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Issue 067 October 2016 www.themover.co.uk

TheMover

The independent voice of the global moving industry.



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Channel Islands Trade Rates

Effects received at our Portsmouth receiving facility

Guernsey & Jersey

0 - 500cuft	£1.70 per cuft
501-1000 cuft	£1.50 per cuft
1001 - 1500 cuft	£1.30 per cuft

Alderney, Sark, Herm rates on request.



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H.M Customs Documentation - Channel Islands

- All goods received at our Portsmouth Channel Islands Receiving Facility must be already wrapped with an inventory and accompanied by full delivery details
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The deadline for article submission is the 1st of the month preceding publication.

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Deadline:

The booking deadline for advertisements is the 1st of the month preceding publication. Artwork for adverts is required by the 8th of the month preceding publication.

Disclaimer:

Opinions expressed in *The Mover* are not necessarily those of its publisher, unless stated otherwise.

Published by:

The Words Workshop Ltd
26 Swanwick Lane
Broughton
Milton Keynes
MK10 9LD

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The Mover is designed on behalf of The Words Workshop Ltd by I Like Creative
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LEADER

Getting in the IAM mood

.....
Steve Jordan, Editor



There are many industry conferences that play an important role in the moving calendar: but none are quite like IAM. Some would say “thank goodness”, others consider the FIDI conference to be increasingly like a ‘mini’ IAM. I wouldn’t disagree, but IAM is unique.

It seems that every other convention around the world is billed as a place in which people can make contacts, build friendships and spend quality time with like-minded people that will allow long-term relationships to blossom. They are great. They do a valuable job and the industry would be a shadow of itself without them. It’s true also that people do build those sort of relationships at IAM. But IAM is different.

IAM is a sales environment that takes place in the home of unashamed capitalism: the USA. People go there to sell and be sold to. The dynamic is different. There is no pretence. Everyone knows why they are there and nobody apologises for getting on with the job. I have been criticised for saying this in the past but I strongly believe it’s true: everyone arrives at IAM in the hope and expectation of leaving a little wealthier at the end. I think that’s great. Of course there are exceptions – people working for non-profit making organisations for example – but broadly that’s true.

To some people this type of ‘in your face’ selling needs working up to. They have to get in the mood. Some cultures simply don’t work that way so it must be especially difficult for them to get into the IAM groove. So, I thought I’d have a little practice.

On page 19 you will find a short story about our writing service. We’ve been writing all manner of materials for moving companies for much longer than I care to remember. Most people find writing difficult, especially when English is their second language, – we don’t. What’s more, we can legitimately say that we know more about the industry than most. So why struggle over the words for your new website, brochure or advert. Just contact us at *The Mover* and we’ll do it for you.

Now then, that didn’t hurt too much did it! I think I am ready now for the onslaught of New Orleans. So sir, would you like a full page advert or a half ...?

Steve Jordan



● Left to right: David Bigglestone, Brad Mills and Lewis Mills.

Britannia Leatherbarrows supports swimming challenge

Thousands of swimmers supported the fight against heart disease on 7 August by taking on an unforgettable swimming challenge and braving the open sea between Bournemouth and Boscombe Piers; a total distance of 1.4 miles.

One participant urging others to join in with this incredible fundraising event was David Bigglestone, Sales Executive for Britannia Leatherbarrows Removals who underwent a triple heart bypass ten years ago. This was David’s fifth consecutive Pier to Pier Swim, completing the challenge in 50 minutes.

David, said, “I know only too well the importance of raising money for the British Heart Foundation. Without their hard work and dedication I and many others may not be leading the lives that we do now.”

The Leatherbarrows’ team not only supported their work colleague but also helped at the event by supplying a van and two employees to look after the swimmers’ belongings and transport them between the two piers.

Andy Coles, the British Heart Foundation’s Fundraising Event Manager, said, “Coronary heart disease remains the single biggest

“I know only too well the importance of raising money for the British Heart Foundation. Without their hard work and dedication I and many others may not be leading the lives that we do now.”

David Bigglestone

.....
 killer in the UK. It is responsible for over 250 deaths in Bournemouth each year, so it’s vital that we raise as much money as we can from events like the Bournemouth Pier to Pier Swim in our search for the breakthrough.”


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NEWS: UK

National Minimum Wage increase on 1 October, 2016

The National Living Wage (NLW) was introduced on 1 April, 2016 for all working people aged 25 and over and is set at £7.20 per hour. The National Minimum Wage (NMW) for those under the age of 25 still applies.

In October 2016 the new NMW rates increase to:

- £6.95 per hour: 21-24 years old;
- £5.55 per hour: 18-20 years old;
- £4 per hour: 16-17 years old;
- £3.40 for apprentices under 19, or 19 or over who are in the first year of apprenticeship.

The rate will then change every April starting April 2017.

There are a number of people who are not entitled to the NMW/NLW:

- Self-employed people;
- Volunteers or voluntary workers;
- Company directors;
- Family members, or people who live in the family home of the employer who undertake household tasks.

All other workers - including pieceworkers, home workers, agency workers, commission workers, part-time workers and casual workers - must receive at least the NMW.

Information courtesy of Acas (Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service)



● The National Minimum Wage applies to all employees under 25.



● The proposals will limit a Valuation Tribunal's powers to amend the Rateable Value of a business.

UK government pulls the plug on business rates appeals

The latest UK government plans to reform the business rates appeals system will all but remove the ability of business owners to appeal their business rates bill, according to Colliers International, the global commercial real estate agency and consultancy.

The 'Check, challenge, appeal - reforming business rates appeals - consultation on statutory implementation', published at the height of the summer recess, makes clear the government's intention to introduce its wide-ranging programme of business rates appeals reform from 1 April, 2017.

These latest proposals will prevent Valuation Tribunals from amending the Rateable Value of a business unless it is 'outside the bounds of reasonable professional judgment'. So, for a business with a Rateable

"We are urging all businesses to respond to this consultation in no uncertain terms..."
John Webber

Value of £100,000 that believes its rates bill should be £90,000, the Valuation Tribunal would now be directed to rule that because the

figures are within the same ballpark, i.e. 10 to 20%, that the higher figure is allowed to continue, denying a proper appeal based on the evidence presented.

John Webber, Head of Rating at Colliers International, said, "For businesses with a £200m portfolio, an unchallengeable 20% margin of error is going to pile tens of millions of pounds on to business rates bills. And at a time when many firms, particularly in London and the South East, can expect their bills to skyrocket, this adds insult to injury."

These new regulations would also have a significant impact on Material Change in Circumstance (MCC) appeals. Currently, if a business lodges an MCC appeal (it might be the road outside a shop is being dug up or, for a hotel, another hotel opens), the appeal is usually for a reduction in rates of less than 10%. Under the new system, an MCC appeal would effectively disappear if it were to reach the Valuation Tribunal, as it would be within the new 'bounds of professional judgment' test.

John Webber continued, "This clear infringement of a rate payer's right to appeal their Rateable Value must not be allowed to form part of the government's business rates appeals whitewash. And with only weeks to go until the Valuation Office Agency publishes new Rateable Values for every non-domestic property in the country, 300,000 businesses are still awaiting decisions about appeals lodged up to seven years ago. These proposed regulations are very draconian."

"We are urging all businesses to respond to this consultation in no uncertain terms," he said. "The government must stop this direction of travel aimed at making it near-impossible for rate payers to contest their business rates."



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Game, set and match for Bishop's

Bishop's Move Business Relocation has recently won the contract for move management for the All England Lawn Tennis Club (AELTC), Wimbledon for the relocation of items from its Number 1 court. The items needed to be relocated while the famous court is fitted with a sliding roof similar to that on the Centre Court.

Bishop's conducted a survey on-site followed by a three-week planning period to minimise disruption during the building works scheduled for completion before the 2017 championships. Bishop's was required to pack and export wrap all of the furniture from the suites at Number 1 Court and then remove the blinds, curtains and fitted units. These items were then relocated and repositioned into secure storage areas. The company also dismantled temporary commercial refrigeration units.

The entire commercial relocation took a 12-man team of professionally trained packers, three removal vans and 14 days to complete. 15,300 metres of packing materials were used.



● Items from Number 1 Court wrapped and ready for storage.



● SurveyBot "offers customers convenience and flexibility ..."

John Mason adopts SurveyBot technology

John Mason has recently adopted the use of SurveyBot: a new technology that allows customers to record video inventories and receive quotes via their own smart devices.

We are among the first in the UK to use this pioneering software with our clients - and it's completely re-shaping and enhancing our offering here," said John Mason International's Simon Hood. "People connect with us on a recorded video chat, show the items they want to move, and they get a quote. It really is that simple and convenient. Having the ability to take video and turn it into an accurate inventory list is a game changer. It allows our customers to interact with us in their own way, right from their mobile phones."

Simon said that SurveyBot makes his service more efficient and affordable and offers customers convenience and flexibility, as well as ensuring information security. All videos are recorded, avoiding any risk of discrepancies. "We've already had a great reaction from

our clients," he said, adding that he believed it would transform the future of transportation, logistics and supply chains. "It could even be the beginning of the end of home removal surveyors."

Daniela Alpert, founder and Director of Business Development at Crater, added: "With our video survey platform and virtual management solution, we're breathing new life into a decades-old industry. We are providing the necessary, innovative, tools and software for moving companies that will support them in meeting the demands of this fast expanding digital landscape. We are pleased to now be in partnership with John Mason International and are extremely confident that our technology will see them through their mission to provide a flexible moving experience for their customers."

50th vehicle for Osbournes

34 years after Osbournes Removals & Storage in Sale, Cheshire, came under the present ownership, the company has bought its 50th vehicle.

The company has had Bespoke Bodies in Warrington build a new body for a 2011 model DAF Space Cab. The new acquisition replaces an ageing R registration 15-tonne DAF vehicle. Using a used chassis has saved the company in the region of £40,000 compared with buying new, despite adding the fetching Kelsa chrome bars which have received a few admiring glances from the public.

Osbournes now has a fleet of ten vehicles and has given this latest addition to its longest-serving driver, Trevor Butcher, who has been with the company for 13 years. Riding with him will be his son Bradley and his porter throughout that time, Denny Morris, who has been with the company since 1983.



● The crew, left to right: Trevor Butcher (driver), Bradley Butcher and Denny Morris.

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INSIGHT: RANSOMWARE



● Ransomware is designed to lock you out of your own files.

Pay up – or the data gets it!

A warning about the ever present dangers of ransomware to your data, systems and business. By Darren Frostick of Leading Edge Market Solutions.

