New Zealand's news source for road transport, logistics & heavy equipment industries

DIESELtalk

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The test crew: Andre Asselbergs, Mr Hosoya, Mr Kumakura, Mr Seki and Mr Itou.

Isuzu test team hits Kiwi roads

The arrival of the new Euro V Isuzu Giga 460 and 530 heavy duty horsepower trucks is the brand's most important model launch for seven years, says NZ GM Colin Muir, and there will be 18 variants on offer with a mixture of manual and AMT transmissions.

More than 26 orders have already been placed by New Zealand customers for the new Euro V HD Giga, before the truck has even entered into series production.

A two-week jointly-run summer validation test on a manual steel sprung pre-production Giga 8x4 combination set up for HPMV use has just been completed by Isuzu Japan engineering staff and Isuzu New Zealand staff, and the outcome and results learnt from this exercise will be rolled through into production.

The 2015 Euro V HD Giga offers a larger cab with updated interior, DPD is removed in favour of SCR, there's improved cooling capacity, along and flatter torque curve, super single tipper models receive heavy duty front axles and a retarder, alternative chassis depths to shift between HD and height restricted vehicles, and factory alloy wheels across the models.

Dealer launch activity for the Giga in New Zealand is expected to occur after the first shipment of 8x4 manual models arrives in May, the AMT 8X4 models are expected to arrive in August, and all 6x4 models are expected to arrive in September, provided that planned pro-

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MARKET REACTS TO COF-B CHANGE

BY JOHN MURPHY

The new CoF-B regime introduced last year allowed sites, including suitable workshops – such as Southpac Truck's workshop in Wiri, which was the first to be approved by the NZ Transport Agency (NZTA) to issue CoF-Bs – subject to relaxed site criteria.

The most significant criteria is that there must be no conflict of interest between the vehicle inspector and the owner of the vehicle. Jim McDonald, NZTA Transition Lead VLR Project clarified the conflict of interest boundary with DIESELtalk.

He says the term the NZTA have adopted is, "if an organisation has a financial interest in the 'operation' of the vehicle, the organisation will not be able to inspect the vehicle." However organisations such as fleet operators who do have a financial interest in the operation of their vehicles can have their vehicles inspected in their own workshop by an approved inspecting organisation coming to them.

McDonald makes it clear that workshops can have their own

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NAVMAN WIRELESS

Isuzu test team hits Kiwi roads

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duction and shipping schedules remain unchanged.

The new Giga will also introduce new features to market such as tyre pressure monitoring which will give data on the temperature and inflation on a truck and trailer combination of up to 32 tyres.

Isuzu Trucks is also testing a new telematics system for the New Zealand market, which has already been rolled out in Australia. All the functions are controlled from the double-DIN head unit in the trucks cab.

The new heavy duty segment of the truck market accounts for 50% of all NZ truck registrations, and it is the only one where Isuzu is not the top seller, it took third place behind Volvo for 2014, with Hino the overall segment leader, something that Muir wants to redress.

"This is our most important product launch in seven years and it gives us the opportunity to regain the No.1 position in the heavy duty truck segment," says Muir.

"To do this we have re-introduced variants which we know were popular previously and we have also introduced new variants to the line up. One model (CYZ 460) has been significantly upgraded."

Most importantly the new Euro V HD Giga will offer an 8x4 manual model with air-suspension with a 285mm chassis that will allow Isuzu Trucks to regain a foothold in the stock truck market, where it has not been able to offer a suitable chassis for some time.

"With the focus on animal welfare during stock transportation, we think the manual 8x4 Giga with air suspension will give us a good lever to get back into that section of the market," says Muir.

To ensure the new Euro V HD Giga will meet the standards demanded by New Zealand operators with the growth in the combination HPMV arena, Isuzu New Zealand and Isuzu Trucks Japan have completed a joint testing and validation exercise on a manual 8x4 combination.



Preproduction Isuzu Giga CYH530 manual

Another joint validation exercise with the Isuzu Japan engineers and local staff will take place in April on another 8x4 combination HPMV-rated vehicle, but this time they will be validation testing with the AMT transmission.

Muir says that validation was necessary because New Zealand has a first-world level of compliance and technology, but it has a less than first-world roading system and many sections of the state highway network are arduous and uncompromising.

