



INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR ASSOCIATION

INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR 1977 SEDDON ATKINSON 200

Seddon Atkinson had a real winner on its hands when the heavy-duty 400 Series started to enter service in 1975. Within a couple of years these trucks had secured 17.5% of the British over-28-ton market and the manufacturer turned its attention to the rigid 16-ton market, where Seddon vehicles had traditionally been popular. The first 200 Series prototypes were unveiled in 1975, with full-scale production commencing in the Spring of 1976. Sharing some chassis components with its larger stablemate, the 200 also featured common cab pressings for the scaled-down cab which was regarded as luxurious for a British truck of this weight in its day.

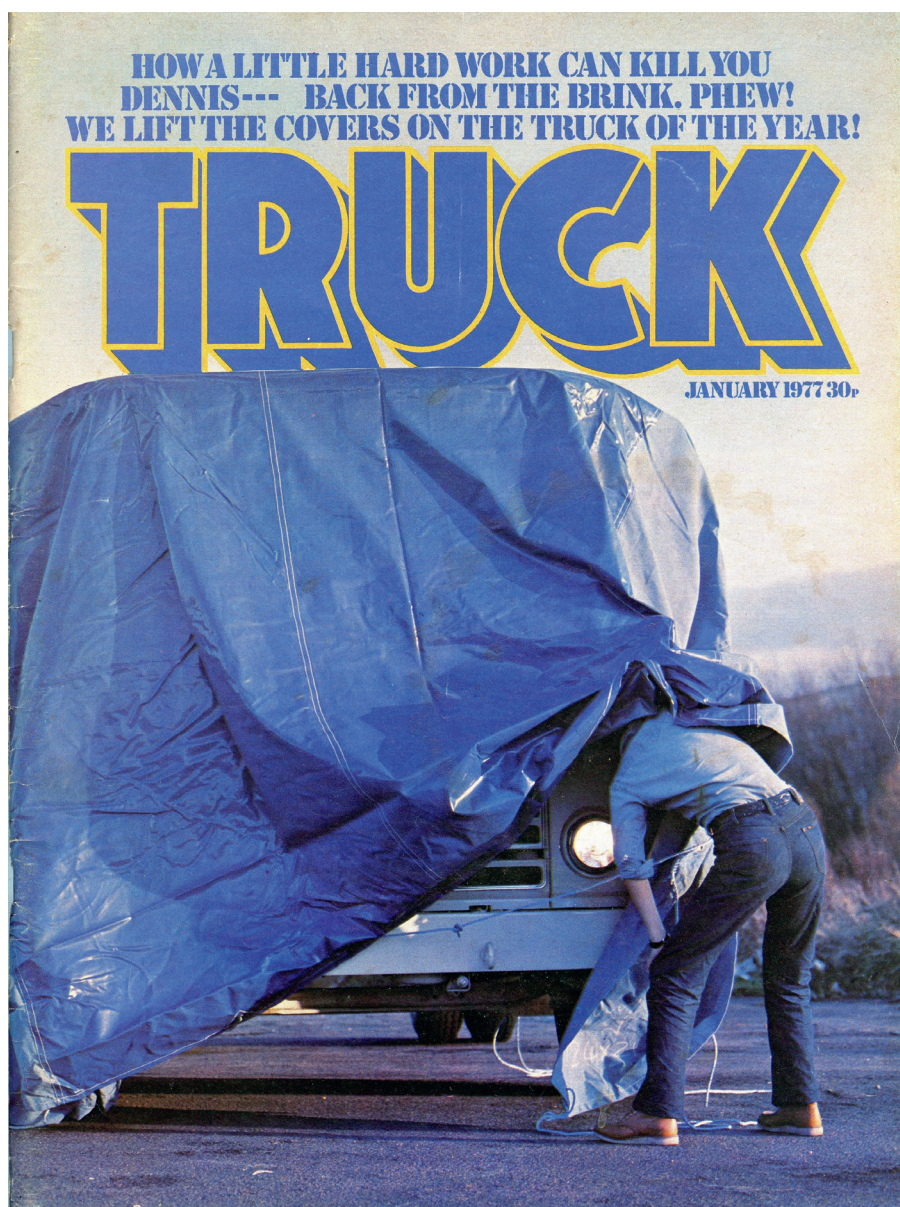
An early supporter of the new truck was Pat Kennett, the legendary first editor and co-founder of TRUCK Magazine, who announced the 200 as the inaugural Truck of the Year in January 1977. Whilst not explicitly describing the criteria used for the award, careful consideration was given to a number of other contemporary vehicles, with Kennett single-handedly confirming the winner.

Seddon Atkinson's mischievous marketing people lost no time at all in exploiting the win with an advert reading, "We'd like to thank British Leyland, Chrysler, Bedford, Fiat and Mercedes for making it all possible."

In hindsight the 200 was a relatively conventional vehicle marked out by a much-improved cab - supplied by Motor Panels (Coventry), which had produced the earlier Seddon cabs - and an unconventional choice of engine - the International D 358. With Seddon Atkinson being under International Harvester ownership since 1974, the engine choice might have seemed a matter of expediency but officially the men from Oldham rejected the traditional Perkins in favour of the higher power anticipated for 17-ton operation.



Commercial Motor's tester achieved 11.7mpg overall and a 10.6-tonne payload with a 200 in May 1977.



The Seddon Atkinson 200 was unveiled as the first Truck of the Year in 1977, eclipsing vehicles such as the Mercedes 1626 and Bedford TM.

With a design dating back to 1965, the German-built engine was well-proven in agricultural tractors operating overseas and the 6.8-litre, 134hp naturally-aspirated 6-cylinder had a longish stroke and a usable power range between 1,000rpm and 3,000rpm, with a cruising speed of 60mph at 2,600rpm. Unusually for such a wide power-band, a rev-counter was not included in the instruments, leaving the driver to hone his hearing skills.

The engine was matched to an Eaton 5-speed constant mesh gearbox driving a 10.5-tonne single reduction axle, and an Eaton 2-speed axle option was added shortly after introduction. There were three wheelbase options: a 3.8m tipper, and two haulage variants at 4.5m or 5.6m.

With no alternative engine, transmission or cab options, and only offered as a 16-ton vehicle, the 200 seems an odd winner from a modern perspective, but the truck was a popular choice in its day, albeit the International engine never fully gained market acceptance with questions over its performance and reliability. The revised 201 model was announced in September 1982, and by December 1983, this was offered with a turbocharged Perkins engine.

1977



INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR ASSOCIATION

INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR 1978 MAN 16.280

MAN was still a relatively new name in the British market when the 280 was announced as the Truck of the Year for 1978. The naturally aspirated 16.232 had been offered since 1974, but the design improvements made to the new model really caught the judges' attention.

For the second award, Pat Kennett recruited some European expertise and opinion with the inclusion of technical experts from The Netherlands, Denmark and two from Germany, with Kennett acting as the foreman of the jury. At this time, these four countries were responsible for 70% of road freight carried in the European Economic Community.

The judging criteria were also further refined so that only new models available on the market in the preceding 18 months were admissible, and these were awarded points based on operating performance, engineering excellence and cost.

So, in January 1978, the MAN 280 was announced as that year's winner with 29 points, having - perhaps unexpectedly - beaten the new Volvo F10/F12 range by a margin of two points. Whilst the Volvo's cab was afforded high praise, the truck was regarded as "over-engineered for many users" leaving the MAN to take top spot with "An unspectacular formula giving great reliability and high operational efficiency."

Much thought had certainly gone into the MAN design. The new D.2566MTF engine was a turbocharged development of the existing 11.4-litre straight-six with a longer stroke and new crankshaft. The 280hp engine was governed to 2,200rpm and retained MAN's M-System spherical combustion chamber with new oil-cooled pistons and improved inlet ports and water circulation.

During 1977, about one third of all MAN trucks, and half of MAN tractors, were 280-powered, with the new model being nicknamed "The Whisper Truck" on account of its quiet running.

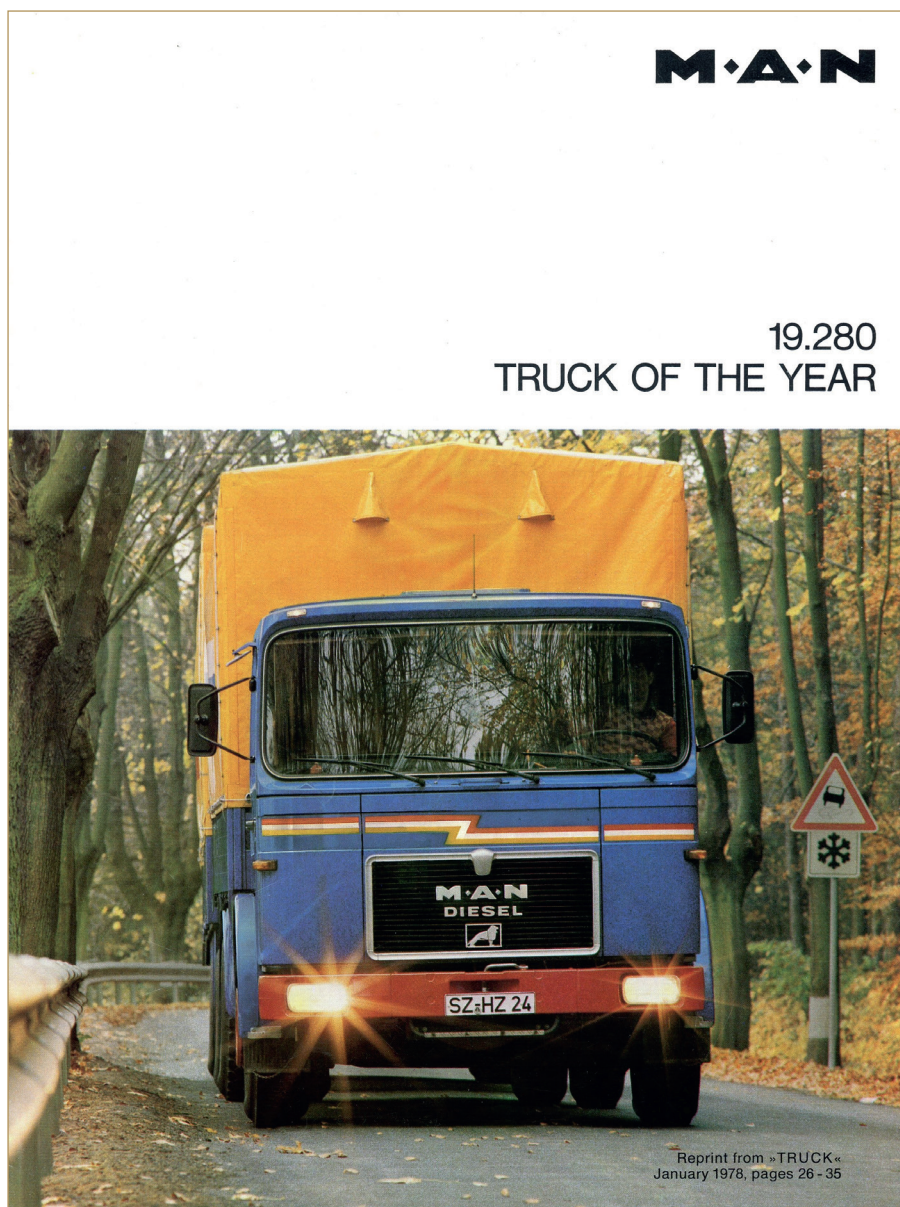


The 16.280 demonstrator show-bound outside MAN's former British headquarters in Chiswick High Road.

The 13-speed Fuller Roadranger with column-shift was selected as the optimum transmission for the new engine, but a ZF option was available in markets with a high resistance to constant mesh designs. MAN's hub-reduction rear axle was the standard fitment with either 4.64, 5.22, 5.94 or 6.73 ratios, but the top two were most common for on-road work. The British version of the truck was the 16.280 with an 11-tonne rear axle, whereas a 13-tonne axle was specified on the European 19.280 variant, which was also offered with full air suspension.

Remarkably for a Truck of the Year, the Saviem-designed cab was over a decade old in 1978, but in testimony to its advanced design, it was still an excellent workplace in the late 1970s with a very good interior build quality and MAN's engineers had re-designed the dash panel for optimum visibility.

No truck is perfect though, and a 1977 Commercial Motor magazine test, although generally very favourable, found the 16.280 to be thirsty on part-throttle running at 40mph and better-suited to hard work on motorways.



The MAN 280 took the 1978 award.

1978

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INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR ASSOCIATION

INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR 1979 VOLVO F7

The Volvo F86 was a very tough act to follow, but the F7 stepped up to the mark admirably and completed the renewal of the entire Volvo truck range which had started five years earlier with the N Series.

For 1979's award, jurors were recruited from Belgium, Norway and Sweden to increase the national representation to seven north-western European countries. The assessment criteria spanned design, engineering, styling, serviceability, repair costs, operating cost, service support and work capacity, and the Volvo F7 emerged as the clear winner. The 18-month qualifying period also meant that 1977's F10 was still eligible, and that truck took second place, having been pipped at the post in 1978 by MAN.

The F7 was the first Truck of the Year to win with an entire range of vehicles, rather than a distinct model or designation, and despite the range covering 2-, 3- and 4-axle rigids and 2-axle tractors over the 16- to 36-ton weight segments, there were only two engine, cab and gearbox options specified – typical of the production programmes of the day.

The F7 was a masterclass in component development with its driveline, chassis and cab all being adaptations of earlier, proven parts. The TD 70 6.7-litre engine retained the bore and stroke measurements of the F86's TD 70E, but gained oil-cooled pistons, a higher capacity oil pump and an improved head design to become the 202hp-rated TD 70G. The TD 70F employed air-to-air charge cooling to develop 224hp.



F7 8-leggers were designed and built in Britain.



Clever advertising from Volvo captured the essence of the F7.

Transmission was provided by the R52 8-speed range-change synchromesh gearbox which made greater use of roller-bearings for long-life in preference to the ball-bearings used in the F86's R51, with the larger R62 gearbox being standard in the double-drive 8-wheeler, supplemented with the option of a 16-speed splitter. The rear axles were also developments of earlier designs, and shared with the F10.

The F7's cab was a development of the "Club of Four" model, sharing rear and side panels with Renault's enlarged Club design, and was very well-appointed in traditional Volvo fashion with a stylish brown carpet and cloth interior. Offered as a short day-cab, or a longer "rest cab", the vehicle was regarded as quite spacious within its limited dimensions.

Interestingly, the F7 appealed to the judges across a range of European segments, serving as anything from a high-powered distribution truck in Scandinavia to a longer-haul 36-tonner in the Netherlands. Britain's preference for 6x4 tippers and 8-wheelers led to the development of these models at Irvine, Scotland as part of the Volvo programme, rather than as an adjunct to it.

The F7 proved to be hugely successful in Britain and even appeared as a 38-tonner with the 243hp TD 70FS engine in 1983. At the time of its replacement with the new FL range in 1985, the F7 was still contributing over a third of Volvo's British sales without any significant revisions or even a major facelift.

1979



INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR ASSOCIATION

INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR 1980 MAN 321

MAN's second win came within two years of its first, with the victorious 321 model essentially being a development of the earlier 280.

1980's runners-up were the DAF 2800 DKSE – an economy-tuned variant of the long-serving 2800 which wasn't available in the UK at that time – and the Fiat Daily, which punched above its weight from the light truck sector.

MAN's trump card was the new 320hp 6-cylinder D2566MK engine which caught the jury's attention with its tuned induction resonance system and intercooler. Improving turbocharger output and fuelling produced the required increase in power, whilst an intercooler reduced the air charge temperature to 50°C. The induction resonance system was designed to overcome the then common obstacle of turbo-lag and low torque production at low engine speeds.

Essentially, the MAN system used an impulse charge system to draw a greater volume of air into the cylinder at around 700rpm – 900rpm. The incorporation of a balance chamber provided the advantage of drawing air from a relatively still source, rather than from a fast-flowing stream.

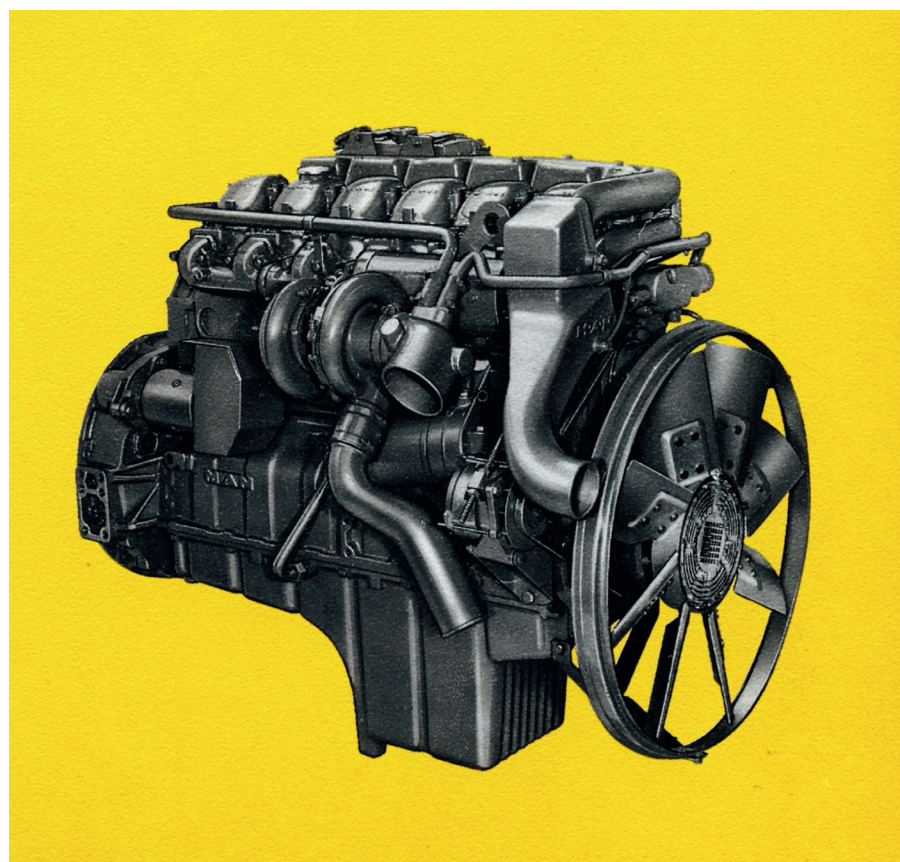


The MAN 19.321 took 1980's award by a clear margin.

The new technology won plaudits for its ability to generate greater torque at low speeds than any other 11.4-litre engine of the day, with the added bonus of the thorough combustion system resulting in very clean running. This was quite a leap forward from the earlier MAN D2530 engine which had developed 330hp from its 16 litres and 10 cylinders.

In contrast to 1979's winner – the Volvo F7 – the MAN 321 was an improved model within a range, rather than a new range in itself, and was typically seen in Europe as the 19.321 4x2 tractor, or as a 3-axle truck for drawbar-trailer operation. British operators had to wait until October 1982 to buy the 16.321, following its launch at that year's Motor Show. By this point the earlier 280 model had also received charge cooling and resonant induction to become the 16.281, and the engine technology eventually spanned the 170hp to 360hp output range marketed under the "MAN System Six" name.

The 321 featured a slightly taller cab than its predecessor with improved bunks, more extensive carpeting, a pneumatically suspended driver's seat, electronically controlled exhaust brake and a simplified cab tilting mechanism. Externally, a new three-piece bumper coated in black plastic identified the new model.



At the heart of the 321 was the D2566MK engine.

Constant mesh transmission was retained in the form of the 13-speed Fuller RTO 11613 Roadranger, but now with a floor-mounted gear lever, mated to the MAN H7 hub-reduction axle rated at 11 tonnes in Britain and 13 on the Continent.

MAN was the first manufacturer to fit the new generation of lower-profile Michelin XZ Pilote tyres, which had the approximate height of an 11.00 tyre but with a weight-carrying capacity of a 12.00. These were fitted as standard on all new 321s.

The 321 bowed out in September 1985, with the introduction of the new 12-litre D2866-powered 331 which dispensed with the tuned induction resonance principle in favour of more conventional induction and a modified fuel injection system.

1980



INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR ASSOCIATION

INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR 1981 LEYLAND T45

The fifth Truck of the Year saw a second win for Britain in the form of Leyland's "make-or-break" T45, but unlike 1977's Seddon Atkinson, which had been hand-picked by Pat Kennett, the panel now consisted of judges from 10 Western European countries.

