

Two becomes one for Hamblys' Volvo rigid

A new Volvo FM 6x2 rigid, specified to the requirements of family-owned agricultural machinery dealership Hamblys, is doing work that previously required two vehicles, according to MD Steve Barrett.

Supplied by Truck and Bus Wales & West, and serviced by Stuarts Commercials of Exeter, the Volvo truck is designed to carry a wide range of agricultural machinery, sold by the company throughout the South West of England.

Specifications include a Volvo D11C engine, rated at 370bhp, matched to an I-Shift, two pedal fully-automated gearbox and rear-steer axle.

A nine-tonne front axle, equipped with 385/65R22.5 tyres, is in place to take the extra weight imposed by the front-mounted Fassi self loader. "There were several reasons for choosing the Volvo," explains Barrett. "But fundamentally we decided after looking around the market that the Volvo



offered the best overall combination of quality and affordability."

The bespoke platform beaver-tail body, cheese-wedge loading ramps and Fassi F-235A crane, supplied and fitted by S W Commercials of Redruth, ensure that loading and unloading the Claas machinery

is both faster and simpler than was possible with the company's previous vehicles.

"Everything is quicker and easier now," says driver Kevin Locke, "With this set-up, loading and unloading just about any of the machines we handle is generally a one-man job. The truck is just superb. I can't fault it."

WMB Haulage's step frame trailer



Abnormal loads specialist WMB Heavy Haulage has taken delivery of its first new bespoke specification Andover Trailers step frame trailer, after years of dealing with the company for the supply of Goldhofer trailers from Germany.

The trailer, built at Andover's factory in Hampshire, will be used by the Dumfries-based operator to transport heavyweight plant and machinery, including forestry machines, ranging from harvesters to forwarders, for delivery into some of the largest forests in the UK.

Unlike the majority of tri-axle step frame trailers, this 13.5m SFCL48 was specified by WMB to operate on 19.5 inch tyres.

Jon Smail, WMB's transport manager, expects this specification to ensure greater ground clearance for forestry work, in

comparison with the standard 17.5 inch fitments. "The SAF air suspension features a raise and lower valve, for loading, and also a dual-height valve that effectively gives us a choice of running heights," states Smail.

"When we're not in the forest, we can lower the trailer down to a height comparable with a typical step frame operating on 17.5 inch tyres. It gives us the best of both worlds – and is testament to Andover's ability to build each trailer to the customer's requirements," he adds.

The new step frame replaces an older King step frame trailer at WMB, and was also specified with a low-profile neck, beavertail, SAF drum brake axles and a self-steering rear axle, with under-floor stowage to accommodate side extension timbers.

A pair of 3m long and 1m wide hydraulic fold-forward ramps, each with a hydraulic sideways function allowing movement both in and out, enable the ramps to be adjusted to accommodate machines with different track widths or wheel spacing.

Controls have been fitted to both sides of the trailer, ensuring easy operation in confined areas. Also, five pairs of lashing points have been fitted, with slide-out side extensions and timbers for wide machines, stowage under the bed for the timbers and LED floodlights, along the side of the trailer, to assist with loading in forests.

Fresh Direct returns to Isuzu

Following the success of its first 20 Isuzu 7.5-tonne rigid, delivered in 2009, food service company Fresh Direct has taken delivery of another batch.

The order involves 39 N75.190 4x2 Isuzu Forward refrigerated 7.5-tonne distribution trucks, which have now joined Fresh Direct's 200-plus strong UK vehicle fleet.

Twenty five of the trucks have replaced existing Isuzu vehicles, while 14 are an extension for the fleet, reflecting Fresh Direct's growth.

"Since the original Isuzu order in 2009, we have now built up three years of meaningful operating data on the performance of the Isuzu Forward vehicles," comments Nick Allen, head of business improvement at Fresh Direct.

"We have found them to be robust and reliable vehicles in operation, with excellent fuel consumption," he continues.

"However, it is their impressive payload capacity of three tonnes that is critical to the success of the intensive multi-drop operation in which they operate."

All 39 vehicles have been fitted with Isuzu's Easyshift transmission. They were also specified with a single compartment RVL refrigerated body, using Carrier Transicold Xarios refrigeration systems, and are capable of carrying an eight-pallet load.