

LEADING TIPPER BODY MANUFACTURER UPGRADES FINISH QUALITY

Thompsons, the UK's leading truck tipper body builder, is now offering customers a premium-quality paint finish for their equipment following installation of a self-contained blast-room from Hodge Clemco as part of a major investment in finishing facilities.

The company's Lancashire premises complete some 25 tipper bodies a month for customers throughout the UK – about 50 per cent of its total production. In the past the finishing work at the Blackburn operations was carried out by subcontractors. Expansion into a third production area was followed by installation of in-house surface preparation and paint application facilities, allowing better control of quality and production schedules.

The Hodge Clemco blast-room is 12 metres long x 5.5 metres wide x 5 metres high and is built of acoustically insulated wall and roof panels with a 3.5-metre wide vertical folding door at one end. Tipper bodies are carried in and out of the chamber on a pneumatically powered bogie with a five-tonne safe working load running on a rail track. The bogie has two levels so that all body surfaces can be worked on conveniently by operatives.

Chilled iron abrasive held in a four-tonne silo with twin outlets is used to provide a high-quality surface that is regular, clean and rust-free in order to optimise the long-term performance of the final paint finish. Used abrasive falls through floor gratings and is then carried automatically to a separator system where large contaminants, fines and dust are removed by an air-wash system and scalping drum. With suitable clean abrasive being delivered continuously to the storage hopper for re-use, blast-cleaning can continue for long periods without interruption.

A ventilation and dust extraction system rated at 12,000 cfm provides a linear airflow the length of the room and ensures good visibility for operators. Large particles fall to the floor, while dust is collected on filter cartridges for disposal. An internal alarm system has been incorporated to provide extra security when staff are working alone in the blast-room.