Imagine this scenario ... You and your co-workers arrive at work on Monday morning, turn on your computers and rather than seeing your normal home page your system has been locked and a message appears saying 'if you want your data back you need to buy some Bit coins and pay us a ransom'.

That includes all your data, information on clients, invoicing, operations and everything else you hold on your system. You cannot access it and cannot back it up, in fact to all intents and purposes it is like someone has broken in and taken all your computers away.

Sound like something from a science fiction movie? Well it's not – everyday more and more businesses and individuals are falling victims to ransomware; a sophisticated and potentially business-destroying piece of malware that encrypts your data and requires a decryption key to access it again. And guess what? To get the key and your data back you have to pay criminal gangs a ransom.

The criminal gangs who run these ransomware operations are highly organised, difficult for the police to prosecute and for anti-malware software to detect.

I know this from personal experience when my laptop recently became infected with one of these pieces of malware. I had two choices, pay a ransom or lose my data.

The ransomware itself can get on to your system in more than one way. However, the most common are by infected e-mail attachments, downloaded Word documents with infected code or from infected websites or adverts. This means every time you or any of your employees open

an e-mail attachment or Word document from an unknown source, visit a suspect website or click on an advertisement, you and your company could be under attack.

Businesses from SMEs to large institutions have had to pay criminal gangs to regain their data with the ransom fees ranging from a few hundred pounds to many thousands; dependent on the size of your business. So it really is important to safeguard your data as much as possible.

Do not be complacent about backing up

The criminal gangs who run these ransomware operations are highly organised, difficult for the police to prosecute and for anti-malware software to detect. Although occasionally it is possible to regain some, or all of your data; in the majority of cases it is not. Remember, the people doing this are criminals and do not offer a money back guarantee so paying the ransom does not necessarily mean you will get the key or if you do get your data back that a large amount of it will not be corrupted in some way. So you need to make sure you are backing up your data regularly. Pay particular attention to not leaving drives plugged in (this can result in the backup being infected too). Ideally have data backed up at different timescales, in different formats and have a copy stored off-site and off-line.

Make sure your security is up to date

Make sure that all your computers have up to date software, this should include software updates for Windows, your antivirus software, and especially the browser and any browser plug-ins. Always run up to date antivirus on your machines.

Make your staff aware

The ransomware requires somebody to open something or visit a site for it to work, so the main weak link in your company is the people using the system. Make sure everyone is aware of this threat and if you do not have one, make an e-mail and Internet policy document explaining never to open or download attachments from an unknown source and when visiting websites, not to click on unknown links.

Ransomware is a growing problem that as yet the best malware busting software or the law have not come to grips with. It is also something that could affect any of us and have potentially very expensive ramifications. So beware of this threat and make as much effort as possible to offset the risks.

Fortunately for me my laptop did not have anything important on it and I was therefore able to reset it to factory settings, which wiped the drives. However, could you or your business afford to lose all of your business data?

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NEWS: UK



● Unlike in the south, house price inflation in northern English cities like Manchester is not slowing.

UK city house price inflation slowing

The latest Hometrack UK Cities House Price Index reveals a marked slowdown in house price growth over the last three months, led by a deceleration in London and other high value cities across the south of England.

The annual rate of house price inflation across the 20 cities slowed to 9.5% in July after 12 months of higher growth. The shift in momentum was due to growth stalling across a number of cities in southern England over the last quarter. In the three months to July house prices in London rose by just 2.1%, the lowest quarterly rate since February 2015. Furthermore, Bristol, which is the fastest growing city over the last 12 months, saw growth over the last three months slow to 2.6% from a recent high of 5% in May 2016. Prices in

Cambridge fell by 1% in the last quarter although over the last 12 months prices are 7.1% higher. However, Hometrack can also reveal that house price inflation in many large regional cities in the north of England and Scotland show no signs of slowing. The rate of annual house price growth in Leeds, Manchester, Birmingham, Liverpool and Nottingham continues to rise by between 7% and 8%. Focussing on activity in the last quarter, the highest rates of growth have been registered in lower value, high yielding cities where prices are rising of a lower base –

Glasgow (5.2%), Liverpool (4.4%), Manchester and Nottingham (3.4%).

In Aberdeen the year-on-year rate of growth fell at a slower rate of -8% in July with prices up 2% in the last quarter, a sign that the housing market may have adjusted to the impact of falling oil prices on demand over the last 12 months.

Richard Donnell, Insight Director at Hometrack said that in the absence of adverse economic trends impacting employment and mortgage rates, the near term outlook is for a continued slowdown in London towards mid-single digit growth.

In the face of lower sales volumes agents will look to re-price stock in line with what buyers are prepared, and can afford to pay.”

Richard Donnell

“The slowdown in London is being seen across the market is not accounted for by seasonal factors with weaker demand from home owners and investors as supply grows,” he explained. “This analysis suggests London house price growth will continue to slow over the rest of the year. In contrast, northern regional cities will continue to register stable growth rates as households benefit from record low mortgage rates and affordability remains attractive. We continue to believe that turnover will register the brunt of the slowdown in London. In the face of lower sales volumes agents will look to re-price stock in line with what buyers are prepared, and can afford to pay. Past experience shows that this process can run for as long as six months and relies, in part, in how quickly sellers are willing to adjust to what buyers are prepared to pay.”

Gerson flies Batman to Japan

Gerson Relocation Ltd has secured a most unusual move of Batman memorabilia from Cheshire to Japan. The private collection was started back in 1961 and is the second largest in the world.

The collection consists of just about everything to do with Batman, including the Batmobile and a children’s Batman car made from a cardboard box. It’s the only one in the world so great care and special packaging was used to keep it safe during the long journey.

The collection has numerous toys, costumes and even a Batman pogo stick. The final volume of the collection which was packed by staff at Gerson’s Daventry office was 450ft³. This volume would normally be transported by sea, but the buyer in Japan decided to have it sent by air to Tokyo for the sake of speed.

The buyer also insisted on lots of photographs being taken before, during and after the packing, and during the air freight casing process at Gerson’s warehouse.

As expected, the valuable collection arrived safely in Tokyo to the delight of its new owner.



● The Batman collection.

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INTERVIEW: ADAM CHUDLEY



Plus ça change...

Adam Chudley is one of the many thirty-somethings that are taking over from the previous generation bringing new ideas and vitality just as their predecessors did. The industry is changing dramatically but, in Adam's opinion, in vitally important ways, it stays the same. Steve Jordan visited him to find out more about him and his attitude to the industry.



The business, Chudley International Moving & Storage in Ilminster was started in 1994 by Adam's father Mark. Mark had previously worked with Derek Blatchford at Blatchpack in Exeter and married Derek's daughter, Dawn, making Derek, Adam's maternal grandfather. Derek had been one of the founding fathers of the modern moving industry, a BAR president instrumental in the creation of Pelican Van Lines which merged with Britannia in the 1980s and BAR Services. The industry today would look very different had it not been for Derek and those like him.

"I always knew I was going to work in the business. It was a bit of a legacy thing. My grandfather was BAR president before I was born."

Adam Chudley

Mark too, as well as building up a successful business initially focussing on antiques shipping for the American market, is closely involved with the BAR as a director of BAR Services and sitting on the Board for FEDEMAC, carrying on the tradition of service to the industry as a whole. The company now continues a frequent groupage service to the USA and specialises in shipping to Cyprus where it has a close agency agreement with Peter Morton Removals in Paphos.

Adam has inherited his family's dedication to the industry despite having started his career very differently. Of course he worked at the company as a young man during the school holidays but it was accountancy that initially took his fancy. He went into accountancy straight from college aged 18 but, after five years, decided it wasn't for him. "It was June and Dad was busy at work. I went back to lend a hand during the summer season and never left," said Adam. "That was 13 years ago."

"I always knew I was going to work in the business," he said. "It was a bit of a legacy thing. My grandfather was BAR president before I was born. I remember a big gilt-framed picture of him as BAR president. We called it 'grandad with his necklace on'. I was always out on the vans as a teenager, collecting from the flea markets in Paris. It was very exciting in the early days. My accountancy experience gave me a lot of day-to-day business experience. It's a bit like your French lessons at school: you don't realise how much you take in until you need to use it."

Today everything has moved on a bit but it's still very much a family business.

Mark is taking more of a back seat spending much of his time doing surveys; Adam is now operations director; his uncle, Hugh, 13 years his senior, handles the antiques side of the business; and Sarah, Adam's step sister, is the accounts manager.

The biggest change Adam's generation is having to deal with is technology. The company installed Moveware five years ago and having compared it with other systems, found it best able to handle the number of variables in the business. "The other systems are great too but we thought Moveware worked best for us," said Adam.

The company is now on its fourth website with the company investing time and money on its development. "Customers want prices from websites and they don't want to spend too long getting them," said Adam. "If you make people give you information on the website then don't give them a price, they feel you have robbed them of their time." Adam also realises that he needs to spend more time making social media work harder for the company. "It's now a big part of our discussions at Board meetings. It's definitely worth the effort and I know we could get more out of it."

He chooses not to use price comparison sites much but acknowledges that they have had an effect on the industry. "It seems that the industry is becoming more split into the traditional movers and the menu movers," he said. "Companies wanting to provide a traditional service can continue to do so but it will become an expensive niche. There's not enough money in our business, we have all said it for years. People pay for lawyers and estate agents but they don't want to pay for removals. The problem is people can't get a law degree in five minutes but they can get a van. We are an easy set-up industry. Moving should be seen as a speciality industry, but the public don't seem to see it that way."

"Companies wanting to provide a traditional service can continue to do so but it will become an expensive niche. There's not enough money in our business, we have all said it for years."

Adam Chudley

One major development that Adam has embraced is the concept of Skype and FaceTime surveys (see page 40). A surveyor simply contacts a customer by smartphone and is shown around the house through a video link. It saves time, is cheaper and it's what customers want.

continues over

INTERVIEW: ADAM CHUDLEY



“The young generation sits in an office every day and doesn’t get out there and learn about the world. You have to meet people. How do you challenge the way things have always been done if you don’t look?”

Adam Chudley

continued from previous page

“It might not work for the bigger moves or where people want a personal service but most of the time it does fine,” explained Adam. “The world has become much more ‘price savvy’ with people paying a lot less for goods and services.”

Apps are also likely to take a bigger role in the industry according to Adam, especially where things are done regularly. “We already carry out our daily vehicle checks using apps,” he explained. “I think it’s on the operations side that this technology will be of most benefit to us.”

Just like Derek and Mark, Adam has done his share for BAR. He was very much involved in the Young Movers Group which, he said, is now being reinvented.