"Heavy duty trucks are the most important models in any manufacturers stable," says Muir. "We need to hit the market running to achieve number 1 in the segment, and not have to re work the specification during the product's lifecycle."

Isuzu Trucks HD product planning and engineering department chief engineer Haruyuki Hosoya says the company wanted to conduct the validation locally because the models are New Zealand specific and it made more sense to bring the vehicle to where it will be used and test it.

"We expect to have two results, the accuracy of simulation and the validity of testing in a proving ground," says Hosoya.

"We cannot always conduct test driving on a 'vehicle under development' on public roads. Therefore we conduct development by a simulation based on accumulated data from existing models and test drive in a proving ground.

"This time we have conducted the test in an actual market, but we expect to have the same result as we tested internally."

The validation testing involved driving the preproduction Isuzu Giga combination unit in conjunction with another European competitor on a number of common heavy commercial truck routes including Auckland to Whangarei, Auckland to Tauranga and Auckland to Taupo.

Isuzu Japan staff, Mr Kumakura (assistant manager vehicle validation section #1), Mr Itou (Durability experiment group #2, engine experiment department #2) and Mr Seki (technician - vehicle mechanic section) were joined Isuzu NZ technical specialist Andre Asselbergs and two professional drivers during the two-week long test period.

The Isuzu engineering had the opportunity to get behind the wheel for themselves and experience roads such as the Brynderwyns in Northland and the Kaimai ranges in the Bay of Plenty to get an understanding of local operating conditions.

More than 2800km was covered by the two test combination vehicles

Muir says that Isuzu New Zealand got a lot more benefit from the validation exercise that it initially expected.

"It's been hugely worthwhile to us to be a part of the exercise, and we've had some stellar wins," he says.

While Muir wouldn't be drawn on specifics of the new Gigas fuel economy, or the specific results of the testing which were still to be calculated and finalised, he says that the company is targeting European standards of drivability, fuel consumption and desirability.

"All I will say is the fuel economy results were very encouraging."

Southpac trucks celebrates most successful year yet

Queenstown's Jacks Point was the setting for the 2014 dealer and sales conference dinner to celebrate the most successful year on record for PACCAR distributor Southpac Trucks.

An award was presented to Mike Gillespie for being the 2014 truck salesman of the year, while Mark Tucker won the 2014 DAF salesman of the year, and Adam Macintosh was awarded the 2014 Kenworth salesman of the year.

The event was attended by factory representatives from both Eindhoven, Holland and Bayswater Melbourne, as well as the entire Southpac dealer network including the truck sales team and customer service/ administration and support team.



Paul van Rooijen service manager - sales operation DAF Trucks, Richard Smart general sales manager, Mark Tucker truck sales, Mike Gillespie truck sales, Adam Macintosh truck sales, Maarten Durent chief executive officer and Matthew Marshall regional sales manager Kenworth Trucks.

Southpac Trucks general sales manager Richard Smart says that 2014 again showed continued growth with both of the Paccar truck brands, and continued investment in the dealer network and also Southpac's own facilities in Auckland.

"It's the first time in 20 years of representing the PACCAR brands in NZ that we have sold 400 trucks in one year, another record DAF year at 208 sold, and our second best Kenworth year on record at 192," says Smart.

"Of special note was Adam Macintosh's 102 personal sales for the year, the highest on record for us."

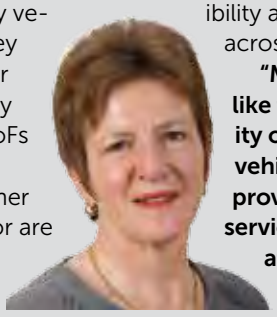
"This year sees us starting off with a complete rebuild of our Auckland truck sales and parts offices, coupled with very strong order demand.

"We have already placed some 145 trucks into production since the year began."

MARKET REACTS TO COF-B CHANGE

Continued from page 1

technicians approved as inspectors, and they can carry out CoF inspections on customers' heavy vehicles, even if they service and repair the vehicles. They can also issue CoFs to vehicles they are selling, whether they own them or are selling them on behalf.



Stella Stocks

VTNZ are partnering up with heavy vehicle repairers to provide CoF-B inspections on their sites too. Their high profile and long history with its roots in the Ministry of Transport ensure they have had many audits and questions asked of them over the years, and strengthens the argument that they have proven credibility and transparency across their business.

