

## **The Easter 2005, convoy consisted of eight 7.5 tonne trucks, two articulated lorries all loaded with essential aid.**

This years route was: UK to France, up the coast to Belgium, through Belgium to Germany. Across Germany to the Czech Republic, from Prague to Bratislava in Slovakia, on to Budapest, Hungary, from there to Belgrade in Serbia and to its destination Kosovo.

**Friday 18th March 2005:** Chas Storer fresh from his humanitarian trip to the Tsunami affected area in Sri Lanka took over the Easter Convoy for what he describes as an 'eventful and challenging' week. During that time a problem with one of the 38 tonners resulted in a twenty one foot rip in one of the curtain sides and necessitated the removal and reloading of its entire cargo. Thanks to some gratefully received help the side has been repaired. Both 38 tonners and one of the 7.5 tonners (Nibsy) were loaded onto the Ford Ferry from Dagenham to Flushing earlier this week thereby avoiding the ferry problems that have been affecting Dover and Calais. They are now heading across Europe and were last reported to be south of Frankfurt.

**Saturday 19 March 2005:** Latest news, the convoy has reached Germany and are making excellent progress.

**Monday 21 March 2005:** With the assistance of the Serbian Embassy in London, the Hungarian and Serbian borders were cleared by lunchtime today and the convoy is making good time, expecting to stay overnight at Nis in Southern Serbia before moving on tomorrow, making it through the two final customs checks out of Serbia and into Kosovo.



**A new warehouse this year**



**Klina**



**Distribution in Klina**

All is well, all vehicles running together.

**Tuesday 22 March:** After arriving very late in Nis, the drivers and crew spent Monday night in a hotel and enjoyed hot showers and comfortable beds. While waiting at the Kosovo border the trucks were sealed by the UN, hopefully for safety reasons. It was hoped that the convoy would reach it's destination, Pristina in Kosovo by tonight ready to start the hard work of loading and re-loading the trucks to distribute their aid. Chas Storer has been informed that the warehouse base which Hope and Aid have been able to use on other trips is only available until Sunday.

**Wednesday 23 March 2005:** The convoy, it seems, has been delayed by customs on the Kosovo border and the trucks have only just reached the warehouse at just after twelve midday. This has meant that a days distribution has been lost. Clearly the aid team are very frustrated by this state of affairs so they are going to have to work harder to achieve a successful aid delivery

**Thursday 24th March 2005:** Distribution now one day behind. John Desty and others were out at the Peje region and got back at 9:40 pm after a long day. Apart from a couple of incidents it was a good days drop and morale seems to be high now the work is underway.

Unfortunately Chas put diesel into a petrol mini-bus and of course it stopped! Also he managed to lose a wing mirror so he's not had a very happy day!

Tomorrow a group are going to the Gjilan region to the South East of Pristina.

**Friday 25th March 2005:** Despite the delay the teams are now up and running and handing out aid at an unprecedented rate. On previous convoys the daily distribution was between 40-50 families per truck but this time the convoyers have been going out loaded for 80-90 families. Yesterday most of the aid went to Klina and Peje area. Today many of the truck loads were destined for Gjakove. The main NGO this Easter is the Mother Theresa organisation who have organised a 10 ton 4 wheel drive truck and two mini buses to help with the distribution. The new warehouse where the aid is sorted and reloaded is vast and large enough for all the trucks including the 38 tonner to be housed inside.