“I think it’s really important to get people together talking about the industry and how they work,” he explained. “We have people in the industry who have knowledge in bags full and are willing to pass it on. But it has to be accessible and affordable. The young generation sits in an office every day and doesn’t get out there and learn about the world. You have to meet people. How do you challenge the way things have always been done if you don’t look?”

Everything is measured by money. How much extra business do you get from attending a conference? “But it’s very difficult to quantify the monetary gain of running our business slightly differently because we’ve seen how someone else does it. People don’t get out because they don’t think they need to. Everything is done remotely now. We text not call. Even our relationships with customers is more arm’s length. To experience directly is much more powerful.”

What’s the biggest challenge for the immediate future? “Brexit,” said Adam, without hesitation. “I think the country will become much more uncertain. The housing market will slow down. There isn’t much room for further interest rate cuts. The European market will become difficult. It won’t disappear but people

will think twice about it.” He admits to slipping into a period of fear immediately after the Brexit vote. “But I’m coming out of that now, simply because we have to.”

Although the industry has changed and it will be Adam’s generation that continues the process at an ever increasing rate, he believes that in one important aspect, nothing changes. “It’s still a people business built on networking, mutual respect and friendships. Nobody should forget that.”

Long may it continue that way.



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NEWS: INTERNATIONAL



● www.suddath.com

Suddath launches redesigned website

The Suddath Companies has launched its new website, www.suddath.com.

The redesign, which merged a total of 36 individual sites into one, was commissioned as part of an overall digital strategy following an extensive internal and external audit of the Suddath brands. The primary objectives of the site redevelopment were to give a good first impression and provide new content to better reflect the vision of the 97-year-old organisation and to enhance the customer experience. This includes:

- Consolidated service offerings: Moving & Relocation, Workplace Solutions and Global Logistics;
- Vibrant design and a clean layout to take visitors on a journey through the organisation;
- Responsive technology that allows customers to move seamlessly across mobile, tablet and desktop devices;
- Information centre that includes

industry updates, best practices, current events and key tips to educate customers;

- Interactive locations map that shows the Suddath footprint, contact info and offers Google-integrated driving directions.

“To help better showcase our corporate DNA and brand, we have completely redesigned our website to establish our diversified service offerings under one Suddath brand and to serve as a resource and reflection of the many ways we are reimagining the way the world moves,” explained Melinda Byrnes, Senior Vice President of Marketing, Communications and Brand Management. “The new Suddath.com design aesthetic and site architecture now very accurately reflect the modern Suddath and align our brand, our services and our culture into one web-based experience.”

Arpin Van Lines ranked number one in customer satisfaction survey

Arpin Van Lines has been rated number one among the ten largest suppliers of household goods shipment services for ‘customer satisfaction’, according to the 22nd Annual Nationwide Relocating Employee Survey released in August by independent research firm Trippel Survey & Research.

Arpin Van lines earned the highest moving industry score with an 8.47 out of 10 for customer satisfaction. The company also achieved the top rating in two other key measurement categories. “The results of this independent survey validate the feedback we have been receiving directly for years in the form of letters and e-mails from happy customers,” said David Arpin, President and CEO of Arpin Van Lines. “Whether our customers are moving across town or to the other side of the world, we pride ourselves on taking one of life’s most stressful moments and transforming it into a seamless experience.”

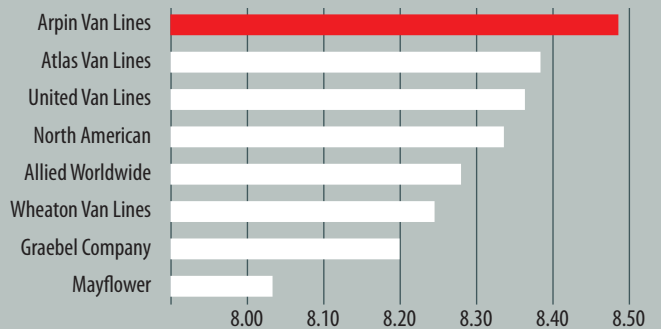
A total of 6,878 employee

transferee evaluations were accumulated for this survey that covered a range of moving industry services including household goods shippers, relocation management companies, relocation mortgage providers, corporate temporary housing, spouse-partner support and destination rentals.

The 22nd Annual Nationwide Relocating Employee Survey was conducted throughout a six month period ending June 30, 2016. The overall purpose of this annual survey is to collect and report objective, unbiased evaluations from transferees or assignees moving within the USA regarding their level of satisfaction with external relocation service providers.

22nd Annual Nationwide Relocation Employee Survey[®]

Trippel Survey & Research, LLC. 2016



Huge growth in freight through Dover

DFDS Seaways, that operates ferry services from Dover to Calais and Dunkirk, has reported a 63% increase in freight volumes on the routes over the second quarter of 2016. The company says that the growth has been achieved following the introduction of two new ships on

the Dover-Calais service - *Cotes des Dunes* and *Cote de Flandres* - and is the strongest recorded in the company’s history.

Wayne Bullen, Freight Sales Director for DFDS on the Channel, said, “We’ve invested heavily in improving capacity and enhancing both the booking and travel

experience for our freight customers on the English Channel routes. Our new Dover-Calais ships allow us to offer higher frequency and more choice for our customers and we’re delighted to see the significant volume growth achieved as a result.”

● www.dfds.co.uk



INSIGHT: ORGANISING THE MOVERS & STORERS SHOW



● Keith and Charlotte have been organising The Movers & Storers Show since 2008.

“I always get very stressed that nobody will turn up! I’m always so relieved on the first day once we’ve had a couple of hundred people through the door.”

Charlotte Parslow

forward to the Britain’s Strongest Removalist competition. “All those muscles ... The Packer of the Year Contest too. I absolutely love the competitions, and how involved everyone gets.”

Keith, by contrast, being a ‘diesel head’ at heart, likes the truck display. “We understand that the Commercial Vehicle Show had fewer trucks than normal this year, and we’re really proud of the fact that we’ve managed to increase the number of vehicles on display. It’s going to look spectacular.”

Every year the show provides something different and Keith and Charlotte work really hard to make sure it’s always fresh. Charlotte explained that it’s important for her to work really closely with the event sponsors to keep things feeling exciting. “I’m looking forward to seeing the Reason Global Lounge this year, and also the Buzzmove Web & Social Media Clinic. You can expect iPads, beanbags, and a lovely relaxed vibe. And some red sofas, naturally.”

“I think it’s the bigger changes which keep the show interesting,” said Keith. “Changing venue every few years helps – it gives us an opportunity for a complete redesign of the space, so we can apply all the lessons we’ve learned over the years.”

So why is The Movers and Storers Show important? Why is it important that you go along in November? “This is such a ‘people’ industry, relationships are so vital in this sector,” said Keith. “We provide a place for movers and storers to meet with each other and their suppliers and talk – it’s as simple as that.”

“I also believe the show has a role to play in terms of education, and helping the smaller operators improve and expand, be it via seminars or advice from suppliers,” said Charlotte. “And of course there is a PR benefit – the more high profile The Movers & Storers Show can be, the more members of the public may start to understand the professionalism of this industry and focus less on price.”

The Movers and Storers Show takes place at Bruntingthorpe Aerodrome, close to junction 20 on the M1, on 1 and 2 November, 2016. Don’t miss it.

● Register at www.themoversandstorersshow.co.uk.

Inside story

An interview with Charlotte Parslow and Keith Merrett, organisers of The Movers & Storers Show, as the 2016 event approaches.

It’s only a few weeks now until the start of The Movers and Storers Show on 1 and 2 November. Charlotte Parslow and Keith Merrett conceived the idea and have been organising the event since 2008, so are pretty experienced at it by now. But still, the run up to the show can be a busy and stressful time.

“Our planning is pretty much done now, but the build day is usually pretty crazy,” said Keith. “Our whole team will be on-site, and we’ll be project managing the build, our own office set up, staff briefings, and exhibitor queries.”

“We handle a lot of visitor calls and e-mails on the build day as well,” added Charlotte. “In reality, most people decide whether or not to come to the show at the last minute, so we get a lot of queries and last minute registrations. If you call us on Monday 31, please bear with us, as we’ll probably be doing 18 things at once.”

Keith said that his main worry this year is whether people will struggle to find the new venue at Bruntingthorpe. “It’s only ten minutes from the M1, and we’ve paid for AA event signage to give people a hand.” Although Bruntingthorpe appears to be a little out of the way, it’s a well-

“We understand that the Commercial Vehicle Show had fewer trucks than normal this year, and we’re really proud of the fact that we’ve managed to increase the number of vehicles on display. It’s going to look spectacular.”

Keith Merrett

known venue so it’s unlikely that anyone will have any real problems. “I always get very stressed that nobody will turn up! It’s a recurring nightmare for me,” said Charlotte. “I’m always so relieved on the first day once we’ve had a couple of hundred people through the door.”

This year the show will be a mix of the traditional and some new events to provide something of interest for everyone. Charlotte said she is particularly looking



Lost for words? Visit *The Mover* stand

The Mover magazine is expanding its range of specialist writing services for the moving industry. Visitors to *The Mover's* stand will have the opportunity to meet members of the editorial team and get an insight into the services its professional writers can provide.

As well as crafting articles and gathering news for *The Mover*, the magazine's editors and feature writers are now available to write your brochures, website content and just about anything else that involves putting words together for the moving industry. Newsletters, advertising copy, straplines, blogs and press releases are all in a day's work for *The Mover's* specialist writers.

The Mover also has media contacts throughout the world as well as just around the corner, so if you have a news story that would be of interest to the press, TV, radio or online media, *The Mover* can write and distribute it to your target audience, wherever that may be, from Sheffield to Sri Lanka.

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Trucksmith: maintaining a Devon tradition



PROFILE: TRUCKSMITH



Deputy Editor David Jordan took a trip to Britain's West Country to visit one of the UK's most successful vehicle bodybuilders.

The Trucksmith factory occupies the site of a former dairy in rural Devon; an industry that was once famous in the county but is now sadly in decline following the catastrophic drop in milk prices during recent years. Smart new buildings now stand where the milking sheds once stood and industry thrives, no longer in agriculture, but in the production of specialist vehicles, many of which are destined for the removals industry.

After finding my way to reception I was welcomed with a broad smile and a firm handshake by Trucksmith's Executive Sales Manager, Simon Partridge. Simon introduced me to Emma Trebble who runs the company with her co director and husband Daniel. As we sat around Emma's oak Victorian 'partner's desk' she told me how her father-in-law Brian Trebble had started the company back in the early 1980s.