1980 had been a strong year for truck launches, and the Leyland win was scored with a two-point margin over some impressive competition from the Fiat 170, Volvo F12F and Mercedes-Benz 1628.

The Leyland's ability "to make a major contribution to the efficiency of the transport of goods by road" was achieved with a combination of the new cab design, efficient running in early fleets, serviceability, reliability and a "well-balanced mechanical specification".

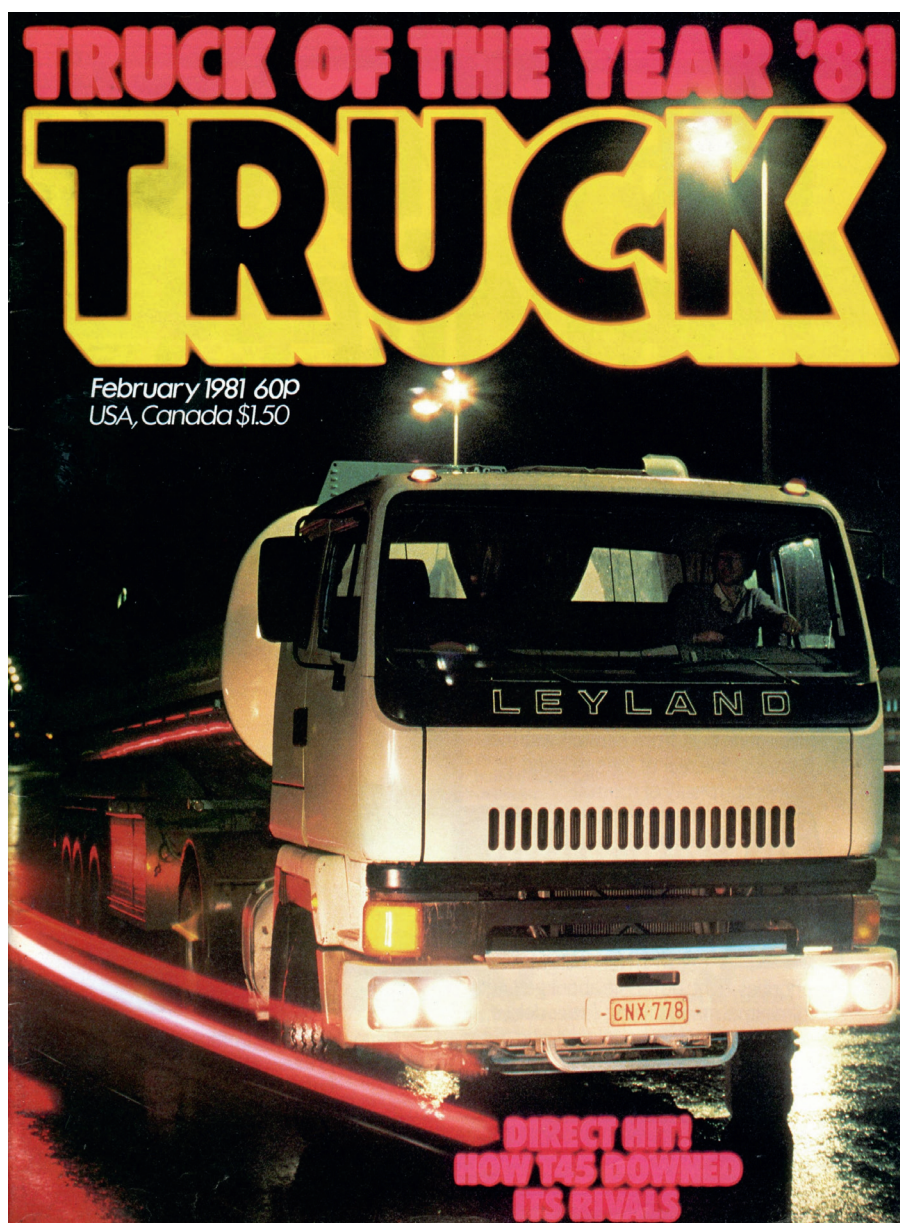
Officially launched in February 1980, the Roadtrain – as the T45 tractor unit became – was a replacement for the stop-gap Leyland Marathon, and retained that model's engine and rear axle in its first incarnation, the 16.28.

The modern new cab was designed by Leyland's Bill Lowe, styled by Tom Karen and his team at Ogle Design and built by Motor Panels (Coventry). The C40 cab, as it was designated, had a strong theme running through it, with the door

handles, grille apertures, dash recesses and floor mat patterns all conforming to a similar style, with a non-aggressive overall appearance. Extensive thought was also applied to the interior fittings, colours and materials.



The original Leyland T45 Roadtrain 16.28.



European judges put their faith in the T45 which was largely unknown in continental service at the time.

The cab featured a high degree of practical advantage, with the aerodynamics claiming a 30% reduction in drag compared with other full-width European designs. As part of a comprehensive modular system, the design permitted a combination of three heights, two widths and three lengths to be produced.

In contrast to the Marathon, the T45 project received adequate funding despite the voracious appetite for cash from British Leyland's ailing car division, and the new truck marked the culmination of a heavy-truck rationalisation programme over a decade in the making. A brand-new facility – the Leyland Assembly Plant – was built in 1979 for the commencement of full-scale production in 1980.

The initial Roadtrain 16.28 was in some ways an odd choice for the launch vehicle, being offered with the lower-cab in short form with a solitary engine specified – the Leyland 12.47-litre, 281hp TL12. The adoption of the Spicer SST10 10-speed gearbox in place of the ubiquitous Fuller Roadranger on the grounds of the former's cost and weight also led to raised eyebrows.

By mid-1980 the Cummins NT250 and Rolls-Royce 265L were on the options list, followed shortly by the full-sleeper high-datum cab, initially with the TL12 engine. By early 1981 high-datum models were on the market in mainland Europe, although these took the Fuller transmission, and by the end of the year domestic buyers could acquire the high-cab models with the popular Cummins E290 motor. The Roadtrain was possibly the right truck, but it came at the time of a catastrophic collapse in the heavy truck market in 1981, leading to a mountain to climb in the recovery of development costs. The truck never lived up to its potential in Europe, but was a stalwart of British haulage in the 1980s.

1981

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INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR ASSOCIATION

INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR 1982 FORD CARGO

For 1982, two more judges – and they were now regarded as judges as opposed to the “jurors” of earlier years – were added from Finland and Switzerland to complete the 12-country voting bloc of Western European nations.

The shortlist was drawn up at 1981’s Frankfurt Show, and the Cargo achieved a convincing victory, securing 50 votes against Scania’s GPR “2-Series” with 34, and Mercedes-Benz’s turbocharged 19.33 and 19.38 with 31. The Ford Motor Company was presented with the trophy at the Geneva Show on 21 January 1982. The Cargo was the first vehicle to achieve a win in respect of an entire range, and in a remarkable feat of engineering coordination, the entire D Series line-up ceased production on New Year’s Eve 1980, to be replaced with Cargos spanning 6 to 28.5 tonnes.

The Ford D Series was a hard act to follow, being Britain’s market leader since 1977 with over 540,000 examples built, and Ford invested £150m into the Cargo. Development work had started in 1976 under the Delta code name, but this was swapped to Cargo when Dennis adopted the Delta tag for its own 16-tonner.



Cargo represented another British win in 1982.

Of particular interest to the judges was the fact that Cargos were pretty much engineered for each European market from the outset, with 2.3m-wide Swiss models, high-powered Norwegian variants and well-trimmed models designed for Germany all being included in the original programme.

The flexibility of the Cargo range also appealed greatly, although the flexibility of the high-tensile alloy steel chassis, which required flexible front body mountings, was a feature that some early operators and Ministry inspectors were wary of.

The very modern cab design, good turning circle, quality ride, stability and handling and serviceability all scored in the Cargo’s favour, as did the reduced scheduled downtime, but the most popular aspect amongst judges was the way in which the wide range of specification options in the modular system could effectively produce the ideal vehicle for an operator in this class.



The cab was designed to offer “a freedom to work in light, spacious conditions”.

When launched the Cargo was powered by Ford’s own Dorset engine range, comprising a naturally-aspirated 4-cylinder, and a 6- and 6.2-litre straight-six, with a 6-litre 150hp turbocharged engine at the top end of the in-house power range. These engines were carried over from the D Series and had received substantial re-engineering in 1979. For heavier trucks the Perkins V8.540 or Cummins V8.504 were offered, rated at 180hp or 186hp respectively.

Within a year of introduction, the Cargo received the new Dover range of Ford engines, which retained the bore and stroke of their predecessors but offered more power and better consumption courtesy of higher injection pressures, larger ports, and new manifolds amongst other improvements.

A V6 Deutz-powered 32-tonner was added in the Spring of 1982, and the Cargo was given a new lease of life with the introduction of Cummins 10-litre engines in 1985, but like the Leyland Roadtrain before it, the Cargo was introduced into a depressed home market and arguably never achieved its full sales potential, before being phased out in the Iveco takeover.

1982



INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR ASSOCIATION

INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR 1983 RENAULT G260

Renault's G260 won the 1983 Truck of the Year award by a surprising margin, enjoying little in the way of expectation at the shortlisting stage, but winning the 13 judges over with operational feedback in its first year of service.

The G260 was regarded as the first genuinely new product from Renault Véhicules Industriels following the eight-year merger between the Berliet and Saviem marques, and scored an impressive 53 points, knocking the Scania P and R ranges into second place for a second time with 40 points, with the DAF 2500 coming home in third place with 30 points.

The Scania's performance might be surprising, but the judges apparently regarded the 2-Series models as heavy with questionable transmissions, and the new intercooled models were ineligible until 1984.

The new Renault was seen as a new class of vehicle – both a 38-tonner with the capacity for heavy work across long distances, but also light and compact enough to be a strong proposition for city distribution work. Road tests revealed the G260 to be “quite out of the ordinary in the fields of economy, payload and earning

ability” and so the unassuming French truck nailed the “greatest contribution towards the economics of the carriage of goods by road” criteria.

The G260 cab was of course a development of the “Club of Four” design, but Renault's engineers had adopted a wider and lower interpretation of the concept than that used by Volvo on its 1979 award-winning F7.



The G260 in 6x4 tipper form – designated G260 24D.



The G260 arrived on the British market in the summer of 1983.

The RVI cab was not new though, and had already appeared on both Saviem and Berliet-branded vehicles on the continent, and on the TF 231 model which was a 32-tonner designed specifically for the British market and announced in September 1979.

At the heart of the G260 was the MIDR 06.20.45 engine. This 9.8-litre, 6-cylinder turbocharged and charge-cooled, 260hp motor was a long-stroke development of an earlier Berliet design which retained a minimum of 725lb/ft torque across the 950rpm-1,850rpm working range.

The mechanical specification was completed with Renault's own 9-speed B9 gearbox and a Berliet-derived hub-reduction axle with three weight ratings dependent on the national market.

The G260 arrived in Britain in July 1983, although a non-charge-cooled version of the engine, designated MIDS 06.20.45 but still rated at 260hp, was standard. UK operators were offered the 11.6-tonne rear axle with a choice of day or sleeper cabs, and even in sleeper form the 4x2 tractor weighed in at only 5.8 tonnes.

By 1984, British G260s were being assembled in the former Dodge factory at Dunstable, and the following year saw a change to the standard specification with the B18 18-speed gearbox and sleeper cab with revised trim becoming the norm. The more powerful G290 models were introduced in 1985.

1983



INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR ASSOCIATION

INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR 1984 VOLVO F10

Volvo's second Truck of the Year win came for the revised F10 in 1984, which again saw Scania held in second place with the intercooled 112, and MAN in third with the 361.

Volvo's philosophy of the all-purpose heavy-duty truck impressed the judges who liked the idea of a premium vehicle totally on top of most of Europe's operating requirements. The project to improve the F10 began as early as 1978 – just 12 months after the original vehicle's launch – with full development funding released in late 1979.

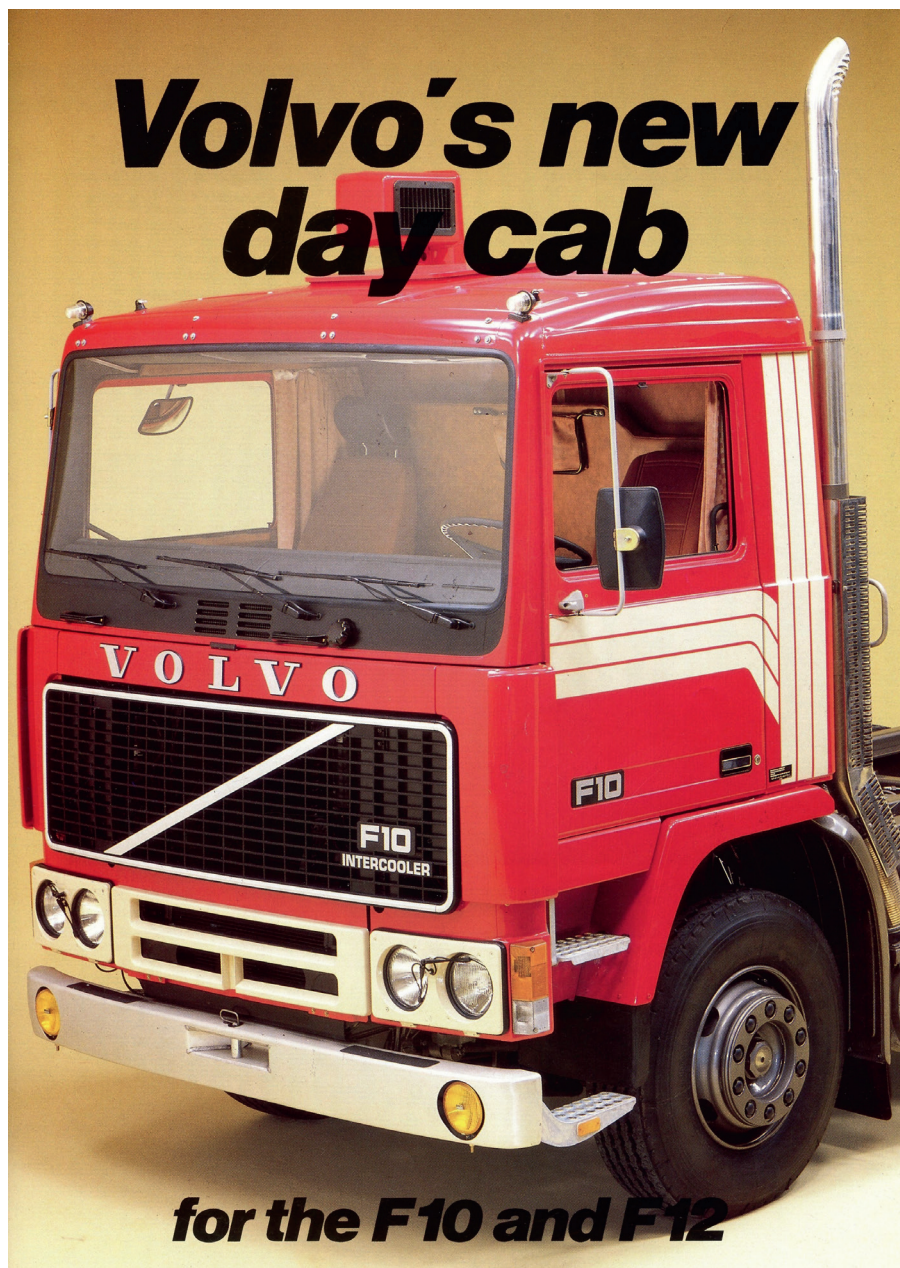
When the new F10 emerged in 1983, it was the product of many hours of driver consultation in addition to the demands of legislation and technological advancement. In fact, the "Version Two" F10 received a re-designed cab, engine and chassis layout to secure the win.

The re-designed cab was a product of driver clinics whereby Volvo's engineers noted that most drivers' optimum eye level was above that previously believed. Therefore, a lower seat, deeper windscreen and re-positioned radio console

were introduced. The cab dimensions were also revised with an extra 150mm of headroom over the sleeper bunk, courtesy of a new sloped roof panel, and an extra 150mm of length for the day-cab, which was now long enough for a fold-down rest bunk.



The "Face '83" F10 was more than a pretty face and incorporated an intercooled engine and completely revised chassis layout.



With an extended cab and a fold-down rest bunk, the new day-cab addressed the shortcomings of the original short cab.

A new version of the TD 100 9.6-litre engine was introduced – designated TD 101F – which featured charge-cooling to increase the output to 299hp. In addition to intercooling, the new engines received strengthened cylinder heads, gear-driven water pumps, improved cylinder liner seals and a larger fan. The improved torque characteristics of the TD 101F meant that the 8-speed R62 gearbox was suitable as a standard fitment in most European markets, with the 16-speed SR62 remaining as an option. The non-intercooled 273hp TD 101GA, which had been introduced in September 1981, was also available as an alternative.

The F10's chassis also received considerable attention for the 1983 model with the rear end being tapered for greater clearance, and taper-leaf parabolic springs with rubber inserts and shackles replacing the previous slipper-ended design on the rear.

Air tanks and the battery box were relocated to the left side of the chassis and incorporated with a new, larger exhaust silencer designed to conform with forthcoming EEC noise regulations. New, rectangular fuel tanks of aluminium alloy were adopted, and the standard capacity of 270 litres could be increased to 875 litres with the largest capacity tank being supplemented by a reinforced plastic tank of 250 litres mounted beneath the battery box in lieu of a spare wheel. A vertical exhaust arrangement was also added to the options list.

The 1983 F10 maintained the reputation of the original model and won many friends around the world before being superseded by the final F10 version in 1987.

1984



INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR ASSOCIATION

INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR 1985 MERCEDES-BENZ LN2

1985 saw an emphatic win for Daimler-Benz with the light middle-weight Mercedes-Benz LN2 range impressing the 13 judges with the versatility of its modular design. Scoring a total of 71 votes, the little Mercedes won by the largest margin yet seen in the competition, knocking the Iveco Turbostar into second place with 49 votes, and Leyland's Roadrunner into third with 19.

The runners-up were regarded as worthy designs, but essentially "one-class" vehicles, whereas the LN2 was a distinctly multi-class, multi-model range with a huge appeal across a range of European transport operations from 6.5 to 13 tonnes in rigid form, all the way up to 21 tonnes gross train weight.

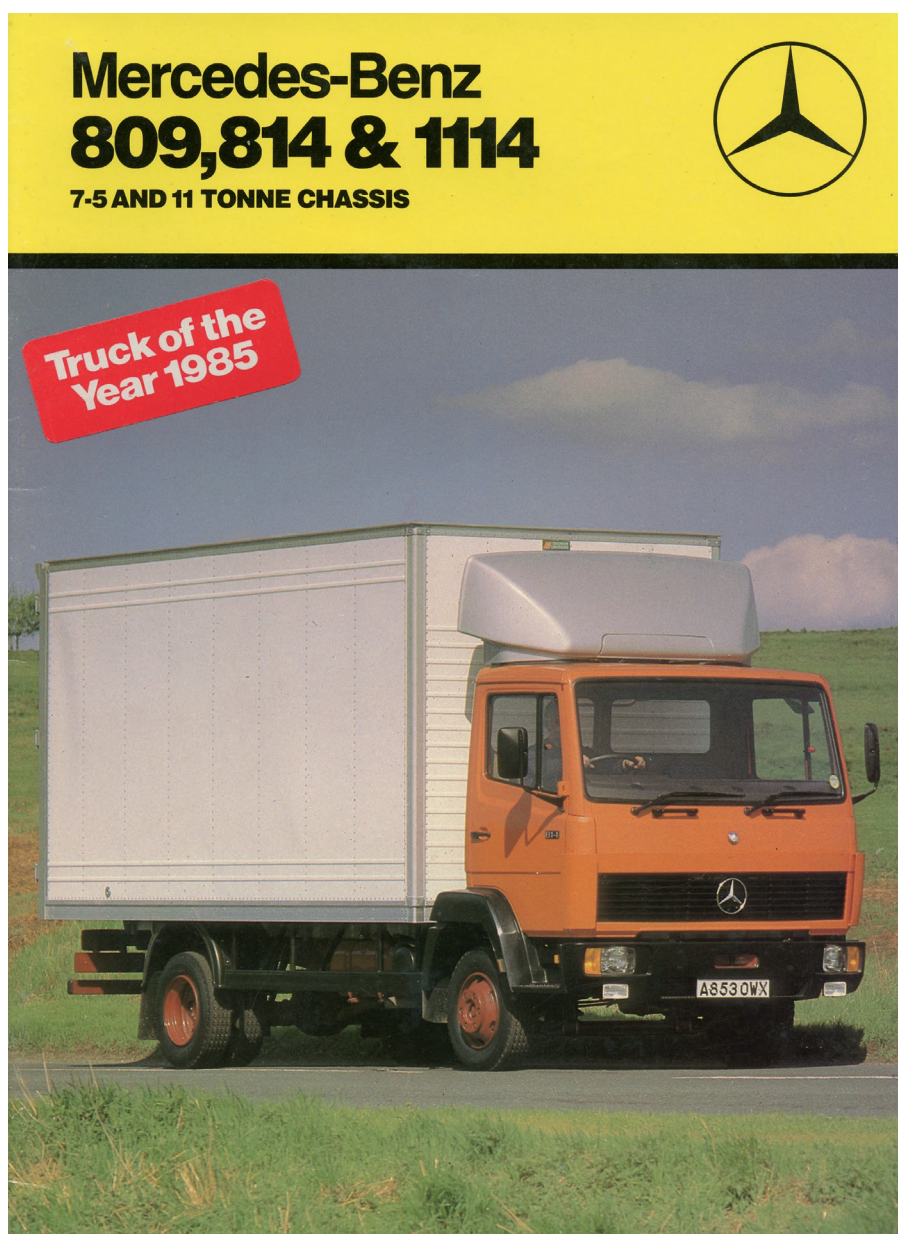
Whilst the Ford Cargo had offered a similar proposition in 1982, the Mercedes was wisely conceived as a lightweight truck without venturing into the heavy class where Mercedes trucks had their distinct identity.

