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Major environmental benefits of longer truck combinations

By driving with two full-length trailers, Scania reduces fuel consumption by up to 30 percent with an equivalent reduction in harmful carbon dioxide emissions. Following Scania's request, the Swedish Transport Agency has now granted permission to operate rigs of 31.5 metres in total length between Södertälje and Helsingborg in Sweden.

Scania Transport Laboratory has been conducting research activities on the road for the past six years by transporting the company's own materials under realistic operating conditions between Scania's production units in Södertälje, Sweden and Zwolle in the Netherlands.

The Transport Laboratory has already been able to demonstrate a halving of CO₂ emissions per tonne-kilometre from 2008 to 2012, thanks to skilful drivers, optimised vehicles and lower average speed. Another step is now being taken to show how heavy vehicles through new ways of thinking can dramatically reduce climate emissions to 20 grams per tonne-kilometre.

The haulage service has been operated to date using rigs of 16.5 metres, which is the maximum permitted length today for the tractor-semitrailer vehicle combination in most European states, with the exception of countries such as Sweden and Finland. For the truck-trailer combination, a maximum length of 18.75 metres applies in most European states, while countries such as Sweden and Finland, permit 25.25 metres.

"There are positive environmental effects of longer vehicle combinations but unfortunately it is difficult to find support for this issue in many European countries," comments Erik Ljungberg, Senior Vice President, Corporate Relations at Scania. "It is really gratifying that the Swedish authorities are taking action to obtain these benefits. To achieve an equivalent climate effect through vehicle development would take several years."

The decision of the Swedish Transport Agency was preceded by the Swedish Transport Administration's stability tests on vehicle combinations of 31.5 metres in order to ensure that these vehicles do not present any risk, for example during sudden evasive manoeuvres.

"Our long haulage services will not cause any disruptions to the pace of traffic and we will quite easily be able to maintain the legal speed limit of 80 km/hour," assures Anders Gustavsson, Managing Director of Scania Transport Laboratory.

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Scania is one of the world's leading manufacturers of trucks and buses for heavy transport applications, and of industrial and marine engines. Service-related products account for a growing proportion of the company's operations, assuring Scania customers of cost-effective transport solutions and maximum uptime. Scania also offers financial services. Employing some 41,000 people, the company operates in about 100 countries. Research and development activities are concentrated in Sweden, while production takes place in Europe and South America, with facilities for global interchange of both components and complete vehicles. In 2013, net sales totalled SEK 86.8 billion and net income amounted to SEK 6.2 billion. Scania press releases are available on www.scania.com

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