



ON THE ROAD AGAIN: Malcolm Logistics' 14.6m longer semi-trailer in Transaid livery has visited almost 50 sites since the operator unveiled it at Multimodal earlier this year. The moving-floor trailer covers an average 3,500kms a week, operating out of Malcolm's base in Linwood, Scotland. Malcolm Logistics driver trainer, John Heirs (above), is on secondment for two weeks at

Transaid's Professional Driver Training project in Tanzania, continuing the company's work with the charity. Malcolm Group chief executive Andrew Malcolm said: "We wanted to raise awareness for the work that Transaid does and to highlight the partnership between Transaid and The Malcolm Group. Putting one of our trailers in Transaid livery seemed like the perfect idea."

RHA attacks London mayor's retrofitting plans

London mayor Boris Johnson's plans to force the retrofitting of larger windows in HGV cab near-side doors have been attacked as a step too far that risks further damaging the image of road transport.

Speaking to *MT* after the mayor revealed the initiative at the launch of the Safer Lorry Scheme earlier this month (*MT* 7 September), Ray Engley, head of technical services at the RHA, questioned the practicality and benefit of mandating retrofitting panels in cab doors. "The jury is out on that one. We'd be happy to work with TfL on a solution if there is one," he said, adding that the industry had demonstrated its commitment to addressing the issue and that demonising haulage was not the answer.

"The RHA's point of view remains that both sides need to play their part. Cyclists need to be taught to make eye contact with HGV drivers and not to put themselves in a dangerous position."

Bob Dempsey, operations manager south at Wilson James, said retrofitting windows would be a major cost. "When is it going to stop? We've already spent about £40,000 on safety equipment and training for our 10 trucks."

Dempsey oversees the London Construction Consolidation Centre (LCCC), which has Fors gold. He said, like many, the LCCC had gone above and beyond minimum safety requirements, fitting camera systems, side radar and audible turn alarms to its vehicles. "Standard sideguards are more than sufficient for most HGVs [as mandated by the Safer Lorry Scheme]," said Dempsey, adding that tippers, volumetric mixers and some refuse trucks were the primary source of collisions, not trucks in general.

J O'Doherty incident is the catalyst for a rethink on how firms progress through levels

Fors to amend accreditation process after controversy

By Robin Meczes

The Fors Community Partnership (FCP) has announced an immediate change to the way firms are allowed to progress through the Fors accreditation levels. The move comes after it emerged that a vehicle operator was elevated from silver to gold status at the same time as its O-licence suspension was being confirmed for a series of drivers' hours and tachograph offences (*MT* 7 September).

In August, an appeal against the O-licence suspension imposed on north London construction haulier J O'Doherty Haulage in March was rejected by the Upper Tribunal. This was about the same time as the firm's eleva-

tion to gold status was being approved. The firm has since served its week-long suspension.

The FCP has now decided that applications for progression from bronze to silver or silver to gold will no longer be assessed or approved when Fors members are undergoing a legal appeal and told *MT* its terms and conditions were being rewritten to reflect this.

The FCP has not decided to extend the same restriction automatically to firms that have had action taken against their licence by a traffic commissioner but have chosen not to appeal the decision, however, or to those awaiting a public inquiry.

John Hix, regional director

of lead Fors concessionaire Aecom, told *MT* the scheme's terms and conditions allowed it to suspend or even terminate Fors membership after action was taken against a company at a PI but said that in terms of the revised Fors progression process "we will need to take each individual case on its own merits".

The FCP declined to provide the reasons for this decision, however.

Meanwhile, a TfL spokesman confirmed that the last routine Fors audit carried out at J O'Doherty Haulage, undertaken by the FTA in May 2014 when TfL was still running Fors, showed up no areas of concerns relating to drivers' hours and tachographs. This

was despite a subsequent DVSA investigation that demonstrated a series of offences took place in 2013 and 2014.

Despite Hix describing Fors as "robust, transparent and beneficial to the industry", Aecom and TfL have declined to provide a copy of the firm's audit report or to comment in any real detail on it. The FTA declined to comment.

Hix has confirmed, however, that the Fors audit should include checks on an operator's managerial systems for both drivers' hours and working time rules, as well as checks on a proportion of the fleet to ensure compliance with these rules and checks on the firm's record-keeping procedures.

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