



RG Bassett takes up Ecostralis challenge

Stoke-on-Trent-based haulier RG Bassett & Sons has taken delivery of its first Iveco Ecostralis fuel-saving 6x2 mid-lift tractor units, from Sherwood Truck & Van.

Having trialled a conventional Stralis for a month, joint managing director Ashley Bassett says he hopes the truck's ability to limit power and torque according to vehicle weight will deliver fuel savings.



"The demonstrator proved to be as good on fuel as any other tractor we operate: it was enough to make us want to put an Ecostralis through its paces," says Bassett.

"With all the new technology, there's the prospect of achieving tangible fuel savings over time," he continues. "If that proves to be the case, then we may see more Iveco

tractors joining our fleet in the future."

Bassett believes the key to its fleet unlocking fuel savings lies in the new truck's Ecoswitch device, which uses vehicle weight information from the ECAS/EBS system to limit engine torque, in line with the gross vehicle weight.

"The nature of our work means we regularly carry relatively lightweight cargo in one direction and heavier goods on the return," explains Bassett. "If the Ecoswitch can enable us to consume less fuel when hauling lighter goods, then it will offer some real benefits to our operation."

Also helping this Ecostralis is a re-mapped version of the FPT Cursor 10 engine, claimed to deliver reduced fuel consumption, compared with regular Stralis. Its EEV-rated 10.3 litre engine is capable of producing 460bhp and a maximum torque of 2,100Nm between 1,050 and 1,550 rev/min.

As with all Ecostralis tractor units, this AS440S46TX/P comes with a EuroTronic transmission, with higher gearing and, in this case, also the ECOfleet mode, which automatically adjusts to the loading of the tractor unit, to help fine-tune fuel economy.

Fuel trials lead to 300 Scania trucks order

Independent operator Gregory Distribution has declared Scania its preferred supplier, following comparative fuel trials involving vehicles from four truck manufacturers. Fully 300 Scania trucks are now set to be delivered to the North Tawton, Devon-based operator over three years – representing two-thirds of the fleet.

Given Gregory's involvement in several industries, the order comprises a mix of trucks. For its general haulage operations, two tractor unit types – the R 420 LA6x2MNA tag axle and the R 420 LA6x2/2 pusher axle, both with Scania Highline cabs – have been chosen. For milk collection, the firm has specified manoeuvrable P 420 LB8x2*6HNA rear-steer rigid.

Meanwhile, for the environmental sector, the firm also opted for R 420 CA6x4MHZ double-drive tractors to haul its fleet of ejector and walking floor trailers. Completing the line-up are day-cabbed P 420 LA 6x2MNA tractor units and P 280 DB6x2MNA rigid, with curtainsider bodies, both of which will be used on distribution.

Scania's two-year repair and maintenance support has been taken for all vehicles based away from Gregory's operating centre in Cullompton, Devon. Also, as part of the arrangement, Scania has been awarded a contract to maintain trailers.

"Before embarking upon such a major order, we considered it necessary to undertake trials to determine the performance of [Scania's] current product range on our operations today," states John Gregory, chief executive of Gregory Distribution.

"The results were extremely encouraging and this .. was instrumental in securing this deal," he adds.

Renault Trucks skiploader heads to CR Hales

Lowestoft-based waste firm CR Hales has taken delivery of the UK's first Renault Kerax 520.42 8x4 drawbar skiploader. The vehicle, supplied by Renault Trucks Felixstowe with the Roy Humphrey Group, was purpose-designed – and Renault Trucks was the only manufacturer able to deliver the specification.

The Kerax features a Boughton body, fitted by Machinery Maintenance in Stanton, and joins CR Hales' mixed fleet of DAF, Scania and Iveco skiploaders and roll-on/roll-off vehicles.

This truck's 520bhp engine ensures that the Kerax and its trailer can operate at 44-tonne gcw and, for managing director Charles

Hales, meeting that requirement was key.

"Everyone else could only offer off-the-shelf trucks, [but] we needed extra horsepower to pull up hills when we're at 44-tonnes," he explains.

"Getting the right spec was paramount and, although fuel efficiency wasn't our first consideration, the Kerax's larger engine is comparable to the rest of the fleet," he states.

