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President: Chris Grime IEng MSOE MIRTE FCILT

Chief Executive: Nick Jones FCA

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Registered Office: 22 Greencoat Place,

London SW1P 1PR

Tel: 020 7630 1111

Fax: 020 7630 6677

Email: soe@soe.org.uk

www.soe.org.uk

Editor: John Challen

Email: jchallen@findlay.co.uk

Editorial Director: Brian Tingham BSc

CEng MInstMC FSOE FIPlantE

Email: btingham@findlay.co.uk

Contributing Editors: John Fife,

Dan Gilkes, John Kendall, Keith Read

Art Editors: Martin Cherry, Neil Young

Illustrations: Phil Holmes

Advertisement Manager: Craig Molloy

Email: cmolloy@findlay.co.uk

Tel: 01322 221144

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# Time for transport to flex its collective muscle

**Y**ou can almost touch the growing momentum in our transport industry, as not only the manufacturers, but also our institutions, associations and the fleet operators large enough to have corporate social responsibility departments, change up a couple of gears on what they see as a gathering climate change catastrophe.

It's almost as though there's a new sense of potential strength in numbers right across the sector, as the world faces a near vacuum of rudderless European indecision following last year's lacklustre Copenhagen summit, and realises it's time to get heavy.

First we hear of the global truck manufacturers' agreement in Brussels to co-operate in pushing policy makers in Europe, the US and Japan to develop global fuel efficiency metrics, methodologies, standards and regulations (Transport Engineer, January 2010, page 5). That initiative came out of their meeting, hosted by ACEA (the European Automobile Manufacturers' Association), but also involving JAMA (the Japan Automobile Manufacturers Association), EMA (the Engine Manufacturers Association) and TMA (the Truck Manufacturers Association).

Among their targets is the UNECE (UN Economic Commission for Europe) transport division, which they want to ramp up its work on harmonised engine certification for fuel efficiency on heavy-duty vehicles and engines – but also taking in factors such as aerodynamics and rolling resistance. They also want that organisation to certify heavy-duty hybrid electric vehicles, based on Japan's established procedures, and to drive quality-based legislation for fossil and renewable fuels, so that they match today's and emerging vehicle technology requirements.

But they're not alone. As we go to press, the FTA (Freight Transport Association) has launched its Logistics Carbon Reduction Scheme (LCRS), aimed at presenting policy makers with what it calls hard evidence, direct from 23,000 commercial vehicles in the operator community, to guide carbon reduction strategies (page 4). Operators, says FTA president Stewart Oades, will be submitting fuel data for analysis, in order to provide an accurate carbon footprint picture to help steer Department for Transport thinking.

It's not the first time that the sector has moved to flex its collective muscles, but there does appear to be a new appetite to drive policy very publicly, rather than to remain on the receiving end of it. And, given the apparently contradictory directions of recent European emissions legislators, it's high time.

As Scania's engine development leader Björn Westman says, if the European Commission follows its current focus on particle numbers in diesel engine emissions, it will force reduction of particle mass way beyond the half originally intended (page 12) – and risk increasing fuel consumption, which could, in turn, push up greenhouse gas emissions.

Our engineering industry has proved itself extremely adept at rising to challenges. However, if we are fast approaching an area of diminishing returns, it's time for new thinking.

**Brian Tingham BSc CEng MInstMC FSOE FIPlantE**

