

TNT's greater lengths efficiently reduce environmental impact

TNT Express, one of the UK's leading Express delivery companies, is already seeing improved efficiencies, reduced costs and a reduction of its impact on the environment just a few months into the government sponsored trials of new longer semi-trailers.

New 15.65-metre long semi-trailers (LSTs) – two metres longer than a standard long-haul trailer – have been introduced by the company as part of the Department for Transport directive which is examining the impact of such vehicles on British roads.

Simon Harper, Director of Operations for TNT Express UK & Ireland, said: “Using the new LSTs allows us to achieve fuel cost savings and reduce our carbon emissions.

“The longer trailers have a 15% greater load capacity which allows us to carry greater volumes. This means we can reduce the number of trips required to deliver the same number of parcels which, in turn, helps to reduce our fuel consumption, hence saving costs.

“It also means we are reducing our carbon emissions by 15% against the standard trailers.

“Using fully-loaded LSTs on long distance routes means we can remove partly-filled trailers from the network which is already driving efficiencies.”

TNT is currently running two of its DfT allocation of LST's between one of its main Hubs at Kingsbury in the Midlands and its Llantrisant Depot in South Wales.

“The Llantrisant route is part of Phase 1 of the trial and is under constant review by the project team. We are now moving to Phase 2 of the plan with the introduction of more trailers – perhaps even Double Deck LSTs,” added Simon.

“As part of the trials, we are engaged in an extensive data gathering exercise to measure distances travelled, weights carried and any issues that affect the impact of the vehicles on the road infrastructure and other road users. This we will report back to the DfT.”

TNT sees added value for customers by using LSTs on long-haul routes but does not anticipate the giant vehicles driving through the nation's towns or cities.

“Despite rear steering axles and similar manoeuvrability to standard trailers, they do 'behave' differently, so we are not planning urban routes for LSTs,” added Simon. “They are very much trunking trailers designed for long-haul, bulk deliveries.

“We don't see a replacement plan for the whole trailer fleet with LSTs but we do see an evolving use for them, targeted on specific tours to and from specific customer and TNT facilities. They certainly have a future as far as we are concerned.”