

NEW

For Volvo drivers, operators and enthusiasts No.1 December 2011

VOLVO TRUCK DRIVER

VTD

M A G A Z I N E

FREE



EXCLUSIVE!
FH16-750

EIGHT AXLE RIG – 60 TONNES!
FIRST DRIVE IN SWEDEN (p14)

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Also Inside

- *West Country Heroes* ➤ *Personal View* ➤ *Operator Profile*
- *News* ➤ *Volvo Mania* ➤ *Volvo Trucks Driver Challenge*

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WELCOME!

Welcome to Volvo Truck Driver (VTD)! This is the first issue of the only commercially produced magazine aimed at drivers, operators and enthusiasts of the premier Swedish truck marque – Volvo! We aim to be the magazine for all those dedicated professionals who are interested in Volvo trucks past present and indeed future! We'll be running driver and operator profiles and, in future issues, in depth features about the technology and engineering that make a Volvo truck one of the safest working environments for the professional driver.

In this , our launch issue, we are proud to present a European exclusive! We were privileged to be given access to one of the first mighty FH16-750s for a fantastic drive through the mountains north of Gothenburg. The vehicle we drove was an eight axle drawbar grossing 60 tonnes and as you would expect, it's performance was awesome. Pictures and report are on pages 14 to 17.

We've also been catching up with the latest trucks to go on the road with UK operators as well as talking to some dyed in the wool, long-time, loyal Volvo users. People like Angelo Binaccione, who runs a smart fleet of Volvo tippers in the West Country and Phil Blakeman, an own account operator in Staffordshire.

Our mission is to be the 'go to place' for anyone interested in Volvo trucks, their technology and the people associated with this great marque.

Tell us what you think of this first issue. You can follow us on Twitter @VTD, Facebook or send us an email :editor@vtd.com

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News

A R Demolition order UK & Ireland's first FH16-750

Carlton, Leicestershire-based, A R Demolition has placed an order with Volvo Truck and Bus Centre East Anglia's nearby Bardon Dealerpoint for what will be the first FH16-750 to be delivered in the UK and Ireland. A R Demolition is owned and managed by Andrew Thompson and Richard Dolman. They currently operate two trucks, both Volvos - an FM with Boughton hookloader material-handling equipment and an FH tractor unit that is used on both low loader and bulk trailer duties. A R Demolition also operate a fleet of Volvo excavators. According to Andrew Thompson, the FH16-750 is an additional truck on the fleet and will provide the firm with increased flexibility when it comes to moving its own plant and machinery. It will also be available to provide a low loader service for other companies.

A new low-loader trailer is being purchased for use with the new 6x4 double drive Volvo. "We were looking at the big picture when we decided to order the FH16-750," says Andrew. "From the calculations, we expect it to be at least as good as or better on fuel than other trucks with less horsepower." A R Demolition co owner Richard Dolman agrees, saying that, at 3550 Nm, the massive torque of the D16G 16-litre engine in the FH16-750 and the truck's high specification effectively future proofs the company's transport capability in terms of the service they can offer and the efficiencies to be gained in enhanced flexibility. "It makes good business sense," he says.

VTD 's DATA DAD SAYS:

A R Demolition told VTD Data Dad that they specified their FH16-750 with Volvo's latest I-Shift automated gearbox and retarder together with a transmission oil-cooler. The company will also be trialling Volvo's Dynafleet telematics system.

“We expect it to be at least as good as or better on fuel than other trucks with less horsepower.”



Andrew Thompson (left) and Richard Dolman, owners of A R Demolition.

FIRST EVER VOLVOS WIN ON FUEL FOR M J GRIFFITHS TRANSPORT

VTD 's DATA DAD SAYS:

M J Griffiths' trucks rack up the miles on double shifts, trunking fresh fruit and veg from Lancashire to wholesalers of top quality produce in London and Scotland. These wholesalers include famous names such as Gordon Ramsay, Heston Blumenthal and even The Queen among their customers.

Managing Director Mick Griffiths has declared himself "very impressed" with the fuel economy of the first-ever Volvo trucks to join the 16 strong fleet of his company, Burscough, Lancashire based M J Griffiths Transport Ltd. Mick reports that the two new Volvo FH-500 6x2 tractor units to join the mixed fleet of the family business are achieving between 9 and 10 mpg at 44-tonnes, saying: "That's 2 mpg better than other trucks in the fleet and we expect them to improve as their mileage increases. He added: "We're saving up to £100 a day on our fuel bill as a result of the two new Volvo's economy."

Both trucks were supplied by Thomas Hardie Commercials on a three year Volvo Contract Hire package. This is also the first time that M J Griffiths

Transport Ltd has taken trucks on contract hire. Mileage is expected to be around 900,000 kms during the contract term and Mick reports that only Volvo was prepared to offer a three year term on such high mileage.



M J Griffiths Transport Ltd's new Volvo FH-500 tractor units are delivering excellent fuel economy, says Managing Director Mick Griffiths.

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News

Leeds Recycling's FH16-700 beauty



Leeds Recycling have added an FH16-700 to their growing Volvo fleet.

Leeds Paper Recycling's MD Jamie Todd has added an FH16-700 to his growing fleet of Volvo trucks. "We wanted it as a flagship for the fleet," he told VTD, adding that the super spec motor is being used to haul bulk waste from energy material. Readers will have spotted the words: Mick Todd (Legend) on the front of the truck. That, Jamie tells us, refers to his father Mick who founded the firm. The FH16 plus two new FE Drawbars were supplied by Volvo dealer Crossroads at Birstall. Speaking earlier

“We wanted this FH16 as a flagship for the fleet.”

this year Jamie told VTD: "Our choice of purchase was only ever going to be Volvo due to the quality of the truck from our experience over many years and the excellent after-sales support and service we have had so far. Crossroads and Volvo have helped

Leeds Paper Recycling grow into one of the leading waste management companies in Yorkshire through value for money and the way they have looked after our vehicles 24 hours a day. We've always found Crossroads to be the best people to deal with."



Scan this QR code with your smartphone to watch a video about Leeds Paper Recycling's FH16-700 on the Volvo Trucks UK YouTube Channel.

Hartshorne focus on partnership helps keep UK Mail Group rolling

As part of the company's enhanced professional focus on working in partnership with key businesses, the new management team at Midlands Volvo dealer Hartshorne have announced they are working closely with UK Mail Group to provide strategic transport solutions and vehicle support services.

