

Nicholls Transport boosts sustainability with new LNG-fuelled IVECO fleet

Major IVECO customer opens on-site Gasrec refuelling facility to support Stralis NP 460 tractor units which will deliver significant advantages

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Sittingbourne-based Nicholls Transport says the environmental and business case for running heavy trucks on natural gas means now is the right time to start the transition away from diesel. Together with Gasrec, the firm has opened a refuelling station for pumping liquified natural gas (LNG) from its Kent base, which will be used to support an initial order for 10 Stralis NP 460 6x2 tractor units from local dealer Haynes Trucks.

Nicholls follows a steady line of major own-account and 3PL fleets in embracing a cleaner and lower cost fuel. Its LNG refuelling station is the first of its kind in Kent and is perfectly situated for freight traffic bound for the continent, being less than five miles from Junction 5 of the M2 – with Nicholls making the site available to third parties by arrangement.

The company's seven-figure investment in IVECO's LNG vehicles is the latest in a long line of innovative ventures for Nicholls and represents the most significant change in course in its 50-year history.

Paul Nicholls, Managing Director of Nicholls Transport, says: "Moving to alternative fuels has been high on our agenda – but gas is currently the only technology that's ready for 44-tonne operation. Gasrec has been hugely proactive and gave us the confidence to switch fuels, following experiences with demonstrators organised through IVECO and Haynes."

Commenting on the benefits of LNG, he adds: "Moving to natural gas shows how much we care about our planet. It's our collective responsibility as an industry to do something to tackle climate change and make road transport more sustainable, and by opening this LNG station and investing in the Stralis NP fleet, we're showing our customers and competitors that's possible to do today. We very much hope other local businesses in North Kent share our vision for a sustainable future and buy in to LNG in the same way. As an industry, we really need to make this happen."



PRESS RELEASE

Sascha Kaehne, IVECO's UK & Ireland Business Director, says: "Nicholls saw the potential for natural gas and we were delighted to help them take this big step forward in sustainability. IVECO has delivered more than 35,000 natural gas-powered vehicles into service around the world, so we have a lot of confidence in this technology. For a business like Nicholls, LNG makes perfect sense.

"The location of their refuelling facility is also strategically very important, serving as a gateway for freight traffic between London and continental Europe," he adds.

Commenting on the refuelling infrastructure, James Westcott, Chief Commercial Officer of Gasrec, explains: "We have installed a pumped mobile refuelling station which we use to seed new locations where we want to get LNG into an area quickly. It's ideal for an early adopter like Nicholls, being capable of supporting as many as 30 gas vehicles from a single location. This is the pre-cursor to a larger and fully open-access development we are looking at for the Nicholls site."

Highlighting another reason for natural gas, Nicholls adds: "Margins are tight in haulage so you need to consider every possible angle to make a return as soon as possible. When we looked at total cost of ownership, the arguments in favour of LNG stacked up well."

IVECO designed the Stralis NP to be the most sustainable heavy truck for 44-tonne operation, standing apart from competitors for being the only three-axle tractor unit on the market to run purely on LNG. It is mounted with gas tanks on both sides of the chassis, offering Nicholls a projected range of between 610 to 640km, dependent on terrain and payload – making it perfect for vehicles operating on same-day back-to-base missions.

The new Stralis NPs are powered by IVECO's proven 12.9 litre Cursor 13 NP engine, which delivers up to 460hp – offering the same blend of power and performance as its diesel vehicles. They also benefit from the latest generation Hi-Tronix transmission, which reduces gear shifting times by 10 per cent.

The new Stralis NPs are expected to cover up to 175,000km per year when being double-shifted, and are planned to remain in service for a minimum of five years.

Contributing to the appeal of the Stralis NP are IVECO's extended maintenance intervals of 90,000km – the longest in the industry for single-fuel gas vehicles – resulting in less time in the workshop and more time on the road. Furthermore, the absence of complex after-treatment systems associated with

diesel vehicles means the Stralis NP requires no EGR, SCR, Diesel Particulate Filter (DPF) or AdBlue – adding significantly to its low-maintenance advantages.

Compared with Nicholls' Euro VI diesel vehicles, each Stralis NP emits around 90 per cent less NO₂ emissions, 99 per cent less particulate matter and 50 per cent less noise. They also reduce CO₂ by as much as 95 per cent when being fuelled on biomethane.

Nicholls Transport operates a single-marque fleet of more than 100 IVECO trucks, which has been supplied and supported solely by Haynes Trucks for more than a decade.

IVECO

IVECO is a brand of CNH Industrial N.V., a world leader in capital goods listed on the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE: CNHI) and on the Mercato Telematico Azionario of the Borsa Italiana (MI: CNHI). IVECO designs, manufactures and markets a wide range of light, medium and heavy commercial vehicles, off-road trucks, and vehicles for applications such as off-road missions.

The brand's wide range of products include the Daily, a vehicle that covers the 3.3 – 7.2 tonne vehicle weight segment, the Eurocargo from 6 – 19 tonnes and, in the heavy segment above 16 tonnes, the Trakker (dedicated to off-road missions) and the IVECO WAY range with the on-road IVECO S-WAY and the IVECO X-WAY for light off-road missions. In addition, the IVECO Astra brand builds off-road trucks, rigid and articulated dumpers as well as special vehicles.

IVECO employs close to 21,000 individuals globally. It manages production sites in 7 countries throughout Europe, Asia, Africa, Oceania and Latin America where it produces vehicles featuring the latest advanced technologies. 4,200 sales and service outlets in over 160 countries guarantee technical support wherever an IVECO vehicle is at work.

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For further information about the IVECO dealer network: <http://www.IVECO-dealership.co.uk>

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