

ransport engineers, fleet managers, workshop managers and manufacturers: all are under more pressure than ever to raise their game. The race is on for everyone not only to achieve operational cost savings, but also simultaneously to make serious efficiency and customer service improvements. And there's an uncompromising mandate to shifting up a gear, in terms of standards and regulatory compliance, too.

The IRTE Conference 2012 focused squarely on practical methods and technologies that deliver on all of these important fronts. Sessions covering the critical issues for today were delivered by operators and specialists – your peers – who have put their heads above the parapet and are now reaping the benefits.

Their experiences and the lessons learned are invaluable. So we hope that the secrets of success revealed in this special Transport Engineer supplement will help you to make similar significant and tangible differences to your operations as you, in turn, walk the walk.

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- With the industry facing more challenging times than ever, Nick Jones, CEO of the SOE (the umbrella organisation for IRTE), says the IRTE Conference 2012 couldn't have come at a better time
- 2 In her keynote to the IRTE Conference 2012, senior traffic commissioner Beverley Bell challenged the transport industry to sort out its standards and shake off its poor image
- VOSA chief executive Alastair Peoples asked delegates at the IRTE Conference to redouble their efforts to keep first-time pass rates and vehicle standards improving
- HM Government's10-year trial of longer trailers is giving a new urgency to advanced truck and trailer steering and braking systems. John Challen reports from the IRTE Conference on pioneering work by the Cambridge Vehicle Dynamics Consortium
- The thorny issue of Euro 6 was addressed by Andrew Nicol, technical specialist for heavy-duty engines at Ricardo, who led a panel of experts from Cummins, Delphi Diesel, Iveco and Scania. Ian Norwell reports
- With increasing fuel costs and concerns over the environment, the IRTE Conference 2012 session on alternative fuel experiences was very well attended. Brian Tinham reports
- When it comes to cutting costs, it's vital to look at the whole picture and challenge the status quo. Brian Tinham reports on huge improvements, available to some, from light weighting to aerodynamics
- Tyres may not be the most glamorous of truck or trailer components, but, reporting from the IRTE Conference 2012, John Challen finds that a vehicle's boots determine its cost efficiency, as well as safety and noise
- Truck operators that have taken the plunge with telematics are reporting mouth watering savings, in terms of seriously improved fuel usage and vehicle maintenance. Ian Norwell reviews this conference session

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