

## **Is there room to sex-up the styling of FLT's in the way that tractors' appearance have dramatically improved in the last couple of decades?**

There is always room to improve, but the customer wants to have a strong and reliable product to minimise damage. We also want, and require, weight on our trucks, so steel is a very good material for us.

On the ergonomics side and in the operator's compartment in particular, we are now using much better materials which gives a nicer appearance and improved 'feel' than in the past.

## **What needs to be done for wider acceptance of vehicle management systems?**

Vehicle management is in our opinion more focused towards key account business. You need a certain kind of truck for a vehicle management system to give a return on investment. Furthermore, we think the drivers are against it, because they are continually under observation. To find a wider acceptance, the driver has to be convinced that the system is improving truck usage and not to observe the driver.

## **You're "anti-hybrid" – can you explain? How will you provide fuel savings in future?**

Hybrid means, two full systems in parallel. We need two systems to store the energy and then also to separate systems to convert the energy into movement. That is the definition of a Hybrid based on the United Nations. A serial hybrid (like Still) is in our view, just a different kind of transmission. The truck is not able to run either on battery power or on the internal combustion engine.

That means in total we, and at least the customer, have to pay for two systems. Here is the question: Is the return on investment, high enough to accumulate the higher purchase cost. On cars it is possible in city use, as Toyota has shown with its Hybrid vehicles. But these cars only have to drive. Forklifts have to lift heavy loads up to 7 metres high, therefore the load on the total system regarding performance, heat and consumption is much higher than on cars.

Furthermore the systems are more complicated and highly skilled service mechanics would be required to maintain them. To be sure, this specialist will

be also more expensive and raise the cost of the trucks in operation. Toyota and Mitsubishi have launched the first hybrids in Asia. If this becomes a standard and the market demands the hybrid, like AC power in the past, Clark will also change to hybrids.

Hydrogen is not an energy source; it is only a 'material' to transport energy. First the hydrogen has to be created. The environment-friendly production will take place if regenerative energies are used. On the automotive side, some study cars are in operation, but no one is offering fuel cells. For example, BMW stopped their fuel cell program last year. Forklifts, with their lower volume could only participate and use fuel cells, if the automotive industry goes on to produce in high volume.