

Sanders & Woods achieves 20-tonne payload

With its new DAF CF85 eight-wheeler tipping the scales at just under 12 tonnes, East Midlands operator Sanders & Woods Transport reckons it is achieving a payload of more than 20 tonnes.

But Steve Tilley, a director of the family-run firm, also points to a number of other improvements that are making loading and tipping times better.

The combination of DAF's FAD four-axle chassis, with an aluminium fuel tank, Wilcox Wilcolite body and Durabrite alloy wheels, is the secret behind the new truck's payload, he says.

Then optimising that payload is achieved via a PM1300 on-board weighing system, linked to a camera inside the body and to a reversing camera – with both images and weight information being provided through a single in-cab screen.

Tilley explains that, at the start of loading, the driver switches on the camera that



looks into the body and, without leaving the cab, he can watch that the load is being spread correctly. At the same time, he can keep an eye on the gross weight figure in the top corner of the screen and inform the shovel operator when full.

The driver can then sheet the load, using the air-operated

Wilcover sheeting system, and, on arrival at the delivery point, automatically un-sheet. Also from the cab, he can open the air-operated tailgate either fully or to a level for controlled discharge into a tarmac-laying machine. The result is much reduced loading and unloading times, and more loads in a day.

It's all good, but Tilley says DAF's 'Earn Now, Pay Later' scheme, which provides a three-month holiday before payments have to commence, was another major clincher in his case.

"It's been tough in the tipping industry recently and this has impacted on cashflow for all tipper firms. This scheme means that we can start earning revenue immediately, and it assists us to manage our cashflow better, which, for a small 12-vehicle business such as ours, is very helpful."

The 5.7m FAD CF85 is powered by the Euro 5 DAF MX265 engine, delivering 360bhp (265kW) at 1,900 rpm – giving a 11.25bhp per tonne power to weight ratio. That, along with a torque of 1,775Nm between 1,000 and 1,410rpm and a mechanical diff lock, means it can handle most conditions. The engine is matched to a 12-speed AS-tronic automated gearbox.

I-Shift cuts fuel consumption for R Collard

Demolition, disposal and recycling specialist R Collard's latest pair of Volvo eight-wheelers have been equipped with the I-Shift automated gearbox – and the firm says that it is already seeing benefits.

"We took an I-Shift gearbox in an FM double-drive tractor nine months ago and it's performed exceptionally well, so I thought it was time to try it in an eight-legger," explains Robert Collard, owner of the Hampshire-based firm.

The two new Volvo FM13-380 8x4 chassis have only been at work for a month, but, says Collard: "The drivers think they are absolutely fabulous and early indications are that they are beating the manual versions on fuel. My next order will be an I-Shift, too."

Collard took the construction software package for the I-Shift,



which optimises the gear shifting for on/off road work to give the best possible fuel consumption.

Collard currently operates a fleet of 44 trucks and the two new arrivals take his Volvo four-axle rigid fleet to 30. The trucks work hard for a living on multi-drop, and on/off highway construction and aggregate duties.

Volvo Truck and Bus Centre London supplied the trucks from its Didcot site, and Collard uses the company's Basingstoke depot for service, parts and warranty work.

"The support we get from [truck salesman Tommy Carroll] and his colleagues in Basingstoke is second-to-none. This is the 50th truck I've bought from him and he always gives us a good deal," comments Collard.

Tesco.com to trial biomethane on Dailys

Tesco.com, Tesco's online shopping subsidiary, is taking delivery of 795 Iveco Daily light commercials, of which 25 are EcoDailys, powered by compressed biomethane (CBM), in a major trial of the technology.

Dino Papas, fleet transport manager at Tesco.com, says the retailer will take its bio-natural gas from Gasrec's plant, which cleans waste gas streams from a landfill site in Surrey.

"The scale of the CBM trial will allow us to assess the performance of the natural gas vehicles comprehensively," says Papas. "It represents one of the most important trials we have ever run and, if it proves successful, it could have a major impact on our future transport strategy."

In comparison with diesel, Gasrec's CBM reduces particulate emissions by 90%, NOx by 60% and SO₂ by 50%. Noise from the engine is also reduced by around 30%.

As for the remaining 770 Dailys, these are 35S11 AGiles, with the six-speed automated transmission, which provides a



choice of automatic or manual sequential gear selection for stop-start work.

These are the latest AGile models, with revised control software claimed to improve the driving experience by allowing driver-initiated down-shifting, for engine brake performance, and anticipating traffic conditions without exiting from the fully automatic mode. The system also analyses pressure applied to the accelerator and adapts its response to the driver's style.

Commenting on Tesco.com's decision to specify automated gearboxes across its new Iveco fleet, Papas says: "We opted for the AGile transmissions, as Iveco's trial data shows it cuts wear and tear on the driveline in urban applications, where the mainstay of our fleet operates."

And he adds: "It's also proven to [improve] fuel economy, which supports our environmental goals, and lets our drivers place maximum attention on the road."

As for the rest, the bodies are being manufactured by Lancashire-based Solomon, with triple-compartment insulated bodywork to transport ambient, refrigerated and frozen goods – with refrigeration units supplied by Suffolk-based Hubbard and GAH.

The Dailys are also being built with side loading doors on the nearside to permit safe unloading by the driver at the kerbside.

Each vehicle is also being equipped with Microlise telematics to provide information on vehicle performance, driving style and fuel consumption – both to support Tesco's driver training programme, and to provide environmental and safety benefits.

The new fleet will be spread across the majority of Tesco.com's 300-plus sites throughout the UK, with the Dailys covering the 70,000 home deliveries it makes each day. Each of the vehicles is to remain in operation for five years and will clock up an average 25,000 miles per year.

Solicitor warns of faulty used wheels

Failure to apply a full risk assessment in the purchase of a commercial vehicle wheel could ultimately lead to a corporate manslaughter charge, should the item fail and cause a catastrophic injury.

That's the warning from Mike Rainford, head of business crime at North West criminal practice Burton Copeland, speaking following a meeting with John Ellis, managing director of Motor Wheel Service, where the issue of second-hand contamination was raised.

Ellis estimates that more than 10,000 second-hand and take-off wheels entered the market in 2009, and says that most were sold by companies that do not possess the technical abilities or



examination procedures to ascertain the history and fatigue of a wheel.

In one serious case, Motor Wheel Service's field sales team

was made aware of old, repainted wheels being sold and passed off as new.

Says Rainford: "There needs to be greater scrutiny and control in this market sector, because the implications [in terms of failure] are huge. The process shows that, if a wheel fails and causes death to either the driver or a third-party, there will be a full HSE investigation."

"If the HSE then finds evidence of cost-cutting, gross negligence or incorrect arrangements in the purchase of the wheel, it will be referred to the police, when it officially becomes a criminal investigation."

"At this stage, it becomes more likely that the case will go

to court and the company can at least expect a fine or a suspension of their licence – and the worst-case scenario is a lengthy prison sentence for manslaughter."

Comments Ellis: "At the outset, we stated that the serious repercussions of purchasing a faulty wheel are huge, with warranty, liability and safety just a few major factors, but this moves a very serious industry issue into the boardroom."

"We are fully aware that some wholesalers are diversifying into wheel supply from their core tyre business and this threatens to bring to market an uncontrolled range of wheel products of varying standards, of which some may be dangerous," he adds.