

New policy halves Brian Yeardley tyre costs

West Yorkshire-based international logistics firm Brian Yeardley Continental says it has halved its tyre costs over an 18-month period, following a change in tyre policy.

The company, which operates a fleet of 27 4x2 tractor units (all red and white Volvo and DAF) and 40 tri-axle Mega semi-trailers, first contacted Michelin for advice after its previous tyre brand continually suffered excessive shoulder wear, forcing replacements to be fitted to the steer axles at six-monthly intervals.

Michelin technical manager Dan Lamb carried out a vehicle weighing exercise and also ruled out wheel alignment issues. He then suggested a change in steer axle tyre size to 315/60 R 22.5, from 295/60 R 22.5, and the fitment of Michelin X Energy XF tyres, operating at tyre pressures tailored to the trucks' conditions of use.

Kevin Hopper, managing director of Brian Yeardley Continental, says the suggested changes were carried out on three vehicles – and the uneven shoulder wear was eradicated.

“As a result of the trial, we now fit Michelin tyres across the fleet



and we've been able to cut our tyre bill in half," enthuses Hopper.

“Previously, we'd focused on the unit cost of tyres. This experience has taught me that paying a little bit more per tyre up-front can save you significant time and money over the life of the tyre. In a climate where industry-wide price increases mean most fleets are paying more for their tyres, we're bucking the trend with our spend-to-save approach.”

Brian Yeardley Continental now specifies Michelin low rolling resistance Energy tyres as original equipment on all new tractor units, with the X Energy XF steer axle fitments matched with 295/60 R 22.5

XDA2+ Energy new and Remix tyres on the drive axle.

The trailer fleet has also moved from 245/70 R 19.5 twin fitments to Michelin 445/45 R 19.5 XTA2 Energy new and Remix tyres.

“The change in trailer tyre performance has been revolutionary,” comments Hopper. “The twins we used to specify suffered unbelievable scrub and were forever failing in hot climates, such as southern Spain. The Michelin 445/45s have doubled our tyre life and mean we're only fitting six tyres per trailer as opposed to twelve.”

Vauxhall's television company deal proves the sky's the limit

In one of the biggest single orders for Vauxhall Fleet in Northern Ireland, Belfast-based Fleet Financial has delivered 70 customised Vauxhall Vivaro vans to Sierra Support Services.

The £2 million fleet, put together with the help of Vauxhall Fleet Sales, will tour Northern Ireland as part of Sky TV's installation and service team.

Each of the Vivaros, powered by a common-rail 2-litre CDTi engine, has been installed with specialist shelving, roof racks and graphics.

The operation ran so smoothly that the vans were turned around in just six weeks, and the operators could collect their vehicles, uniform, equipment and parts from a central location and start work the next day.

Jim Humphreys, from Fleet Financials, says: “The strong support, all the way from the factory to the dealer, was key to us winning the deal and supplying these vehicles.”

And he continues: “The Vivaro is rightly recognised as a national fleet vehicle and, because we've worked with the Vauxhall brand for the last 15 years, this gave us the absolute faith in the vehicles' abilities.”

“Rather than supply a number of different makes and model of van, we were able to deliver 70 identical vehicles. We're confident of the vans' capabilities, the servicing costs and the lack of downtime through reliability issues. You can't afford to have this kind of vehicle off the road.”



Stress relief with new trucks

Truck driving is a less stressful job than it used to be, according to a study by Mercedes-Benz.

As part of its Actros development programme, Mercedes-Benz analysed data from drivers on three trucks.

The new and outgoing models were compared, and a 1965 vintage LP 1620 drawbar was thrown in, too.

Wiring up test drivers to measure physical stress with an ECG to monitor heart rate and an EEG to pick up brain activity, they sent four drivers away for a week into Spain's Sierra Nevada.

A 466km daily route showed there to be smaller than expected variations in physical stress, with a 1.4% drop between the current Actros and the new model, and the old LP 1620 being just 10% more stressful to drive.

On the other hand, cognitive stress, as measured by the EEG, told a different tale. Against the current Actros, the LP 1620 added a whopping 140% to the drivers' cognitive workload, with the new Actros dropping cognitive stress levels by 25%.