"Brian had served his time as a coachbuilder with a local company but wanted a business of his own," said Emma. "He began building vehicles in his garage at home with the help of his wife Elizabeth. Customers would come

and see him with a 'fag-packet' drawing of what they wanted and Brian would build it from that. Things were very different in those days."

Brian and Elizabeth are still on the Board of Trucksmith as non-executive directors. Their aim had always been to hand over the business to their children - if they were willing and able - and in 2010 their eldest son Daniel, who had previously worked as a chef in London's Dorchester and Savoy hotels, decided to change direction and join the company. But it was not a matter of simply walking into the boss's office and taking over, as Emma explained. "Brian and Elizabeth have very high standards and they insisted that Dan learned the trade on the shop-floor before being allowed to take the reins from his father. He completed the Trucksmith apprenticeship and eventually became workshop manager before being appointed managing director seven years ago."

Emma's background is in investment banking and she now uses her commercial skills to head up Trucksmith's sales and marketing, working closely with Simon Partridge.

"Brian had served his time as a coachbuilder with a local company but wanted a business of his own. He began building vehicles in his garage at home with the help of his wife Elizabeth."

Emma Trebble

Fifteen years ago the family realised that relying on bespoke vehicle manufacture alone was not going to work in the long-term. A more standard vehicle that could be produced quickly and economically was required. At that time Trucksmith was building a 3.5 tonne low-floor Luton van based on an FWD Renault Master Platform Cab, which was proving popular with customers.

Daniel approached Renault UK and asked if they would consider ordering the LoLoader to sell through their dealer network. After lengthy negotiations and approval testing, Renault not only agreed, *continues over*

● Left, left to right: Brian Trebble, Emma Trebble and Simon Partridge; above: Trucksmith now designs and laser cuts many of its own parts; below left: Really Trucks Haulage was started in 2014 as a means of delivering to Trucksmith's customers.



PROFILE: TRUCKSMITH



● Above: Trucksmith currently employs 110 staff and 12 apprentices; above right: completed vehicles awaiting delivery.

continued from previous page

but started an ‘off the shelf’ converted range and the LoLoader was to be the first. This was an industry first, led by Renault UK to have converted products available from stock. They ordered their first 27 units and it marked a turning point in the company’s fortunes as Emma explained.

“We were of course delighted, but at the same time a bit scared! Until that point the biggest single order we’d ever had was for six vehicles, so you can imagine how we felt. We had a total workforce of twelve and only seven were on production: how on earth were we going to build them? Fortunately, Devon is a traditional coach building area and we managed to recruit enough skilled people to help us complete both the Renault order and the bespoke work we already had in the order book.”

Today the Trucksmith workforce stands at 110 with 12 apprentices currently learning the trade.

Within a few years the bespoke work had reduced to about 10% of the company’s turnover and its platform-based products had become a UK market leader.

The company’s close relationship with Renault UK continues to flourish along with similar partnerships with Vauxhall, Fiat, Nissan, Toyota and Peugeot.

Customers are able to buy from the manufacturers’ franchised dealerships or directly from the factory. “As well as the standard 670 and 741ft³ Lutons, we are able to build customised versions to order, either via the dealer network or directly from the factory,” said Simon. “We currently have 132 variants that are European Whole Vehicle Type Approved, so there is no requirement for an IVA certificate on any of our approved range, which can mean a delay of up to six months.”

Simon later gave me a tour of the modern well-lit production facility and pointed out the company’s newly installed computer controlled laser cutting machine. “One of the things that makes us different is we make all the parts for our bodies here in the factory rather than buying them in,” said Simon. “All the steel fittings are designed by our development department and cut from sheets using laser technology. It was a major investment for us but it’s all part of our continual drive to improve our production techniques and stay ahead of the competition.”

“The LoLoader and its derivatives are very popular with removals companies,” said Simon. “They are of course easy to load and don’t need a tail-lift, which reduces weight and maintenance costs.

They can be driven by anyone with a car driving licence and they don’t need a tachograph or driver card. Also, parking and access is easier in congested areas like central London for example.”

Two years ago the Trebbles formed a new company to carry out deliveries of the newly completed vehicles. “We’d always had trouble getting our vans delivered by the transport companies, mainly because of their size, so we decided to start our own,” said Simon. “Really Trucks Haulage was launched in 2014 and has been a great success. We now have 18 transporters operating in the UK and Europe, so we’ve solved our own delivery problems and also turned it into a profitable business transporting vehicles for other motor companies.”

Although Trucksmith has grown beyond all recognition during the past 30 years it is still very much a family business and the impression I took away from my visit was of a ‘happy ship’ where people feel appreciated and valued. Even during the last recession, the company retained every member of its workforce, despite the inevitable hardships and difficulties.

Whatever challenges lie ahead for the UK’s economy, Trucksmith is clearly well placed to exploit new opportunities and remain a market leader.

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NEWS: INTERNATIONAL



● Robert Voerman speaking on Successful Netherlands.

Voerman International winner in International Relocations & Mobility category

The National Business Success Award Institute has declared Voerman International BV as 2016 winner in the category of International Relocations & Mobility.

According to the Nomination Committee, it has developed into a leading organisation with a very strong position. "Voerman International combines its extensive expertise with an innovative approach, which makes it score very high on customer satisfaction. A stunning, highly innovative and socially involved company."

Voerman has never been a traditional moving company – over the years, a unique business approach developed the organisation into a full-service relocation provider, focussed on international relocations

"A quick look at the Voerman website makes you realise you're not dealing with your average moving company ..."
Robert Zwaan

of expatriates and diplomatic missions. "A quick look at the Voerman website makes you realise you're not dealing with your average

moving company, but rather one of outstanding quality," said Robert Zwaan, Head of the daily Nomination Committee. "All aspects that concern international removals are all dealt with by the staff. Insurance packages, for example, are an evident supplement to the scope of their services. When customers ask, Voerman will even find new homes for them."

The company is remarkable through its technological innovations. A good example is the Internet platform move4u.com – an initiative (and property) of Voerman. "This platform is comparable to eBay and

brings together supply and demand on the international removals market," said Robert Zwaan. "Even competing international movers are eager to use this website to find clients and search for services that fit their business."

The jury said Voerman also should be complimented on its corporate social responsibility. The Voerman Foundation conducts various charitable activities, including support for an orphanage and charity for children with Down Syndrome in Russia. With money, goods and manpower, Voerman contributes to a better world, locally and globally.

Voerman International BV was founded in 2011, however, the company originated in 1986, headquartered in The Hague. Part of the Voerman Group, the organisation has offices in Russia, Poland and the Czech Republic. In the Netherlands, Voerman employs approximately 140 people (of which 70% are based in the HQ) and about 240 worldwide.

The National Business Success Award Institute has been nominating the best companies in the Netherlands in specific sectors on the basis of strict criteria since 2011. A Success Award is based on extensive research into companies that have achieved excellent results in their industry and are a shining example of successful entrepreneurship. The National Business Success Award is the first and only annual business award in the Netherlands, with its own television programmes *Successful Netherlands* and the *Success Factor*. The top prize is €100,000.

● See the full YouTube recording of Robert's TV Interview at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OQ_UraF2f4Q.

<p>EUROMOVERS International Worldwide Movers Alliance</p>  <p>A friendly Network with a Family Spirit</p>	<p>EUROMOVERS International SA 13, Rue Edmond Reuter · L-5326 Contern, Luxembourg Phone: +352-26 70 16 56 · Fax: +352-26 70 16 57</p> <p>The EUROMOVERS Network, now in existence for over 10 years, is proud to count partners in more than 30 countries in Europe and Overseas.</p> <p>Throughout the years, the network has developed a strong, international recognized partnership. Originally created by likeminded European Movers who wished to co-operate with others under the same standards, vision and banner, it has developed to an exclusive Circle of Experts with strong coherence, co-operating with a family spirit.</p> <p>Email: info@euromovers.com Web: www.euromovers.com</p>	 <table border="1"> <tr><td>Recognized Trademark</td></tr> <tr><td>Co-operation and Assistance</td></tr> <tr><td>Special rates and Conditions</td></tr> <tr><td>Powerlanes and Groupage Services</td></tr> <tr><td>Exchange of Knowledge and Experience</td></tr> <tr><td>Participate in Corporate Accounts</td></tr> <tr><td>HO's Sales Assistance</td></tr> <tr><td>Partner-to-Partner Sales Assistance</td></tr> <tr><td>Marketing, Public Relations, Web</td></tr> <tr><td>Quality Training Environment</td></tr> <tr><td>International Matrix Certification</td></tr> <tr><td>Area Coverage</td></tr> </table>	Recognized Trademark	Co-operation and Assistance	Special rates and Conditions	Powerlanes and Groupage Services	Exchange of Knowledge and Experience	Participate in Corporate Accounts	HO's Sales Assistance	Partner-to-Partner Sales Assistance	Marketing, Public Relations, Web	Quality Training Environment	International Matrix Certification	Area Coverage
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GRAEBEL: STRATEGY IN PRACTICE



● Bill Graebel and Tim O'Shea.

Graebel in the USA has introduced a new product for its mobility customers: the Graebel Mobility Quotient Insight (MQ Insight); it's a new diagnostic tool that provides a fast, in-depth analysis of the overall strategic health and maturity of a company's mobility programme.

MQ insight has been developed in line with the company's declared strategy of being a 'disrupter' in the market by providing analytical tools that will provide its customers with hard, specific information that will help them benchmark and optimise their mobility programmes.

The company said that MQ Insight goes beyond policy benchmarking or broad organisational assumptions. It combines a proven methodology, best practices, research and expertise to give senior mobility and HR executives a 360-degree view of their mobility programme's performance, meaningful insights and actionable recommendations.

In practice it's a survey, but it's unlike anything that has been done in the industry before. Tim O'Shea, Vice President of Consulting Services for Graebel explained that MQ Insight was designed to enable companies to establish the effectiveness of their mobility programme from a combination of internal perspectives, external benchmarking and best practice. The whole process takes just eight weeks.

"We don't just talk to the mobility team, we talk to around 15 people across seven different functions within the organisation, including accounts, HR, travel, etc."

Tim O'Shea

"We don't just talk to the mobility team," he explained. "We talk to around 15 people across seven different functions within the organisation, including accounts, HR, travel, etc. We ask them 40 questions and for each question the respondent is asked to rate the importance of that aspect of the mobility programme to the organisation and its maturity level. Our job is to take those scores and show how people in the organisation feel about the programme and then benchmark those findings

against other organisations in their sector. It's a very powerful tool." As yet Graebel has stayed clear of questioning assignees themselves about their specific experiences.