The LN2's predecessor – the LP – had been a market leader in its class in Germany despite its origins in the mid-1960s, but its set-forward-axle imposed weight limitations that would hinder its development, and in truth the driving characteristics and its non-tilt cab had become antiquated.

The Mercedes engineers intended the LN2 to be a very high-quality grade of vehicle, rather than a technological marvel in its own right, and the design brief was to produce the safest, most durable, high-quality truck for the top of the lightweight sector and to develop that concept down to the lowest tonnages in the range.



The full scope of the LN2 range is seen in this introductory press photo.



The 809, 814 and 1114 represented the LN2 in the UK.

Therefore, the new cab had a sleeper option and big-truck style, comfort and finish, and a full air-braking system replaced the previous air-over-hydraulic arrangement. Power steering was offered throughout the range and twin parabolic front springs with twin leaf and helpers at the rear gave excellent handling and ease of driving. Air suspension and ABS were also available.

Turbocharged and intercooled motors were also introduced as part of a major redesign of the engine range, and the LN2 spanned a total of 418 basic models at its launch. These included 90hp to 201hp engines, 5- to 12-speed transmissions and automatic options to give European operators everything from a premium-quality 7.5-tonne delivery truck to a 21-tonner drawbar outfit for trunking.

In Britain, the LN2 was most popular as a 7.5-tonner, but with a deep chassis designed to accommodate higher design weights and overloading outside of European markets, there was a slight weight penalty, which Mercedes sought to minimise with increased use of plastics for the cab.

The 809 variant was powered by the 4-cylinder 88hp OM 364 engine, with the 814 and larger 1114 both using the 6-cylinder, 134hp OM 366, both in naturally-aspirated form, and each driving through a 5-speed synchromesh gearbox.

The LN2 was anticipated to have a 20-year design life, but despite its huge success it fell a little short of this, bowing out for the Atego models in 1998.

1985



INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR ASSOCIATION

INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR 1986 VOLVO FL

Volvo achieved an unprecedented third Truck of the Year win in 1986 with the FL family which was introduced to replace 1979's winning F7 range.

Despite its huge success, the F7 was replaced within just seven years as transport technology moved apace and the limitations of a 7-litre engine for heavy work became unsustainable.

The 13 judges awarded 121 of the 156 available points to Swedish manufacturers for 1986, with Volvo eclipsing the Scania 92 by just five votes, and the DAF 3600 ATi taking third position on 13 points.

Volvo's application of technology to the specific distribution, construction and medium-haul sectors, and in particular the focus on reducing long-term operating costs, found favour with the judges. The company's engineers paid special attention to flattening out the increase in variable costs traditionally associated with higher mileages, and focused on the four principal areas of basic design concept, engineering development, build quality and field support.

The FL family was somewhat unusual, being made up of two distinct forward-control, low-mounted, designs which spanned the 11- to 38-tonne sector. Whilst the FL7 and FL10 gained the most attention, covering the 16.26- to 38-tonne weight range

with intercooled 7- and 10-litre engines, the Belgian-built FL6 slotted into the 11- to 16.5-tonne sector, with tractor units taking the train weight up to 28 tonnes.

The new cab designs featured improved access and visibility and – controversially – a fixed seat as standard, Volvo's engineers relying on advanced cab-mounting technology and long taper-leaf, shackled springs to provide an improved ride. Greater front axle weight capacities, tighter turning circles, new brakes jointly-developed with Girling and new wiring systems with a simplified loom and better weather protection were all incorporated.

In addition to the two new cab designs were brand new engines in the 6- and



The FL611 was the lightest truck in the range.



The Volvo FL was launched at Frankfurt in September 1985.

7-litre classes and the adoption of the F10's TD101F 299hp engine for the top-powered models.

The new engines were entirely redesigned and wholly different from their predecessors, although they enjoyed a degree of commonality with each other in terms of cooling, lubrication and ancillaries. For the FL6, the 5.5-litre TD61G was rated at 152hp for 11-tonne work, with the TD61GS rated at 180hp, and the intercooled TD61F at 207hp. There were automatic and manual transmissions offered with ZF 6-speed or Volvo 8-speed range-change gearboxes.

The FL7 was powered by the TD71 6.7-litre charge-cooled engine, rated at 230hp in TD71F form, or 245hp in TD71FS form with transmission generally being provided by Volvo 8-speed, or 16-speed splitter gearboxes. The new engines incorporated design features from the 1983 10-litre design such as a stiffer block, a gear-driven coolant pump and improved oil-flow to enhance durability.

The FL went on to gain a 12-litre engine in January 1995, before the heavier models were replaced with the FM range in 1998, whereas the distribution sector is still served by an FL model in 2026.

1986



INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR ASSOCIATION

INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR 1987 MAN F90

1987 saw MAN hot on the heels of Volvo to secure a third win with the F90. MAN had last been awarded the Truck of the Year in 1980 with the 19.321, and the intervening years had proven quite rough a ride for the Bavarian manufacturer. Adversely affected by the downturn in the European heavy truck market in the early 1980s, MAN had walked away from a potential deal with General Motors and had sold its interest in the MTU engine business to Daimler-Benz in order to offset losses. The F90 was introduced in the Summer of 1986, with MAN having shed 6,000 jobs across its factories.

Compared with other recent winners, the F90 was a relatively cautious launch, with drive axles and engines being modified versions of existing components matched to a brand-new chassis and conservatively-styled cab, introduced initially with just two models – the 19.332 and 19.362 - both in 4x2 configuration.

The 13-nation judges were won over by the “brilliantly-engineered” MAN which achieved a clear margin over the Mercedes-Benz Powerliner, and third-placed contender – the “Middle Class” Steyr. The Mercedes lost out due to questions over the necessity of a 450hp engine, and the no-options electronic gearbox, whereas the Steyr's availability in only selected European markets limited its appeal.



MAN's F90 was introduced in the summer of 1986.

The MAN F90 was introduced with the latest version of the D2866 12-litre engine, which had been improved 18 months beforehand, and now featured increased turbo output at low revs and redesigned piston crowns. With either 332hp or 362hp ratings, the 6-cylinder engine was offered in either vertical or horizontal forms.

The chassis featured an entirely new modular design, developed with computer assistance to maximise strength while minimising weight. Its component groups and air suspension could be incorporated into any production frame without modification. The truck was also an early design to use a smaller propshaft flange with serrated faces and four bolts, and steering was from the new ZF Servocom design.

A new front axle of 7.5-tonne capacity was introduced, but initially the old 13-tonne hub-reduction drive-axle was retained with bigger brakes before the introduction of a single-reduction design, jointly developed with Eaton.

Transmissions originally comprised the 16-speed ZF Ecosplit or the 13-speed Fuller Roadranger, with Eaton's Twin Splitter and semi-automatic SAMT joining in due course.

Most attention was paid to the cab, which was a robust, very well-finished and well-appointed 2.44m wide sleeper with electric windows as standard. Narrower and day versions of the cab were introduced across the MAN range over the following three years.



“Totally different from any other MAN, but unmistakably an MAN” ran the copy in the launch brochure.

Whilst some commentators questioned the new cab's lack of radical styling, many preferred to see a natural evolution from its predecessor and MAN claimed the similarity in styles helped fleets retain a unified identity as newer trucks were introduced.

The cab design was retained with the introduction of the F2000 in 1994, eventually being replaced by the TGA models from 2000.

1987



INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR ASSOCIATION

INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR 1988 DAF 95

DAF's first Truck of the Year success came in fine style with the 95 Series in 1988. The ageing F241 cab had hindered DAF in preceding years, despite some important engine improvements, but the 95 impressed judges with its versatility, modernity and technological developments, giving it a 22-point win over Iveco's Turbostar 360 and the Pegaso Troner.

Of course, the Pegaso shared the Cabtec cab with the new DAF, but the limited availability of the Spanish entry across Europe restricted its appeal to a nonetheless respectable third place.

The 95 Series project was conceived as early as late 1979, and when launched in August 1987, DAF could boast a brand-new cab, chassis, rear axle and electronic system matched to a reworked and proven 11.6-litre engine.

Designated "WS", the new engines retained the existing ATi combustion technology, but incorporated crossflow cylinder heads and the Bosch in-line pump gained its own gear in a new timing case, instead of being driven from the rear of the compressor. These improvements, amongst other measures, were aimed at engine functionality and serviceability. At the launch, the engines were rated at 310hp, 350hp or 380hp.



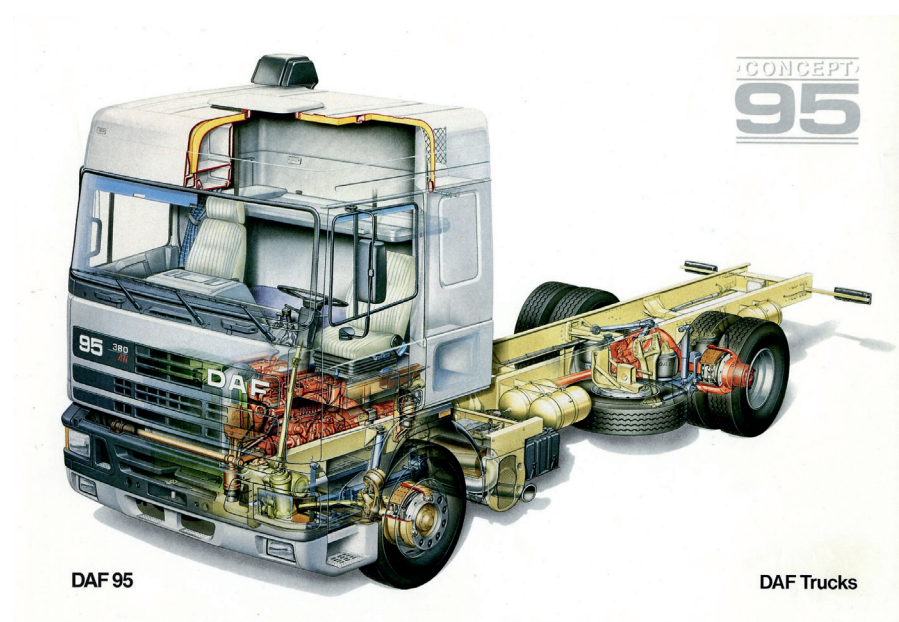
DAF's first Truck of the Year – the 95 Series.

Transmission duties were handled by the ZF Ecosplit 16-speed 'box in direct-drive or overdrive forms, but DAF replaced the usual double-H shift pattern with a single H and collar-activated range-change operation. DAF's long-serving hub-reduction axle was retired for general haulage in favour of a new single-reduction design, designated 1346.

Initially, the 95 was a 4x2 or 6x2 rigid or tractor unit, with a brand new high-tensile steel chassis developed for rigidity, stability and weight saving. "Harmonic damping" was employed whereby the engine mass was used to offset vibrations through the front axle via long parabolic front springs.

In product planning, DAF's engineers had sought to enhance their brand image of dependable workhorses into a more prestigious bracket and also anticipated the expansion of international pan-European haulage under what became the Maastricht Treaty five years later. To this end, a host of electronic systems were introduced into the vehicle.

The 95 featured an Intelligent Warning System with yellow or red notifications, a Central Timing Unit for general functions like wiper speeds and the E-GAS electronic throttle control with optional features including ABS, Integrated Temperature Control and Electronically Controlled Air Suspension.



95s matched revised engines to new chassis and cabs.

The new cab was the result of extensive driver research, combined with insights from the co-designers at Pegaso. Introduced with day, sleeper, space or short top-sleeper variants, the design featured three levels of suspension – coil spring and damper for fleet vehicles, electronically controlled air suspension for the top of the market and rubber for the construction market.

Despite its worthy win, it wasn't all plain sailing for the 95 and in 1990 the F241-cabbed 3200 was introduced for more conservative and cautious operators whilst the 95's engine range was revamped with 330hp, 365hp and 400hp ratings.

1988



INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR ASSOCIATION

INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR 1989 SCANIA 3-SERIES

Having been a runner-up on no fewer than three occasions with various 2-series models, Scania prevailed in 1989 with the 3-series.

The 1989 competition was regarded as something of a two-horse race by the 13 European judges with the new Scania and the Mercedes-Benz SK fighting it out for first place. The competing engineering philosophies – Scania's evolutionary approach against Daimler-Benz's more revolutionary design – eventually saw the Mercedes succumb to reservations about the unfamiliar technology at a time when few of the SKs had entered service.

The new Scania were a model of evolutionary development with all the major component groups receiving some engineering refinement to produce a range of vehicles which were basically familiar to judges and operators but advanced to a new level of detail.

Following the designations of the 2-series, 3-series models retained the G, P and R cab designs across a range which started at 16 tonnes and ended with a 6x4 heavy haulage model of 150 tonnes.

The cabs themselves enjoyed a host of improvements including new seating and trim and an all-new wraparound dashboard designed by Open Design in Italy featuring revised switchgear and instrumentation. For long-distance operators, the new R cab received an optional 220mm higher roofline to become the "Topline". The relatively modest increase was apparently chosen as a compromise between interior space and aerodynamics, and also permitted clearance beneath a fridge unit on a rigid chassis.



Announced in late 1987 and entering full production the following February, the 3-series was Scania's first Truck of the Year.



The 113 340 was the most powerful vehicle with the lower P cab.

The Topline cab featured an aerodynamic sun visor with marker lights as standard and all of the cab range benefited from streamlined mirrors, improved dirt deflectors and electric windows on both sides of the cab. The R cab also became the only cab option for the highest-rated 11-litre model, which was the 360.

Power across the range came via eight engine options, with the 210hp, 230hp, 250hp and 280hp models using the 9.5-litre engines, and the 310hp, 320hp, 340hp and 360hp versions with the 11-litre. The V8 had one rating – 450hp – but Scania was offering the 470hp with Electronic Diesel Control to operators in Scandinavia before the Europe-wide rollout during 1989. All the engine ratings were quoted at ISO 1585 standards, with the nett installed horsepower typically rounded up to the next 10.

All of the engines received modified fuel injection equipment and an increased compression ratio of 16-to-1 for the 11- and 14-litre units, with the large V8 also receiving new piston crowns. The extra torque and power of the V8 led to the introduction of the new GR880 10-speed synchromesh gearbox operated by a pull-type clutch.

Work on the 3-series had begun in earnest five years before it entered full production in February 1988, and was completed with more-responsive steering, lighter road springs and higher capacity front axles to make the new Scania as good a truck as it was possible to buy in 1989.

1989



INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR ASSOCIATION

INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR 1990 MERCEDES-BENZ SK

In July 1988, Daimler-Benz unveiled its new heavy truck range and won a second International Truck of the Year title in 1990, having lost out to the Scania 3-series in 1989.

The 18-month qualification period brought the Mercedes-Benz Schwere Klasse – Heavy Class – back into contention in 1990, with the German manufacturer prevailing over the unlucky Italians who took both second and third spots with the Iveco TurboDaily and TurboStar 480 respectively.

The SK range was a substantially new design with new engines, gearboxes and frames being matched to a re-vamped version of the previous generation's NG cab.

The redesigned chassis was a high-tensile steel design with central lubrication which remained without flitching except when offered for off-highway applications. The cab, whilst bearing a close resemblance to its predecessor, was immediately identifiable by the sloping window line of the doors and the greater use of plastic, with the enlarged grille, corner shrouds, stepwells and wings all made of the

material. The cabs employed galvanised steel sections and were available in five formats – day, short sleeper, full sleeper, "Grossraum" and a short cab with top sleeper – not previously offered by Mercedes.

The SK range spanned the 260hp to 480hp range and five variations of the new "440 Series" vee engines were employed across the various models. Surprisingly for the time, the 260hp and 290hp trucks were powered by the naturally aspirated OM 442 in 15-litre V8 form, whilst the turbocharged OM 442 A, 14.6-litre V8 provided 354hp, or 480hp in intercooled form designated the OM 442 LA. In the middle of the range sat the OM 441 LA, an 11-litre, intercooled V6 engine, rated at 330hp which really caught the judges' attention. In fact, the judges' commendation specifically referred to this model.



The short-cab 2433 L EZ70 was a valuable addition to Europe's growing maximum-volume market.

MERCEDES-BENZ POWERLINER 2 1733S & 1733LS 38 Tonnes 340 bhp 4 x 2 TRACTOR UNITS



The judges regarded the 1733 as the standout model in the SK range.

The new V6 engine retained the 90-degree cylinder block arrangement but featured a new crankshaft design with crankpins offset by 30 degrees so that the better-spaced firing order would give a much more smooth-running engine than the earlier Mercedes V6 units. With a revised cylinder head design and injection system, the OM 441 LA was a very compact engine in the 300hp-plus class and promised improved fuel consumption to give Mercedes a strong competitor for the likes of the Volvo FL10 and Cummins L10-powered trucks.

All SK on-highway models of 290hp-plus featured Mercedes' own 9- or 16-speed transmissions which incorporated the pneumatic selector controls for the Electronic PowerShift, and optional anti-wheelspin and ABS completed the package.

The Mercedes also scored highly on the 45,000km chassis service intervals – courtesy of the central lubrication system – and the build quality and fit of detailed items such as electrical installations and piping, which the judges pointed out are responsible for more breakdowns than major component failures, making them of prime importance to reliability.

1990



INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR ASSOCIATION

INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR 1991 RENAULT AE

Eight years after Renault's triumph with the steady G 260, the French manufacturer was back to claim the top honours for a second time with the ground-breaking AE in 1991.

If ever there was a truck guaranteed to catch the attention of the 13 European judges, it was the Renault AE. The genesis of the truck can be traced back to the Virages VE 10 concept truck which was unveiled in November 1985, and as early as August 1987 the press was spotting prototypes out on the road.

At the AE's launch in May 1990, there were essentially two principal models - the AE 380 and AE 500, but these were configured into a useful range of 4x2, 6x2 and 6x4 tractors and rigids for drawbar operation. The 380 featured Renault's 12-litre, straight-six, intercooled engine with a rating of 374hp, whilst its more powerful stablemate took the 16.4-litre, 503hp V8 from Mack, Renault's US subsidiary. Behind the engine lay a familiar driveline from the well-established R-series, comprising the 18-speed B18 gearbox and P1345 hub-reduction axle on single-drive models, with the R-series' disc brakes employed on the front axle.



The Renault AE was an iconic design of the 1990s.

