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Freightliner drivers get hands-on with bespoke training vehicle supplied by ATE Truck & Trailer Sales

Freightliner's trainee drivers will be swapping a truck simulator for the open road after specialist retailer ATE Truck & Trailer Sales converted a used tractor unit into a bespoke rigid training vehicle, at a fraction of the cost of a new truck.

The MAN TGS 26.440, supplied by ATE Truck & Trailer Sales' sister company Asset Alliance, has been converted into a short-wheelbase rigid in specific dimensions for transporting maritime containers, and will be operated by drivers working towards securing their Category C licence.

Supervisors hope the new training regime will better equip trainees on the road to driving Freightliner's 44-tonne articulated trucks.

Freightliner's General Manager – Road, Richard Branston, says: "We wanted to add real-life 26-tonner experience to our driver tuition as there's no substitute for hands-on training, so were keen to buy a truck as a pilot project. The team at ATE suggested we convert a used truck instead of buying new, which has proven incredibly cost-effective.

"ATE worked closely with us to specify the short-wheelbase conversion exactly to our needs, including fitting twist-locks on the body to secure containers."

The converted rigid joins a fleet of 242 trucks at Freightliner, and will travel all over the UK as part of the company's distribution fleet.

Branston adds: "The industry-wide shortage of commercial vehicle drivers is a well-known fact, and this pilot project is part of Freightliner's response to that challenge. We hope to extend the project in coming years, and wouldn't hesitate to use ATE again to add more specialised training trucks to our fleet."

Freightliner is a long-standing customer of Asset Alliance, and has taken delivery of a number of commercial vehicles, including trucks.

Specialising in the transportation of maritime containers by rail, Freightliner's train fleet ferries freight from major UK deep sea ports, including Felixstowe, London Gateway and Southampton, and 12 container terminals. Once delivered to Freightliner depots in cities including Birmingham and Liverpool, the company uses its road transport fleet for final deliveries.

ENDS

Note to editors:

Asset Alliance Group is redefining the way companies acquire commercial vehicles, through its brands [Asset Alliance](#), [ATE Truck & Trailer Sales](#), [Forest Asset Finance](#) and [Total Reefer](#).

The Group occupies a unique position in the market, as it uses its own funds and significant buying power to supply multi-brand vehicles on any combination of contract hire, operating lease, finance lease or hire purchase. This flexibility, combined with a transparent and consultative approach, helps customers drive maximum efficiency from their fleets.

Asset Alliance Group also stands out for maintaining full control of residual risk through its retail arm ATE Truck & Trailer Sales, which protects customers from overly strict return conditions commonplace in the industry. Its modern workshop facilities also keep end-of-life costs to a minimum and provide the opportunity to refurbish vehicles in-house for an additional life in service.

The Group is headquartered in Wolverhampton and was founded in 2010 by Willie Paterson, former Director of Commercial Finance at Alliance & Leicester plc.

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