Having performed the survey, Graebel benchmarks each customer's programme against others in their sector and works with the customer to plug any gaps that have been identified in line with the best practice in the industry. In developing the programme Graebel has identified six key problems that mobility leaders face regularly:

Visibility: They are unable to gauge their programme's effectiveness, performance and level of integration across multiple functions and so create a strategic improvement plan;

Executive insight: They lack the necessary insight to identify where their programme excels or falls short so that gaps can be closed;

Strategic positioning: They cannot demonstrate the quality of their programme or understand how important it is to the workforce;

Industry expertise: One-size-fits-all industry best practices aren't specific enough to help them develop a strategy or improvement plan;

Depth of information: Surveys typically provide limited insights and expensive consulting services usually focus on policy benchmarking;

Time and resources: They don't have the time or resources to develop a mobility assessment from scratch.

"So often we stay at a tactical level with our clients; focussed on solving the day-to-day problems," said Tim. "Sometimes we lose sight of some of the broader issues." MQ Insight will now provide a mechanism for Graebel to take a much more strategic approach to helping clients long-term. "We can now be a good strategic partner by helping them understand where there are gaps in their programmes, helping them identify changes they need to make themselves and by providing assistance where necessary."

MQ Insight is in line with the strategy of the company declared to *The Mover* Editor, Steve Jordan in an interview with Bill Graebel earlier this year. Bill said that he saw his company as a "disrupter"



● MQ Insight is designed to give a 360-degree view of a mobility programme's performance.

in the industry that would be looking for a new way of doing business. "I would like to think that we have the ability to provide a very technologically enabled, customer centric service that is not yet represented in the industry," he said.

Bill went on to say that his company was engaging with its workforce and suppliers to provide the best possible service for customers. He also wanted to link that engagement with "... some really cool technology and financial enablement that solves problems for clients and knits it all together to provide better business intelligence and predictive analytics." At the time of the interview MQ Insight had not been developed, however it is clear that this is the kind of initiative Bill had in mind.

MQ Insight is in its very early stages for Graebel and Tim O'Shea recognises that there are some obstacles to overcome with some clients who may feel that it is uncomfortably intrusive. "But we believe that once those initial reservations are overcome our clients will find their ability to use analytics in a much more creative way will be immensely powerful for them, helping to identify and solve the major strategic problems that they experience every day."

NEWS: ON THE ROAD



● The new proposals transform the recruitment and training landscape of the road haulage industry.

New proposals for lorry driver funding support

An improved funding package for apprentices in the transport sector has been announced that will open up even more opportunities for smaller firms.

From April 2017, lorry driving apprentices will attract government support of £5,000, with an additional £2,000 depending on the age of the individual. Importantly, the funding obligation on smaller firms has been reduced to nil.

This transforms the whole recruitment and training landscape of the road haulage and logistics industry, for those who are willing to invest in the drivers of the future.

Road Haulage Association Policy Director Jack Semple said, "The government has listened to what

the industry has said and has given a very positive response. The RHA has been arguing for quality-based funding that will drive up levels of recruitment from within the UK and quality of skills training and that is what the Department for Education has now proposed."

Alongside the package for new lorry drivers is increased support for traffic office and warehouse operative apprenticeships.

There is also assistance available for apprenticeships where the individual needs support with maths or English of £471 for each of the two subjects.

"This is a really exciting time for the industry," Jack Semple continued. "The RHA will be working actively to bring these opportunities alive, not only for our large and medium-sized members but for the many thousands of owner-drivers and smaller hauliers who want to introduce newcomers to the industry - often their friends and relatives - in a way that gives them a really strong foundation and transferrable skills."

- For LGV drivers:
- £5,000 base funding (includes licence acquisition);
 - £2,000 for those aged 16-18 at the start of the year-long apprenticeship;
 - Nil co-investment for employers with fewer than 50 employees;
 - Co-investment of just 10% for those with 50+ employees who are not apprenticeship levy payers;
 - Levy payers make no additional

co-investment.

For traffic office ('logistics and supply chain operator'):

- £3,000 base funding;
 - £2,000 for those aged 16-18 at the start of the year-long apprenticeship;
 - Nil co-investment for employers with fewer than 50 employees;
 - Co-investment of just 10% for those with 50+ employees who are not apprenticeship levy payers;
 - Levy payers make no additional co-investment.
- For warehouse operatives:
- £3,000 base funding;
 - £2,000 for those aged 16-18 at the start of the year-long apprenticeship;
 - Nil co-investment for employers with fewer than 50 employees;
 - Co-investment of just 10% for those with 50+ employees who are not apprenticeship levy payers;
 - Levy payers make no additional co-investment.

What is the Apprenticeship Levy?

The Apprenticeship Levy is part of the UK government's plan to increase apprenticeships and is a new tax which aims to fund three million new apprenticeships in England by 2020. The new levy is aimed at improving both the quantity and quality of apprenticeships and will come in to effect in April 2017.

Measure emissions for effective management

The Environmental Audit Committee's new report on, 'Sustainability in the Department for Transport,' is seriously flawed, according to Fuel Card Services.

Steve Clarke, Group Marketing Manager, said: "The select committee made some good long-term suggestions, but has missed an opportunity. It could have recommended action that would bring immediate benefits for fleet sustainability. In particular, it could have urged the introduction of measures compelling commercial road users to monitor and record fleet emissions."

The committee offered conclusions and recommendations in the areas of government policy and policy making, governance and operations. Steve Clarke said: "The focus on ultra-low emission vehicles (ULEVs) ignores the reality of current technology, cost and infrastructure. Government should promote ULEVs, but recognising that widespread adoption remains a long-term prospect. Meanwhile, diesel and petrol vehicles will



"What gets measured, gets managed. Requiring fleets to record and track their emissions has to be the first step in getting them to implement reduction programmes."

Steve Clarke

dominate for years to come. Government could achieve widespread, immediate impact with mandatory emissions monitoring."

The select committee noted that "emissions have increased for the past two years running". Although it then recommended that the DfT "set out in the government's forthcoming carbon reduction plan how it intends to deal with this", it suggested no

particular actions.

"What gets measured, gets managed," said Steve Clarke. "Requiring fleets to record and track their emissions has to be the first step in getting them to implement reduction programmes. Thousands of fleets have already seen the sense of this, but many more will require encouragement in the form of regulation."



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The new DVSA guide to drivers' hours and tachograph rules

John Heaton of Backhouse Jones Solicitors looks at the startling changes in the guidelines from DVSA that seem to have been introduced 'under the radar'.

As before, the Guide says "that it is for general guidance only ... the guidance reflects DVSA's current enforcement policy". At this point, the Guide used to concede that "it should not be regarded as a complete or authoritative statement of the law". The Guide no longer states this – why not, I wonder?

Overview – driving 'out of scope' of EC Rules

The Guide says: "It is not necessary for a vehicle to be laden for it to be in scope of the EC/AETR rules. Vehicle operations that take place off the public road or vehicles that are never used to carry goods on a public road are out of scope."

"Additionally, drivers who are employed to drive vehicles which would normally be in scope of EU/AETR rules but who never carry goods or passengers in the course of that employment, are not considered to be in scope of the regulations. For example, this covers operations such as:

- 1 Driving of hire vehicles for the purpose of delivery or collection;
- 2 Empty vehicles being driven to or from annual test or a place of repair;
- 3 Driving a vehicle for the purpose of moving it between depots;
- 4 Driving a new/demonstrator vehicle for the purpose of collection or delivery;
- 5 Vehicles being driven to be scrapped."

A 'driver' is anyone who drives a vehicle or is carried on the vehicle in order to be available for driving.

By way of comment it has to be borne in mind that EC legislation has to be interpreted in a purposive way. The regulations acknowledge that there have been difficulties in interpreting, applying, enforcing and monitoring certain aspects of the previous Regulation and it sought to clarify and simplify the rules.

The new Guide reflects the UK attempt to interpret the rules and does so by setting out a list of circumstances when operations would be regarded as out of scope. These operations are then defined by reference to:

- 1 The purpose of the journey;
- 2 The journey being driven by employed drivers who never carry goods or passengers in the course of that employment.

This interpretation is in no way supported by either the letter or the spirit of the Regulations. Firstly, the DVSA interpretation seems to apply to employed drivers and not self-employed drivers. Secondly, the definitions of 'carriage by road' and of 'vehicle' and of 'driver' seem to make in scope, in summary, the driving even for a short period of a vehicle which is normally used for carrying goods, whether the vehicle is laden or not. Thirdly, the DVSA interpretation anticipates that goods and passenger operators have available to them a cohort of drivers who never drive operationally, i.e. carrying goods or passengers, but on hand to drive just for the limited purposes

in the 'out of scope' lists stated. This is not realistic so the DVSA interpretation may prove to be of limited use to operators.

Multi-manning and daily rest

The Guide correctly states that as long as the multi-manning preconditions are complied with, each driver must have a daily rest of at least nine consecutive hours. However, they may do so within a 30-hour period that starts at the end of the last daily or weekly rest period, rather than the normal 24-hour period. So far so good; however, the Guide continues by stating that the nine-hour rest period "cannot be counted as a regular daily rest as it is of less than 11 hours duration. These rest periods therefore count towards the limit of three reduced rest periods between any two consecutive weekly rest periods". This is a new interpretation. What is unattractive is the fact that the interpretation has come in under the radar, apparently without full consultation and certainly without adequate publicity. It is hardly the approach to be taken in respect of a road safety provision.

Unforeseen events

Perhaps what needs to be emphasised is the Guide's observation that "this concession only allows for drivers to reach a suitable stopping place, not necessarily to complete their planned journey". As soon as a suitable stopping

place is reached the driver must stop and belatedly take the break or rest which he was due to take. This applies even if the taking of the rest or break means that the planned delivery cannot be made.

Analysis of digital tachographs

The Guide says "make regular checks of charts and digital data to ensure compliance". However, this advice is not really advice at all – it simply repeats the language of the legislation. The advice sets no standards for these regular checks. It gives no explanation as to what checks DVSA expect to be done. Particularly, it gives no guidance on the vital missing mileage check/unknown driver reports. In a recent high profile public inquiry, the DVSA, the operator and the Traffic Commissioner agreed that reliance on driver card data alone without comparing it with the data from the Vehicle Unit was endemic within the industry.

