

ORANGE FUTURE



Millbrook Proving Ground was the venue for customers and press alike to see DAF's latest Euro 6 truck line-up. Brian Weatherley reports

Truck registrations should pick up again this autumn, according to DAF Trucks UK managing director Ray Ashworth – though he believes manufacturers won't see the full effect of returning sales until early next year. His comments – at DAF's Millbrook Euro 6 customer event – follow the unprecedented spike in registrations last December as operators rushed to acquire Euro 5 trucks to avoid paying for more expensive Euro 6 chassis. SMMT figures show UK sales have since collapsed.

Last year, UK CV registrations above 3.5 tonnes rose 23% to 56,218 units. "We did over 3,000 registrations [in December], where normally we'd do about 1,000," confirms Ashworth. He now expects the 2014 market for trucks above six tonnes to finish at 36,000 units, settling at nearer 42,000 longer term.

Why the lag? While tractor registrations are likely to rise from this summer, rigid chassis won't. "People don't really buy in July or August: they start in September," asserts Ashworth. "Then, with an eight-week [build] lead-time you're into November and, if you need a body that's another four weeks. Will you register a truck in December? No, it will be January."

Another disturbance

And Ashworth believes the truck market will then see another distortion. He says DAF is "getting a lot of questions" from operators about WVTA (Whole Vehicle Type Approval). "We've run a number of bodybuilder seminars at both Leyland and Thame. We do have a benefit with our own factory-built [Paccar] bodies, since they are already type approved. And the

majority of box and curtainsiders we build on our own chassis. But there's a lot of disturbance in the market, in particular [with] smaller bodybuilders as the October deadline for compliance approaches."

What about DAF's new trucks? With its Euro 6 range based on the existing cab, Ashworth expects the Dutch truck maker's replacement cycle to match the EU's timing for longer 'aero-nose' trucks from 2020 to help reduce CO₂ emissions. "Our plan was to invest in Euro 6 with existing cab technology, and to get the best out of what we have," confirms Ashworth. "After that, the plan was always a new cab generation – so [the EU decision] has played into our hands."

As for the rest, visitors to Millbrook saw the full range of LF, CF and XF Euro 6 trucks – with two- and three-axle CF and XF tractor units, including the CF440 lightweight mid-lift FTP 6x2, for tankers and bulk tippers. The latter is powered by the new MX-11 10.8-litre engine (440bhp), which is 180kg lighter and 3% more fuel efficient than the MX-13 12.9-litre engine, available at up to 510bhp for heavier-duty applications.

LF is available in 7.5-, 12- and 18-tonne gvw variants, equipped with Paccar bodies, which are additionally fitted on the CF at 18 tonnes gvw, with box and curtainsiders available. DAF has also upgraded its CF 8x4 tippers, with an on-road version and a new construction variant in 6x4 and 8x4 rigid format, and a 6x4 tractor. The construction trucks are built for high ground clearance and approach angle to suit on-off road applications.

On a point of detail, DAF has now revised its electronic DIP (Driver Information Panel) oil level display on CF and XF trucks. Whereas previously, if insufficient time had been allowed for oil to return to the sump, the driver was shown a 'data not available' message, now the DIP displays the last reading – oil level along with date and mileage. **TE**

DAF latest Aero box body can save up to 4% on fuel compared to the standard LF



DAF's UK managing director Ray Ashworth says the manufacturer is aiming to grow both its heavy and light truck market shares across Europe. In particular, the giant is chasing a 20% EU heavy-truck share by 2020



Oil level check on CF and XF Driver Information Panel now shows either current level or last oil level readings with date and mileage information