Now universally referred to as the Magnum, that name was originally reserved for the higher of two cab trim levels, the other being the standard De Luxe whilst the truck itself was referred to as the Maxicode. However, by early 1992 Renault had adopted the Magnum name across the board for general promotional purposes. The cab was naturally the focus of attention with the design arising from the Renault engineers' intention to produce "something really different, focussed on the idea of living in the truck". A flat floor was integral to that philosophy and the 1.87m of headroom was sufficient to allow most drivers to walk around the cab with ease. Mounted on active, four-point air suspension which cleared the engine, the steel cab frame made extensive use of plastic mouldings for exterior panels, providing protection from corrosion and reducing the weight penalty of the large cab. The AE was a remarkably tall truck in its day – standing at 3.77m unladen, about 300mm higher than a Volvo Globetrotter.

Once inside the cab, drivers were treated to 8.9m³ of space, with two full-length aircraft-style lockers, shelving above the windscreen with provision for fitting a TV and two built-in wardrobes with built-in shoe lockers. Fans of both budget hotels and Renault cars may have found themselves at home in the truck, as the designers incorporated some car influences for the dash.



Extensive operational testing went into Renault's premium truck offer.

Actually, getting into the cab was also novel with the set-forward front axle necessitating the use of three rear-positioned steps and two long grab-handles to reach the appropriate height before a shuffle over the wheelarch to the seat. The door handle concealed under the edge of the door was another unique design feature cementing the judges' opinion that "there has never been a truck quite like it". The second-placed VW Transporter never stood a chance.

1991



INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR ASSOCIATION

INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR 1992 IVECO EUROCARGO

Iveco was the last of Europe's major manufacturers to win an International Truck of the Year title, but did so in fine style and a £2.5bn investment in 1992. Each of the 13 European judges had 12 votes to cast, with a maximum of seven being allocated to one vehicle, and the new Ivecos scored with all the judges to secure a convincing win on 80 points. Scania's Turbo-Compound 400 was pushed to second place, and the Low Emission version of the Mercedes SK took the third spot.

Hailed as the first "all-new" Iveco since the company's founding in 1975, the EuroCargo's design brief originated in 1985 as an attempt to streamline the sprawling range of legacy models which included Club-of-Four cab Magirus trucks, Ford's original Cargo and older designs from OM and Unic.

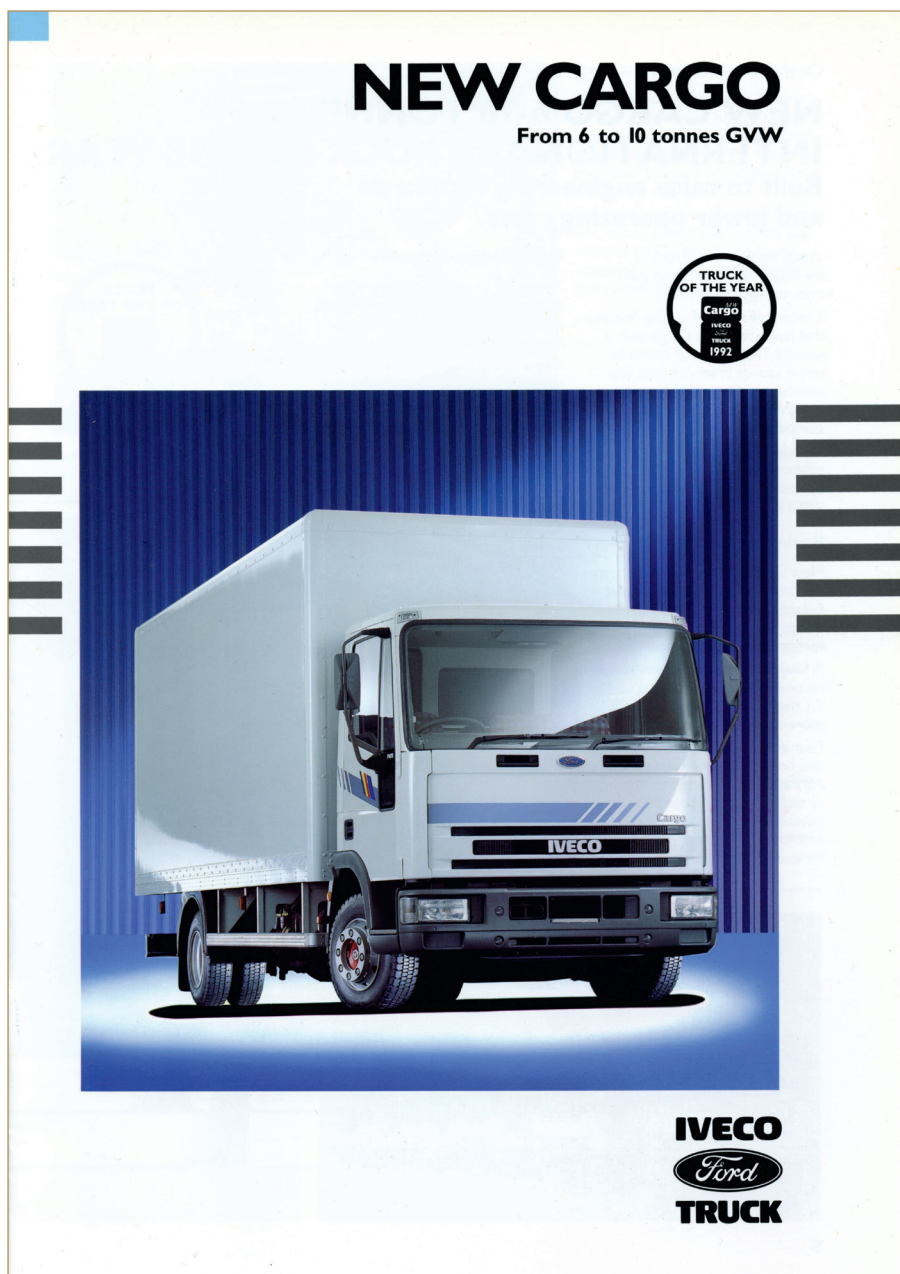
The EuroCargo was a very ambitious model range – arguably two model ranges, with the 6- to 10-tonne models sharing more engineering features than the heavier versions, which completed the programme up to 15 tonnes in rigid, or 24 tonnes in articulated, form. The 540 standard variants on offer were so extensive they effectively made "special builds" a redundant measure.

The judges always loved a comprehensive and adaptable range of light trucks, and with Euro-1 technology, "exceptional standards of handling and stability" and reduced scheduled maintenance times, Iveco was on to a winner.

EuroCargo's power was derived from the existing 8000 series engines, but these had been extensively re-engineered with new piston designs and injectors to improve combustion and reduce smoke. All of the engines were turbocharged and the 4-cylinder versions of 3.9 litres were rated at 116hp or 135hp. Six-cylinder designs of 5.9 litres covered the 143hp, 177hp, 207hp and 227hp ratings, with intercooling employed on the two highest-powered options. A single 7.7-litre engine of 266hp was offered for the heaviest models.



A EuroCargo launch press photo dated April 1991.



The trucks were marketed as "New Cargo" in Britain.

A new range of gearboxes was jointly developed with Eaton, and these were known as the 2800 Series by Iveco. They consisted of 5-, 6- or 9-speed units, with a splitter version of the 6-speed also offered. The gears were of a generous width to reduce noise and prolong durability.

Up to 10 tonnes, EuroCargos used Iveco's own drive axles, with a choice of up to six ratios on some models, and disc brakes from Lucas were employed all-round. The heavier variants used Rockwell axles with wedge actuator brakes. Suspension options spanned parabolic or multi-leaf springs, parabolic (front) and air (rear) combinations or air suspension all round. Torsion anti-roll bars and telescopic dampers were common to all applications.

The brand-new cab, designed in a joint venture with Ital Design, was of modular construction and pressed at the Brescia factory which was said to have Europe's most sophisticated press complex. Much of the assembly work was robotic, and the clean lines of the cab were adapted for Iveco's heavy range in the years following.

1992



INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR ASSOCIATION

INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR 1993 IVECO EUROTECH

Iveco waited 15 years for its first International Truck of the Year award and then two came along in a row with the EuroTech winning a close competition in 1993. Having scored a convincing win in the 1992 competition with EuroCargo, the next phase of Iveco's massive investment programme produced another winner with the EuroTech medium/heavy range. The new Ivecos saw strong competition from DAF's 75/85 Series, with the 13 judges settling the question in the EuroTech's favour by a mere four votes. The Volvo Euro-1 Geartronic came in a distant third. The judges were intrigued with the differing approaches employed on the new Iveco and DAF ranges, with the new DAF models being a distinct model range between the 45 and 95 Series vehicles, and the Ivecos part of a highly-rationalised programme integrated with the EuroCargo and EuroStar.

The EuroTech cab featured very similar styling to its smaller stablemate, but was 2.28m wide with four options – day, standard sleeper, top-sleeper or medium-roof sleeper (the latter selling itself a little short given its 2.02m internal height). Engines spanned the 7.7-, 9.5- and 13.9-litre capacities, with the 9.5-litre available at 345hp or 375hp at its launch. The 13.9-litre was initially rated at 420hp, but a

470hp version was later added, along with a 300hp version of the 9.5-litre. The new engines were developments of the existing 8000 Series with new piston designs, higher pressure, six-hole injectors and waste-gate valves which were all Euro-1 compliant at their launch. The 375hp 9.5-litre engine was electronically controlled and the adoption of this size of engine in the 360hp-plus class presented a significant weight saving over its predecessor, which was built upon with aluminium cases for the ZF gearboxes, and fabricated steel chassis bracketry used in place of heavier cast iron.



The EuroTech was announced in spring 1992. This launch press photo shows a generic model, but the truck also wore Ford badges in Britain and Pegaso badges in Spain.

EUROTECH

Heavy on-road vehicles
Engines from 176 to 309 kW (from 240 to 420 Hp)

IVECO

The Eurotech programme was an exceptionally comprehensive range of vehicles from 18 to 44 tonnes.

Eaton Twin Splitter gearboxes were offered alongside the ZF Ecosplit and Rockwell drive axles featured on most models, with the Iveco hub-reduction unit reserved for some 6-wheelers. Rear axle ratios ranged from 2.93:1 up to 5.7:1 to allow a wide range of performance possibilities when matched to various wheel and tyre sizes, and all the Iveco-built front and non-driven axles employed Bendix air-disc braking.

In keeping with its name, EuroTech was a truly pan-European engineering project, with engines built in the French Bourbon-Lancy plant, frame rails and cross members sourced from Turin, and cab panels pressed in Brescia. Final assembly was completed in the former Magirus plant in Ulm for the Central and Northern European markets, whilst the newly-acquired Pegaso plant at Barajas, near Madrid, supplied France and Southern Europe.

The EuroTech was a strong contender and caused its rivals much concern but build quality on early models dogged the truck's reputation to a degree.

1993



INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR ASSOCIATION

INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR 1994 VOLVO FH

The Volvo FH earned the Swedish manufacturer an unprecedented fourth win, dashing Iveco's hopes of a three-in-a-row triumph in 1994.

When Volvo announced the new FH range in September 1993, the odds on another win for Gothenburg would have been short, and, true to form, the FH secured 74 votes against 46 for Iveco's EuroStar flagship, and 18 for the DAF 75/85 Series.

The all-new family of heavy trucks featured innovative engineering, high safety and driver comfort standards, and the kind of performance and operational factors beloved by the judges and operators alike.

When the vehicles were formally launched, they already seemed quite familiar such was the extent of the pre-production testing of a design brief which was finalised by 1988.



Project FH was started in late 1986 with a £550m development budget.

The FH was built on a new, wider, chassis constructed of an alloy of high-yield steel chosen for its stability without the traditional "spring" of a conventional high-tensile steel, with deeper and thicker pressings for heavier applications. A new "S spring" parabolic suspension was introduced for single-drive axles, improving the ride from steel suspensions, but traditional multi-leaf or air-suspension was also offered.

The new 12-litre D12A engine was a ground-breaking development, designed with future environmental standards in mind, and featuring very high pressure electronically-controlled unit injectors. In order to further develop the combustion chamber, an overhead camshaft was introduced, breaking the Volvo tradition of

having individual cylinder heads on larger engines, which meant introducing a new cylinder head casting – the most complex undertaken at the Volvo foundry. The engines, rated at 340hp, 380hp and 420hp, had 4 valves per cylinder and generous cooling capacity, with forged steel piston crowns to accept the highest pressure and thermal loads.

The FH range also included the FH16, and whilst the bigger truck didn't receive a brand-new engine, the 16-litre lump evolved into the D16A with electronic fuel management and a new 520hp rating, alongside a 470hp version.



The FH12 420 was the most powerful model with the new D12A engine.

Two new 14-speed gearboxes were introduced with the SR 1900 14-speed available in the FH12 420, and the SRO 2400 in the FH16 520. All FH12s were offered with the option of the electronically controlled Geartronic system.

The FH's all-new cab also drew much praise, and was developed from a brief that the design must be suitable for a variety of operations, not just long-haul European work. In keeping with this, the cab was high-mounted to allow an underfloor radiator big enough for higher-powered engines, and to accommodate air intake trunking to leave a clean back-of-cab for bodying rigid vehicles. Accordingly, a flat floor was discounted, but the high-roof Globetrotter cab offered more space than the standard sleeper or day cab for those that needed it. The cab was made of zinc-coated steel and had three trim levels – standard, C or CD level, which boasted leather upholstery.

In hindsight, some Trucks of the Year appear more important than others, and the FH, like 1992's EuroCargo, was strong enough to establish a brand name that continues to the present day.

1994



INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR ASSOCIATION

INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR 1995 MAN F2000

In 1995 MAN replicated Volvo's fourth success with the F2000 taking the top honours as the replacement for 1987's winning F90 range.

The MAN F2000's triumph in the 1995 competition was overseen by Dr Klaus Schubert, the German manufacturer's head of engineering, who had also been at the helm eight years earlier for MAN's previous win with the F90.

Dr Schubert outlined a very perceptive and insightful philosophy underpinning the F2000, which won by a two-point margin over the DAF 95.500 Super Space Cab. MAN's offering was a comprehensive range of vehicles designed to meet all anticipated operational and legislative requirements, whereas the DAF was aimed squarely at the new super-long-distance work anticipated with the opening up of Eastern Europe.



The F2000 beat the DAF 95.500 by the slimmest of margins.

Whilst the external appearance of the F2000 was not radically different, the new vehicles were identifiable with an extra (third) step to the cab, and twin halogen headlamps. Inside, a new dash featured an improved display for the driver, and new Isringhausen seating was installed. The most powerful models received new cab air suspension, with this offered as an alternative lower down the power range. Chassis frames were pressed in "fine grain medium-yield steel" for the required strength and stiffness, and a new design of three-leaf parabolic spring was the standard option on the front axle. There was an air option for the front suspension, with air generally specified for the rear, and an optional electronically-modulated design was introduced for high centre of gravity applications.

The F2000 had improved front axles with disc brakes, with the rear axles being carried forward from the joint-venture agreement signed in 1986. These single-reduction units had replaced the MAN hub-reduction design originally used on early F90s and used three sizes of ring gears together with different carriers, ratios and housings to offer a wide variety of variants.

MAN's close working arrangements with Eaton Truck Components were also in evidence with the new Eaton 16-speed synchromesh gearbox offered as an alternative to the ZF Ecosplit 16-speed. Dr Schubert remarked that a choice in synchromesh transmissions was a logical philosophy, and MAN also offered the Eaton SAMT B, which was a semi-automated version of the 16-speed unit. The cost of other advanced semi-automated transmissions was deemed prohibitive at the time.



F2000 designations ended in "3". This is the 19.463 with the new 12.8-litre 460hp Euro-2 engine.

With an eye on differing purchasing priorities across Europe, MAN simultaneously offered the F2000 with a choice of Euro-1 or -2 engines. For conservative operators, content to retain proven Euro-1 designs, engines from 270hp to 420hp were available, but for those seeking the latest engineering technology, Euro-2 versions from 290hp to 400hp with Bosch pumps and EDC were offered.

A brand-new 12.8-litre long-stroke version of the D28, rated at 460hp and 2,000Nm of torque at 800rpm-1,500rpm, was the highest-power option available, but this was only offered at Euro-2, with a view to further development over the next decade.

The IToY panel increased to 14 judges in 1995, with the inclusion of an Irish representative.

1995



INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR ASSOCIATION

INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR 1996 SCANIA 4-SERIES L CLASS

1996 saw a second International Truck of the Year win for Scania with the highly anticipated 4-series.

Whilst the popular imagination remembers the 4-series as the runaway winner of the 1996 competition, the award was actually made in respect of the L Class of vehicles within the 4-series range. The Long-distance class had only been formally announced in October 1995, and the other classes (Construction, Distribution and General) followed.



The Topline cab featured an overhead bunk accessible via a fold-away ladder.

The new Scania scored an impressive 72 points, with the DAF 55 Series in second place on 33, and its 85.400 stablemate in third with 17. The modular Scania concept contrasted with the Dutch manufacturer's segment-based designs.

The 4-series was heralded as the biggest ever change in the Scania range and came at a pivotal time in the company's history, following the demerger with Saab, and prior to a stock market listing in April 1996.

The various classes of 4-series were based on their chassis and sector designations, and Scania paid particular attention to chassis development across the range, having encountered some criticism that the 3-series chassis design had failed to recognise the growing degree of specialisation in the marketplace. Scania's trusty 9-litre engine received an increased capacity to a full 9 litres with 310hp, and the 11-litre was available for Euro-2 with a 340hp rating. A brand-new 12-litre engine was introduced for 360hp and 400hp featuring 4 valves per cylinder, with individual cylinder heads and rear-mounted timing gears. The famous Scania V8 14-litre was equipped with a new generation of EDC and was rated at either 460hp or 530hp.



The Scania 4-series was announced in October 1995, and the first models were the Long-Distance Class which scooped the 1996 IToY.

Amongst the advanced features offered in the L Class were Scania's semi-automated Opticruise transmission, standard ABS and a gearbox-integrated retarder but the very first trucks were fitted with drum brakes, until discs were introduced later in 1996.

The new cab design was quite a departure from traditional Scania styling, and initially received a mixed reception, not least from staff at Södertälje, according to contemporary reports. Styled by the Italian design house Bertone, the cab featured an upright windscreen with large-radius curves to the corners, roof and under-bumper.

In keeping with the Scania modular-cab philosophy, there was a low-mounted P-cab in day or sleeper form, and a tall R-cab also in day or sleeper form which was joined by the new CR19 Topline flagship design. A normal-control T-cab joined the line-up in due course.

The new Topline addressed the interior-space issue of the 3-series, affording 1.97m of standing room above the engine cover, and a 900mm "home-sized" bed mounted above the windscreen at the front of the cab. Scania's engineers resisted the temptation to have a high cab floor, like the Renault Magnum, in order to preserve accessibility and "feel for the road".

1996



INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR ASSOCIATION

INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR 1997 MERCEDES-BENZ ACTROS

The 1997 competition saw a comfortable third win for Mercedes-Benz with the high-tech Actros.

Looking back, the Actros provided the concept for the modern-day truck with a host of new electronic features and engineering guaranteed to catch the judges' attention with 76 votes, but Renault's Premium scored a creditable 57, with a mere 12 votes going to Scania for the remaining classes of 1996's winning 4-series. The Actros project was initiated in principle in 1990, born of the realisation that the 1973 NG-derived cab had reached the limit of its potential, and full development started in 1992. With a £780m investment, the project had a very ambitious scope and every aspect of the range was included, leading to new engines, gear-shifting, brakes and "Telligent" electronic architecture in addition to the cabs.



The comprehensive Actros range was launched in September 1996.

The design brief also included an ambition to reduce the parts inventory by nearly 75% across the entirety of the truck range, affording the manufacturer the economies of scale to provide operator value in a price-sensitive market. Lighter vehicles and longer service intervals – up to 120,000km in certain applications – were also designed in for competitive advantage.

Two new engines were introduced – the OM501LA 12-litre V6, rated at 313hp, 354hp, 394hp or 428hp, and the OM502LA 16-litre V8 rated at 476hp, 530hp or 571hp. The new engines featured unit injection and a much-improved engine brake. The V6 offered a considerable weight saving over its 8-cylinder predecessor, while the new V8 was compact enough to allow for a flat floor.

The new Telligent gear-shifting system was applied to the Mercedes 16-speed gearbox in two alternative forms. The standard shift used a short lever which was pressed forward or back to select shifts with a switch for split shifts. This system retained a clutch pedal, but the Telligent Automatic system offered clutchless shifting, although a foldable "emergency pedal" was incorporated.



The 1857 was the flagship Actros – the V8 engine developed 571hp with 2,700Nm torque and there was 1.9m of standing room in the MegaSpace cab.