UK Mail Group have now put two new Volvo FM13-460 6x2 tractor units into service at their Birmingham depot. Both trucks are equipped with Dynafleet telematics and were supplied on a forty-eight month Contract Hire agreement with Volvo Financial Services. The trucks are expected to cover around 190,000 kms a year and are maintained at Hartshorne's workshops at Gravelly Hill Industrial Park, Birmingham. Hartshorne's fully equipped bodyshop at Walsall is also providing a comprehensive trailer repair service for UK Mail Group. "We are impressed by the enthusiasm and professional approach we've had from the team at Hartshorne," says UK Mail Group's Fleet Administration and Resource Manager



Midlands Volvo Dealer Hartshorne is working closely with UK Mail Group to provide strategic transport solutions and vehicle support services.

(Transport Group) David Williams, adding. "They were able to source two tractor units to our specification very quickly when we needed them. We are also using Hartshorne's bodyshop at Walsall. We like the fact that they give us a fixed price for trailer repairs and also their reliability. Jobs are always completed on time and to the agreed price. As a value added service, the bodyshop provides a fantastic fit with our transport requirements." "UK Mail Group is very much the kind of key business we are focusing on to partner with." says Hartshorne Director Keith Bradley.

Tats oot for the lads!

VTD have been sent this great pic of an unidentified guy showing off his splendid tat of a Volvo truck. We know the pic was shot at Truckfest Peterborough this year but we need readers help to find this guy as we would like to feature him in a future issue. If you are the cool dude in the picture or, if you know who he is, please contact Matthew at VTD on 07747 717578. We'd also like to hear from you if you have a tattoo showing a Volvo truck or Volvo logo. Please send a pic of your tat plus your name and a contact number to VTD (address on page 3) and you could be picked to be in our tattastic feature!



Cool dude reveals ace tat at Truckfest.

VTD 's
DATA DAD SAYS:

In addition to the D1C 11-litre engine rated at 330hp, the spec includes the Volvo Powertronic PT2106 six-speed, fully automatic planetary gearbox with integral retarder. Designed for heavy duty applications, the PT2106 offers smooth gearchanges without interruption in power delivery in both automatic and manual modes. Smooth start-ups and good traction, even on gradients and demanding terrain are possible thanks to the electronic gear selection and torque amplifier with automatic lock-up.

Tough on the streets

The first FMX snowploughs in the UK will be keeping the mean streets of Bristol's urban shopping centres and car parks free from snow and ice this Christmas. South Gloucestershire Council has put 11 FMXs into service to keep access roads, delivery ramps and shoppers' car parks clear in areas such as the Cribbs Causeway and Kingswood malls as well as the A46 Marshfield High Street. These are also their first Volvos. In addition to eight FMX-330 double drive 26-tonners, the

council have also put three all wheel drive FMXs into service. According to South Gloucestershire Council's Highways Manager Owen

“Bristolians say: The best 4x4: Not arf”

Jenkins, the short wheelbase 4x4s are ideal for this application as they are required to work on icy surfaces, on steep hills, between rows of parked cars, to keep roads open for local businesses, residents, shoppers and delivery vehicles. Volvo Trucks tells VTD that these are also the first 4x4 FMXs in the UK.



Winter's here and South Gloucestershire Council have got the best kit to deal with it.



Some of South Gloucestershire Council's guys who help keep the roads and car parks of Bristol free from ice and snow.

Muckaway Monster

South Wales plant hire specialist Bob Gay has taken delivery of an FMX-380 for use on muckaway duties. This is the first Volvo to enter the business for more than a decade and joins a fleet of artics, tippers and excavators. The FMX is being maintained by the supplying dealer Truck and Bus Wales and West at Pontypridd under a three-year servicing agreement. The mighty muckaway tipper is equipped with a sleeper cab about which the Owner and Managing Director Bob Gay told VTD: "We invested in a sleeper cab because these days we have to go where the work is and drivers are required to sleep in the vehicles. Expectations regarding the new Volvo's performance are high," he added.



Bob Gay takes truck away for muckaway.

VTD 's
DATA DAD SAYS:

Bob Gay Plant Hire's new FMX is powered by the D13C diesel rated at 380hp. The truck features the popular I-Shift two-pedal, fully automated gearbox. It is also equipped with Thompson Loadmaster bodywork and Binotto tipping gear.

INTERNATIONAL

Mean green hybrid world record verified

The FIA (Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile) has verified Boije Ovebrink's world record run with the 'Mean Green' hybrid truck. He received a diploma confirming his speed record from the Swedish Automobile Sports Federation on the occasion of the Federation's 75th jubilee celebrations in Stockholm on 19th November. "This is a landmark achievement and I am both proud and honoured to receive this diploma," says Boije Ovebrink. "No record feels entirely real until you get the diploma in your hand. The world record is the result of excellent teamwork between me and Volvo's engineers. We're all true enthusiasts." It was on June 28th this year that Boije

Ovebrink beat the world record with Mean Green at Hultsfred Airfield, Sweden. He has often maintained that 'Mean Green' is the world's fastest hybrid truck and now he has received official confirmation that this is indeed the case.

The first record, the standing 500-metre sprint, was measured at 115.347 km/h while his second one, the standing 1000 metre event, recorded an average speed of 152.252 km/h. Boije Ovebrink already holds the standing kilometre world record for trucks with conventional diesel drivelines, at an average speed of 166.698 km/h. His terminal speed in all his record-breaking runs was above 250 km/h.



Boije Ovebrink's Mean Green Volvo Hybrid causing a stir at Truckfest Peterborough 2011.



World record holder Boije Ovebrink

VTD 's DATA DAD SAYS:

The electric motor gives an additional 200 horsepower and 1100 Newton metres of torque. The result is a lightning-speed boost from start-off without any of the customary diesel-engine delay. Mean Green runs on renewable liquid rosin diesel and starts delivering power with explosive force. Boije tells VTD that he has to change up to 9th gear by the time he's doing about 60kmh!

Weight reduction was absolutely crucial to setting the new records. Mean Green's front axle was milled by experts from Volvo's engine factory in Skövde and lightened from 100 kg to 57. And the gear set for first gear was removed from the gearbox, shaving off another seven kg.

Mean Green differs from a Formula 1 car in that the aerodynamic properties allow the truck to slice through the air rather than be pressed down onto the road surface



You Tube

Scan this QR code with your smartphone to watch a video about the Mean Green Hybrid's World Speed Record on the Volvo Trucks UK YouTube Channel.

