optimizes energy usage, today announced a partnership that will give fleet operators in North America access to integrated EV charging and energy management within Geotab's software platform, MyGeotab.

Commercial fleets, which include maintenance vehicles, delivery vans, semi-trucks, rental cars,

government vehicles, and school buses, face many obstacles when integrating EVs, including energy price volatility, multiple charging requirements, and prolonged charge cycles. Integrating Synop's software with Geotab's data insights allows customers to manage their EV assets in real-time on a single, unified platform. With no additional hardware or installation required, fleet operators can easily identify current charge levels; anticipate when vehicles are expected to be fully charged; gauge necessary

energy needed for upcoming trips; evaluate expenses associated with fueling up, and gain insights into the energy efficiency of each vehicle, all within their existing telematics platform.


Synop is designed to support all commercial EV types and charging infrastructures and offers interoperability across mixed-fuel fleets. Synop is specifically designed for large commercial fleets to transform the performance of their EV operations and achieve sustainability commitments. 

Innovations for Energy-efficient and Sustainable Filtration



Used across a wide range of applications, the filtration solutions devised by Hengst do their part in making the world a purer place. The products are uniformly popular in the segments of plant and machine engineering, industrial filtration, hydraulics, life science and health care as well as in the automotive and motor industry.

Highlights unveiled at the recently held Filtech included a newly developed Hengst cathode filter for use in innovative fuel cell technologies. This is significant as fuel cell systems will arise to the status of a key technology for sustainable mobility - especially in the utility vehicle sector.

Thanks to a highly effective separation of sulfur gas and ammonia, the filtration solution reliably protects the catalytic converter and the membrane of the fuel cell against damage from particles and noxious gases. 

MAN Strengthens Entrepreneurial Responsibility in the Management of its Bus Business



MAN Truck & Bus is reorganising the management of its bus business as part of a comprehensive package of measures to transform the unit. In the newly created role of "Head of Bus" (HoB), Barbaros Oktay will assume overall entrepreneurial responsibility for the bus unit. He will report directly to MAN CEO Alexander Vlaschke.

and will have direct organisational responsibility for managing the Bus Engineering, Production and Sales units. The Bus CFO (Chief Financial Officer), Bus CHRO (Chief Human Resources Officer) and Bus CPO functions (Chief Procurement Officer), which have also been newly created in the bus organisation, act as business partners of the HoB.

Barbaros Oktay began his career at MAN Truck & Bus in 2004 at MAN Türkiye A.Ş.'s production site in Ankara and has since held various bus management positions within the Group. Most recently, Oktay held the positions of Head of Bus Solutions at TRATON and Head of Bus Engineering, Product & Project Management at MAN Truck & Bus SE as Senior Vice President. In his new

role as Head of Bus, he takes over the leadership role in MAN's bus business from Rudi Kuchta, who becomes the new Managing Director of MAN Truck & Bus Austria and replaces Robert Katzer. Katzer is moving to MAN Truck & Bus SE after six years in Austria and will take over as Head of Sales Bus in the new structure. ■



Karsan e-ATAK is the Most Preferred Electric Midibus in Europe



Karsan, which has raised its targets in public transportation with its advanced technology products, is taking firm steps towards becoming a global brand. Karsan e-ATAK managed to repeat the market leadership in 2022 as well, which it achieved in 2021. According to the Wim Chatrou - CME Solutions report in 2022, Karsan e-ATAK completed the year with a market share of 40% in the electric midibus segment, thus became the segment leader in Europe two times in a row. Stating that the e-ATAK model is the most preferred electric midibus by many countries in Europe, Karsan CEO Okan

Baş said: "100 percent electric Karsan e-ATAK model is sold across many European countries, from France to Romania, from Italy to Spain, from Portugal to Greece. In Luxembourg, one of the important markets for our brand, the country's largest electric midibus fleet consists of e-ATAK buses. Additionally, Luxembourg also draws attention, as our e-ATAK model is used here in intercity transportation. We are very pleased that the interest for Karsan brand is increasing day by day thanks to e-ATAK's segment leadership we have achieved in Europe for two consecutive years."

