Suckling calls for new procurement reviews

JW Suckling Transport fleet engineer Dan Bauckham says operators might be surprised if they reviewed their vehicle decisions.

Following months of truck analysis, Suckling has taken delivery of 11 MAN TGS 440 tractor units for its 44-tonne fuel delivery fleet and ordered a further three – despite having been a firm believer in DAFs.

Bauckham says it was a marathon exercise, but worth it. "Until recently, the vast majority of our fleet were still DAFs, but over recent years we've been buying more MAN tractors, because they were supported by MAN's specialist ADR pet regs workshops in regions where DAF couldn't help us."

However, when planning for this year's replacement trucks, Bauckham decided to start from scratch by looking at Volvo, DAF, MAN, Mercedes and Scania – those with strength in ADR that could offer trucks capable of double shifting over five years.

For him, that meant initially scoring everything from purchase price to fuel efficiency and full-life costs, including R&M, and the ADR workshops infrastructure.

He says this process confirmed DAF and MAN as most suitable for Suckling's ADR operation, which then led to the second phase of his in-depth study.

Bauckham cites several key costing issues: "EGR [exhaust gas recirculation] versus SCR [selective catalytic reduction] was one big issue. Our data showed that the

average annual cost of the DAF with SCR was £1,168 more than a MAN with EGR – making assumptions from Euro 4 engines."

Next, he raises tare weight, which is crucial for fuel haulage. The MAN tractor with a day cab, lightweight chassis, light lift axle and ADR kit came in at almost 5% lighter than the DAF equivalent – largely due to the SCR equipment on the DAF, he says. Marrying those to the trailer gives an extra available combination payload of 1.2% for the MAN.

Finally, MAN's network of ADR workshops sealed the deal, for its support and flexibility.

As for the road tankers, Bauckham explains that Suckling currently favours British-built Lakeland Innovators, compared to foreign suppliers – based on price, quality and the proximity of the firm's Birmingham factory.

Lakeland's latest trailers look standard, in some respects – BPW axle, with Eco Plus 2 hub system and disk brakes, Knorr-Bremse EBS, Emco Wheaton discharge equipment etc. But he also cites ongoing improvements that promise further tare weight reductions, as well as aerodynamic enhancements to improve fuel efficiency.

"All tankers are elliptical, but then there's the square profile valence on top that houses the vapour recovery combing and provides rollover protection for the lids. That's like a brick wall, which is why we're opting for Lakeland's new chamfer design to help air flow across the trailer.

"We're also investigating the possibility of fitting wind defectors in front of the side guards and landing legs to provide better curvature, with Lakeland, as well as aerodynamic improvements to the rear of the barrel. All of this is with a view to producing the lightest, most fuel efficient road tanker."

Husmann boosts productivity on new DAF

Productivity and efficiency have been improved as a result of flexibility designed into an unusual new DAF at Husmann.

The company, which supplies recycling equipment from four sites in Germany, has gone for an 8x4 truck to collect from Hull docks and deliver to its UK base on Merseyside, and then on to user sites across the UK.

By choosing the maximum 6.4m wheelbase day cab for its DAF CF85 four-axle chassis, the company was able to specify both a large crane, mounted behind the cab, and an Edbro hooklift, both fitted by Abba Commercials of St Helens.

Its drawbar configuration also allows more products to be carried, which, says engineering

manager Ian Murray, helps save time on installations.

"This new DAF has effectively doubled our carrying capacity and greatly increased our productivity," he explains. "Now, using both the truck and trailer, we can collect up to four of our static compactors from the docks in a single lift – two on the truck and two on the trailer."

In its four-axle configuration, the DAF provides a stable platform for a roll-on, roll-off system. It also suits the heavy HMF crane, with the DAF's 32 tonne gross weight (44 tonnes gtw) giving latitude on payload.

Power comes from the 12.9 litre Paccar MX engine, rated at 410bhp at 1,500–1,900rpm and delivering 2,000Nm of torque from 1,000 to 1,410rpm, enabling easy move-offs in all load and road conditions.

The combination truck was supplied by DAF dealer North West Trucks of Huyton.

Type 3 tipper fits the bill for T&J Haulage

One of the first new-design Wilcox Type 3 plank sided stepframe trailers has gone into service with T&J Haulage of Clitheroe, Lancashire, complete with Hyva FC169 tipping hoist.

With the new trailer offering an additional 200kg payload without sacrificing rigidity, T&J director Trevor Walker believes his most recent purchase is ideal for multi-purpose 44-tonne tipper haulage.

"We'll always go for the best specification equipment possible, simply because this way our earning potential is always maximised," explains Walker.

"We need trailers that are equally at home on unmade quarry roads, farm tracks or the highway. As a result, we definitely prefer the extra strength of a steel chassis, but within that we also want the best possible payload as well."

Made from Domex hi-tensile steel, Wilcox Type 3 trailers can be up to 380kg lighter than its earlier steel chassis designs. Also, to maximise weight savings, T&J chose Hyva tipping gear, which Walker suggests is up to 40kg lighter than

competitive equipment. Working with a new Scania R440 6x2 Hi-Line tractor unit, the Wilcox/Hyva trailer offers a 29,750kg payload. The tractor was built on the Scania production line and fitted with a lightweight mid-lift axle, having 19.5in wheels to add a further 450kg to the truck's payload capability.

Lafarge seeks carbon savings with dual-fuel

Lafarge says it is looking to cut its carbon footprint, with the introduction of new LPG dual fuel systems to its tipper truck fleet.

John Dargie, head of distribution and transport for Lafarge Aggregates & Concrete UK, explains that the initiative follows the company's investment in nine new lighter vehicles that offer improved load potential, so reducing delivery movements and carbon output.

"We estimate the dual fuel system will offer an immediate saving of 10% on carbon emissions, as well as a similar level in fuel costs, thanks to the introduction of an LPG tank," says Dargie.

"Clearly, this makes sense from an economic and environmental perspective. Over the next 10 to 20 years, we will all need to look at alternative ways to fuel our fleet, so this is a good start," he adds.

Lafarge is working with LPG fuel specialist Flogas and dual fuel engine systems firm G-volution. Initially, one truck is being fitted with the dual system, with a view to more vehicles being converted, if the trial is successful.

Simon Pickess, commercial sales director at G-volution, explains that the company's dual fuel system uses an optimiser that delivers a matched mix of more than one fuel at the point of combustion, while maintaining OEM power and torque ratings.

"Our dual-fuel system is ideal for Lafarge and we have no doubt that it will help them to significantly reduce their carbon emissions," he says.

"As the fuels are combusted simultaneously, the optimiser continually adjusts the ratios when operating in dual-fuel mode," adds Pickess. "This ensures optimal operation at all times, with net fuel cost and carbon output savings virtually unaffected by changes in operational conditions, load or driver behaviour."

The G-volution optimiser was originally designed around the MAN D20 engine. However G-volution is currently developing systems for other OEMs.

While the system currently works with diesel and LPG, Pickess says he is confident that any future alternative fuel, such as bio-ethanol, bio-methane or hydrogen, could be accommodated.