Sleep deprivation: A real nightmare

After first experiencing the classic symptoms of tiredness, such as heavy eyelids and yawning, drivers can slip into what is known as a microsleep, when they doze off for a few seconds – often without realising it. To help combat this, Volvo Trucks has developed Driver Alert Support (DAS), a sensor-based system which detects when a driver is drifting off. If the driver shows symptoms of tiredness such as erratic or jerky driving, the system sends out both an audible warning and a visual signal. “The system is invisible if you are driving well,” says Peter Kronberg, who led the technical development of DAS for Volvo Trucks. “It isn’t something that will require your attention or unnecessarily distract you while you are on the road. However, when it makes itself known, it does so for a very good reason – to warn you that you are a danger on the road and it is time for you to do something about it.”

The European SafetyNet (2009) Fatigue survey revealed that 60 per cent of all heavy vehicle drivers have

experienced drowsiness behind the wheel. However, a Finnish study reveals that truck drivers are less likely to fall asleep behind the wheel than other road users and are involved in fewer accidents per kilometre, but because of the sheer amount of time they spend driving, they are still an important group to examine.

The average long-haul driver sleeps 4.6 nights a week in the cab, according to surveys carried out by Volvo Trucks. This was underlined when the company asked 2,200 long-haul truck drivers to prioritise fifteen different in-cab parameters, because top of the list was ‘rest’ and ‘sleep comfort’. Today’s driving and rest regulations for truck drivers can only improve safety if the statutory rest period really does offer proper relaxation. “A good driver’s environment is one of Volvo’s hallmarks, but it’s also as much about another of our core values – safety,” explains Carl Johan Almqvist, Traffic and Product Safety Director at Volvo Trucks. “A poorly

VTD Top Tip Take a break

Drowsiness can be counteracted by drinking plenty of coffee or taking frequent breaks. However, after a break you’re only alert for another 15 to 30 minutes and the more tired you are, the faster you’ll become tired and sleepy again after each break. As such, it’s vital to be aware of your tiredness, so that you can choose to act before it gets too late.

designed driver’s environment results in poorer road safety, but a driver who is tired because they have slept badly is actually even worse.” So Volvo has redesigned the bunk area of its sleeper cabs to help drivers sleep better, thereby keeping them more alert behind the wheel the next day. Beds are adjustable, mattresses are available in different firmness levels and there is a choice of overlay mattresses to meet each individual driver’s preferences.



Volvo Driver Alert Support detects when a driver starts to doze off.

Being drowsy behind the wheel is as dangerous as drink driving.

Operator Profile

ALL ALONG, DOWN ALONG, OUT ALONG LEE.

When partners Walt Lydamore and Angelo Binaccione decided to give up their steel fabrication business a little more than 40-years ago in order to embark on a new venture in road haulage they had little idea what they were letting themselves in for.

“Believe it or not, from where we were sitting it looked like an easy option,” said Angelo, hardly believing his own words. “We often worked in and around the local quarries and in those days the steel fabricating business was hard physical work. So when we saw tipper drivers just sitting in the cab while they were loaded and later watching the truck as it unloaded itself we reckoned this had to be an easier option! But if we had known then just what a hard slog the tipper business is, we might never have made the move,” he added. As fortune (and hard work) would have it, the business prospered and today L & B Haulage based near Cullompton in Devon is still operated by the surviving partner Angelo and his wife Barbara.

100% Volvo

These days the fleet is 100% Volvo, a new FM six-wheeler powered by the Volvo 11-litre engine rated at 370-hp being the latest addition. Other vehicles are FM eight-wheelers finished in the livery of the quarry companies to which the company is contracted. The business started with a four-wheeler, a Bedford KM 16-tonner registered F234 NYD, recalled Angelo. And the first new Volvo on the scene arrived in 1983. The Volvo was an F-model that featured the light weight four-spring suspension known as the ‘L-Ride’. But while this was light, it

provided only indifferent traction which was not a big help in the tipper business. As a result it was some years later that L & B purchased their first Volvo eight-

“One day at the wheel of a Volvo with the I-Shift and they never want to drive a manual again!”

wheeler with the more effective B-Ride rear suspension. Even 20-years ago tippers were not nearly as sophisticated as they are today but Angelo’s enthusiasm for the business and his

vehicles ensured that they were always equipped with the latest technology. Consequently even his earliest Volvos were equipped with automatic chassis lubrication, sun visor, air conditioning, spot lights and mirror guards, the latter an essential item when negotiating the narrow lanes in the area. Even before the quarries and subsequent legislation demanded equipment such as automated load covers and on-board cameras, Angelo had ensured that his vehicles were fully compliant in these areas.

“One of the many reasons we liked the Volvo was its guaranteed high residual value,” explained Angelo. “In order to take full advantage of this we specified several of our eight wheelers with a sleeper cab and fully insulated body even though drivers never had a night out and we seldom carried asphalt,” he added. This comprehensive specification allied with the reputation gained by L & B for top-notch maintenance not only meant that his trucks were always in





left to right)
Phil Bell and son Marco
with Angelo Binaccione.



Mirror guards are essential kit here.

demand at the end of their first life but that top price could be assured when the time came to up-grade to a new vehicle. And by specifying lightweight Alcoa wheels, the extra weight of the sleeper cab and insulated body could be off-set to some extent.

I-Shift

During the past two decades Volvo trucks have always made up the biggest part of the L & B fleet, but that is not to say that Angelo has not been tempted away from the product at times. One offer from the local Scania salesman on a cancelled order was just “too good to refuse” according to Angelo. On another occasion it was necessary for the Volvo salesman to spend almost the entire day going through the specification of a DAF line-by-line in order to convince him that the deal on offer was in fact no better than Volvo’s. “I guess that deep down I have a lot of respect for Volvo and the people I deal with,” said Angelo. “But that’s not to say that I won’t take a look at a really good deal from the competition if one comes my way.” Nevertheless, Angelo is quick to concede that innovations such as the Volvo I-Shift fully automated gearbox with optimised software packages and a rear-view camera system with an integral colour monitor in the cab continue to put the marque at the top of his wish list. “We have had the occasional new driver who has been convinced that any sort of

automatic ‘box could never be as good as a manual,” he remarked. “But one day at the wheel of a Volvo with the I-Shift and they say they never want to drive a manual again!”

