

Carrosserie Akkermans,

# Coach building at its best

Oud Gastel is only an hour's drive from both Amsterdam and Brussels airport. This small village has been the hometown of coachbuilder Carrosserie Akkermans for more than two centuries. Founded in 1811, the family business is one of the most reputable coachwork companies in the Netherlands, if not the world.



The first thing you notice when you arrive on the premises is the activity in and around the enormous modern complex. Dozens of police cars, defence vehicles and ambulances are being built by equal numbers of skilled professionals. OB-trucks are also an important part of their product range; Akkermans can modify or upgrade an existing vehicle or if the budget allows manufacture large



trailers from scratch. "Alongside Medical, Police, Defence vehicles and mobile command centres is Broadcast and Media - one of our specialities" says Arjan Akkermans CEO, and the 8th generation to work in the family business: "With more than 150 OB trucks built, only a few companies in Europe can match our track record."

In the early years the company mainly built wooden carts, wagons and carriages. Around 1920 the first ambulances and hearses were built for the municipality of Amsterdam starting with only a chassis from a car manufacturer. After the Second World War, car manufacturers started to supply the superstructure on the chassis themselves and Akkermans had to specialize. They did this by focusing on police, fire, defence and medical vehicles. As a result of their rich history, the craftsmanship and the high quality, the company has subsequently built up a very reputable clientele in the broadcast industry too.

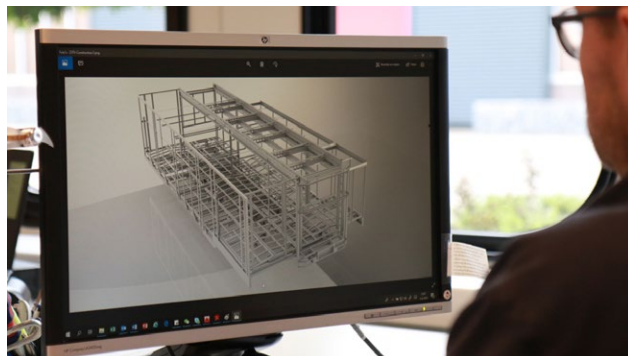
"We started building OB trucks in the late 1980s", says Akkermans: "Dutch public broadcaster NOS requested some custom made Mercedes Vario vans. They ordered six vans from Mercedes: three to be converted into OB vans and three to be used as utility vehicles. Since we already had years of experience with building vans for the police, fire brigades and ambulance services, we got the job. We were commissioned to construct both the interior and the vehicle sub-systems, aircon, power distribution.



The vehicles were well received and so these initial six vans became the first of many more over the coming decades. Today we build OB's, audio, SNG and other media trucks in all shapes and sizes for various countries. We focus on three worldwide segments: Western Europe and Scandinavia, China and the Middle East. and have recently also built trucks for Bangladesh and Myanmar, so you could say that whole world is our territory.

Carrosserie Akkermans is more than proud to hold the honorary title of 'Purveyor to the Royal Household in The Netherlands'. H.M. Queen Beatrix awarded this title to Arjan Akkermans in 2011, during the celebration of the Carrosserie Akkermans' 200th anniversary.

During King Willem I's reign (1815-1840), the 'Purveyor to the Royal Household in The Netherlands' was awarded to only a few enterprises that delivered goods to the Royal Household. After King Willem III's coronation in 1849, the title was given a wider interpretation and the actual delivery to the Royal Household was no longer a condition.



Starting with construction of the coachwork, we continue with the interior furniture and the manufacturing of the technical racks. This is combined with integration of the vehicle subsystems aircon, power, alarms, and control. To provide the customer with a "rack ready" vehicle ready to accept their equipment.

All these activities are managed in close cooperation with the end customer be that a system integrators or vendors such as Grass Valley and Sony. I am proud to say that we have great relationships with the best system integrators and vendors in the business – developed over many years partnering to deliver increasingly complex vehicle solutions.

Carrosserie Akkermans has approximately 45 full time employees and each of them has specific skills. We are able offer our customers the total package, from 3D design where the detailed specification is agreed, to wood workers, metal workers, electricians, upholsterers and all-round coachbuilders who all take pride in ensuring all vehicles leaving the premises are built completely in accordance with clients' specifications.

### Sustainability

Sustainable working has been important for Carrosserie Akkermans for many years. The company was the first in The Netherlands to be certified for "Sustainable Bodywork". This quality mark is an initiative of CarrosserieNL (formerly Focwa - Carrosseriebouw) and the Sustainable Repair Foundation. Certified companies have to meet strict requirements and comply with a structured framework. To be successful in the long term you have to produce sustainably "We have been working as sustainably as possible for many years. Because care for the environment has been a core value in our family for decades. We use sustainable and recycled materials wherever possible and also ensure that our products can be dismantled in an environmentally friendly manner. And for several years now, full electric and hybrid vehicles have become increasingly important in our offer".

### Trends in outside broadcast vehicles

Arjan: "We realise that the demand for outside broadcast trucks is changing, but not declining. The broadcast technology that we use in vehicles is changing, becoming lighter, smaller and more energy efficient. The trend towards remote and IP-production has freed up floor space and this is being used to accommodate more people and more workplaces. Space for 20 to 30 people in one truck is no longer an exception. More video is produced than ever before and digital transformation is in full swing. A new type of customers is engaging with us and they want to use OB trucks for IP distribution. The industry is really changing and we are changing with it."

### Tailor made versus standard design

The diversity of the Carrosserie Akkermans product range and our experience with a variety of end users, combined with an extensive product knowledge of materials and systems makes us the perfect partner for any business.

**Arjan:** "Our extensive experience has taught us, what is the best and most efficient way to design and build a broadcast or video vehicle. We have extensive experience of air conditioning and climate control systems, we understand the challenges of expanding side vehicles and ensuring that every piece fits perfectly. We want to share this knowledge with our customers. You can opt for a 100% tailor-made product, or a 'standard design' with limited adjustment options. We provide 'templates' for our customers, so they can choose, from a small van to a huge trailer or anything in between, with one, two or three expanding sides or none at all. We work exclusively with the best system integrators and manufacturers, and only with those who have proven to meet our standards."