Taking its power from BMW battery that has proved itself with a capacity of 220 kWh, Karsan e-ATAK is the leader of its class in terms of range. With its 8.3-meter length and 230 kW electric engine, e-ATAK can be charged in five hours with alternating current charging units and in three hours with fast charging units. ■

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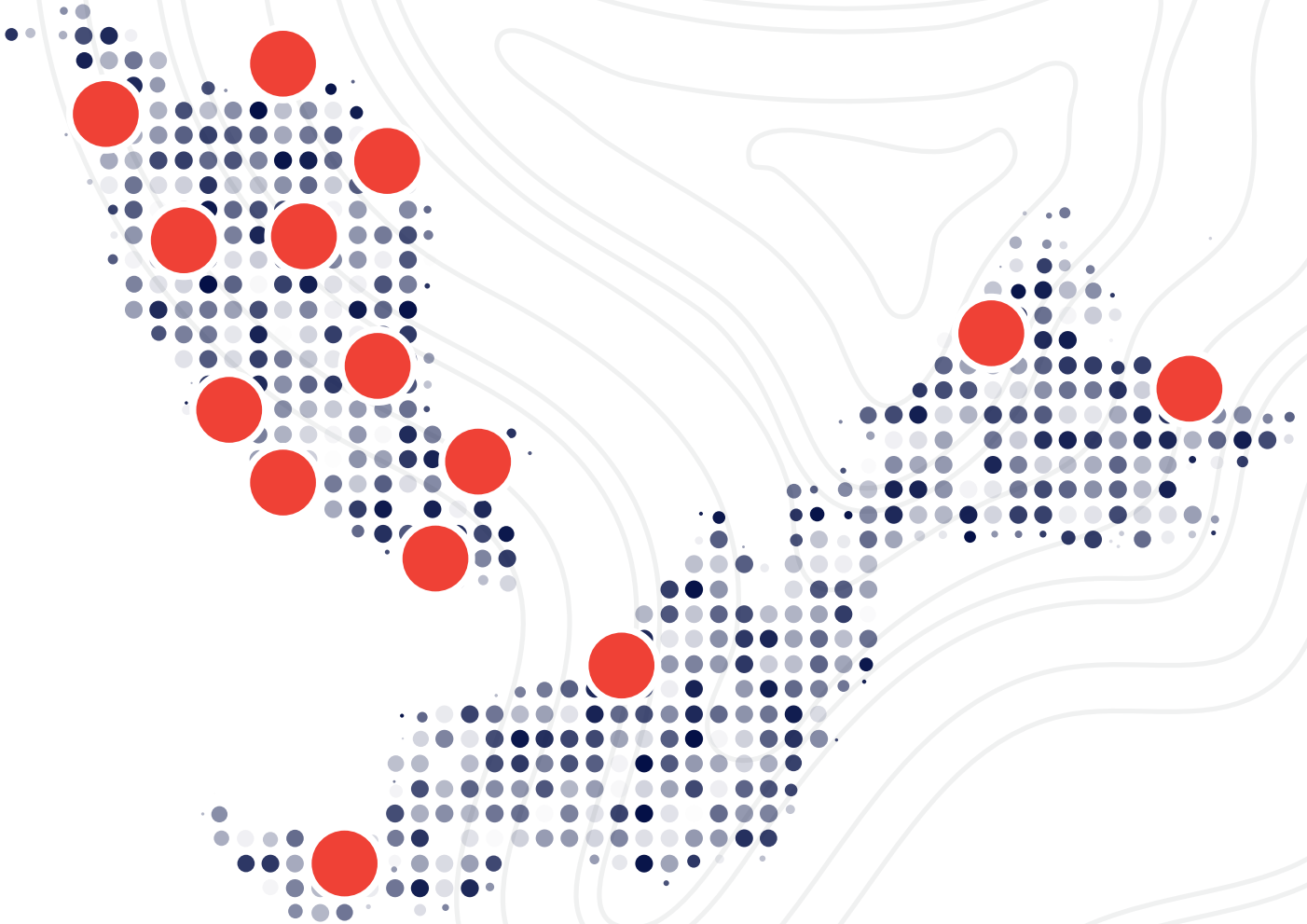
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