Family business

At one point Angelo and Barbara were a little concerned as to who would take over the business when they eventually decide to retire. Their son is a highly qualified helicopter engineer and having embarked on his own career is simply not interested in the family enterprise. Fortunately their son-in-law Phil Bell and his wife Karen showed rather more enthusiasm for the early starts, long

days and constant aggravation that is part of any road haulage operation and Phil is already gaining valuable hands-on experience at the wheel of one of the FM tippers.

“One of the many reasons we liked the Volvo was its high residual value.”

According to Angelo, Phil’s university education should stand him in good stead when the time comes for him to run the business himself. The line of succession from then on would appear to be assured already since Angelo’s three year old grandson Marco is already keen to help with washing the trucks and according to Angelo, ‘goes round and kicks all the tyres’ whenever he is in the yard. That being the case Angelo should be able to take a little more time out for his other ‘hobby’ – game shooting, something at which he is obviously very accomplished if the number of trophies on display is anything to go by.

IN BRIEF: DEALER SPOTLIGHT

VOLVO TRUCK AND BUS CENTRE EAST ANGLIA

In this, the first of a series of interviews with Volvo dealer senior managers, VTD talks to Volvo Truck and Bus Centre East Anglia Aftermarket Director Con Rooney to find out, in brief, how the dealership is helping customers maintain optimum vehicle uptime.

Volvo Truck and Bus
Centre Aftermarket
Director Con Rooney.



VTD: How big is Volvo Truck and Bus Centre East Anglia?

CR: "The dealership looks after an area of approximately 8,000 square miles in which we have eleven strategically located Dealerpoints. But despite its size, when it comes to supporting customers in terms of parts and service, we are very much focused on getting the simple things right. We maintain that focus because customers tell us that's what matters. Working in partnership with our customers is at the heart of what we do."

VTD: What are a couple of key ways you currently support customers in terms of parts?

"One of the popular services we offer is our Retail Parts Centre. This provides a telephone ordering service that is staffed by a Volvo trained, dedicated team who have an unmatched level of knowledge of not just Genuine Volvo Parts but also all makes and trailer parts and workshop consumables through our Roadcrew solution. One of our major strengths is

“Working in partnership with our customers is at the heart of what we do.”

that the Retail Parts Centre can also provide quotes for Fitted Price and offer customers a workshop appointment at any of our Dealerpoints across the region to have those parts fitted. We pride ourselves on being friendly and easy to deal with and the Retail Parts Centre is a great example of that philosophy. I would say to operators, please try it! It's on 0845 850 8703. You'll like what it can do for your transport business in terms of saving you time and the convenience it brings to ordering parts. Across the East Anglia region, we hold around £2.5 million worth of parts. We also have a substantial fleet of parts delivery vans with many operators receiving twice daily deliveries."

VTD: What is Fitted Price?

CR: "Essentially, the Fitted Price programme means that the price we quote you for one of our Dealerpoints to fit a part is the price you pay. It's a very simple scheme with no hidden extras and a great range of parts are covered by it. An added benefit is that Fitted Price parts come with a 2 year or 200,000Kms warranty on both the parts and the labour. Furthermore, provided the parts are fitted by one of our Dealerpoints, the Fitted Price warranty also includes free Volvo Action Service roadside assistance in the event of the part failing due to defects or incorrect fitment."

VTD: What are your workshops doing to support operators of older trucks with their service offer?

CR: "We have a range of offers aimed at helping operators of older trucks get quality service from Volvo trained Technicians using Genuine Volvo Parts. We also do trailer servicing and MOTs so we have something to complement all budgets and schedules. A key fact that is so important for our customers, including those operating older vehicles, is that, whichever Volvo Truck and Bus Centre East Anglia Dealerpoint they use, their vehicles will be looked after by people from our team of 200 Volvo trained workshop Technicians and Master Technicians. This is the case whether they are in for an 'O' Licence inspection, scheduled maintenance or an MOT. Being able to support customers with properly trained Technicians is fundamental to us. So important in fact that we invest around 12,000 hours of practical and classroom training for all our people in the region. They are our front line and really make the difference when it comes to right first time diagnosis of faults and reducing the amount of time vehicles spend in the workshop. Our target is to complete jobs right first time and get customers' vehicles back on the road meeting our customers' expectations. With fuel costs increasing and delivery schedules getting ever tighter, operators need their trucks to deliver the best possible

uptime performance. An important indicator of how well we are doing regarding service is that our Customer Satisfaction Index score for Service last year remains in the upper quartile. A good result that we are constantly working to improve. But, to get back to the original question, we are very focused on our offer for operators of older vehicles. In particular, we have a range of service contracts to suit their profile both in terms of budget and what is covered. For example, we offer, with our Blue contract, not just Preventive Maintenance but also Off-Peak Preventive Maintenance. Both cover 'O' Licence inspections and servicing but the Off-Peak is carried out between 8am and 4pm and is thus a value option that might better suit the budget for smaller operators or those customers with an older profile fleet. Finally, I'd like VTD readers to know that the reason Volvo Truck and Bus Centre East Anglia consistently achieve a high first time MOT pass rate of over 93% on the vehicles that we maintain is thanks to all the above things. It's because of the Volvo trained Technicians and also the fact that we not only have all the necessary special tooling but also the facilities. At the end of the day, MOT pass rates achieved by operators have a significant impact on their OCRS scores so it's vital that their vehicles and trailers are correctly prepared."

VTD: Thank you Con Rooney.

VOLVO TRUCK AND BUS CENTRE EAST ANGLIA: THE FACTS

- 1. Eleven Dealerpoints and workshops.**
- 2. 200 Volvo trained workshop Technicians and Master Technicians employed.**
- 3. Over 93% first time MOT pass rate. Well above the national average.**
- 4. Four ATF Centres at Coventry, Norwich, Ely and Felixstowe.**
- 5. Over 82% of roadside call outs handled by Volvo Truck and Bus Centre East Anglia every year are repaired at the roadside.**



Volvo Truck and Bus Centre East Anglia have 11 workshops and 200 Volvo trained Technicians and Master Technicians.

EXCLUSIVE - Volvo FH16-750

Production set to begin February 2012

BARNSTORMING HEAVY METAL SWEDE!

Volvo Trucks invited VTD over to Sweden to have the first drive of the most powerful production truck on Europe's roads, the mighty FH16-750 - configured as an ultra special 60 tonnes gross, 25.25 metre drawbar.

