

MaddyFeed: Everything you need to know about tech's answer to driver shortages

Every week, Maddyness curates articles from other outlets on a topic that is driving the headlines. This week, we're talking about the UK's continued lorry driver shortage, and why how other delivery sectors are coming up with new solutions.

As the shortage of HGV drivers in the UK continues, new contingency plans are being put in place to keep our shelves stocked in the run up to Christmas.

Just this week, it was announced that foreign lorry drivers will now be able to make an unlimited number of pick-ups and drop-offs within the UK.

Currently, drivers from the EU can only pick up and drop off in the UK twice within 7 days, but unlimited deliveries would mean shelves have a better chance of staying stocked.

The change to cabotage rules was met with negativity among lorry drivers, but UK ministers - including transport secretary Grant Shapps - said it was the "equivalent of adding thousands of extra lorry drivers to the road."

Read more via [*The Guardian*](#).

Contingency plans hit by delayed applications

Despite the aim to bring more drivers to the UK with the extension of 5,000 foreign visas, ministers have admitted that it will now take these visas three weeks to process.

So far, only 20 applications for temporary visas from foreign driver have been processed. Those who have applied are not set to arrive in the UK until mid-November, leaving only weeks to make an impact on the supply chain ahead of Christmas.

Read more via [*The Independent*](#).

Can new technology replace drivers?

But while a shortage of drivers is consuming the haulage industry, new technologies are being trialled in other areas of delivery that require no drivers at all.

Wayve, the delivery startup backed by Richard Branson, has advanced machine learning and camera-first technology to create vehicles which can operate without the need for human intervention.

The startup has recently received £10M in funding from Ocado, who will test the technology's ability to pick up from and deliver to grocery retailers in complex urban settings.

Read more via [*Yahoo*](#).

Momentum behind self-driving startups is growing

The UK is not the only place trying out these technologies. The investment in Wayve comes only two weeks after US-based self-driving startup Aurora said it had thought of new ways to turn the costly vehicles into profitable businesses through a combination of autonomous trucks and robotaxis.

The growth of the self-driving vehicle industry is clearly growing since Aurora's insight came after several autonomous trucking companies in the UK announced plans to prepare to launch driverless routes in the coming years, meaning they would need industry partners.

Read more via [Reuters](#).

Article by MADDYNESS UK