Electronically controlled disc brakes were standard all round and this was a first for a manufacturer, offering much-improved stopping distances over non-electronic disc braking. A new, lighter, four-bag air suspension was standard on the rear axle, and this too was electronically controlled to self-level.

The new cabs were a full 2.5m wide and offered a significant increase in space over the outgoing SK models. Offered in day, standard sleeper or high-roof sleeper specifications, the designers cleverly adapted the modular principle to also include the flat-floor MegaSpace option. Access, dash information and stowage space were all regarded as significant improvements, but the seat fabric – a curious 1980s-like combination of red, blue and purple – caused some raised eyebrows. Co-ordination of the 26 electronic sub-systems was undertaken by Mercedes' own Control Area Network data-bus "CANbus" system whose Telligent brand name signified a combination of telecommunications and intelligence. Twenty-first century trucking arrived with the Actros, and the IToY judges were going to hear plenty more from this German icon.

1997



INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR ASSOCIATION

INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR 1998 DAF 95XF

DAF replaced the 1988 IToY winner with its successor after a decade, and took the top prize again in 1998 with the 95XF.

Following 1997's win for the high-tech Mercedes-Benz Actros, the 14 judges decided on a more conservatively-engineered vehicle for 1998, with the new DAF securing 71 points with its closest rival, the re-engineered Renault Magnum Integral on 61, and the new Renault Kerax in third on 14.

Having been announced at the Brussels Show in January 1997, the new 95XF had the advantage of significant numbers of vehicles being in service by the time of the judging for 1998, and demand for the truck was outstripping Eindhoven's capacity to supply the market. Some 10,000 sales were made in 1997, and press evaluations were very positive.

The two major factors in the 95XF's success were the new class-leading long-haul Super Space Cab, and an all-new 12.6-litre engine.

Mechanical injection was retained for Euro-2, and the DAF Engine Brake (DEB) jointly developed with Jacobs, was also made available. DAF continued to offer the Cummins 14-litre engine rated at 530hp until replacing its with their own design for Euro-3 in 2000.



In Super Space Cab form, the 95XF had 2.25m of interior space and "better provision for drivers than any other truck on the market".



International Truck of The Year for 1998 – The DAF 95XF offered with Super Space Cab, Space Cab or Comfort Cab options.

DAF had introduced the original Super Space Cab in 1994, but for the 95XF an additional 20cm was added to the length of the cab, which was also shared by the standard height sleeper Comfort cab and the intermediate Space Cab. The new cabs featured an 810mm bunk and were mounted 100mm higher on the chassis than their predecessors and all benefited from a less-intrusive dash, improved heating and a button-operated adjustable steering column.

Externally, plastic panels extended the door length to enclose the cab steps, and a larger grille was introduced to accommodate an increased-capacity radiator required for the dry-liner engine.

The totally new engine replaced the long-serving WS 11.6-litre unit which had its ancestry in a Leyland design from the early 1960s. Rated at either 380hp, 430hp or 480hp, and a maximum torque of 2,050Nm, the 12.6-litre engine featured 24 valves, a gear-driven fan, a crankshaft which was forged directly in the correct shape, hollow push-rods and a much stiffer block.

In keeping with traditional engineering, DAF stuck with drum brakes for the 95XF, on the grounds of the longevity of drums and linings compared to disc brakes – reduced maintenance time and lengthy service schedules were a key factor in the truck's design. Two chassis specifications were offered, the medium-duty M class, and the heavy-duty H class with deeper sides for rigids and reinforcement for tractors. The driveline was completed with ZF's 16-speed manual transmission and DAF's SR 1347 single-reduction drive-axle.

With the new fuel-efficient engine, spacious cabs and proven engineering the 95XF held a wide appeal to European operators, serving them well until the introduction of the electronically enhanced XF95 in 2002.

1998

Words: Richard Stanier / Pics supplied by Richard Stanier / First published in Commercial Motor Magazine, UK



INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR ASSOCIATION

INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR 1999 MERCEDES-BENZ ATEGO

Following the Actros' success in 1997, Mercedes-Benz scored another victory in 1999 with the light-middleweight Atego.

When planning for the renewal of its entire truck range, Mercedes engineers took the bold step of combining the former lightweight and middleweight ranges into a single programme spanning 6.5 to potentially 36 tonnes.

The rationalisation of components and attention to engineering detail required to achieve this successfully, combined with a highly rated driving environment, was enough to secure the Atego a relatively narrow five-point victory over the new Volvo FM. The 18-nation jury, now including Slovakia, Greece and Russia, awarded the Mercedes 69 points, with the FM on 64 and the Iveco Cursor third on 33 points. The Atego range was essentially composed of a single cab design, a pair of engines and a new design of common chassis up to 17 tonnes, with the Actros chassis used at 18 tonnes and over.



The first official press photo of the Atego was issued in December 1997, with the vehicles appearing at RAI in Amsterdam in February 1998.

The lighter Ategos featured a two-piece chassis, with the rear section being a conventional ladder design to which a separate front section was bolted behind the cab. The front section for models under 10.5 tonnes had a Z-section profile, angled downwards and outwards to allow both cab and engine to be low-mounted for easy access.

All on-road Ategos featured disc brakes all-round, but the lighter models relied on high-pressure pneumatic actuation rather than the electronic system used by the 18-tonners and the Actros. Price sensitivity in the market was a factor for this decision, and also influenced the transmission choice which spanned manual 5- or 9-speed ZF gearboxes, or new Mercedes 6- or 12-speed designs – with no automated options.

The Atego's engine range comprised of the 4-cylinder, 4.25-litre OM 904 rated at 122hp, 152hp or 170hp and the 6.37-litre in-line six OM 906 rated at 231hp or 279hp. Both the engines used three valves per cylinder and electronically controlled unit pumps, but only the 6-cylinder was brand new; the 4-cylinder engine having been used in the previous Light Class models since 1996.



The Atego fought off tough competition from the Volvo FM range to secure 1999's ITy.

The new 2.3m-wide cab received particular praise having 25% more space than its predecessor, and being available in four variants – a short day cab, extended day cab, sleeper cab, or high-roof sleeper which really gave the appearance of a premium vehicle.

Disappointing fleet sales of the high-tech Actros in some markets prompted Mercedes to launch the Atego-cabbed Axor tractor unit in September 2001, and following an announcement in September 2004, all of the heavier Ategos were incorporated into the Axor range, leaving the Atego to be the 6.5- to 17-tonne specialist so well regarded by operators today.

1999



INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR ASSOCIATION

INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR 2000 VOLVO FH12

Following a disappointing second place for the FM in 1999, Volvo rebounded with an unprecedented fifth win with the new FH12 in 2000.

That year's IToY competition was an unusual affair – 1999's third-placed entry, the Iveco Cursor 10, increased its score by 23 to achieve a strong second place with 56 points, with the little Spanish Nissan Atleon in third with 31. The FH12 totalled 62 points, but the casual observer may have been forgiven for not even realising that the big Volvo was a new truck.

The late 1990s were heady days for Volvo. In 1998 the company had sold its truck axle plant in Lindesberg to Meritor and announced an alliance with Deutz for 6- and 7-litre engines, and in 1999 the car division was sold. An alliance with Mitsubishi to develop medium-duty trucks was announced, and a takeover of Scania with majority voting rights agreed in principle.



Volvo's FH12 underwent significant revisions to scoop its second IToY in 2000. The original FH had won the competition in 1994.

Against this backdrop of corporate restructuring, and the high-profile launch of the long-awaited FM, the FH12 was quietly being modified and re-engineered for the 21st century. Under Volvo's Global Modular Concept, there was a 78% parts commonality between the FM and new FH including a shared chassis platform, which resulted in nearly 10,000 fewer parts in the Volvo inventory.

The FH12 chassis incorporated new CAN-bus electronic architecture branded TEA – Truck Electronic Architecture – by Volvo, and optional electronically controlled disc brakes which featured a solid non-ventilated disc which was said to offer greater resistance to distortion and cracking. The new braking system was eased into production in order that any operational difficulties could be rectified quickly.

A new four-bag rear air-suspension design also benefited from electronic control with auto ride height and memory functions built in. Beneath the new suspension was a new axle – the RS 1344 – a single-reduction design with a significant weight reduction over its predecessor.



FH12 tippers were offered as a high-power alternative to the FM.

Volvo's highly regarded D12 engine was revised into the D12C model with an increase in injection pressure and compression ratio through updated electronics, a revised combustion chamber, new pistons, rings and valves. The original camshaft was replaced, the new timing mechanism used fewer gears, and the block was stiffened to reduce noise and increase fuel efficiency.

The D12C was available with a new 460hp rating in the new FH12, which was capable of 2,200Nm of torque, and the 340hp option was dropped from the FH line-up, to become exclusively an FM engine.

Behind the new engines were new 14-speed range-change gearboxes – the VT 2014 and 2514 with "light action" manual shifting mechanisms that Volvo claimed had a 50% lower shift load. Clutch pedal effort was also reduced by 30% with new servo-assistance.

Despite the extensive re-working of all the major components, the FH12 cab remained resolutely unchanged from the exterior, with the improvements not even acknowledged in the badging – operators had to wait until 2001 for a facelifted cab.

2000

Words: Richard Stanier / Pics supplied by Richard Stanier / First published in Commercial Motor Magazine, UK



INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR ASSOCIATION

INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR 2001 MAN TG-A

When the MAN TG-A was announced in March 2000, its impressive new cab design, electronic architecture and driveline innovations made it a serious contender for 2001's IToY, and when the time came for judging, the MAN scored a runaway victory with 114 points.

That year's competition saw the Renault Midlum come a distant second on 44 points, with the Volvo FL in third on 29, giving MAN a fifth victory to match Volvo's achievement.

The TG-A took its name from a compound of the words truck and technology – "Trucknology" Generation A, and the intention stated at the launch was to develop this concept through successive generations, B, C etc., although this idea was quickly dispensed with along with the hyphen, to become simply the TGA in 2001. MAN's designers readily acknowledged that the 1999 product range, based on the now-ageing F2000, had left the company in a slightly weak position in some areas, such as the top end of the tractor unit market, and the ambition for the TG-A was to improve MAN's sales performance across Europe. At the time MAN held 30% of the 6-tonne-plus German market but only 6% in France and 8% in the UK.



The undisputed IToY for 2001 – the MAN TG-A XXL.

In keeping with technological developments, the TG-A was developed with a full CAN system, facilitating communication between all the electronically controlled components, and the system was developed in-house alongside the serial-production vehicle, rather than in isolation. This approach, it was claimed, combined with thorough testing, would ensure the mistakes made by "certain manufacturers" would not afflict the TG-A.

The TG-A featured a new chassis design which offered a front air suspension option with electronically controlled disc brakes on all wheels as standard. The new Brakematic system was a rocker-switch actuated design which combined the engine brake and retarder with the cruise control. The rear axle was another new development, being lighter and more compact than its predecessor.



A TG-A LX tractor with 460hp engine.

The initial engine offering was carried over from the F2000 Evolution models and comprised the 12-litre D2866 rated at 310hp, 360hp or 410hp and the 12.8-litre D2876 rated at 460hp, with a 510hp variant added during 2000. Both Euro-2 and Euro-3 models were initially offered, with the latter featuring 4-valve technology and becoming the first heavy truck diesels in production to use Exhaust Gas Recirculation.

New transmission choices came from adaptations of ZF hardware. The standard "Comfort Shift" was the 16-speed Ecosplit with hydraulic shift and an automated clutch function for high range which was operated by a gear-lever-mounted button. Alternatively, the TipMatic was the 12-speed AS Tronic gearbox, matched to MAN software which offered fully-automated changing or a semi-automatic mode operated by a column-mounted stalk.

The primary focus of the TG-A was the all-new cab, available in five different forms. The 2.44m-wide version was known as the XL in standard-sleeper form, or XXL as a high-roof sleeper with an exceptionally deep windscreen. The 2.24m-wide models were designated M in day cab form, L in sleeper form and LX as a high-roof sleeper.

The finish and build quality of the vehicles, and the standard of the new cab made a significant impression in the contemporary press with commentators convinced that the TG-A would indeed cement MAN amongst Europe's elite.

2001



INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR ASSOCIATION

INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR 2002 DAF LF

DAF's third win came with the LF distribution range, proving – like the Mercedes-Benz Atego three years before it – that the IToY judges were not star-struck by flagship trucks when the right proposition came along.

The LF was launched at the Brussels Show in January 2001 as a replacement for the 45 and 55 Series, and owed its victory to the driveability of the range with quality ride and handling, the in-cab layout which compared well to heavier classes of vehicles, good manoeuvrability for distribution, and the flexibility of the new Cummins ISBe engines.

The judges awarded 87 points to the little DAF, ahead of the new Volvo FH12 500 on 80 points, and the Renault Magnum on 29. DAF also scored a fourth place with the revised CF models.

Whilst the outgoing 45 Series had been very successful in Britain and the Benelux countries, the new LF was designed as part of DAF's stated intent to secure 15% of the European market for vehicles of 6 tonnes and over.



The LF project began in 1996 with the truck launched in January 2001.

The design engineers were presented with a "clean sheet" opportunity for the new models, and the resulting range was produced in close association with outside suppliers, both old and new.

Essentially a 6- to 18-tonne range, with 6x2 rigids up to 21 tonnes and tractor units up to 28 tonnes, the LFs were powered by either 4 or 6-cylinder Cummins engines, which were rebranded as the Paccar BE and Paccar CE respectively. The 4-cylinder 3.9-litre unit was rated at 135hp, 150hp or 167hp and was adopted

due to the difficulties of achieving Euro-3 emission standards with lower-powered 6-cylinder engines. The 5.9-litre 6-cylinder engine was rated at 185hp, 220hp or 250hp. The new engines were developed by Cummins as part of the European Engine Alliance with New Holland and Iveco, with DAF having input into the development of its versions.



High street hero – the LF at work.

Cab options were dictated by anticipated production volumes, and the choices were to design a brand-new cab, to scale down the CF cab, or to collaborate with another manufacturer, with the final option winning the day by arrangement with Renault.

The LF cab enjoyed distinctly different styling to differentiate itself from the Renault Midlum, but the cabs were supplied in fully trimmed form from the French manufacturer, with both DAF and RVI sharing ownership of the design and tooling. Models of 6.2 up to 12 tonnes GVW were designated LF45 and had the lowest mounted cab. The LF55 was fitted with 19.5in wheels in 12- to 15-tonne form, with the tallest LF being the LF55 18-tonner on 22.5in wheels. Disc braking was employed on each axle, but DAF refrained from electronic operation, claiming it was unnecessary at these weights.

The driveline was completed with a choice of ZF 5- or 6-speed manual gearboxes or an Eaton 9-speed 'box with the more powerful engines, each driving Albion rear axles. The "Light Forte" certainly earned its place in transport history with 238,700 examples being produced in a near 23-year production run.

2002



INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR ASSOCIATION

INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR 2003 IVECO STRALIS

A decade on from the Eurotech's 1993 award, Iveco was back on winning form with a new generation of heavy trucks.

Having achieved the monumental task of replacing the entire range over 1991-1992, the shortcomings of the Single Product Range, as it was known, were used by Iveco's engineers to inform the development of the Stralis. The earlier range had been launched with the lighter EuroCargo models and moved up the scale, whereas the Stralis was effectively the replacement for the top-tier Eurostar and more powerful Eurotech models.

At a time when speculation was rife about the sale of the Iveco business, and it being "make or break time" (again), Iveco delivered the goods with a combination of a proven driveline, CAN-bus electronic architecture and innovative cab design. The Cursor 10 and 13 Euro-3 engines featured unit pump injectors and a single overhead camshaft with variable-geometry turbocharging and were already proven designs in the preceding model range. With the Stralis, the radiator area was increased by 23% and the intercooler by 21% and a new 540hp rating of the 13-litre was offered alongside the existing 480hp variant. The 10-litre maintained its 400hp and 430hp ratings.



The Stralis was announced at the Amsterdam Show in February 2002.

Iveco's version of the ZF AS-Tronic automated gearbox – marketed as EuroTronic 2 – was the standard transmission, with the 12-speed version behind the 10-litre engine and the 16-speed behind the 13-litre. ZF's 16-speed manual Ecosplit, fitted with servo-shift assistance, was retained as an alternative for traditionalists. Despite retaining the cab frame from the Eurostar, 80% of the panels on the Stralis were new, giving the truck a much more assertive look than its predecessor. Surprisingly, only one size cab was offered – the 2.5m-wide, high-roof model, with a tapered roof-line for improved aerodynamics mounted on a new four-point air and damper suspension system.

Whilst the roof line reduced headroom at the front of the cab, there was still 1.96m of standing room in front of the bunk, and the Iveco designers incorporated some innovative interior features with the deletion of the passenger seat.

Designated the "Active Space" design, there were three interior concepts: the Enhanced Single Driver version featured an armchair-style seat against the nearside of the back wall which could be angled at 90 degrees. The Long-Distance Single Driver layout featured a larger lower bunk, or a larger upper bunk with a chair and table beneath it, and a Two-Driver cab was offered with an air-suspended passenger seat to give extra legroom with 90 degrees of rotation.



The innovative Stralis Active Space one-man cab interior.

Features like these, and the rotating gear console which could be swung out of the way, together with the multi-coloured LCD dashboard display particularly appealed to the 19-country strong panel of judges who regarded the focus on driver amenity and the well-developed driveline to be a combination worthy of their 102-point score. Second place went to the DAF XF95 with 50 points, with the Volvo FM in third place on 44.

2003



INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR ASSOCIATION

INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR 2004 MERCEDES-BENZ ACTROS

2004 saw a second win for the Mercedes-Benz Actros, which had originally prevailed in 1997 as the harbinger of the electronic truck.

The original Actros had been a significant success, with 250,000 sold before the full launch of its successor, which was to become known as the Actros MP2, MP standing for Model Project.

Despite these significant sales, the original Actros had certainly split opinion with some operators being wary of the cost and reliability of the technology, leading Mercedes to introduce the Axor for general fleet roles from 2001.

To avoid direct competition with the Axor, Mercedes was able to develop the Actros into the premium truck niche it was always most at home in, and when the new Actros was announced in October 2002, this differentiation was clarified. The Euro-3 V6 engines of 320hp, 360hp and 410hp were restricted to rigid versions of the new model, with tractor units employing 440hp or 460hp variants of the engine, which sat above the Axor's straight-six horsepower ratings. The new V6s had 10% more torque than their predecessors and the V8 engine versions received a 4% increase and were rated at 500hp, 540hp or 580hp.



The V8 Actros with MegaSpace Executive cab was the flagship Mercedes-Benz.

Improvements to the chassis saw the adoption of a fully bolted, rather than riveted, front end, and a new rear air suspension on single-drive tractors which featured a lighter dual-bellows system. A new drive-axle saved a further 90kg, and the re-positioning of the shock absorbers behind the axle improved ride, handling and stability. Batteries and air tanks were also located within the rear of the chassis rails to free up space in anticipation of SCR for Euro-4 and -5.

Externally, the new Actros sported a facelifted grille with more prominent horizontal bars, and a redesigned bumper and deflector arrangement with new headlamps and an improved aerodynamic profile. It was internally that the major changes were made, as Mercedes sought to align the offer with the quality car range, and dispense with the idiosyncratic seat patterns and grey plastic. A new curved dash, improved seating, storage and bunks were introduced.

The cabs comprised the "S" short day-cab in Distribution or Construction specifications, the "M" short-sleeper, which had a 250mm increase in depth to

the rear wall, the "L" standard-roof sleeper, and the high-mounted MegaSpace with flat floor. Fully sprung mattresses replaced the previous foam versions in the sleepers.



The interior of the new Actros found favour with the judges.

All cabs featured electric windows and CD-players as standard, and the new seats were approved by the German orthopaedic authority. The Telligent gear lever was incorporated into the driver's seat and the handbrake lever into the dash, with the steering wheel having multifunctional buttons. The MegaSpace cab was offered in Long Distance and Executive versions, with the latter featuring automatic air-conditioning and fully automated transmission.

The improvements for the driver were recognised by the IToY judges when they proclaimed the new Actros the winner in Amsterdam in October 2003. The Mercedes achieved 91 points, ahead of the Iveco EuroCargo on 58 and the Volvo FH16 on 48.

