

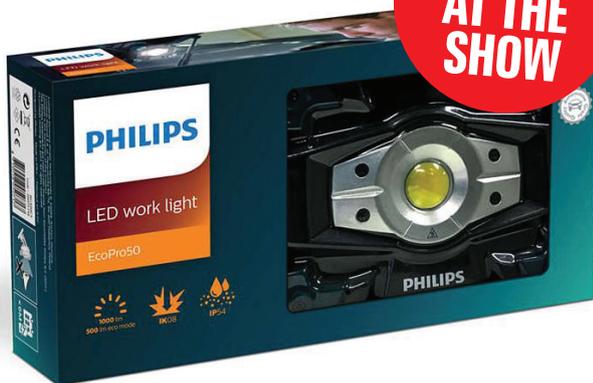
SIR MIKE PENNING MP, TO OPEN THE SHOW

The Rt Hon. Sir Mike Penning MP will be visiting the show on Wednesday, to formally open the show.

Sir Mike will be speaking at the PROF Review at their Wednesday morning meeting after which he will be taking a tour of the show and be available on the PROF stand to meet up with recovery operators.



FREE WORKLIGHT FOR NEW PROF MEMBERS



After their successful launch in February The Professional Recovery Operators Federation will be exhibiting for the first time at Tow Show.

Chairman Richard Goddard will be available to give visitors an update on the progress PROF has made since their formation.

Memberships will also be available to purchase at the show and they are offering a unique offer that lasts just the two days.

10 work lights from Philips will be given away free to the first 10 new members signing up at the show.

Make sure you visit them in Hall 2, stand number B370.

AN UPDATE FROM PROFESSIONAL RECOVERY OPERATORS FEDERATION

The recent announcement that Highways England has launched a training course to improve safety on Smart Motorways is worthy of comment.

by Richard Goddard



WE work in challenging environments, and there is consensus that training is a good thing. So in a sense, training is like 'motherhood and apple pie'. Always to be welcomed as a good thing.

But what this announcement doesn't do is address the fundamental safety issues around Smart and All Lane Running (ALR) motorways. No amount of training recovery operators addresses the central concern to the wider motoring public. And remember, so far, the victims of Smart Motorways aren't to date recovery workers. No, they're members of the motoring public which we serve. Refuge areas are simply too far apart. This means that motorists risk being stranded in live lanes with absolutely nowhere to go. Let's just think through what that actually means. It's dark. It's raining. The motorway is busy, but not so busy that traffic speeds are lower. We're in lane 3. The vehicle was showing signs of having a problem. There's no hard shoulder. So there's nowhere to roll or limp to as the refuge area is still three quarters of a mile away. Traffic is hurtling up behind us at 70 to 80 mph. And the official advice to that stranded motorist is to sit tight and call the emergency services!

Every single second that vehicle remains stranded the occupants are at life and death risk. And in the event that one of our operators arrives first the protocol is that they are to drive by until there is adequate protection provided by HE and/or the Police. Has it occurred to the authorities that this is a morally repugnant position for that operator. How on earth will they feel if they drove past in a vehicle that whilst not fully equipped as a fending vehicle would at least offer some protection to the stranded motorist, and that vehicle is subsequently hit and the occupants seriously injured, or GoD forbid, killed.

So it's a 'yes' from me to more training. But not if that's the sum total of the authorities response to addressing what as a major crisis in our road strategy. And as long as the said training, does not contribute to the recovery industry being made scape goats for the obvious deficiencies in safety and the response times from Highways England. Making the roll out of Smart Motorways safer than they are now for all road users should be Highways England first priority.