"Many repairers like the flexibility of having VTNZ vehicle inspectors provide inspection services on vehicles at their workshops, at times that suit them, says the company.

With VTNZ providing inspectors, it means that repairers do not have to recruit or train technicians to become inspectors, provide ongoing training, or arrange cover when staff are on leave. They save costs on the site application process and the costs of setting up to become an inspecting organisation. They also save on costs of travelling to and from testing stations.



Gordon Shaw

"Many fleet operators still prefer to have an independent inspection on their vehicles to ensure that the process is transparent, is easily audited from a health and safety perspective, and it means that they will not be paying for repairs that are not necessary to get a CoF."

AA general manager – motoring services, Stella Stocks says the AA is a small player in the heavy vehicle CoF market, adding, "At this stage we are keeping a watching brief to see how the new CoF regime unfolds."

VINZ CEO Gordon Shaw says, "The VLR [Vehicle Licensing Reform] changes have increased competition in the CoF-B space and have also given former TSDAs the ability to enter the truck

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Bonneted 'Benz comes back to spread fertiliser

Mercedes-Benz range of all-wheel drive trucks will be expanded with the introduction in mid-2015 of the Zetros, which will be available in both 4x4 and 6x6 configuration for the fertiliser spreading industry.

"Bonneted Mercedes-Benz trucks – such as the L1113 model – established a strong reputation in the ground spread industry here back in the 1970s, so in some ways this is a bit of a nostalgic move for us; says Mercedes-Benz truck sales and product senior manager Dave Ballantyne.



The truck brand already offers the Atego, Axor and Actros AWD models which fit into different market applications and the Zetros will complement the current range.

Mercedes-Benz Trucks have a long history dating back to the 1970s as one of the most popular brands of AWD trucks sold to fertiliser spreading operators, and the medium duty Atego and Axor 4x4 models have seen strong sales in this market.

The heavy duty Actros model fills the need for higher horsepower requirements in the spreading market and also offers a range of models suited to off-road quarry applications where increased gross vehicle mass ratings, traction and braking are key requirements.

Recently the Axor 1833AK 4x4 model has sold strongly, particularly in the South Island, and the Zetros shares the same engine and driveline.

"We've decided to introduce the Zetros into both New Zealand and Australia to sit alongside the Axor range to offer operators a choice, and we believe Mercedes-Benz now offers one of the most extensive range of all-wheel drive trucks to the local market," says Ballantyne.

The Zetros is planned to be officially launched in July at the **Groundspread Association** national conference.

Mercedes-Benz Trucks relaunches 'service plans'

Mercedes-Benz has re-launched its 'service plans' contract maintenance program to provide customers with the choice of different levels of maintenance and repair cover, along with more flexibility in determining whole- of-life costs for their trucks.

"We've listened to feedback from customers over the past twelve months, overhauled the program to make it more operator friendly yet provide more comprehensive coverage at the same time," says Mercedes-Benz truck sales and product senior manager Dave Ballantyne.

"We've seen an increasing demand and uptake of maintenance and repair contracts supporting new truck sales in general, and we now have the support of an experienced team at head office that are solely focused on service plans," he says.

"In today's environment, known maintenance costs and low total cost of ownership are critical for any transport operator and our service plans program, in conjunction with our current Mercedes-Benz truck range, certainly offers peace of mind to our customers".

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TIL Freight Group boss leading from the top on fuel efficiency

TIL Freight Group chief executive Jon Kyle takes his company's commitment to the EECA Heavy Vehicle Fuel Efficiency programme so seriously, he's put himself on the fuel efficiency working group for TIL's pilot of the programme at South Island based subsidiary TNL Freighting.

Kyle says his number one motivation to support the heavy vehicle fuel efficiency programme was safety, followed by minimising environmental impact, and thirdly making sure that the company had the most efficient operating costs for itself and its customers.



Jon Kyle

The journey began in April 2014 when the first fuel management assessment at TNL was carried out and the first report was published in June. The TNL fuel efficiency working group committee, made up of a number of drivers, branch managers, the fleet manager, GM operations Mark Holland, EECA fuel management advisor Jim Pollard and CEO Jon Kyle, first met in July to get the ball rolling.

"It was important to maximise the buy-in from all across the business by having a broad representation of staff on the working group," says Kyle.

