Green, safe, efficient vehicles for city centre operations

Stuttgart invests 7 Mercedes-Benz Econic NGT models

- Natural gas drive helps to ensure clean, quiet waste disposal operations in the city
- Premiere for the new natural gas engine in the Mercedes-Benz 936 engine family
- Comprehensive range of safety equipment: Active Brake Assist 3, Lane Keeping Assist, Stability Control Assist and Emergency Brake Assist, rainlight sensor
- Positive experience with natural gas-powered Econic NGT waste collection vehicles – additional costs offset after around 3.5 years

Seven Mercedes-Benz Econic NGT (Natural Gas Technology) models with an environmentally friendly natural gas drive system and extensive safety features are set to take over waste collection and disposal duties in the city of Stuttgart, the regional capital of Baden-Württemberg. The official commissioning of the vehicles took place on 23 February 2017 at the AWS operations site in Burgholzstraße in Stuttgart-Münster. The new natural gas vehicles have already proven their worth during trials that have been running in Stuttgart for the past six weeks.

“The purchase of the latest generation of the Mercedes-Benz Econic NGT is of particular importance for Mercedes-Benz Trucks. The regional ties to Stuttgart play just as big a role as AWS’s long and intensive relationship with Mercedes-Benz products,” stated Dr Ralf Forcher, Head of Marketing, Sales and Services Mercedes-Benz Special Trucks. Since the market launch of the Econic in 1998, the regional capital has pursued an ongoing policy of purchasing Econic vehicles to replace its conventional waste disposal vehicles. The new Econic NGT is joining AWS’s waste disposal fleet in Stuttgart for the first time.

AWS Stuttgart has been involved with the Econic and Econic NGT from the outset as a development partner. The local authority-owned enterprise has provided valuable suggestions on the specific operational requirements for the waste disposal vehicle of the future. Econic product manager Peter Bauer confirms that this forward-thinking investment will make an important contribution towards ensuring a positive environmental track record. The key reason behind this lies in the innovative drive technology with economical fuel consumption combined with very low CO₂ and noise emissions.

“AWS is taking on the issue of fine dust emissions in Stuttgart,” stated AWS CEO Dr Thomas Hell. “And we are delighted that, when it comes to tackling the issue of exhaust gases and increasing safety in our extremely emission-laden city centre, we have an outstanding partner in Mercedes-Benz Special Trucks.”

AGILE, LOW-EMISSION VEHICLES FOR STUTTGART

With their 3900 mm wheelbase, AWS Stuttgart’s new Econic NGT was developed for Stuttgart’s unique traffic situation. The Econic NGT burns a prepared mixture of natural gas and air rather than a diesel/air mix. Because combustion of the alternative fuel natural gas by the monovalent, innovative Econic NGT engine produces virtually no particulate or fine dust emissions, compliance with Euro VI limit values can be achieved without the need for SCR technology with AdBlue, post-injection processes and particulate filters for exhaust gas cleaning. The CO₂ emissions measured during AWS Stuttgart’s operations are actually around 23 percent lower than those of a Euro VI diesel engine, and where biogas is used, it is possible to reduce CO₂ levels even further.

TAX RELIEF ON NATURAL GAS UNTIL 2026 MEANS ADDITIONAL COSTS CAN BE OFFSET IN AROUND 3.5 YEARS

The German cabinet’s decision to extend tax relief on natural gas as a fuel until 2026 has provided a boost to the market for climate-friendly natural gas drive systems in Germany: the additional expense involved in purchasing the Econic NGT is offset by lower fuel prices, that means that purchasers will continue to enjoy this benefit for some time to come. “Despite the higher cost of purchasing a natural gas-powered waste collection vehicle, the saving on fuel bills that can be achieved with a complete switch from diesel to natural gas is going to offset our additional costs after around three and a half years,” concluded Dr Hell.

ECONIC ACTS AS A SAFETY BENCHMARK

The low positioned driver’s cab with panoramic windshield, large windows on the driver’s side plus a fully glazed folding door on the co-driver’s side ensures that the driver enjoys optimum visibility. The large field of view and the low sitting position allow the driver to have direct eye contact with other road users, in particular more vulnerable road users such as pedestrians and cyclists.

The safety equipment on the Stuttgart NGT vehicles includes numerous systems which set new standards when it comes to preventing traffic accidents: Stability Control Assist, Lane Keeping Assist, Emergency Brake Assist, the latest-generation Active Brake Assist (ABA 3) and a rainlight sensor are just a few examples. In addition, the Econic NGT features disk brakes all round, an immobiliser plus a central locking system with remote control.

As an option the Econic NGT can be equipped with additional innovative safety technologies and assistance systems to enhance road safety. These include adaptive cruise control to prevent rear-end collisions plus Sideguard Assist.

HIGH OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY

At AWS Stuttgart operational safety, efficient processes and good working conditions for the driver are paramount. To increase operational efficiency in summer and in winter, it is vital to ensure pleasant climate conditions in the driver’s cab. Air conditioning with a pollen filter is therefore a must in AWS Stuttgart’s new Econic NGT, as is a further innovation: the new Truma natural gas auxiliary heating system which, with seven weight-optimised steel composite gas bottles, not only delivers a constant supply to the heating system, whether the vehicle is stationary or mobile, but also offers a payload advantage of 400 kg.

The AWS drivers particularly appreciate the wide opening angle of the driver’s door and the low entry, which has just two steps. These design highlights of the Econic NGT allow comfortable access and significantly reduce the risk of injury when exiting the cab. The generous interior dimensions of the cab allow for a row of four seats and offer plenty of stowage space for equipment and weatherproof clothing for the driver and crew. A switch on the 8-pillar which operates the folding door on the co-driver’s side is another new, comfort-enhancing feature. Other new additions include a refuse program with automatic shift into neutral and the bodybuilder emergency stop switch in the instrument support. Fitting an Eco package limits the vehicle speed to 85 km/h with constant acceleration, which simulates a three-quarters load status and locks the kickdown function.

Source: Press Release of media.daimler.com, mercedes-benz.com