VTD were asked along to Volvo's head office in Gothenburg to try out the latest addition to the Volvo family of trucks, the FH16-750. As VTD readers know, this is the truck that only this year took away the top power crown from Volvo's rivals and near neighbours. An early start was needed as the invite meant being in Gothenburg by 9.00am. Fortunately, the Volvo guys would collect us from the airport and take us to a secret location to collect the truck. We were to be accompanied by one of their top test pilots from the truck test team and a route had been pre-planned in order to best demonstrate the capabilities of the beast.

With VTD being based in north west England, flying from Stansted meant a lengthy drive down the evening before and staying close by in an airport hotel. Following our alarm call at 4.45am. we drove bleary eyed in the early morning murk to the mid-term stay car park. Our whistle stop day trip to drive Volvo's top power thumper had truly begun. The chosen budget airline got us to Gothenburg City Airport (which is located virtually next door to Volvo Trucks demonstration centre) half an hour in front of the scheduled arrival time. Collected by our host, Volvo's press test manager Jeff Bird, we were whisked away to pick up the FH16-750. Within 10 minutes we were with our chosen steed for the next seven or so hours. Imagine our surprise when we found out that, unbeknown to us, the demonstration vehicle was a 25,25 metre long dry freight box combination loaded to its maximum gross weight of 60 tonnes. Although we have driven a 25,25 on a closed circuit, we had never driven the truck in anger on the highway. Things however, were about to change. We were introduced to our co driver Martin who was there to keep an eye on the

day's proceedings. As we walked round the vehicle, he explained the terrain we would encounter on the 400kms test route. And so it transpired that in a whisker over 30 minutes after arriving in Sweden and with the outside air temperature hovering just above freezing, we were 'Wagons Ho!'

Arctic artic

I asked our Swedish co-driver Martin for any tips on handling such a monster? His answer was simply " No!" However, the rear axle on the rigid was steered and the trailer and dolly pretty much follow the arc of the prime mover. But, what we found you had to watch out for was that, on moving away and making the first left turn, the trailer is a fair way behind you - and it doesn't half fill the mirror! The next turn was a right turn to join the main carriageway, this is where you really do become aware of the 25,25 combination's extra length. Although the Swedish roads are not busy by comparison, you need to remember that when the prime mover is already in the straight ahead and accelerating, the back end of the trailer is still coming out of the side road. It means that you need to remember to leave plenty of space and time for vehicles behind you.

Acceleration was another thing as the 750 horses galloped away effortlessly and 3550 Nm of torque wound its way through the I-Shift gearbox. The latter blocked changed smoothly and the numbers displayed on the screen in front of me flicked upwards at a rate of knots. We had to keep reminding ourselves that we were driving an overlength, by UK standards, outfit at an all up weight of 60 tonnes. Perhaps the best direct comparison you could make with the 750 is that, at this weight, it drives very similarly to a 520/560 horsepower outfit on 40 tonnes work.

Just imagine what the 750 would do on 40 / 44 tonnes work? Catch pigeons one would expect!

We headed out of town and through a number of contraflow systems that we tackled with ease, eventually picking up Route 40 heading East from Gothenburg towards Stockholm. The plan was that we would drive as far as Jönköping which is approximately one third of the way to Stockholm, where we would about turn and head back towards Gothenburg. The whole route was peppered with speed cameras so we set the cruise control to 80kmh. The road East did have some very long hills, and as you would expect the 750 romped up every one of them. Coming down the other side of the climbs, the FH demonstrated the opposite of its extreme power. On the long drops you have technically put Sir Isaac Newton in the driving seat, you need to be able to harness the force of 60 tonnes of mass travelling downhill at around 80kmh, activate the VEB+ (Volvo Engine Brake Plus) and the retarder, and get ready for 865kw of gut wrenching additional braking force. At such a high gross weight it really is important to use the rolling mass of the vehicle to maximise fuel efficiency so the driver can nominate the I-Roll setting to get the vehicle to work for free.

During our break we spent a some time reacquainting ourselves with the largely unchanged interior from the FH16-750. However, the outside tells another story. The exterior decals will make all and sundry aware that this is 'The FH16-750' and its purpose is to celebrate the 25th Anniversary of Volvo's mighty 16 litre engine.

Once hitting the ring road around Jönköping and then heading back into the country we hit a succession of long hills. This time we pay particular



DATA TABLE

Model:	FH16-750 6x2 R
Wheelbase:	4600mm
Cab:	Globetrotter XL (L2H3)
Engine:	D16G-750 (Euro 5)
Gearbox:	I-Shift (ATO3512D) 12 speed
Rear Axle:	3.61:1
Fuel Tank:	570 Litres
Adblue:	125 Litres
Tyres Steer:	355/55 R 22.5
Tyres Drive:	315/70 R 22.5
Tyres Tag:	385/55 R 22.5
Packs:	Driving+ Resting+ Visibility+ Safety+ Personal Protection Audio Advanced
Other:	VEB+ 865kW Retarder Full Dynafleet Rigid/ Dolly/ Semi Trailer- Cargo swap body
GCW:	60 tonnes
Max Engine Power:	750 hp 1600-1800 RPM
Max Engine Torque:	3550 Nm 1050-1400 RPM





EXCLUSIVE - Volvo FH16-750



attention to the down change of the I-Shift. With 3550 Nm of torque available from as low down as 1050 rpm, the 16 litre D16G really is a 'lugger' and will do its damndest to fight the gradient. When the climb begins to ease, the engine's rate of recovery is phenomenal. A good driver will tame the beast by using the power to hit the hill at speed and let the power and the torque sort the job out.

Central heating

As dusk falls not too much after 3 o'clock we are heading back west on route 40. An infamous climb on the outskirts of Jönköping, known simply as 'Gothenburg

Hill', presents us with a very long 7 % climb which we attack in 8th slot. The truck is working hard and really does dig in, passing everything in sight. We have to remind ourselves that we're grossing 60 tonnes. A very interesting fact about this section of road is that the inside lane of the dual carriageway is central heated, to keep trucks moving in the snow and icy weather. Martin explains that even though the weather is cold in the winter, this is the only section of the road in the country that has such a system.

