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SHORT TERM HIRE BOOM A GOOD BAROMETER OF CONFIDENCE IN THE UK ECONOMY, SAYS IMPACT HANDLING

Impact Handling has announced orders for £1.5 million worth of new warehouse machines and counterbalance trucks for its short term hire fleet, matching a similar investment made in 2013. It will see more than 100 brand new machines from Cat® Lift Trucks bolstering the fleet, and the company is not ruling out further short term hire orders this year.

The new deliveries will reduce the average age of Impact Handling's short term rental assets to just four years, whilst reinforcing its position as offering one of the most diverse hire fleets in the industry.

Peter Woodhouse, Business Development Manager at Impact Handling, says: "Short term hire is one of the fastest growing areas of our business and we're seeing demand increasing all the time. Companies need forklifts to load and unload goods being manufactured or transported to market, so the increased demand in short term rentals is a good barometer of confidence in the UK economy."

Commenting on changes in the short term hire market, he explains: "It was historically a way of companies topping up their fleets to meet seasonal peaks or to provide cover during periods of machine downtime. But it's now an increasingly popular funding method in its own right and some companies see it as an alternative to the industry-standard five year fixed term – particularly those cautious about long term commitments in a recovering market."

Impact Handling is responding to this demand with continued high levels of investment. This second injection of more than 100 new trucks within 12 months is matched by an ongoing flow of ex-demonstrators and two to three year old Cat® lift trucks being transferred into its short-term hire fleet each year. "It's as much a part of continuing to modernise as it is ensuring we have the capacity to meet demand," he adds.

Key to Impact Handling's short term hire operation is its flexibility and strong product availability – the company's 1,000-plus short term hire assets are spread across a network of nine branches, enabling it to react quickly to local demand, rather than sourcing trucks from a central location. This model also allows Impact Handling to build its offer around local

customer requirements – for example, the Hull branch offers the largest stock of materials handling equipment for port operations.

Using its own delivery vehicles enables Impact Handling to fulfil deliveries for most short term hires on a same-day or next-day basis. Hire periods begin from a single day and Impact Handling's mobile service teams can support trucks in any mainland UK location.

The fleet includes assets ranging from pallet trucks to 16 tonne counterbalance machines, with a diverse range of mast heights and attachments available, plus a choice of diesel, electric and gas-powered drivelines to ensure maximum flexibility to meet customer demands.

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About Impact Handling

Established in 1985, Impact Handling is one of the UK's largest independent materials handling companies and a main agent for sales and service of some of the world's best known forklift, warehouse and logistics brands. In addition to being the sole distributor for Cat® Lift Trucks in the UK and Ireland, it is also main agent for major brands including Kalmar, Combilift, Lancer, Narrow Aisle Flexi, Hako, Ulma Inoxtrucks, Pallet Mole and JLG. The company operates from nine locations and has more than 300 employees, including in excess of 200 service engineers. It operates a combined fleet of more than 5,000 rental units, plus supports 2,000 customer-owned machines and 2,000 used assets.

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