2004



INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR ASSOCIATION

INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR 2005 SCANIA R-SERIES

In April 2004, Scania announced the new R-series model, which immediately became a favourite to win the IToY contest for 2005, and as history records, that year was strangely quiet for new truck launches.

The R-series eventually went head-to-head with the MAN TGA with its new D20 common-rail engine, and the Renault Mascott. Light trucks generally have little chance of winning IToY, and the new engine alone was not enough to clinch the competition for MAN, so the new Scania scored a third win for Södertälje with the judges expressing admiration of the improved driver environment and driveline. In keeping with the Scania ethos, the R-series was an evolutionary product within a modular design concept which saw low-cabbed P models and the bonneted T-series launched over the following 12 months. The outgoing 4-series had received some criticism and the new Scania's were claimed to have had 35% of their content changed. The models also received a new naming convention with designations being by cab type followed by power rating.

The R-series cab received an extensive make-over with an all-new interior and the re-modelled dash was mounted closer to the windscreen to afford greater interior space. The cab was also slightly higher mounted to reduce the footwell depth to a mere 145mm, and provide for an "almost-flat" floor. New fabrics were introduced with light sand-coloured materials in the upper cab to enhance light and space, and darker, dirt-resistant materials in the lower areas.



The 420hp engine with EGR became Scania's first Euro-4 engine.



The R-series was announced in April 2004.

The Opticruise and retarder controls became column-mounted, and the radio controls were incorporated into the steering wheel. The 4-series' novel front bunk arrangement in the Topline cab was abandoned in favour of the conventional position to the rear of the cab, and a new high-roof cab design was added to sit between the standard height roof and the huge Topline. The new high roof cab – designated the CR19H – provided an additional 20cm of headroom and additional storage facilities above the windscreen.

Externally, the re-designed grille provided for a stylish facelift with the contoured lines enhancing the visual appeal of the cab. "The focus is no longer on the bars, instead the space between them is what creates the truck's identity," Scania's PR people added, cryptically.

The R-series chassis benefited from a CAN-bus system integrated with new generation Bremse ABS and EBS disc brakes and an electronically-controlled air compressor. An Electronic Stability System was also offered on 4x2 tractors with air suspension and EBS.

The chassis itself was available with four-spring rear air suspension, and an alternative 7mm side member was offered for weight-conscious operators. When supplied with a lightweight fifth wheel, 270kg of weight could be saved.

Scania's renowned V8 16-litre was offered at 580hp, with the former 480hp uprated to 500hp. The 11-litre was offered at either 340hp or 380hp and the 12-litre line-up offered 420hp or 470hp. Scania also offered its first Euro-4 engine, being a 12-litre 420hp with turbo-compounding and EGR.

2005



INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR ASSOCIATION

INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR 2006 MAN TGL

In October 2005, MAN's TGL range won with an impressive 94 votes win to become 2006's IToY, as the "Trucknology Generation" expanded down into the lightweight sector. Runners-up in that year were the revised Iveco Trakker on 39 points, and the Mercedes-Benz Atego on 33.

The judges were particularly impressed with the new cab styling and interior and welcomed both the excellent driver environment and the deep screen and effective mirror arrangements giving distribution drivers an especially good field of vision.

The TGL was regarded as being long-overdue when launched in April 2005 as a replacement for the LE2000 models which featured the old Steyr-derived cab. The adaptation of the TGA cab for a range of vehicles spanning 7.5 to 12 tonnes was viewed as a significant advance, and the TGL had three cab options.



The Austrian-built MAN TGL was introduced in April 2005 and its big-truck styling and advanced specification won the judges over.

The "C" cab was the entry-level offering and was low mounted with only one step. Designed for tippers and multi-drop operations, it was the full 2,240mm wide, but was restricted to a length of 1,620mm and was most common in 7.5-tonne operations. The "L" cab was a sleeper design with a length of 2,280mm. This cab was higher mounted with two access steps and was equipped with a large bunk. For long-distance operation, the "LX" cab was the same length as the "L" but with a higher roof, giving 1,665mm of headroom above the engine tunnel, and including tinted glass and air conditioning in the specification.

All the cabs were noted for their blind-spot eliminating mirror arrangements, the general standard of trim, and the storage availability in the sleeper-cab models. Whilst the new cab was undoubtedly the centre of attention, the TGL also offered an updated chassis and engines and new transmissions. The rear of the chassis frame was drilled with closely positioned holes and a bolted cross member so that the overhang could be easily cut to length. A new two-bag air suspension was offered as an alternative to the standard rubber-bushed parabolic leaf springs and internally-ventilated disc brakes with electronic control were used on both axles.



This is a top-of-the-range TGL 12.240 with high-roof LX cab and 6-cylinder engine.

The 4-cylinder 4.6-litre D08 common-rail engine was offered at either 150hp or 180hp in the 7.5-tonne models, and at 180hp or 206hp in the 8-, 10- and 12-tonners. The 206hp rating was a new development fitted with two-stage turbocharging to produce a class-leading 830Nm of torque. For even greater power, a 6.9-litre 6-cylinder engine rated at 240hp was available for the 8-, 10- and 12-tonners. The TGL was the first truck to be offered with the new ZF 6-speed automated transmission, which was available with all ratings of the 4-cylinder engine under the MAN "TipMatic" brand name. Conventional 6-speed ZF gearboxes were also available, with a 5-speed offered in addition for the 150hp 7.5-tonner. The 12-tonne model remained resolutely manual with a nine-speed Eaton gearbox.

2006



INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR ASSOCIATION

INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR 2007 DAF XF105

In 2007, DAF repeated the formula adopted by the original 95XF to win the 1998 competition – a new engine and revised cab with sufficient vehicles in operational service to underwrite the judges' decision.

The DAF XF105 was the very definition of an evolutionary design, being the product of operator feedback and legislative requirements to retain its position amongst Europe's elite. A development of 2002's XF95, the XF105 was unveiled at Amsterdam's RAI show in October 2005.

The cab received a significant makeover of the interior with a 150mm-lower engine tunnel, new trim and storage, a new steering wheel, and a new dash display. Controls for the optional AS-Tronic automated transmission were incorporated into the steering column with the auto-selector repositioned to the dash, whilst the gearstick for the manual gearbox could be folded away. The under-bunk pull-out drawer and fridge, the pulley system to raise the top bunk, and the bunk's fold-down steps also won approval.



The XF105 matched evolved styling with an all-new engine.

Externally, the new DAF benefited from more generous mirrors, with a 50mm increase in width being offered with the new four-piece arrangement. The previous mirror arrangement had been identified by drivers as insufficient, and the new set-up featured an aerodynamic design and the option of colour-coding.

The lower grille was restyled so that it extended further into the bumper to afford greater airflow, and an aluminium strip was added to the top of it to indicate compliance with Euro-4/5 emission standards. The new bumper design featured optional cat's-eye combi lights and Xenon headlamps. The upper grille also received a makeover with cleaner lines being introduced.

Super Space Cab models came with an entirely revised, and slightly higher, roofline with a more streamlined profile into which optional "skylight" halogen spotlights could be integrated.

The onset of Euro-4 emissions standards led to the introduction of the new 12.9-litre MX engine which was a 4-valve-per-cylinder design with a compound graphite iron block. The 6-cylinder engine featured a one-piece head with integrated inlet manifold, and the oil filter, thermostat and cooler were integrated into a single lubrication module. The MX was claimed to have 25% fewer parts than its 12.6-litre predecessor and relied on selective catalytic reduction leading to the repositioning of the air tanks inside the chassis rails to make space for the AdBlue tanks.



The attention to detail paid to the interior impressed the judges.

Surprisingly, the MX engine was rated at either 410hp, 460hp or 510hp, being a 20hp reduction on the outgoing models, but this was countered by an improved torque of 2,000Nm, 2,300Nm or 2,500Nm which was available between 1,000rpm and 1,400rpm, and greatly improved the efficiency of the optional engine brake. With synthetic oil and a centrifugal filter, service intervals were extended to 150,000km.

The new DAF won the 2007 IToY with 86 points, knocking the Renault Premium Route into second position on 61, and the Volvo FL into third spot on 31. At the time of the award presentation at Hannover's IAA in September 2006, over 12,500 XF105s had already been sold.

2007



INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR ASSOCIATION

INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR 2008 MAN TGX AND TGS

MAN's success in winning the 2008 IToY competition marked an unprecedented seventh win for the German manufacturer, cementing a victory for six generations of new heavy trucks introduced since the 1980s, with the lightweight TGL thrown in for good measure.

Far from being a one-horse race, the MAN faced stiff competition from the Renault Premium Lander and Iveco's revised Stralis, but the 20-country strong panel of judges allocated 111 points to the TG, with 77 for Iveco and 55 for Renault.

The new MAN TG series was a three-part proposition. Firstly, it was a replacement for 2001's winning TGA range in European markets, with the older model being renamed VW or "Worldwide" and production transferred to Poland for export to non-European markets.

Secondly, the new generation "Trucknology" models were differentiated from their predecessor by being split into two distinct ranges, based on their cab sizes: the narrower-cabbed models forming the TGS part of the range, and the wider-cabbed vehicles becoming the TGX range. These featured relatively modest engineering updates matched to a significantly improved cab.



MAN replaced the TGA range with two new ranges to triumph in 2008.

Thirdly, the TGX range saw the introduction of a new flagship model in the form of the mighty 680hp V8, which was Europe's most powerful road truck at the time. The TG Series was announced in June 2007, with production commencing in September – just in time to secure the 2008 IToY prize, which was awarded at the Amsterdam Show in October 2007.

Naturally enough, the new cab received much attention with the interior being restyled with new, more attractive and durable materials, and significantly improved storage space. Externally, the cab featured smoother lines and a high-gloss radiator trim which improved the general appearance of the truck, and particular attention was paid to aerodynamic performance. The A-column, roof contour, air deflector, bumpers and mirrors were all redesigned to claim a 2% reduction in fuel consumption, and a 13% reduction in interior noise.



The TGS models were engineered for the construction and distribution sectors.

The TG Series carried over the D26 12.4-litre and D20 10.5-litre engines from 2004, with ratings of 320hp to 540hp in the TGS and 360hp to 540hp in the TGX. Euro-4 engines used an EGR system, with the Euro-5 models initially using an SCR system before the development of a full EGR solution. Both 16-speed manual and 12-speed automated transmissions were offered.

The rear axles received a lighter and more durable connection to the springs and the TGX received a new single-leaf parabolic front spring and an altered steering ratio which provided a much more positive driving experience.

The show-stopping V8 TGX was powered by the D2868 16.2-litre, 680hp engine jointly developed with Liebherr and capable of 3,000Nm of torque. This truck featured an SCR system with the XXL cab being standard on 4x2 tractors.

2008



INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR ASSOCIATION

INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR 2009 MERCEDES-BENZ ACTROS

Announced in March 2008, with production of long-haul tractors commencing in July 2008, the Mercedes-Benz Actros MP3 scored an unprecedented third win for the Actros brand, leaving second place to the Iveco EuroCargo and third shared between the Scania R series with EGR, and the Volvo FH.

The third incarnation of the Actros was very much an evolutionary rather than a revolutionary design, but a host of improvements ensured that the truck was to remain at the forefront of technological innovation.

Existing 12-litre V6 and 16-litre V8 engines with SCR technology – called BlueTec 5 by Mercedes – were featured with the 6-cylinder models rated at 320hp, 360hp, 408hp, 435hp, 456hp or 476hp. Eight-cylinder ratings were 510hp, 551hp and 598hp and the standard transmission was the automated PowerShift 2 design which had been available as special equipment since 2006, making the new Actros “the first heavy truck range to be fitted with a 12-speed auto as standard.”



The flagship Actros MP3 – the 1860 with BlueTec 5 V8 engine.

The new transmission had faster changes, an “anti-jerk” function and a new “manoeuvring mode.”

An electronic air processing unit was incorporated into the air compressor so that it only operated during periods of low power loss, and a two-stage water pump ran at lower speed during partial-load operation. These two measures in combination were credited with a 1% saving on fuel consumption. A reduced steering ratio was also adopted for improved handling and feel.

A wide range of equipment packages were offered to operators under the Comfort Pack, Safety Pack and Economy Pack options, with basic, classic and top levels. The Top Safety Pack included active brake assist in addition to stability control, lane assist, airbag, proximity control and a Voith retarder. The Actros was the first standard production truck to offer active brake assist as an option.

Externally, the Actros MP3 received a relatively modest re-style, and whilst the press release's assertion that “the new Actros impresses with its dynamism yet also expresses serenity and effortless superiority” may have overstated the case, the new two-bar grille on the lower-mounted cab, and three-bar grille on the higher cab certainly made for an attractive-looking machine.



The interior featured seats with covers of flat-weave fabric, velour or man-made leather.

Many of the 37 points outlined in the launch press pack were focussed on driver comfort and safety, and whilst some – such as the “new-look key” and the optional illuminated Mercedes star – may have been peripheral, many of the others were useful developments. Optional rain and light sensors were borrowed from Mercedes' E-class cars, being another first in a heavy truck.

A battery status indicator was standard as a preventative maintenance measure, in addition to a compressed airgun connection, with the airgun also supplied with construction chassis. The interior received new seat covers and upholstery, and the top bunk incorporated a level-control system so that the bed could always be in a horizontal position. The lower bunk was also improved with a flexible, slatted base. A large, swivelling shaving mirror, Bluetooth hands-free system, towel rack and optional auxiliary air-conditioning and a folding table on the passenger side completed the in-cab offer.

2009

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INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR ASSOCIATION

INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR 2010 SCANIA R-SERIES

Following Mercedes' third win for the Actros model in 2009, Scania achieved a second win for the R-series in 2010, using a similar formula of proven engines, evolutionary styling, technological enhancements and interior improvements. The new R Series range was formally announced in September 2009, and took the ITToY prize with 114 votes in mid-November 2009 – one of the shortest launch-to-winning periods in the competition's history. The Volvo FH16 was the runner-up with 60 votes, ahead of the MAN TGL/TGM on 46.

The engine range was already a known quantity, comprising straight-six and V8 options. The 13-litre sixes had been introduced in early 2008 and featured the extra-high pressure fuel injection system developed with Cummins with variable geometry turbocharging. Rated at 360hp, 400hp, 440hp or 480hp, these engines achieved Euro-5 with EGR only. The 15.6-litre V8 with SCR was available at 500hp, 560hp or 620hp initially, with the 16.4-litre 730hp unit joining the line-up in April 2010. Scania also offered SCR 12-litre sixes at 380hp and 420hp.



The Scania R 480, with 2,500Nm torque, revised Opticruise gearbox and 2.59:1 axle was a strong proposition for 44-tonne work.

Behind the engine, Scania updated the Opticruise transmission system, finally dispensing with the clutch pedal, and introducing new management software for a more responsive, smoother performance. A new manoeuvring mode and a rocking function for tippers were added, and a higher geared 2.59:1 axle ratio was offered to enable motorway cruising at under 1,200rpm. Stylish, redesigned side fairings incorporating catwalk steps were added to tractor models, and the batteries were relocated to the rear of the chassis in order to allow greater capacity fuel tanks of up to 1,500 litres on 4x2 versions.

Externally, the cab received a modest refresh with a larger badge, and a redesigned grille. The new grille had wider gaps between the bars, and the apertures were tapered at the lower edge. In addition to improving the appearance of the truck, the new design improved the airflow to the engine which would be required in anticipation of Euro 6. The new look extended down to the bumper, which was reworked to accommodate adaptive cruise control radar.



The revised cab interior with central storage console and wood trim detail.

Inside, the cab received a significant makeover with four optional trim colours and a new dashboard with central storage incorporated. Storage in and above the doors was improved and a fold-out table was provided from the passenger glove box. One of the most welcome changes was the new lower bunk, which was developed into a pull-out design, increasing the width to 900mm, and dispensing with the need to use the previous model's foam infills.

The R Series also saw the introduction of Scania's Driver Support System which graded drivers on their hill-climbing, braking and anticipation performance with a star rating via the dashboard. This "innovative learning tool" was one of the measures which appealed to the 22-strong jury alongside the fuel economy, driveability, and general efficiency of the vehicle, leading them to declare the R Series a "state-of-the-art truck."

2010



INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR ASSOCIATION

INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR 2011 MERCEDES-BENZ ATEGO

In March 2010, Commercial Motor tested a Mercedes-Benz Atego and praised the 7.5-tonner for simply getting on with the job efficiently, while noting that it routinely ranked among the three best-selling models in its UK weight class. However, attention was drawn to the ageing design, which last received a facelift in 2004, and although modern technology had continued to be incorporated, it was recognised that this version of the Atego was reaching the end of its product cycle. The 2010 Atego rigid range spanned the 6.5- to 16-tonne sector with a “densely-graduated” range of outputs from its 4.25- and 4.8-litre 4-cylinder and 6.37-litre 6-cylinder engines. The smaller 4-cylinder had 129hp, 156hp and 177hp ratings, with the larger one rated at 218hp. The 6-cylinder was available with 238hp, 256hp and 286hp. All the engines were part of the Mercedes BlueTec programme employing SCR for Euro-5, and the 177hp version was also capable of meeting the EEV standard. Environmental and fuel-saving credentials were enhanced with an optional engine stop/start system.



The Mercedes Atego won its second IToY 12 years after its first, in 2011.

Three 6-speed manual transmissions were offered and these were available with Telligent automated gearshift as special equipment, whilst the 256hp+ models had 9-speed manual gearboxes.

In mid-2010 the face-lifted Atego was introduced with a prominently revised grille in the Actros MP3 style, and a new interior which was said to bring big-truck levels of comfort to the distribution truck driver. With three cab trim variants – distribution, long-distance and luxury, there was certainly something for everyone, and the high-roof version of the L-cab was available with twin bunks. The new steering wheel was pneumatically adjustable and incorporated multifunction controls.



The Atego Hybrid presented interesting technology but was an evolutionary dead-end.

The clever two-piece chassis design which caught the judges' eye for the Atego's first IToY back in 1999 was retained on models up to 11.99 tonnes GVW meaning that the heaviest models in this part of the range fell beneath the 12-tonne German threshold for road tolls. An optional magnetic retarder was also offered for vehicles in drawbar operation.

Of particular technological interest was the introduction of the first hybrid truck to be put into series production. The Atego 1222 L featured a 218hp, 4.8-litre diesel engine with a water-cooled 44kW electric motor mounted behind the clutch and in front of the 6-speed automated transmission. The electric motor could supply power from its lithium-ion batteries when pulling away or during rapid acceleration and was recharged with recuperated energy.

Although the hybrid technology was cited in the IToY chairman's citation, its overall cost and weight penalties limited its market potential and with the introduction of Euro-6 standards it was pretty much redundant in goods vehicle development. Nevertheless, the Atego enjoyed a slightly unexpected second IToY in 2011 with a total of 127 votes before being replaced with the new version in 2013. The win was also notable considering the heavyweight Swedish competition the little German had to contend with – Volvo's new FM range, with the tough FMX included, scored 82 votes, with the mighty Scania R730 in third position on 45 votes.

2011



INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR ASSOCIATION

INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR 2012 MERCEDES-BENZ ACTROS

Following the slightly unexpected win for the Mercedes Atego in 2011, Daimler achieved the second-ever consecutive win with the Actros in 2012, repeating a feat first accomplished by Iveco in 1992/1993.

The success of 2012 marked an unprecedented fourth win for the Actros, but in reality, the retention of the model name was a reflection of the strength of the Actros brand in the market, and the truck itself was effectively a “clean sheet” design, the work on which had commenced a decade earlier.

The new 12.8-litre OM 471 straight-six saw the move away from V6 and V8 engines, and was the first European incarnation of the new Daimler Heavy Duty Engine Platform, developed as a global engine programme with regional variations produced by Detroit Diesel and Fuso. The design was the first Euro-6 engine to be launched, and the standard was met with a combination of SCR, EGR and a particulate filter.

Featuring X-Pulse common-rail, high-pressure injection, the new engine offered 421hp, 449hp, 476hp or 510hp variants, with torque of between 2,100Nm and 2,500Nm. Euro-5 variations continued to be offered ahead of the 2014 deadline, with the 10.7-litre OM 470 and the 7.7-litre OM 936 joining the line-up in 2012.



The all-new Mercedes Actros was announced in June 2011.