An hour or two later see's us bidding farewell to the most powerful commercially available truck on Europe's roads, handing the key's back to Martin, and reflecting on the pleasure we had just experienced. This is where the heart could rule the head, there will be certain applications that will see a direct efficiency advantage to buying a FH16-750, and so far of all the 750s sold, 45% are going to Norway, the bulk of which will find their way into the logging industry. There will also be certain operators that do a lot of hill work that could enjoy faster route times and that could make the difference between getting home at night and not. However, then there is the typical bloke attitude and the FH16-750 becomes a 'must have' and will justify to themselves that they cannot possibly live without one, regardless! Without any shadow of a doubt the FH16-750 is a truly amazing piece of kit we can guarantee if you are lucky enough to either, own or drive one you will be in for a real treat. With production planned to start early Feb 2012 you had better get your name down quick because this could be a very limited offer to a very favoured few.





Norway has ordered 45% of the FH16-750s so far sold.



TRUCK STOP – SWEDISH STYLE

At 126 kms into our road trip we stopped for lunch at the Rasta service area close to Ulricehamn on route 40, Rasta are a leading chain of roadside restaurants and can be found on all arterial routes in Sweden.

We chose from the Daily Special board which worked out at approx £7.50. The special consisted of a self service buffet of which there was definitely no limit on the amount you could put on your plate, the main also came with a side salad again from the self service salad bar. We chose a local dish of thick sliced roasted bacon, served with a pancake, white onion sauce with a couple of boiled potatoes thrown on for good measure. We also loaded our plate with the Swedish equivalent of sauerkraut and white onion sauce and washed this good wholesome truckers' grub down with an ice cold bottle of sparkling water. A large flat screen TV playing Emmerdale Farm, which in Sweden is called Hem till gården which translates as 'home to the farm'. The Swedes are massive fans of the UK telly.

We also learnt that overnight parking is free in most of Sweden and due to the remoteness of many of the service areas, fuel theft is uncommon but not unheard-of.

Excellent Rasta Truckstop



Good grub!
Trucker's lunch
Swedish style.



Ninety three drivers took part in the Volvo Trucks UK & Ireland Driver Challenge 2011.



UK & IRELAND DRIVER CHALLENGE

'I'll be back!' Volvo Trucks UK & Ireland Driver Challenge winner Jim Whitmore



EVERY DROP COUNTS

With fuel accounting, in the UK and Ireland, for anywhere between 40 and 55% of operators' costs and rising, the importance of driver's technique on how much diesel is used cannot be overestimated.

Since the launch of I-Shift and of course Dynafleet and with the company's continuing global focus on helping operators reduce their fuel bills, Volvo Trucks has built up enormous expertise in this area. Thus it was decided to stage a global competition to find the professionals who drive using the most fuel efficient techniques.

For the UK & Ireland, this involved providing a wide selection of both Volvo and non Volvo truck operators with the opportunity to strut their stuff while using one of five identical FH tractor units. So it happened that, over a period of six months this year, drivers from ninety three companies took part in a closely fought competition to find who had the best driving technique and ultimately who could deliver the best fuel economy.

Identical specs

All competitors drove one of the five FH-460 6x2 tractor units on their normal >

UK & IRELAND DRIVER CHALLENGE



Volvo Trucks Managing Director Göran Nyberg (left) and Business Services Manager (Driver Development & Fuel Management) Martin Tomlinson present Jim Whitmore with the winner's trophy.



<duties at the running weights dictated by their delivery schedules.

These trucks were typical distribution / haulage specification with I-Shift and airflow kit. To ensure the specs were identical, they all ran on Bridgestone 295/80R 22.5 tyres. There was no special preparation and all five trucks were put straight to work by the participating drivers and operators after being pre-delivery inspected by the Volvo dealers. Each driver was then scored against fifteen driving techniques which were recorded by the vehicles' Dynafleet telematics systems. These included coasting, time spent in top gear and engine idling.

All the targets for the driving techniques were achievable although they were designed to make it tough to attain perfect scores. For example, 70% of journey time driving within the economy 'green' band, engine idling time of 4%, time spent coasting (defined as no driver input to throttle) 10% and time spent in top gear of 70%. As demonstration of their achievability, at least one of the 93 competitors met each target.

Fairness rules

Because of the huge number of variables in the circumstances in which

the trucks operated, fuel economy during the Driver Challenge was not scored. To ensure absolute fairness, apart from the rigorously controlled conditions of the one-day final event, the Driver Challenge was not billed as a fuel economy competition. However, Dynafleet reports for the five trucks show that fuel economy of between 6.00 and 12.00 mpg was being achieved by the competitors who covered a total of 135,000 miles in the six months of the Driver Challenge competition. Then, to bring matters to a head, as it was possible to for all ten finalists to drive the same trucks in controlled conditions on the same day, the decision was taken to make the Driver Challenge final event a fuel economy competition.

On the day the five identical trucks with five identical trailers, all weighed to within 40 kgs of each other, were lined up to start at five minute intervals. Measures taken to be as fair as possible included allocating the heaviest co-driver to the lightest truck.

All ten finalists, accompanied by a Volvo Trucks co-driver, completed a 79-mile route out of Warwick which was chosen for its mix of tough going and mixed driving conditions. In addition to the notorious short, steep climb out of

Broadway on Fish Hill, there were 20 roundabouts on the route plus three sets of traffic lights. Proof of the level of difficulty of the route is demonstrated by the final results with overall winner Jim Whitmore achieving 6.64 mpg. With only 400 ml of diesel separating Jim from second placed Bryan Douglas, to say that the final was a close run thing is an understatement!

Jim subsequently went on to compete in the Global Final in Sweden in October where he achieved a credible result against ferocious competition. With interest in the Driver Challenge running high right across the globe, Volvo has decided to make it a recurring annual event. So, as Arnie said, maybe Jim Whitmore, the worthy winner of the Volvo Trucks Driver Challenge 2011 will be back!



YouTube

Scan this QR code with your smartphone to watch a video about the final of the Volvo Trucks UK & Ireland Driver Challenge on the Volvo Trucks UK YouTube Channel.

Product Review

Tank You Very Much!

With fuel prices constantly on the up and in many cases a full tank of diesel can be worth more than the load on the back of the lorry. Today diesel is a commodity that can definitely be called liquid gold, and as long as the costs keep rising the more 'nickable' it becomes. There is not a product in the world that will guarantee every drop of fuel that you put in the tank will ultimately power the wheels that earn you a living, and also if the crime of fuel theft necessitates puncturing the tank you are almost getting to the point of despair and you are the victim of the harsh end of potentially organised crime. However the opportunist thief is probably an easier animal to deter, the type that is more likely to skim the fuel through the neck of the tank. Fuel Defend manufacture an anti-siphon device that fits straight into the neck, that once the opportunist spots it or tries his or her luck, may just send them down the line of trucks until they find one that presents a far easier opportunity to the low life scum.

yourself even instructions in plain English. In fact the VTD team even fitted one with complete success.