What is reasonable and sufficient for legal compliance is likely to be infinitely variable depending on the type of operation and the risk of offences in that operation. This risk needs to be assessed by particular reference to the past infringement levels (if any) of the operation generally, and in particular the infringement levels for particular drivers following previous analysis. It is puzzling as to why the DVSA are not prepared to set standards or parameters for what might amount to 'regular checks'. Presumably, they are of the view that it is better to give no guidance at all than to try and give prescriptive guidance on a one-size-fits-all basis.

There would seem no reason why the DVSA cannot set out factors and criteria which might effect a tachograph analysis regime and how the incidents and type of checking might vary from operation to operation. The Guide however fails to give any such prescriptive guidance. As long as it does so it will be hard for DVSA to claim, either in the criminal courts or before the Traffic Commissioner, that the operator is failing to achieve set standards because DVSA fights shy of setting what the standards should be.

● Visit www.backhouses.co.uk for more information.

John Heaton

John Heaton is a solicitor at Backhouse Jones who qualified in 1981. John specialises in road transport law (both prosecuting and defending), Magistrates Court and Crown Court advocacy, and regulatory work before the Traffic Commissioners. John writes articles and publications in legal journals and textbooks on road transport and criminal law, he also gives lectures and seminars in these areas. His particular interest is in jurisdiction issues and developments in the law on strict liability.



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PROFILE: WOOD'S PACKAGING

Wood's Packaging:

new kids on the block

Deputy Editor David Jordan takes a trip down memory lane to visit one of the UK's burgeoning suppliers of packaging to the removals industry.

As a Yorkshireman now living in exile in Bedfordshire, I was looking forward to revisiting Castleford where I'd worked back in the 1970s. The town is very different now. Modern industrial estates, a multiplex cinema and giant Xscape building now stand where pithead gear once dominated the landscape and coal was king.

Wood's Packaging's smart new building just half a mile from the M62 – still under construction when I lived there – is an ideal location for a company delivering goods nationwide, with motorway links to the north, south, east and west of the country.

The air in 'Cass', as the locals call it, was once permeated with an acrid smell from the huge coke ovens. Now the air is clear and as I entered Wood's immaculate reception area delicately scented with sandalwood, I realised just how much the Castleford of old has changed.

Managing Director Tony Wood and Sales Advisor Mark Winterbourne came down to meet me and over a mug of Yorkshire tea, Tony explained how the business had evolved.

"I started the business with my brother Michael in 1992," said Tony. "We were both working in the industry and decided we could do things better, so Wood's Packaging was born. Even in those days we were supplying to the removals industry, but our main business was with furniture manufacturers and retailers."

"We started with a 500ft² warehouse in the middle of Leeds and after a couple of years moved to a 1,500ft² unit in Castleford and over the years we've taken on more space as we needed it. Last year we moved to this brand new building, it's only a couple of hundred yards from the old one but has 13,000ft² of warehousing."

Tony's brother Michael retired in 2005 and the company has grown and diversified into other markets during the past ten years, including expanding the removals side of the business.



PROFILE: WOOD'S PACKAGING



“We listen to our customers and their feedback. If, for example, a number of removers ask for a product we don’t stock, we’ll look for a supplier and if it’s not available we’ll consider getting it made ...”

Mark Winterbourne

“The removals business really started to take off a couple of years ago when we introduced padded covers for TVs, etc. to our range,” said Mark Winterbourne. “We negotiated a very good price with our suppliers and removers were very keen to snap them up. Everything has just snowballed since then, so I guess in some ways we’re the new kids on the block.”

“We listen to our customers and their feedback. If, for example, a number of removers ask for a product we don’t stock, we’ll look for a supplier and if it’s not available we’ll consider getting it made,” said Mark.

Coloured plastic wardrobes and packing tape printed with the remover’s name and a list of rooms the customer can tick to show where the box needs to go at destination, are just a couple of products recently introduced.

“Having more space has meant we can order products in greater quantities and therefore get a better price from our suppliers,” said Tony. “The packaging industry is very competitive, so it’s not only important to give a great service, you need to be able to offer good prices too.”

Wood’s Packaging delivers nationwide and there is no minimum order. They will also deliver direct to the customer and invoice the removals company at a pre-arranged price, allowing a percentage to be added if they wish to do so.

After our meeting Tony and Mark showed me around the new warehouse and I noticed among the corrugated boxes, bubble wrap and tape a number of sack barrows, piano trucks, dollies and

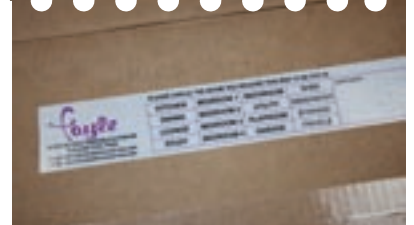


other specialist equipment for the moving business. Mark said the number of products held for the industry now stands at over 100 and new items are being added all the time in line with customer demand.

Recently Wood’s became a member of Move Assured and Tony and Mark are looking forward to meeting new customers and expanding their business with the moving industry in the future.

Before I headed home there was just one thing left to do. As all Yorkshire people living abroad will know, you never get used to southern fish n’ chips. Thank goodness some things in Yorkshire haven’t changed!

● www.woodspackaging.co.uk



● Left: Mark Winterbourne (left) and Tony Woods; above: Mark in the warehouse and tape with location markers; top: inside the Wood’s Packaging warehouse.

NEWS: PRODUCT



● The new Scania truck range.

Scania introduces new truck range

Scania is introducing a new truck range, the result of ten years of development work and investments in the region of £1.75 billion.

Production of the new trucks will start immediately at Scania's final assembly plant in Sweden. Initially the focus will be on vehicles and services for long-haul transportation, but additional options will be continually introduced as more Scania plants readjust and additional options emerge.

"There is a tremendous amount of development work by our engineers behind this introduction," emphasised Henrik Henriksson, Scania's President and CEO. He said that the most noticeable feature will be the new cabs, "But the real innovation is that we are now

introducing new technologies, services and insights that will help our customers gain an overview of both their costs and their revenues. Our goal is for our customers to be able to achieve sustainable profitability, regardless of assignment type or the conditions in which they work."

Scania is launching its new range in phases after the first unveiling in Europe. Among the improvements Scania is introducing is a 5% reduction in diesel fuel consumption, thanks to factors such as improved powertrains and better aerodynamics.

New handbook for company car drivers

The Freight Transport Association (FTA) has published a brand new edition of its *Company Car Drivers' Handbook*, which has been endorsed by the Institute of Car Fleet Management (ICFM) and the Association of Car Fleet Operators (ACFO). The FTA says that the handbook should be read by anyone who drives a car for business purposes.

The new handbook contains information to help drivers remain safe and legal in an easy-to-read format. The contents are divided into relatively small, clearly signposted sections to make it as easy as possible for readers to quickly find the information they are looking for. Once drivers have familiarised themselves with it, they should carry it with them in



their vehicle so that guidance is on hand whenever needed.

Key updates for the 2016 edition include:

- Changes to drug driving legislation (prescription medication);
- Lowered alcohol limits in

Scotland;

- Removal of paper counterpart driving licence;
- Jeopardising vocational licence if caught using mobile phone whilst driving a car;
- Changes to smoking regulations with minors in the car
- Updates to fixed penalty charges;
- Updated information on government agencies.

The handbook should be read in conjunction with each organisation's specific policies, which may well go beyond the advice in the handbook, particularly in relation to dealing with accidents or the use of mobile phones.

Copies are available from Shopfta at £3 for FTA members, £3.50 for non-members (product code: 5045). Visit www.shop.fta.co.uk or call 03717 11 11 11.

BITO's EQ collapsible bins save space – and fingers!

BITO Storage Systems has launched its new EQ range of space saving collapsible Euro-containers for transporting goods.

When not in use the sides of the container can be folded, saving up to 75% on volume.

Sized 600 x 400mm at the base, the EQ container has two height options: 285mm and 320mm. Both versions can accommodate loads of up to 20kg. Depending on use, the ribbed base or double base options provide additional strength and rigidity.

To reduce the risk of trapped fingers - which can be a common issue on similar containers - the EQ has been designed with an innovative 'seesaw' locking/unlocking profile on its short sides. This allows the sides to lock open with a simple push on the box shoulder using thumb or the heel of the hand.

Options for the EQ container include permanently attached interlocking lids, tamper evident security seals and a fold-up grip that allows convenient carrying of filled boxes. Address labels can be inserted into the inside label holders – a transparent window cover allows clear visibility from the outside. Labels fitted inside are loss-proof and keep the box sides clean from sticky labels thereby avoiding time-consuming removal of glue residue.

● www.bitto.co.uk



● Folding the sides of an empty EQ container saves up to 75% on volume.

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SURVEY: LIVEABILITY RANKINGS



Mounting global instability impacts on the latest liveability rankings

The latest findings of *The Economist* Intelligence Unit's Global Liveability Ranking – which provides scores for lifestyle challenges in 140 cities worldwide – show that although Melbourne has retained its crown as the world's most liveable city, liveability has deteriorated in 29 of the 140 cities (20%) surveyed over the last 12 months.

The decline is largely a result of heightened fears over terrorism with more than 1,000 reported attacks in 2016 so far, including incidents in France, Turkey, the US and Belgium being the most high profile. Factors such as social unrest in many US cities due to the deaths of black people in police custody, tensions in Eastern Europe and Asia and the ongoing civil wars in Ukraine, Syria and Libya have compounded the decline.

Jon Copestake, editor of the report said, "The latest rankings paint a very sombre picture. The global trend for declining liveability has become depressingly familiar in recent years as acts of terror in major cities are becoming an increasingly common occurrence. But even discounting

terrorism, we are seeing greater instability around the world including unrest in the US, political disruption in Turkey and Thailand and geopolitical disputes in Eastern Europe and Asia."

Ten cities (Zurich, Geneva, Frankfurt, Berlin, Oslo, Luxembourg, Brussels, Paris, Rome and Lisbon) in Western Europe have seen declines in liveability, mostly stemming from heightened fears of terrorism in the wake of attacks in Paris and Brussels. While social unrest and regular cases of mass shootings have led to declines in the scores of five leading American cities (Chicago, Atlanta, Cleveland, San Francisco and New York), Cleveland and Atlanta both saw the steepest ranking decline, falling nine and 14 places respectively.

The findings show that even Australia,

"The global trend for declining liveability has become depressingly familiar in recent years as acts of terror in major cities are becoming an increasingly common occurrence."