The PowerShift 3 12-speed automated transmission incorporated steering-column control and a new crawl function, with the shifting strategy improved to take into account combination weight, road inclination and accelerator position. The single-reduction drive axle was offered with double the number of ratios of its predecessor, and a new four-bellows air suspension matched to an innovative rear axle guide ensured better roll characteristics and a smaller roll angle on bends.

The chassis frame was also new, with the frame track extended by 90mm for improved road handling and driving characteristics, and pre-drilled throughout. An enhancement to the steering gear also contributed to the overall driving performance. Externally, the new Actros featured modern styling which propelled Mercedes back to the forefront of truck design. Identified with four brand names – ClassicSpace, StreamSpace, BigSpace and GigaSpace, there were seven cab variants with four different roof heights and various cab heights.



The 1851 with GigaSpace cab was the flagship of the new Actros range.

Two cab widths were available – at 2,300mm and 2,500mm, with the sleeper cabs having a standard length of 2,300mm. The ClassicSpace cab featured a low-height roof and was offered in 2,300mm form only, whereas the StreamSpace with the higher roof was available in 2,300mm or 2,500mm form. The widest cabs had a standard flat floor, with this as an option for 2,300mm variants.

The BigSpace cab offered 1.9m of headroom, with the GigaSpace providing 2.13m. The cab interiors received a corresponding redesign with completely redeveloped seats and a new 104mm TFT colour display.

With such a comprehensively new model, Mercedes was always going to be the favourite for 2012's IToY, and this was achieved with 161 votes from the 24-country judging panel. In second place with 67 points was the new Tatra Phoenix, recently launched with DAF cabs and engines, with Scania's Euro-6 range in third place with 61 points.

2012



INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR ASSOCIATION

INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR 2013 IVECO STRALIS HI-WAY

A decade after winning IToY for the original Stralis in 2003, Iveco did it again with the new Stralis Hi-Way in 2013. The Hi-Way designation replaced the “Active Space” brand for the full-width cab on the new models, with the narrower sleeper cab and the day cab models being re-branded Hi-Road and Hi-Street respectively. Announced in July 2012, the Stralis Hi-Way secured 138 votes from the newly expanded 25-member jury to win the award that September. The runners-up consisted of the Mercedes-Benz Antos with 107 votes, and the new Ford Otosan Cargo in third place, being the first time a Turkish vehicle had been shortlisted. The Stralis Hi-Way matched a facelifted cab with interior upgrades and a couple of new engines in the form of the Cursor 9 and 11 which replaced the earlier Cursor 8 and 10 units, although a version of the Cursor 8 was retained for CNG operation.



Launched in July 2012, the Stralis Hi-Way saw Iveco return to winning ways after a decade-long absence.

The 8.7-litre Cursor 9 was rated at 310hp, 330hp, 360hp and 400hp with the 11.1-litre Cursor 11 covering the 420hp, 460hp and 480hp ratings. The new engines featured a new common rail injection system, electronically-actuated variable geometry turbochargers and the Iveco HI-eSCR catalytic reduction system which could meet the forthcoming Euro-6 emission standard without resorting to EGR. This enabled Iveco to avoid an extensive re-engineering of the cooling system, and Euro-5 versions remained available prior to 2014.

For those requiring greater power, the Cursor 13 was upgraded to Euro-6 at 500hp or 560hp, and the transmission options across the range consisted of the Eurotronic version of the ZF AS-Tronic 12-speed automated system, with 9- and 16-speed manual or automatic options.

Whilst Iveco was able to retain the existing cab shell, it was significantly remodelled with a new grille, air deflectors, roof spoiler and bumper featuring LED daytime running lights which in combination reduced the drag coefficient by 3% for better fuel consumption and reduced interior noise. Improved sound-deadening was also introduced to contribute to the much quieter driving experience.



The all-new Stralis Hi-Way interior.

Inside the cab, a completely new interior was provided with an emphasis on quality. Non-reflective, soft-touch plastics, new switchgear, and improved stowage space, combined with new seats and an 800mm-wide bunk equipped with wooden slats all contributed to a noticeable enhancement over the previous Stralis model. The winning Iveco was completed with enhancements to safety and telematics. Amongst the safety systems offered were a lane-departure warning system, adaptive cruise control, hill-hold and electronic stability control.

The Iveconnect System used a 178mm dashboard-mounted touchscreen to control the sat-nav and entertainment systems and to access the Driver and Fleet Management functions. The Driver Style Evaluation tool provided continual driver performance evaluation related to fuel consumption, and this data could be downloaded for analysis. A Driver Attention Support function was also incorporated to protect against the risk of tiredness.

2013



INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR ASSOCIATION

INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR 2014 VOLVO FH

Volvo had been conspicuous by its absence on the IToY winner's podium since 2000, with several successful and significant models failing to tip the voting in its favour, but with the introduction of the new FH4 in September 2012, Volvo became the one to beat.

The headline-grabbing new cab and some clever engineering innovations saw the new Volvo prevail in a tightly fought contest with 116 votes, edging ahead of the new Euro-6 DAF XF on 105 votes, with the Mercedes-Benz Arocs construction vehicles taking third spot.

With over 650,000 FH sales since the introduction of the original model in 1993, Volvo was naturally reluctant to dispense with a brand name which accounted for more than 60% of its heavy truck sales, and the new truck was still the Forward - High offering, but the new cab design dispensed with the characteristic raked windscreen of its predecessor. This had received some criticism over the years, and the new upright A-pillar afforded 1m³ more internal space and improved visibility.



Launched in September 2012, and crowned IToY in Moscow 12 months later, the FH4 secured a third win for the FH dynasty.

New, slim side mirrors mounted further from the A-pillar addressed the other long-standing niggle of earlier FH cabs and contributed further to the driver's vision. Exterior styling was the responsibility of Asok George who intended the truck to look like it was in motion even when stationary, courtesy of some clever lines, and although the trademark bar and Iron Mark received a reduced prominence, "there's no doubt we're looking at a Volvo," confirmed the designer.

The cab interior was suitably impressive with 2,220mm headroom available in the largest Globetrotter XL cab. A new "Scandinavian" colour scheme enhanced the environment with darker tones giving way to lighter, space-enhancing ones above and a new seat with 40mm additional travel, a wider bunk with optional reclining, a steering column with 20° neck-tilt, and 300 litres of additional storage capacity were all highlights.



The FH and FH16 range offered premium vehicles from 420hp to 750hp.

FH4's driveline was brought forward from the FH3 with the D13C engine available at 420hp, 460hp, 500hp or 540hp ratings and the 16-litre available at 540hp, 600hp, 700hp or 750hp. All the engines were Euro-5 standard at the launch, with a solitary Euro-6 offered at 460hp in the form of the D13K; Euro-6 production commenced in autumn 2013. The well-regarded I-Shift 12-speed automated transmission was offered with four add-on packages.

Amongst the engineering innovations were a forward-mounted rear stabiliser bar, independent front suspension with double wishbones and rack and pinion steering, I-See predictive cruise control, the Telematics Gateway remote-maintenance reporting and the I-Torque package.

I-Torque was a combination of a 460hp turbo-compound engine and dual-clutch I-Shift transmission which didn't enter production at the time, whereas the independent front suspension offered operators of left-hand-drive vehicles an unparalleled degree of handling at a price which deterred many, particularly given the improved wider springs on the standard FH front axle and the option of Volvo Dynamic Steering.

2014

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INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR ASSOCIATION

INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR 2015 RENAULT TRUCKS RANGE T

Having been nominated on multiple occasions without achieving the top spot since 1991, Renault's new Range T scored a resounding win in 2015, securing the IToY award for the first time since the original AE Magnum. The scoring saw the new Renaults capture 129 votes, with the DAF CF in second place on 81 and the new Mercedes-Benz Atego in third spot on 49 votes.

In June 2013 Renault had announced a comprehensive review of its entire model range, which was heralded as being one of the most ambitious product launches in recent years. Rather than a rolling, phased approach, Renault presented the market with Range D distribution, Range C construction, Range K heavy construction, and Range T long-haul trucks simultaneously.



The Renault Range T matched a Volvo-derived chassis and driveline with a striking new cab design.

Whilst the D and lighter C models used a facelifted version of the existing Midlum and Premium cabs, the Range T featured a brand-new design which started with a blank piece of paper in April 2006. The new ranges were developed with a €2bn budget following approval from the Volvo Truck Product Board, and the heavy Volvo contribution to the chassis architecture and driveline consolidated the French manufacturer's place in the group following the adoption of Volvo-derived DXi engines in 2005.

When announced, the bold styling of the new model and its unusual green/brown corporate livery drew some adverse commentary, but as is often the case in such circumstances, the revolutionary became widely accepted in no time at all.

The Range T offered four cab variants: the day cab, the "night & day" cab which was a flat-roof sleeper, the standard sleeper, and the high-roof Range T High, which stood at 3.9m tall excluding the air-kit and accommodated a flat floor. The regular-height cabs all had an unobtrusive 200mm engine tunnel.



The flat-floor Range T High replaced the Magnum and scored Renault's first IToY win in 24 years.

When viewed from above, the cabs were trapezoid-shaped and measured 2.3m at the front, flaring out to 2.5m at the rear, with the windscreen inclined to 12 degrees. Air deflectors were integrated into the headlamp unit and aerodynamic bumper extensions, new chassis fairings and roof deflectors combined to improve the drag coefficient by up to 12% versus the previous model. A quirky red plate with silver inlay mounted on the cab side carried the model designation, being T with a horsepower rating suffix.

The inside of the cab provided a much-improved living and storage environment compared to the outgoing Premium model and this included a 680mm-wide mattress which pulled out to 800mm. The Optidriver automated gearbox control was column-mounted and the manual control for the automatic electric parking brake was under a dash-mounted flap, leaving a clear cab floor.

The Range T was powered by new Euro-6 diesels with the 10.8-litre DTI 11 common-rail engine at 380hp, 430hp and 460hp, and the 12.8-litre DTI 13 with unit injectors offering 440hp, 480hp or 520hp. These engines were all matched to 12-speed automated transmissions, with a 14-speed manual gearbox still on the options list.

2015



INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR ASSOCIATION

INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR 2016 IVECO EUROCARGO

Iveco's venerable Eurocargo achieved its first ITToY award way back in 1992, and went on to repeat that feat almost a quarter of a century later in 2016. Naturally enough, the Eurocargo had come a long way since its first incarnation, receiving new Tector engines in 2000, a Bertone-styled facelift in 2003 and a further visual refresh in 2008. Over 500,000 of the trucks had been sold around the world by the time the New Eurocargo appeared in September 2015.

The New Eurocargo very much took the evolutionary road towards modernity, and whilst retaining the original ML cab shell, an extensive front-end redesign brought a more modern appearance with a large, "smiling" grille and revised corner air deflectors. The all-new bumper design incorporated a step for windscreen access, a new headlamp cluster with LED daytime running lights and AEBS radar.

The re-designed interior featured steering wheel-mounted radio and phone controls, new seats, with an optional air-suspended driver's seat, and a new centre console designed as an "office on the move". This afforded 20 litres of storage space when a single passenger seat was specified and could accommodate a laptop or tablet. A reading light, side storage pockets, two USB ports and an open-out work surface were also built in.

Safety features were also high on the Eurocargo's priorities, with a standard steering wheel airbag, lane departure warning system, advanced emergency braking system and adaptive cruise control included. Telematics were catered for with the Unified Telematics Platform which was a factory-fitted option pre-configured for the remote connection and supply of telematic services.



The New Eurocargo 75.160 with improved Tector 5 engine.

In addition to the standard range of 7.5- to 18-tonne rigid trucks, a 22-tonner was offered with a specialist converter adding a single-wheel lifting axle, and urban tractor units spanning 18 to 35 tonnes GCW were also available. A 4x4 model for either 11.5 or 15 tonnes GVW completed the line-up.

The power for the Eurocargo came from the 4-cylinder, 4.5-litre Tector 5 engine rated at 160hp, 190hp or 210hp, or the 6-cylinder, 6.7-litre Tector 7 with ratings of 220hp, 250hp, 280hp or 320hp. These Euro-6 engines used Iveco's Hi-eSCR system to achieve Euro-6 emission standards, without resorting to any EGR.



The Eurocargo's new centre console.

The two lower-rated Tector 5 engines were new designs incorporating new pistons, injectors and turbocharging to increase the compression ratio from 17 to 18:1 with a corresponding 8% increase in torque. A "Natural Power" CNG engine, based on the older Tector 6 design, was also offered in "super-eco" 210hp form for the most emission-conscious operators.

No fewer than 11 transmissions were offered in the form of four automated, five manual and two automatic designs, with the 12-speed automated Eurotronic gearboxes equipped with Ecoroll, which used inertia to switch to neutral on downward gradients to save fuel.

With the choice of day, sleeper, high-roof sleeper and crew cabs, the New Eurocargo was available from the Brescia factory in a remarkable 11,000 variants, preserving the appeal of the original range. In a tightly contested competition, the Iveco received 101 votes, squeezing past Renault's Range C and K on 98, with Ford's Turkish construction range in third place.

2016



INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR ASSOCIATION

INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR 2017 SCANIA R- AND S-SERIES

At a launch event in Paris on 23 August 2016, Scania unveiled the product of 10 years of development and over €2bn in investment in the form of the new R- and S-series range. Scania's "greatest product launch ever" was also relayed to the manufacturer's considerable social media following through the Next Gen Scania campaign.

The new models were the vanguard of a complete range replacement, starting with long-distance trucks with the largest cabs in the modular production programme. The all-new cabs were developed in cooperation with sister company Porsche Engineering, and a 2% fuel saving was achieved with smoother cab corners, tighter-fitting panels and re-designed deflectors, side skirts and under-bumper valances.

Inside the new cabs, the driving position was relocated 65mm closer to the windscreen and 20mm closer to the door, to provide for improved visibility and interior space. The new interiors enhanced these aspects with larger door glazing, slimmer door panels, a lower dashboard and optimised A-pillars and mirrors.



The New Generation Scania R- and S-series were unveiled in August 2016.

The R cabs received an additional 100mm of height in standard form, and 160mm in Highline form, with the former Topline design being dropped. The show-stopping S-series cab was Scania's first flat-floor design and "outshines everything we have done before in factors like comfort and storage," said Scania's head of cab development Göran Hammarberg, at the launch.

Clever re-engineering and a front axle moved 50mm further forward reduced the truck's centre of gravity despite the taller cabs and contributed to improved handling and a 5% shorter stopping distance. In a world first, Scania also offered rollover curtain side airbags, which were integrated into the headlining above the doors and activated by sensors.

A further 3% reduction in fuel consumption was claimed for the revised engine range which featured new engine management systems across the manufacturer's 13- and 16-litre offerings.

The 13-litre SCR-only engines featured fixed-geometry turbochargers and reworked combustion chambers and new injectors, higher working temperatures with thermostatic oil cooling and directly driven fans. Power ratings for the straight-six were 370hp, 410hp and 450hp with a new 500hp rating with 2,550Nm of torque at the top.



The imposing S-series was the first flat-floor Scania.

The 16-litre V8 engines maintained their 520hp, 580hp and 730hp ratings and used variable-geometry turbochargers and a combination of SCR and EGR for emissions compliance.

The introduction of a layshaft brake system on the automated Opticruise gearbox meant that much quicker upshifts were possible with the GRS905 transmission able to change up a gear in 0.4 seconds, to provide both a smoother change and greater retention of turbo pressure. At the back end of the truck a 2.35:1 axle ratio was offered for suitable applications, and a new electro-hydraulic system was applied to steering tag axles with an increase in steering angle and a decrease in weight.

To the surprise of very few people, within a month of its launch the New Generation R- and S-series Scania's were crowned International Truck of the Year at the IAA with 149 votes. Iveco's Stralis NP and XP models were runners-up with 90 votes, with the Mercedes-Benz Actros in third place on 45.

2017



INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR ASSOCIATION

INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR 2018 DAF CF AND XF

DAF announced the latest versions of the long-standing CF and XF at Birmingham in April 2017, which embodied the philosophy of multiple marginal gains leading to significant overall improvements. Having succeeded with a similar formula in 2007 with the XF 105, DAF triumphed again in 2018 with the judges being sufficiently impressed with the evolution of the breed to award the combined range a total of 104 votes, narrowly beating the Iveco NP on 96 votes, with Scania's XT range in third position on 59.

The new vehicles remained powered by the Paccar MX11 and MX13 engines, and these were re-engineered to "down-speed" with a maximum torque available at only 900rpm. New turbochargers, reduced-friction pistons, combustion and air management systems were introduced, and smart oil, steering and water pumps were employed to match their output to the demands of the engine.

Output across the range was increased by between 10hp and 20hp with the MX11 delivering either 300hp, 340hp, 370hp, 410hp or 450hp and the MX13 available with 430hp, 480hp or 530hp. A new ECU with "Multi Torque" engineering produced extra torque in the highest gear, to enable longer periods of running in top gear, and although the engines relied on SCR and EGR, the after-treatment box was reduced by 40% in size and 50kg in weight. This enabled the device to reach its optimum operating temperature more quickly.



The new CF and XF claimed a 7% improvement in fuel economy for long-haul operators and were marketed as "Pure Excellence".

Behind the engine, the new ZF TraXon 12- and 16-speed gearboxes were installed and these also played a part in the campaign against frictional power loss, being designed to operate at low engine speed in all gears, and to provide faster shifts. Optional vocation-specific software packages were available, and the Eco-Roll function was extended for greater frugality with the increased integration of engine and gearbox with predictive cruise control.

In keeping with the new drivetrain philosophy, new rear axles were introduced including a 2.05:1 ratio for 85km/h cruising at 1,000rpm. A new crown wheel and pinion design was introduced for lower noise, reduced friction, increased efficiency and service life.



Construction vehicles joined the range in September 2017.

The chassis received weight-saving attention and depending on axle configuration, up to 100kg could be saved on some models. Inside the cab, the makeover included a revised instrument panel with more driver information and new, warmer colours to achieve a premium feel. A new heating, ventilation and air conditioning system was also introduced which used residual heat in the cooling system to eliminate engine idling.

Externally, the changes were modest and included a redesigned badge with chrome edges, mounted onto a new grille panel with raised mouldings at either side. The XF received a new mesh on the grille, and the CF received silver strips at the bottom of the grille apertures. Both trucks received an aluminium-look accent to their bumpers and an aerodynamically optimised sun-visor.

In September 2017, multi-axle and rigid models joined the long-distance range and brought with them new electro-hydraulic steered trailing axles and dual-mounted trailing axles, sealing the win for DAF, with the 2018 IToY title being awarded at Solutrans in Lyon in November 2017.

2018



INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR ASSOCIATION

INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR 2019 FORD F-MAX

2019's IToY was a remarkable event for a number of reasons. First, the award was presented at the 2018 IAA, which also marked the winning truck's first public appearance. Second, it was the first winner to be built outside Europe, in Eskişehir, Türkiye. Third, it was the first time in 37 years that the award had gone to a manufacturer outside Europe's 'big seven'.

Coincidentally, it was also Ford that broke the oligopoly way back in 1982 with the original Cargo. The Ford Trucks of 2019 was a very different business to that of the early 1980s though, and the intervening years had seen the disposal of the European heavy truck business to Iveco in 1986, the American business acquired by Daimler's Freightliner division in 1997, and the abandonment of the South American heavy truck market in 2019.

Today, Ford Trucks is a brand name of the Ford Otosan Company, which is a joint venture between Ford and Koç Holding, and which began assembling Ford Thames Trader trucks in Türkiye in 1961.

Although Ford Otosan's Cargo vehicles had featured on IToY shortlists a couple of times, to achieve success for the all-new F-Max, selected journalists and jurors were invited to a restricted preview and road-testing session in the summer of 2018. They returned sufficiently impressed with the new truck to announce it as the 2019 IToY at Hanover that September. Securing 126 votes, the Ford was followed by the Scania L- and P-series in second place with 74 votes, and the gas-powered Volvo FH/FM in third on 56 votes.



Ford's F-Max was crowned IToY at its unveiling in September 2018.

For a market-disruptor to win the IToY with a brand-new model was a significant achievement and this was heightened further by the F-Max using both a cab and an engine which were designed and produced in-house.



F-Max was the first Turkish-built winner of IToY.

The 12.7-litre Ecotorq straight-six engine featured high-pressure common-rail injection with an overhead camshaft and variable geometry turbocharging, and achieved Euro-6 accreditation with a combination of SCR, EGR and DPF. The standard transmission was the 12-speed ZF TraXon automated system.

