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2017-08-21 Volvo Trucks Europe Sales Area

First 'Falkom' equipped FH recovery vehicle in UK goes to Manchester's First Point Commercials

The first Volvo FH recovery vehicle in the UK to be equipped with Falkom bodywork has entered service with Urmston, Manchester-based, First Point Commercials was supplied via Thomas Hardie Commercials on Trafford Park.

The Globetrotter-cabbed, 6.0 metre wheelbase FH 8x4 chassis was configured and ordered specifically to suit the fitment of the Falkom 'FAW 25.000' recovery bodywork. Power is supplied via Volvo's 13-litre engine rated at 540 hp.

The Falkom recovery bodywork fitted to First Point Commercial's FH-540 was custom-designed and manufactured for this particular chassis by Falkom B.V. in their modern factory near Tiel, between Utrecht and Nijmegen in the Netherlands. The top-beam recovery equipment has a 25-tonnes lift capacity, lifting 10-tonnes at its full reach of 4.5 metres. It is also fitted with two 24-tonne winches.

The truck, which is based close to the M60 in Urmston, is plated for operation at up to 80-tonnes under STGO CAT2 rules. The front steer axles are rated at 9-tonnes each and the bogie comprises air-suspended, double-drive, hub-reduction axles rated at a total of 26-tonnes.

The truck is also fitted with Volvo's heavy-duty front bumper. Introduced in 2015 for the Volvo FH and FH16, this is based on the same concept as the front of the Volvo FMX, which is especially designed for off-road and rugged construction environments.

The corners and skid plate are both made of 3 mm steel and a fixed footstep has been integrated into the design above the skid plate. The bumper has been fitted with a 1½ tonne ballasted steel under beam by Falkom. Together with the 500 litre fuel tank and other ballast fitted by the bodybuilder to create the optimum 'fulcrum' point for the truck, this contributes to the overall safe balance of the chassis when towing, helping prevent under cab damage when working in difficult off-road conditions.

According to First Point Commercials owner Rob Woolley, the 540hp eight-wheeler is capable of lifting and towing a fully laden 44-tonne artic. The automated transmission is I-Shift and an oil-cooled Volvo gearbox retarder is fitted, the performance of which Rob describes as 'amazing', saying: "Specifying the gearbox retarder was really important as it enables very smooth control when recovering vehicles."

That level of finesse when recovering a vehicle is enhanced by fitment of the in-cab mounted Volvo 'Work-Remote' hand-held device. Rob can carry this with him to ensure full control of the FH's air suspension, levelling and engine revs when working at the back of the truck during a recovery.

"Although we did look at other makes, we decided to specify the Volvo FH 8x4 chassis for this new recovery vehicle because of our excellent on-going experience with operating Volvo trucks on our rental fleet and Thomas Hardie Commercials at Trafford Park have always done a great job of looking after us in terms of both sales and after sales service and parts. It also goes without saying that the Globetrotter cab FH is the premium truck that is a great ambassador for our business."

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