Jon Copestake

SURVEY: LIVEABILITY RANKINGS



Ten most liveable cities

City	Country	Rank	Overall Rating*	Stability	Healthcare	Culture & Environment	Education	Infrastructure
Melbourne	Australia	1	97.5	95	100	95.1	100	100
Vienna	Austria	2	97.4	95	100	94.4	100	100
Vancouver	Canada	3	97.3	95	100	100	100	92.9
Toronto	Canada	4	97.2	100	100	97.2	100	89.3
Calgary	Canada	5	96.6	100	100	89.1	100	96.4
Adelaide	Australia	5	96.6	95	100	94.2	100	96.4
Perth	Australia	7	95.9	95	100	88.7	100	100
Auckland	New Zealand	8	95.7	95	95.8	97	100	92.9
Helsinki	Finland	9	95.6	100	100	88.7	91.7	96.4
Hamburg	Germany	10	95	90	100	93.5	91.7	100

Ten least liveable cities

City	Country	Rank	Overall Rating*	Stability	Healthcare	Culture & Environment	Education	Infrastructure
Kiev	Ukraine	131	44.1	20	54.2	48.6	75	42.9
Douala	Cameroon	132	44	60	25	48.4	33.3	42.9
Harare	Zimbabwe	133	42.6	40	20.8	58.6	66.7	35.7
Karachi	Pakistan	134	40.9	20	45.8	38.7	66.7	51.8
Algiers	Algeria	134	40.9	40	45.8	42.6	50	30.4
Port Moresby	Papua New Guinea	136	38.9	30	37.5	44.2	50	39.3
Dhaka	Bangladesh	137	38.7	50	29.2	43.3	41.7	26.8
Lagos	Nigeria	138	36	10	37.5	53.5	33.3	46.4
Tripoli	Libya	139	35.9	20	41.7	37.5	50	41.1
Damascus	Syria	140	30.2	15	29.2	43.3	33.3	32.1

*Cities are rated from 1 to 100. 1 = intolerable 100 = ideal



● Opposite: Melbourne is top of the liveability ratings in the survey; left: Dhaka is among the ten worst cities while Vienna (below left) remains in the top ten.



which is home to many of the world's most liveable cities, has not been immune to this experience. A hostage-taking incident in Sydney in 2014 has raised concerns about the threat of terror there, pushing the Australian city out of the ten most liveable. Heightened tensions in the South China Sea have also lowered scores for Chinese cities. The steepest score declines came from Tripoli in Libya, which crumbled 4.1% and Lagos in Nigeria dropping 3.7%.

Only six cities have managed to buck the trend, with improving liveability, although of these only Tehran has seen a noteworthy change. The Iranian capital has benefitted from the thawing of international relations, moving four places up the ranking and out of the very bottom tier of liveability.

The Liveability Survey

The concept of liveability is simple: it assesses which locations around the world provide the best or the worst living conditions. Assessing liveability has a broad range of uses, from benchmarking perceptions of development levels to assigning a hardship allowance as part of expatriate relocation packages.

● For more information visit eiu-uk@grayling.com.



The changing nature of corporate relocation

Tad Zurlinden – Chief Executive of the Association of Relocation Professionals and the European Relocation Association (EuRA) – explains why relocation companies can expect continued growth, especially in repatriation support.

The world of the globally mobile employee has changed significantly since companies first recognised the importance of relocation support back in the 1970s. Today, an industry has grown around the needs of the expat family, supporting every aspect of the international assignment, from homefinding and area orientation, to partner employment support and educational consultancy.

One of the most obvious trends of the past ten years within the industry has been the consolidation of local networks into slick and efficient supply chains.

However, as in other dynamic service-based industries, the breadth and delivery of relocation support services have changed according to the needs of the clients and the economic climate. The relocation industry is built to service the needs of the expat in the destination locality and so the transferee's primary needs are best met by local experts. Consequently, the industry is built on networks of local suppliers of destination services, working as sub contractors to the very large relocation management companies.

One of the most obvious trends of the past ten years within the industry has been the consolidation of local networks into slick and efficient supply chains. Take an example: a global bank, with its European HQ in London, has a global relocation service contract with one of the large relocation management companies (RMCs). The bank wants to move six employees to Frankfurt. The HR department in London contacts the RMC and briefs it on the transferees' needs and dates. The RMC will now contact their partner company in Frankfurt (the destination service provider or DSP), who will deal with all of the contact and settlement work with the transferees when they reach Germany.

The networks that service the RMCs and, in turn, the transferees, are made up of professional local relocation specialists. The RMCs all have quality control measures in place to ensure a consistency of service across their global network.

Closer control over these networks has become a feature of the industry over the past decade, and many of the largest RMCs have given themselves a greater local presence to ensure quality and therefore keep and attract more clients.

The RMCs tend to be very loyal to the network partners, but this loyalty comes at a price. For example, RMCs demand high levels of IT support from their network providers so they can offer relocation tracking services to their

corporate clients. This means, to go back to our example, that the partner company in Frankfurt, may well be requested by the RMC to install a costly IT database management system, through which they can offer online tracking of the employees' relocation process to the HR department of the client.

RMCs may also ask that their network partners undertake recognised relocation training, such as the European Academy of Relocation Professionals CERP programme. This helps to increase the professionalism of the network partner, but also helps to ensure the same high levels of service across the network. This commitment to training by the DSP can be very costly, but is a worthwhile investment if they are to continue to handle all of the relocations coming into their area through the RMC.

In the past, the relocation model was very different in Europe. It was rare to find large relocation companies using extensive networks of local suppliers. It was far more common for companies moving employees to go direct to a local supplier in the town or city where the employee would be living. Although with today's model of larger companies subcontracting the work to a local supplier, the result is the same for the employee, in that they receive local information and support from local experts, the difference is the overall cost to the client.

As network supply chains have grown



suppliers. Instead, they work directly with DSPs in the territories to which they relocate. This means that costs are generally the same for the client, but the level of service tends to be higher. For example, an engineering firm moving a project manager from Oslo to Helsinki will contact a DSP in Helsinki and work directly with them on the move. This means that one tier of expense is removed and therefore the costs to the client may be less than they would be if they were working with a global supplier. However, the company may well spend more time organising transfers as a result.

The mid to late 1990s saw a contraction of the breadth of services normally included in the relocation policies of many corporate clients of relocation companies. In the halcyon days of the 1980s, many companies would fund extremely generous relocation packages, providing home-search, area and cultural orientation, language tuition, school search, pre-departure tours for the family, partner employment support and ongoing support from the relocation company during the entire length of the assignment. Today this is increasingly rare as companies try to control the costs involved in an international assignment.

PriceWaterhouseCoopers now estimates that the cost of a two-year international assignment for a company is very close to €1 million.

In the past two years, relocation companies have seen a growth in one area of service provision: repatriation support. As the assignment comes to an end, it is now common for the relocation company to be asked to provide support to send the family home: shutting down the house, moving the furniture, providing emotional support for the children alongside the school, and generally

When professionally managed by relocation specialists, be they global or local, the assignment has a vastly higher chance of surviving and this is why we will continue to see growth in this sector.

smoothing the process of going back. In many situations, the company may not be ready for the employee to slot back in to a defined role, and may well be waiting to move the transferee again, to another new location. This is the most dangerous time for the company in that this is when highly mobile employees are most likely to leave and go to another company. After an investment of the size now necessary to support an international assignment, it would be economically disastrous to lose that employee and so companies are more willing to support a professionally managed repatriation than in the past.

Like many corporate services, relocation and the process of international mobility will always be dominated by the bottom line, but as companies are waking up to the dangers of badly managed international assignments, so the breadth of services being purchased from relocation companies is growing once again. An international assignment which fails is like a bad investment for a company.

The most common reason for the failures of international assignments is the inability of the partner or children to settle. When professionally managed by relocation specialists, be they global or local, the assignment has a vastly higher chance of surviving and this is why we will continue to see growth in this sector.

and flourished, the extra tier created by the RMC means that for costs to be controlled by the client company, the DSPs have seen their fees squeezed further and further with the result that the transferee, in general, receives a more basic service. However, the great advantage for the corporate client is consistency of service across a network and the ability to deal with a central point of contact for their global relocation needs.

However, there are still territories where this type of relocation process has yet to become the norm. In Scandinavia for example, it is rare to find companies working with the big global relocation

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SurveyBot set to revolutionise home surveys

For many movers, personal contact and physical in-home surveys are the cornerstone of their business: but is it time to think again?



California-based technology company Crater has launched a revolutionary new product that will enable customers to conduct their own pre-move survey over video chat and get a quote for their relocation without a removals specialist needing to visit in person. SurveyBot is the brainchild of former relocation surveyor Daniela Alpert and her husband Alex, who also worked for many years at the sharp end of the removals industry.

Daniela explained how the idea for their new company Crater and its product SurveyBot was born. "I was working as a surveyor and would often spend hours travelling to and from a client's home to carry out a survey that would only take a relatively short time to complete. I thought there must be a better way, one that would reduce costs for the removals company and at the same time eliminate the 'pain point' of the appointment for the client."

Self-surveys are of course nothing new, but the problem has always been the inevitable discrepancies between what the customer records on the inventory and the actual quantity of goods to be moved. The contents of the garage or loft for example, or the number of suits and dresses in a wardrobe are often forgotten or wrongly assessed. With SurveyBot a virtual face-to-face interaction is established between the customer and the moving company's surveyor via a smartphone or tablet.

Under the direction of the surveyor the customer moves from room to room recording the items to be relocated; including the contents of cupboards and draws, etc. Any items that may require special attention, such as a piano or tropical fish tank, or objects that may require specialist equipment are also recorded so that an accurate estimate can be calculated.

Crater has partnered with removals industry software specialist Voxme to integrate SurveyBot with its web estimator application. Voxme's Managing Director Max Kreyenin

said, "We allow the ease of capturing and updating relevant survey information over suitable channels - that's the most important aspect for us; it's what we focus on and we look for partners with a similar outlook, hence the collaboration with Crater."

Crater believes that the customer is actually more engaged during video surveys than in physical home surveys. CEO Alex Alpert said, "Crater's mission is to preserve the art and passion that has fuelled hundreds of generational businesses. Moving is a very personal experience that requires a tremendous amount of trust between the customer and the moving company. Face-to-face interaction is at the core of developing this trust and we do so through video."

The idea of using video technology to carry out surveys rather than the time

"The SurveyBot software is easy to use but people sometimes have a little trouble feeling comfortable being on camera until they get used to it ..."

