

## After months of anticipation, London has finally implemented the new requirements for its low emission zone (LEZ).

The majority of transport folk will be aware of the fact that HGVs which are not Euro 4 compliant – as well as vans that don't meet Euro 3 requirements – are no longer welcome in the UK's capital. However, it seems some operators weren't prepared when the changes – which are designed to slash emissions in the capital – become mandatory at the start of the year. This, despite a strong and targeted communications campaign supported by Transport for London, the Freight Transport Association and, of course, Transport Engineer.

The many winners from the reconfigured zone – the main one being the city itself, which can expect to benefit from cleaner air and a boost to its coffers – include some that may not be so obvious. Mid-December 2011 saw the arrival of a fax to this office interested in acquiring non-London LEZ compliant commercial vehicles. Seemingly, any make and model was being considered for re-housing in fleets that need not comply with the new emissions requirements.

And, apparently, dealers purchasing the London-unfriendly vehicles are doing very nicely, thank you. "Just because someone can't operate these vehicles in one city in the UK doesn't mean they are automatically consigned to the scrap heap," commented one dealer.

The government must surely be looking at other potential low emission zone sites. Oxford is already committed to getting its version up and running by 1 January 2014, demanding that all buses be Euro 5 compliant. It can only be a matter of a short time before HGVs and LCVs are added to that city's LEZ list?

Elsewhere, are Birmingham, Manchester and Sheffield being earmarked for LEZ status, too? And, if so, what will this mean for transport operators there? While reliant on entering these urban areas, they are also being stretched financially by a pressurised economy, meaning that fleet renewal is anything but a top priority for the foreseeable future.

All the used commercial vehicle dealers are probably keeping abreast of the situation, even if some operators are not – so buyers beware.



**IRTE**

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