Whilst Henry Ford famously proclaimed that buyers of the Model T could have any colour they liked as long as it was black, the F-Max was launched with 25 different cab colour options, but Henry's prescription held true on other aspects of the truck's specification. Buyers could have any engine they wished provided it was the 500hp Ecotorq, and any cab provided it was the high-roof sleeper. Not that the one-size-fits-all cab presented any hardship – with a flat-floor width of 2.5m, internal height of 2.16m and plenty of storage capacity it offered a comfortable and user-friendly working environment.

Ford yielded on its single wheelbase length of 3.6m with the introduction of the 3.75m F-Max L in 2021, which enabled up to 1,350 litres of fuel capacity. Since its introduction, the F-Max has proven a popular and cost-effective alternative to the established marques, particularly in Eastern and Southern Europe. Inroads have also been made in north-western Europe, but not in Great Britain due to the absence of right-hand drive and a 6x2 configuration.

2019



INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR ASSOCIATION

INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR 2020 MERCEDES-BENZ ACTROS

Daimler announced the New Actros at the IAA Exhibition in Hanover in September 2018, ushering in the era of digital mirror cameras. The fifth generation of the Actros – known as the MP5 – had plenty of time to cement itself in the judges' minds prior to being awarded the IToY award for 2020 at the Solutrans Exhibition in Lyon in November 2019. In testimony to the enduring reputation of the Actros, the 2020 victory was the fifth time that the vehicle had triumphed, with each generation of Actros being voted as an IToY since the original version's success in 1997. In 2020 the runners-up were the Iveco S-Way and Volvo's FH with I-Save.

Despite the eight-year period since the Actros's last IToY win, the model still looked modern in the contemporary scene, and the stylistic changes made for the new model were relatively minimal. Aside from the replacement of the conventional mirrors with MirrorCam, the headlamps were re-designed to feature a strip of LED daytime running lights above the main lamps.

The eleven cab variants spanned the CompactSpace M-cab up to the GigaSpace L-cab, and power was drawn from the 7.7-litre OM 936, 10.7-litre second generation OM 470, 12.8-litre second generation OM 471 and the 15.6-litre OM 473 which offered 18 power ratings over a span of 238hp to 625hp. The only new mechanical driveline component was the R440 rear axle with active lubrication system for lower friction losses.



The New Actros MP5 introduced mirror cameras.

In keeping with the Actros tradition, the MP5 was designed with the latest technology to minimise fuel consumption and total cost of ownership and maximise driver comfort and safety. The truck was the first in production to feature mirror cameras,

and although conventional mirrors remained an option, the cameras offered improved visibility to the rear with digital panning and in the A-pillar area, and were soon adopted as a feature across the industry. The aerodynamic benefits of the reduced protrusions were claimed to reduce fuel consumption by 1.3%.



The Actros's Multimedia Cockpit.

The twin 386mm camera screens were part of the "Multimedia Cockpit" which also comprised two 260mm diagonal screens, one replacing the conventional instrument cluster, and the other dedicated to the infotainment system, temperature and telephony. The screens could be navigated with touch-control buttons on the multi-function steering wheel. The optional interactive cockpit provided a larger screen with a navigation system and remote control of some vehicle functions by smartphone. A keyless starting system and a new electronic parking brake with holding function and automatic activation when the engine was stopped were also included.

Active Brake Assist 5 was the fifth generation of the driver assistance system and could carry out full stops in response to stationary and moving objects and pedestrians, and Predictive Powertrain Control became standard and was extended to include A and B roads. The system used route topography to recognise driving situations and monitor the truck's kinetic energy.

The new Active Drive Assist system was offered on some New Actros variants, and this enhanced proximity control with active lane-assistance through enhanced radar and electrically-assisted steering. The new system achieved Level 2 automation – where the vehicle can control steering and speed whilst a human driver remains responsible.

2020



INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR ASSOCIATION

INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR 2021 MAN TGX

The New Generation MAN TG models were announced in Bilbao, Spain in February 2020, with the manufacturer heralding a “completely newly developed Truck Generation for the first time in 20 years”. This would take us back beyond June 2007, and the introduction of the first TGX and TGS trucks to the turn of the century, to the launch of the original Trucknology Generation – the TG-A.

In a bold move, the entire TG range was renewed, from the lightest TGL model up to the premium TGX long-haul trucks. Although the cab frame could trace its ancestry back to the TG-A, it received some re-engineering for crashworthiness, and a heavily re-worked external appearance. The former size designations were also replaced with a new naming convention. The standard-height sleeper became the GN, the medium raised-roof sleeper became the GM, and the extra-height sleeper became the GX, having formerly been known as the XXL. The GX also received a new roof design and lost the very large coach-style windscreen and the windows above the door.



The TGX claimed to use up to 8.2% lower fuel consumption than its predecessor.

Whilst beauty remains in the eye of the beholder, most commentators agreed regarding the pleasing new lines of the TGX which also featured some interesting engineering improvements. The new headlight arrangement included integrated daytime running lights and indicators with optional Headlight Assist, which lowers the beam for approaching traffic, and narrower mirror cases for improved visibility and lower wind-resistance. The MAN OptiView camera system was offered as an alternative from early 2022.

The re-designed bumper and air deflectors also contributed to improved airflow, and the new, non-shiny grille was extended to the bumper and improved air intake. The steps to the door were widened and the door gained an increased angle of

opening to 89 degrees. A nice touch was the incorporation of control buttons to the lower inside of the driver's door, enabling hazard warnings, amongst other functions, to be activated whilst standing outside the cab.



The redesigned cab interior.

The inside of the cab was newly designed and received greater storage with a well-regarded upgrade in terms of the fabrics and plastics used. The new, smaller, steering wheel gained a wider range of adjustment and retained buttons for the new main dash, and the gear controls were incorporated into a column-mounted stalk. A new electronic handbrake was tidily installed in the dash and in a break with emerging convention, MAN elected not to go with touchscreen functionality for the central infotainment screen, but to introduce the SmartSelect control wheel instead, being a rotary dial with its own wrist support.

The new TGX range was powered by the D15 engine at 330hp, 360hp or 400hp, the D26 at 430hp, 470hp or 510hp, and the D38 at 540hp, 580hp or 640hp. The Euro-6d engines were matched to TipMatic ZF TraXon transmissions, with a TRATON-derived alternative for some applications. The new HY-1344 rear axle also offered a 2.31:1 ratio for optimised consumption.

Immediately following the launch of the TGX the Covid-19 pandemic struck, with the 2021 IToY being awarded to MAN in Munich at a virtual ceremony. The new trucks had scored 155 votes to see off second-placed Volvo with the latest FH.

2021



INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR ASSOCIATION

INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR 2022 DAF XF, XG AND XG+

Having won the IToY in 2018 with a highly optimised driveline under an ageing cab design with the XF and CF, DAF was always going to be a strong contender following the introduction of its all-new cabs in June 2021.

Like Scania's 2016 model update, DAF launched the new range with long-distance models first, with a new model designation topping the range. Unlike Scania, and indeed all the other European manufacturers, DAF was able to take advantage of EU Directive 2015/719 which permitted an increase in dimensions if applied for environmental efficiency and safety.

The resulting XF, XG and XG+ trucks featured a 160mm extension to the front, which provided for optimal cab radii, tapering and a matching curved windscreen, which together with seamlessly fitting panels, a tapered sidewall and new roof and bumper deflectors, claimed a 19% improvement in aerodynamic drag.

The new cab design also brought enhanced safety with the 2.3m² windscreen offering an exceptionally low beltline and forward vision. Passive safety measures included integrated cab crash zones and a new programmed cab displacement system, and a full range of active safety measures were incorporated, including the latest version of advanced emergency braking which could provide full autonomous emergency braking.



The DAF XG+, XG and XF.

The new XF model had more headroom than the XF Space Cab tractor it replaced, and still managed to weigh about 175kg less, but it was with the XG and XG+ models that space really became abundant. These models had a 330mm extension to the rear of the cab without a corresponding loss of load space, which was allowed under the EU's new "controlled derogations" rule. These designs effectively created a new class in the market, with the XG offering 2,075mm of standing room with 11.85 m³ of space, whilst the XG+ provided 2,195mm of standing room with a class-leading 12.50m³ of space.

The cab interiors featured improved storage, 800mm-wide beds with a rear wall control panel and a 305mm digital dash display operated, along with all the direct driving functions, from the steering wheel or stalks. The driving position was also claimed to be the best in its class.

New longer chassis were required for the deeper XG and XG+ cabs and both ends of the chassis were re-designed with new suspension geometry introduced for the new-generation rear axles which held lower oil levels for enhanced efficiency.



The XG+ introduced a cab with class-leading space.

The MX11 and MX13 engines enjoyed improved airflow through the new cab and received new injectors, blocks, heads, pistons and liners and a new turbocharger, and whilst retaining their former power ratings – 370hp, 410hp and 450hp for the 10.8-litre and 430hp, 480hp and 530hp for the 12.9-litre – they developed between 50Nm and 100Nm greater torque in top gear.

Transmission duties were handled by ZF's TraXon which now incorporated automated drive-off gear selection and enhanced predictive features, but DAF finally deleted the manual transmission option.

In November 2021, the 2022 IToY was awarded to DAF in respect of the new range at a ceremony in Lyon. The 24 judges had awarded the winning trucks 150 points, leaving the Iveco T-Way and Mercedes-Benz eActros in second and third spots.

2022



INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR ASSOCIATION

INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR 2023 DAF XD

Following the success of the New Generation XF, XG and XG+, DAF continued its model replacement programme at pace during 2022. Towards the end of the summer, the new low-cab XD distribution models were unveiled to the truck press, prior to a public launch at the IAA in September. By the time of the exhibition, DAF had also added a day and low-sleeper version of the XF, a construction variant of both the XD and XF (XDc and XFc), and a battery-electric range.

It is unusual for a manufacturer to win IToY in two consecutive years when replacing an extended model range over a longer timeframe, but this was achieved by DAF for 2023, with the jury awarding 134 votes to the XD distribution models. Scania's new 13-litre Super range was the runner-up, with the Mercedes-Benz Actros featuring the third-generation OM 471 engine in third spot on the podium.

Sharing its essential DNA with its bigger brothers, the XD also benefited from the new EU Masses and Dimensions rules with the frontal 160mm elongation, radiused corners and aerodynamic advantages. Being the replacement for the long-serving CF range, the XD featured a cab mounted 170mm lower than the New Generation XF, but retained the 2,500mm overall width and generous 2.3m² windscreen to give outstanding visibility. When combined with the DAF Vision Door and Corner View camera system, the XD meets the most stringent requirements, including 5 Stars under the London Direct Vision Standard.



The DAF XD Range was unveiled to the public at the 2022 IAA where it picked up the IToY for 2023.

There are three cab variants, being a Day Cab, Sleeper Cab and Sleeper High Cab, with the engine tunnel height a modest 320mm in each. The Sleeper High Cab offers almost 10m³ of space and a 2,200mm-long mattress which is 750mm wide. The interior followed the larger truck's style and "Eyes on the road, Hands on the wheel" philosophy with a multifunction steering wheel and column stalks, and centrally located 305mm digital display. The full array of driver assistance aids is incorporated and DAF's Digital Vision System with heated cameras on foldable arms is offered as an alternative to conventional mirrors. Automatic Lighting Selection is standard on the XD, as is automatic windscreen wiper activation. An electronic park brake with automatic engagement and disengagement is optional. Power for the XD came from the 10.8-litre MX-11 with ratings of 299hp, 341hp, 367hp, 408hp and 449hp, and the grouped positioning of the air intake, filter and new-generation HE 400 Turbocharger benefited from improved passive cooling through flow guides designed into the grille. The PX-7 engine was offered in 4x2 rigids from 2023 and the MX-11 received re-engineering in 2024.



The interior of the Sleeper High Cab.

The standard transmission was the ZF TraXon with urge-to-move function, which allows accelerator-free, low-speed manoeuvring plus drive-off gear selection, the latest generation of Predictive Cruise Control and EcoRoll which permitted a brief overspeed at the end of a descent to avoid energy loss. An Allison fully automatic transmission was offered for refuse collection operators, and the 8- or 9-tonne front axles were matched to 13-tonne drive axles available in single- or hub-reduction form.

2023

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INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR ASSOCIATION

INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR 2024 VOLVO FH ELECTRIC

The original Volvo FH had secured the IToY in 1994, and in the intervening years Volvo had won again in 2000 and 2014 – both times with the FH. The truck won for a fourth time in 2024, but on this occasion the technological landscape was very different, because the 2024 IToY was the first electric truck ever to win the competition.

The FH Electric's 84 votes saw it prevail over its rivals which were also entirely electric. Second place went to the Mercedes-Benz eActros 300/400 with the Scania 45S in third spot. The Fuso eCanter was also shortlisted.

Volvo was the first major European manufacturer to offer production battery-electric trucks to the market, following the introduction of the FL Electric in 2019. Initial vehicles were delivered to select customers in February that year, with series production of both the FL and FE Electrics starting in the second half of 2019.

In November 2020 the order books were opened for the full range of electric trucks, and by September 2022, full series production of electric heavy trucks commenced with the manufacturer able to offer FM, FMX and FH models in addition to the FL and FE. Volvo was the first European manufacturer to offer a 44-tonne truck from series production, and the FH Electric was the flag of this range.



The Electric FH was the fourth FH, and first electric truck to win the IToY.

Clearly, the adoption of battery-electric trucks is mainly driven by legislative requirements, with the EU introducing targets for average carbon reduction across manufacturers' new vehicles. These targets use a 2019 baseline and become increasingly stringent until they reach a 90% reduction target for 2040. Local jurisdictions also have zero-tailpipe-emission acceleration policies, and outside the EU, the UK has a target for all new heavy trucks to be zero-emission from 2040.

Despite the higher capital cost, greater unladen weight and concerns about range and charging infrastructure, electric heavy trucks can be suitable for some operations, dependent on client profile, government incentives and taxation and toll rebates. The 24-country panel of IToY jurors regarded the FH Electric as a winning proposition for those operators.

Based on the hugely successful 2020 V5 FH, the Electric model offered four cab options and a range of axle configurations to cover a wide range of applications, rather than being something of a standalone demonstration concept. Modular battery arrangements provided for between two and six batteries, with the six-battery layout providing 540kWh storage for a 300km range.



Electric FHs were available in a variety of configurations.

The FH Electric used three electric motors driving through an I-Shift transmission, which combined their torque and transmitted it through a conventional prop shaft and axle arrangement. Continuous power output was 490kW. This equates to about 657hp, and the jurors were particularly impressed with the truck's seamless acceleration and the vibration-free quietness of its performance. The truck could be recharged in 10 hours with AC charging, or 2 hours with standard DC, and during 2024, Volvo accounted for 47% of the European electric heavy truck market.

2024

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INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR ASSOCIATION

INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR 2025 MERCEDES-BENZ eACTROS 600

Mercedes-Benz had achieved third place in the 2022 IToY, and second place in the 2024 competition with earlier versions of the eActros electric truck, but in October 2023, the company announced its game-changing eActros 600, with series production to commence alongside diesel-powered vehicles at Wörth in late 2024.

The eActros 600 was developed from the outset as an electric truck, rather than as an adapted diesel vehicle, and featured the new ProCabin cab design and a significantly increased battery capacity and range. The new cab has since become very familiar on the Actros L, where its aerodynamic properties have provided some very impressive fuel consumption figures.

The ProCabin features an 80mm rounded front extension, an elongated bumper with under-body panelling, A-pillar deflector trims and highly sealed surfaces to achieve a 9% reduction in the drag coefficient over the previous Actros cab. With electric trucks, reducing air resistance not only reduces energy consumption but also means that more energy can be recuperated and range extended.



The eActros 600 was designed as an electric model from the outset.

Mercedes' engineers opted for a newly developed 800-volt 13-tonne electric axle with twin motors and a 4-speed transmission for the new truck. The motors could generate 600kW at peak power, or 400kW of continuous output. With no propshaft, the e-axle freed up space for the batteries, and three 207kWh lithium iron phosphate (LFP) batteries were installed between the chassis rails, this being regarded as the safest location. The LFP batteries were chosen for their long life expectancy, with a design life of up to 1.2 million km over 10 years claimed, after which they should retain 80% of their capacity.

LFP batteries also permit 95% of the total installed capacity of 621kWh to be used, giving the eActros its "600" name and affording a 500km range without intermediate charging. Intermediate charging through a combined charging system

during statutory breaks would increase the range to over 1,000km per day, and the eActros was engineered to be compatible with the retrofitting of megawatt charging capability.

The Multimedia Cockpit Interactive 2 continuously informs the driver about energy consumption, charge level and range, and the Predictive Powertrain Control is especially programmed for the electric drivetrain to consider topography, road and driving conditions to maximise the charge.



Announced in late 2023, the eActros impressed journalists during road testing in 2024.

There are three driving/performance modes with the truck, being the standard Economy mode with 85% of power available, the Range mode for 70% power, or the Power mode for 100%. With five different recuperation levels, single-pedal driving can be selected from the cockpit touchscreen to use recuperation for deceleration and minimise foundation brake use.

Like Volvo the year before, Mercedes was realistic regarding the operational, legislative, total cost of ownership, infrastructure and client requirements which can make the case for electric operation, and an eConsultancy Service was available to operators to assist with the transition.

The IToY jury were suitably convinced of the eActros 600's merits by their criteria of the most significant contribution to road transport efficiency through technological innovation, comfort, safety, driveability, energy efficiency, environmental footprint, and total cost of ownership. After extended driving trials the Mercedes won with 88 points, with Volvo's FH Aero in second position, and the Iveco S-eWay in third.

2025



INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR ASSOCIATION

INTERNATIONAL TRUCK OF THE YEAR 2026 DAF XD & XF ELECTRIC

DAF was very early to the electric scene and provided electrified vehicles to select operators for operational testing following an announcement in May 2018. These CF trucks were fitted with 210kW electric motors by VDL, and were conceived as low-noise distribution vehicles for urban operation at up to 40 tonnes.

By 2021, CF and LF rigid vehicles were offered, and at the 2022 IAA Transportation show the new generation of electric XD and XF trucks were announced. A new production facility in Eindhoven was opened in 2023, pre-production vehicles underwent operational testing in 2024, and full series production commenced in September 2025.

The new electric range also included the XB, but the IToY jury chose the XD and XF range as the 2026 winners, the third win for the new-generation DAFs. The benefits of the well-appointed, aerodynamic cabs with superior visibility were well established and offered an ideal workplace for the new vehicles. The cabs have received blue accents to the grilles as an external identifier.



A day-cab XD Electric at IAA, September 2024.

The range consists of 4x2 tractor units and rigids and 6x2 rigids with the XD offered with day, sleeper or high-sleeper cabs, and the XF with sleeper or high-sleeper cab. Gross vehicle design weights range from 20.5 tonnes to 29 tonnes, with a 50-tonne gross combination weight.

DAF chose to maintain a vertical driveline with a conventional driving axle for greater commonality with diesel vehicles, effective weight distribution and lower overall production costs. LFP (lithium iron phosphate) batteries are available in modules of between two and five batteries for a 210kWh to 525kWh capacity. LFP batteries are chosen for their long operational lives and absence of nickel and cobalt.

DAF uses Paccar EX-D1 or EX-D2 e-motors which each package two individual permanent magnet electric motors into a single central housing alongside a ZF 3-speed transmission. The smaller e-motor is available for 170kW, 220kW or

270kW outputs, with the larger unit covering 270kW, 310kW or 350kW, which span the 230hp to 480hp range.

Only one motor within the unit is engaged under partial load, with the second motor instantly engaging when maximum torque or regeneration is needed. The transmission's planetary gears provide a seamless and highly efficient delivery of power which the IToY jurors described as "almost imperceptible".



The XF Electric can achieve a range of over 500km with the five-battery module.

In addition to being the third of the current generation of DAFs to win the IToY, the electric XD and XF models were also the third range of electric trucks to win in successive years. A total of 92 points secured the win amongst some very capable competitors. The shortlist also included the latest diesel offerings from the TRATON Group in the form of the MAN D30 Power Lion and the Scania Super 11 5-cylinder. Shortlisted electric vehicles included the MAN eTGS and the SANY e435, which was the first Chinese vehicle to ever appear in the competition's shortlist. As the decarbonisation agenda continues it will be interesting to see what the future holds for diesel trucks in the IToY and whether the Chinese can achieve their first win.

2026