Daniela Alpert



● Daniela and Alex Alpert.

honoured face-to-face approach will not appeal to everyone, but in an industry where margins are continually being squeezed the cost saving cannot be ignored. Crater estimates that in the US a typical survey costs around \$240, a significant slice of an average move. Crater has reduced this amount significantly. There are other advantages too. Customers can schedule a video survey online at a time that is most convenient for them by simply clicking on the SurveyBot widget on the homepage of a moving company's website. This information is integrated with the moving company's appointment calendar instantly and should the customer schedule outside normal working hours, an outsourced option is available where Crater does the video survey with the customer on the moving company's behalf, 24/7.

Crater charges \$20 per transaction conducted by the removals company or \$50 for its outsourced service. Automated cubing and delivery of precise inventory sheets or volume estimates (sent in four hours or less) cost an additional \$40.

SurveyBot has no geographic boundaries and is accessible anywhere an adequate broadband connection is available. Currently, Crater is able to conduct surveys in English, French, Italian, German and Serbian languages from its offices located around the US and Europe. There is no annual licence fee; training and online consultation is free, as is the implementation of the SurveyBot widget for moving companies wishing to use this service.

"The SurveyBot software is easy to use but people sometimes have a little trouble feeling comfortable being on camera until they get used to it," said Daniela. "It's just a case of practice makes perfect."

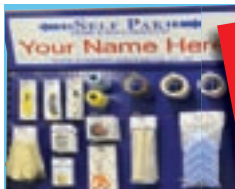
Crater is offering a free, no obligation, 14-day trial with unlimited usage for movers wishing to evaluate the service. All information is available at <https://crater.co/>.



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NEWS: PEOPLE

Suddath hires Mark Burchell

The Suddath Companies has announced the appointment of Mark Burchell as president of its Global Moving Services business unit.

Mark has been in the industry for over 30 years including ten years with Suddath (1997-2007). Prior to re-joining Suddath, Mark served as chief commercial officer for Santa Fe Relocation Services in London. In his new role, Mark will be responsible for leading the global household goods sales, corporate and residential, account management and customer service functions, as well as international operations and agency development for the recently

formed business unit. "Mark brings a wealth of experience in leading teams on a global scale having previously held senior roles in both the US and Europe," said Michael Brannigan, President and Chief Executive Officer of The Suddath Companies. "We are very fortunate to have Mark join and lead a strong team to take us into the future." Mark will formally join Suddath in October upon completion of his current responsibilities with Santa Fe.



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The White & Co Mystery Mover

Congratulations to Ebru Demirel of Asya International Movers in Turkey for spotting Errol Gardiner of New Zealand Van Lines talking to Britannia's David Tracey last month. It was a tricky one but there were plenty of correct answers. Well done to all who took part. This one is easier (at least you can see his face). Who is this smiling gentleman? The first correct answer out of the hat will receive the White and Company Red and Black watch. Answers please to editor@themover.co.uk.



● Anna Barker.

Anna Barker of R3Relocation becomes director of the ARP

Aнна Barker, Director of R3Relocation, has been elected as a member of the Association of Relocation Professionals (ARP) Executive Board of Directors. "I am delighted to have been appointed to the ARP Board, and look forward to working with the rest of the team to serve the ARP's mission of promoting quality standards within the relocation

services market for the benefit of its members," she said. The ARP is a non profit-making organisation formed in 1986 in response to the need for a professional body to represent the growing Relocation Industry in the UK. Since then, the Association has continued to represent and advocate the interests of relocation professionals across the country.

Sherry Wang joins Arpin International Group China

Sherry Wang has joined Arpin International Group China as a global business development executive.

Sherry's responsibilities include new business development, supporting client accounts, managing marketing and public relations events, administering surveys and building new customer relationships. She has joined Arpin from Education First, a world leading, global English training firm, where she served as a senior English language trainer. There she received the 'Most Determined Trainer' award.

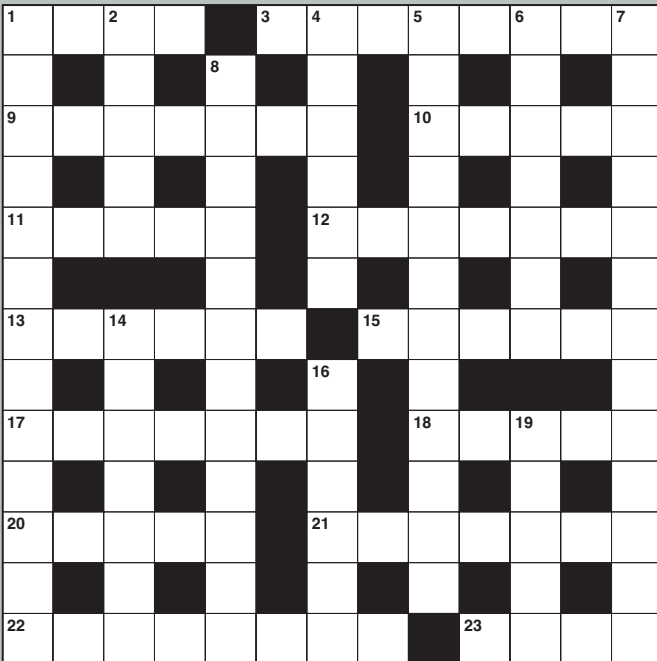
"Drawing on her experience as an accomplished English language trainer, Sherry brings a unique understanding of both Western and Eastern cultures," said Michael Johnsen, Vice President of Business Development for Arpin International Group China. "We are thrilled to have her join our team and help us expand our business in China and beyond."



● Sherry Wang.

Sherry holds a master's degree in TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) from the University of Edinburgh as well as a FIDI diploma in the Foundations of International Moving. She currently lives in Shanghai.

Puzzles



- ACROSS**
- 1 Pulls a vehicle (4)
 - 3 Athletics event (4,4)
 - 9 Form of an element (7)
 - 10 Recycle (5)
 - 11 Fat-like compound (5)
 - 12 Bishop's jurisdiction (7)
 - 13 Chatter (6)
 - 15 Feature (6)
 - 17 Something showing a general rule (7)
 - 18 Quantitative relation (5)
 - 20 Touch on; mention (5)
 - 21 Provokes (7)
 - 22 Disappearing gradually (8)
 - 23 Pottery material (4)
- DOWN**
- 1 Simple problem-solving method (5,3,5)
 - 2 Cry of excitement (5)
 - 4 ____ Staunton: English actress (6)
 - 5 Terrified or extremely shocked (6-6)
 - 6 Four-stringed guitar (7)
 - 7 Affectedly (13)
 - 8 Easy-going (4-8)
 - 14 Movement of vehicles en masse (7)
 - 16 Insole (anag) (6)
 - 19 Sum; add up (5)

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	3			9		4		
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		5				2	6	

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21 – 24 April, 2017, Sorrento, Italy

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18 – 20 May, 2017, Cardiff, Wales, UK

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9 – 12 October, 2017, Long Beach, California, USA

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7	9	6	2	3	5	8	1	4
1	2	4	6	7	8	3	5	9
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Tony Allen: And finally ...



Acceptable norms

Quite recently I was asked to make a speech to mark the 25th anniversary of a local golf society. As you are possibly aware, I don't actually play golf, so I'm not sure why they asked me to do it. Although the club secretary, who was also due to make a speech, said that I was one of the few people he knew who could make him look good. I was initially quite flattered by this remark, but then the possible alternative implication occurred to me: Did he think that I would be so bad that he was bound to look good in contrast? Quite possibly!

The main reason why I've brought up this subject is that, when I actually made my speech, there wasn't one person wearing a tie and only a few wearing a jacket – and this was in a room full of almost one hundred people. Not a problem to me as I have never been a great fan of formality; but in a golf society? It did occur to me that, not so many years ago, this would not have been the case. By the way, I did in fact ask why nobody was wearing a tie, but they told me to get knotted!

Then I got to thinking about 'convention', or to put it another way: complying with the accepted norm; because that's what we're talking about here. But of course we must not confuse convention with tradition, for tradition is built up over generations and is time honoured, whereas convention is almost a question of whatever is the current fashion, and as we know, fashion can change very quickly.

I'll give you an example. Of late, I have sometimes had the feeling that I am almost the only person in the world that doesn't have a tattoo. It is now quite conventional for these to appear in various locations on an individual's anatomy. Even my doctor has one. I know because I saw it on his ankle when I went to see him the other day – only a fleeting glimpse I might add. I wonder whether this is becoming *de rigueur* for the medical profession. Is it now part of the Hippocratic Oath?

Sending birthday or Christmas cards is traditional, but increasingly it is becoming a convention that, not only should these be humorous, but they should also contain a suitable – or unsuitable – expletive. In addition, it is a requirement that the said joke should be one that you are bound to have heard before. Furthermore, it will be sure to produce a groan (see comment regarding ties above).

Hanging in our hall at home we have a delightful old dog-eared sepia photo, taken before the First World War, of a large group of gentlemen, one of whom is my maternal grandfather. They are standing in the Lambeth Walk and about to embark on what I believe was called a

beano in those days – and as a matter of convention every single one of them is wearing a hat. Not today!

So conventions disappear according to fashion, but it does not mean that they are a declining facet of society. On the contrary, new conventions are constantly being created. In the UK we have an attitude towards what used to be called good manners. We must be the only society in the world that decrees that if you bump into somebody by mistake then they are most likely to apologise to you!

And what about conventional behaviour involving a pedestrian crossing? If you stop to allow someone to cross, you naturally expect them to wave a thank you. Then when they reach about half way they will always give a pronounced little skip to signify that they are moving as quickly as possible (I bet you've done this!).

We must be the only society in the world that decrees that if you bump into somebody by mistake then they are most likely to apologise to you!

And if they don't thank you? Well there is often a tendency to wind down one's window and in a voice suitably laden with sarcasm, remark: "Thank you!" This comment will often be met with a non-verbal reply which is created by using two fingers; and very rarely does this imply that: "I'll be off this crossing within two seconds!" Interestingly enough, this form of behaviour does not seem to be a convention in most other countries, where the pedestrian crossing is viewed as an inalienable right and therefore does not illicit any response whatsoever.

Beards are another sign of how conventions can change. At the point of writing, beards upon men appear to be acceptable under most circumstances and the female side seem to find them acceptable too – although that isn't to imply that you would find many of them in a ladies choir for example.

Many years back beards were highly fashionable, but I can remember a time when these were frowned upon in a business environment – apart from within the Father Christmas fraternity. Once, the only places you would find a beard would be on adverts for frozen foods or on cigarette packets.

So in conclusion: My opinion is that whilst tradition is the superglue of society, maybe convention simply forces us to conform to something with which we may not agree. But then again this might simply be an unconventional view!

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