The device itself is turned from a solid piece of aluminium and drilled with precision holes and slots. Fitment is very straight forward. Simply put the grub screws into the drilled and tapped holes, place the device in the filler neck, tighten them up with the ratchet and torx head bit provided, then place the security ring (this will prevent anybody tampering with the grub screws that are now holding the anti-siphon device) firmly in the neck of the tank. The ring is placed on the drift provided and tapped into place with a few sharp taps from an engineers' hammer. And that is it; the device is engineered to accept the standard Volvo fuel cap and will also allow caps on a chain.

Also spare a thought for the biker, when the tank has been brimmed and the truck has gone round a roundabout or down the motorway slip and has spilt DERV on the road, and our friend Mr Biker corners and comes a cropper 'Neck It' also goes a very long way to counter this unfortunate loss of liquid gold.

The fitment of Neck-It could just save you a number of 'Well boss' telephone conversations.



FDG NeckIt!
80mm id ASD

Fuel Defend's 'Neck-It' anti siphon device is readily available and can be sourced through Volvo dealers via the Roadcrew all-makes brand and fitted directly at the Dealership. It can also be installed by the truck operator. The kit can be ordered that includes not just the anti-siphon device but pretty much everything you need to tackle the job

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FANZINE

This is where we pay homage to the dedicated professional drivers who have contributed so much to the success of Volvo in the UK and Ireland since the first F86 went into service in Northumberland in the late 60s. You guys are the real stars of this magazine so, for this first issue, let's have a look at some great pics of a few of your trucks which ace snapper Ade Portlock has supplied exclusively to VTD.

All images courtesy of Ade Portlock





Phil Blakeman (left)
and John Woolliscroft

James T Blakeman: Sausages On The Roll

VTD dropped in on James T Blakeman, Sausage and Meat Manufacturers, an own account operation with a smartly presented fleet of Volvo FHs. Managing Director Phil Blakeman told VTD about the company's early years and brought us up to date on what's happening today in this busy family business.

Formed in 1953 by his father, James T Blakeman, who started out as a retail butcher and sausage maker. As the company grew, James focused his attentions towards the wholesale sector. Back in the early days, deliveries started out with an Austin van, and as the company grew and the move towards a wholesale client base the fleet grew too, as did the size of the vehicles. Like many business's in the early and mid-seventies a Ford D series formed the backbone of the company's distribution fleet. Further expansion in the very early eighties lead to the acquisition several makes of rigid, including a Volvo F7. Even further expansion of the distribution element of the Blakemans business provoked a move towards a unit and trailer and in 1989 the first to join the fleet was a Volvo FL10 pulling a reefer. Having always dealt with local Volvo dealer Hartshorne, Blakeman took delivery of 3 new FM12s complete with Glo-

betrotter cabs which were an instant hit with the drivers. In 2004, the company celebrated its 50th anniversary and what better way to pay a fitting tribute than to order 3 flagship vehicles and these came in the form of fully loaded Volvo FHs, and as Transport Manager John Woolliscroft explained "It just snowballed from there" with FH Globetrotters specified with I-Shift eventually replacing all of the FM's.

The distinctive navy blue and red livery complete with traditional gold lettering has not changed since the company started. When you speak to Phil Blakeman, he is immensely proud of the company's heritage even naming the vehicle after members of his family including his late mum Ann. The business has been formed on very traditional values but he see's investment as key to growth, hence the top spec motors and a recent 4.5 million pound expansion of the company's head office and manufacturing fa-

cility at Newcastle-Under-Lyme. He is also keen to mention that he sees the drivers as "The Ambassadors of our Business" and who are absolutely key in the decision making process when selecting new trucks.

We talked in depth to John Woolliscroft about the operational side of the transport. He reported that, typically, they operate at around 85% capacity of the trailers volume, but chose the 6x2 over 4x2 due to the extra weight of the fridge unit. As with most own account type operations James T Blakemans don't back load, but plan a route where the last drop is as close as possible to the head office. All routes are pre planned and are well known to the drivers. Interestingly factory gate deliveries make up about 30% of the drops. The Volvo's are supplied on a contract hire basis, but, due to their individual specifications, the Chereau fridge trailers are purchased. by four 3.5 tonne vans.

SPOT THE DIFFERENCE



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Personal View

AUTHOR MARTIN PHIPPARD

Martin Phippard is one of the original truck anoraks! The son of a truck driver he has championed the cause of drivers and tirelessly promoted the road transport industry since the late 1960s. Having spent the first 20-years of his working life driving trucks in both Canada and the UK Martin joined Volvo as a salesman in 1981. However, he continued to write transport-related features for various truck magazines and claims to have written in excess of 1,000-stories since he first started. Having retired from truck selling in 2010 Martin now devotes his entire time to the business of writing and film-making. He recently became a great-grandfather for the first time and will doubtless be keen to introduce 'Charlie' to the endlessly exciting world of heavy trucks when he is a little older! "In fact I hope to live long enough to take Charlie out for his first trip in a big truck. And I guess it will have to be a Volvo," he said.



Martin Phippard on recent trip to Sweden.

Tales from the West Country

Personal Perspective by Martin Phippard: Retired Volvo Truck Salesman
Martin Phippard

When I was a young man with an insatiable urge to travel I could never imagine ever working for one employer for any length of time. Stories of workers having slaved away on a production line, bored and unfulfilled for an all-too-short lifetime, filled me with an overwhelming sense of dread and horror. So it was with some unease, but strangely no regrets, that I looked back on my life recently and had to come to terms with the fact that I had spent 30-years working for Volvo trucks in the South West of England! What then had happened?

I guess I was just lucky. In 1981 the Volvo marque stood head and shoulders above other trucks and although not cheap, the Volvo product undoubtedly represented good value. Handsome, powerful, comfortable and reliable a Volvo was the truck most drivers aspired to and this factor alone meant that it was destined to succeed. And of course a strong, professional dealer network ensured that once an operator had committed to a Volvo truck, high levels of service and parts availability were guaranteed.

Halcyon days

The 1980s were halcyon days for Volvo, its employees and dare I say, even its customers. Sales throughout the South West were good with the local Avonmouth-based dealer securing in excess of 20-percent of total market share, a figure that had become the benchmark for sales throughout the UK at the time.

As a result a trip from Bristol down the M5 through Somerset, Devon and Cornwall (surely the most desirable sales territory in the UK!) meant that you would meet an endless procession of Volvos from customers such as English China Clay (St Austell) Evans Transport and W C Hockin Transport from Barnstaple, M & D Transport from Torrington, Mervin Way from South Molton, George's haulage from Winkleigh, Eggbeer's from Newton Abbott, Broad's from Plymouth, Vi-Spring Beds from Saltash, Partridge's from Crediton, Greendale's from Exeter, Wheaton's from Chard, Patten Bros from Ilminster, Bartlett's from Bridgwater, Haul Waste and Langdon Industries from Taunton, Gillard's from Burrowbridge,



Peter Lane Transport from Whitchurch and others. And I am proud to say that I not only knew the companies and the trucks, but in many instances the drivers too. So, as I made my way ever deeper into the South West I encountered much waving and headlight light-flashing from oncoming F10 and F12s and occasional F7s. Indeed my long-suffering wife was once prompted to enquire if 'I knew every Volvo driver in the South West'!

The South West of England, as all holiday-makers will know, is mainly given over to agriculture and has vast unoccupied spaces such as Dartmoor and Exmoor. Nevertheless there were large concentrations of Volvo trucks in certain areas and North Devon was a particularly rich seam. Consequently I was frequently summoned to Barnstaple, Bideford or Torrington and although I knew that I would receive the warmest of welcomes from whichever customer I was scheduled to meet, the prospect of a journey through the tortuous wooded lanes that masqueraded as main roads once I left the M5 always filled me with apprehension. Travelling the North Devon Link Road today with its long, sweeping hills and curves and vigorously imposed speed limits it is impossible to imagine just how demanding the drive from Tiverton to the North Devon coast used to be. And along the way I used to feel that I was travelling back in time, a sensation that was actually reinforced once I arrived at my destination. It was not that things were out-dated, simply that the pace of life, the customs and practices were from an altogether gentler, less frenetic era. So I became used to being addressed as 'my dear' by grown men and grew to understand that being 'missled' in fact meant that you had been mis-led or lied to! It was a steep but not altogether unpleasant learning curve!

On the Mendip

Another area rich with Volvos was the Mendip Hills in Somerset, a district blessed with an abundance of limestone quarries and subsequently heaving with rigid six and eight wheel tipper. Here too many customers enjoyed a rewarding and mutually beneficial relationship with the local dealer and several have stayed loyal to the Volvo product for at least a quarter of a century. One early customer was Foster Yeoman, a family-owned quarry business that had become famous for hauling loads of plant and machinery destined for a project in Saudi Arabia during the 1970s using Volvo trucks that had been purchased for local tipper work! The Yeoman business was acquired by Aggregate Industries in 2006 and had moved away from company-owned to owner-drivers many years earlier. But several former Yeoman company drivers continue to buy and drive Volvo trucks to this day.

The same may be said of the Amalgamated Roadstone Company (ARC) which was acquired by the Hanson Group in 1988. ARC too used a mix of company drivers and owner-operators and although the vehicles and the corporate livery may be different nowadays several ex-ARC drivers and owners have remained loyal to the Volvo product.

Graham Hilborne has operated Volvos for 25 years.



Small fleet owner and one-time owner-driver Graham Hilborne from Wincanton has never bought anything but Volvo during the past 25-years while brothers Pete and Lee Allen from the Frome area and Andy Gillard from Rode continue to fly the Volvo flag by operating some of the best-looking eight-wheel tipper in the business. It is significant that their fathers were also loyal Volvo owners and that the line of succession is assured in Andy Gillard's case by his daughter who drives her own FM 460 8x4 insulated tipper with a striking Globetrotter cab! Meanwhile in the picturesque hills in the immediate vicinity of Cheddar Gorge tipper operators Ken Raisey, Arnold Webber, Nick Virgo and Dave Hembery have continued to buy Volvo trucks since the early 1980s. Who said that loyalty is a thing of the past?

Getting heavy

Volvo has always been strong in the world of heavy haulage so it will come as no surprise to learn that several of the region's specialist abnormal load movers were and in some instances still are users of the Volvo product.

King's Heavy haulage (Bristol) Ltd has used Volvos since the days of the F88 and F89 and their distinctive and boldly-liveried FH tractors continue to turn heads as they go about their specialised tasks.



Personal View

One of Plantspeed's mighty FH16 8x4 heavy haulage tractor units.



John Golding Heavy Haulage from Wotton-under-Edge favoured American heavy metal from the stables of Kenworth, White and Mack. Yet when the company was at its zenith he still allowed a few F16s into his fleet when he required really big power. When it came to the quest for big power then Ralph Davies from Cheltenham almost certainly had a monopoly in the field of general haulage operating during the 1980s and 1990s what was believed to be the largest fleet of F and later FH16s anywhere in Europe. Ralph was a dedicated Scania aficionado but was converted to the Volvo product when it was demonstrated beyond reasonable doubt that the F16 was the most rugged and dependable unit for runs to and from the farthest reaches of Eastern Europe and Asia. Renowned for their stunning appearance and top-flight specifications, the Ralph Davies Volvos set new standards for long-distance hauliers.



An Immaculate Ralph Davies FH16 from 2008.

As is only natural the passage of time has witnessed many changes. Nevertheless it is encouraging to note that in recent years companies such as Dennis Oates and Peter Green Chilled have returned to the Volvo fold after an absence of several years. Meanwhile PlantSpeed of Avonmouth has become a solid supporter of the Volvo product in the heavy haulage sector and its fleet of handsome Volvo FH 8x4 tractors is always a pleasure to see. Viridor, once Haul-Waste, has established even stronger ties with Volvo and its distributors while high-profile companies such as E & J W Glendinning Ltd, Hottot Transport, Britannia Lanes and F G Bond & Son have finally, after much deliberation, seen the light and joined the Volvo clan.

It would of course be remiss of me to overlook the contribution to the success of Volvo made by the innumerable loyal, dedicated and supportive work colleagues who shared all or part of my 30-years in the South West. So thanks to everyone involved whether you were a customer, work colleagues or, as most of you turned out to be after a life-time within the Volvo fold, a valued friend. Retired I may be, but bereft of good friends – almost all of whom are from the transport industry - I most certainly am not! As I hinted earlier, it would be impossible to look back on the past 30-years through anything other than rose-tinted glasses.





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