"There's an excellent cross-section of people within the group and it enables us to talk about subjects from all angles of the business.

"We are looking at all aspects of the operation, from scheduling and route management, to tyre pressure management, even checking such items as valve extensions on inner trailer tyres to make them easier for our team to check the tyre pressures.

"We have reduced the numbers of kilometres travelled to carry the same amount of freight, simply by having a conversation about the most efficient way to move the freight."

Roughly 50% of the TIL Freight fleet is South Island based (running under the TNL banner), and EECA approved fuel management advisor Jim Pollard says that TNL is making very quick progress.

He concurs with Kyle that the working group has driven the changes because the open forum has created an atmosphere that has allowed everyone within to contribute.



"When topics are discussed, it's an open forum where everyone is engaged and enthusiastic about the programme. It's not a blame game, there's no finger pointing, an issue is simply put on the table and dealt with.

"Jon attending the working group meetings sends the right message to the company that they have his full support, and he's created a relaxed environment that people want to be part of," says Pollard.



Jim Pollard

It was highlighted at a working group meeting that there were a number of runs which weren't fuel efficient and so from that a sub-committee was born to reconfigure those particular runs to make better use of the fuel burn.

And the effort is already paying off with early results showing a 7% reduction in fuel burn and a 25% reduction in gear changes amongst the first 15 drivers to complete the SAFED driver training, as part of the programme. These early results have delighted Kyle.

"I believe the programme will more than repay the investment of time and money that has been spent on it thus far, already we've seen a significant reduction in fuel burn and we've barely scratched the surface," says Kyle.

TNL now has four SAFED driver trainers who will continue to work with the more than 200 South Island drivers who have yet to start their heavy vehicle efficiency training.

Pollard comments that it's not just the least experienced drivers that have made great gains in fuel saving and reduced gear changes - the most experienced and qualified drivers (of which TNL has many) have also made improvements.

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TIL Freight found the more they talked together, the more fuel they saved as a business.

Visit www.eecabusiness.govt.nz/heavy-vehicles to find out more.

New Zealand Government

EECA BUSINESS PUTTING ENERGY TO WORK

EEC3278_DT_5

MARKET REACTS TO COF-B CHANGE

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repair and servicing space."

VINZ have been approached by a number of truck repair and servicing businesses to work in partnership to provide heavy vehicle inspections at various sites around the country.

Shaw adds, "We are being approached due to our long standing history in the sector together with our reputation in the market and our training and technical expertise. A number of new players, once they have assessed the market have found that the new vehicle inspector training requirements, together with the quality management requirements for NZTA, add a layer of administration and relationship management that they had not considered. This is leading to opportunities to have VINZ inspectors working in off-site approved inspection facilities."

"For us the safety of the national road transport fleets remains a top priority."

Shaw took over the CEO role late last year and when asked what his plans for driving the organisation forward are, he says VINZ's parent company JEVIC is looking at the VINZ retail model and how this could work in other markets.

"VINZ's fundamentals will stay the same," says Shaw – "to have the right business strategy, work with its customers and partners, attract and retain employees, and be innovative."

While Southpac supply and manage the Wiri inspection lane and major equipment such as brake rollers, they have chosen to have inspections carried out by an independent contractor, Independent Training Audit Services NZ Ltd (ITAS).

ITAS is owned by partners Brent Greenlees and Richard Lee, two heavy vehicle inspectors with long histories in the industry. Between them they have worked for three of the four Transport Service Delivery Agents (TSDAs) approved under the previous regime – On Road, VINZ and VTNZ, as well as the NZTA – in roles including inspection, training and auditing. On Road was bought out by VTNZ and the fourth TSDA, the AA carries out heavy vehicle CoFs at only two sites in New Zealand. The lack of competition between the three TSDAs was frustrating some transport operators.

Greenlees says ITAS and the other five or six independent inspection services have been welcomed into the industry. ITAS is currently negotiating with several potential CoF-B site owners in both the North and South Islands, and Greenlees expects to be confirming more sites shortly. He is instrumental in forming an association for the new group, which he says will aim to create a professional approach and single voice for the individuals.

The joint venture operation at Southpac started on December 1, 2014, the first day of the new regime and Greenlees says they had to pull out all stops to meet the launch date.

The service has now been operating over two months and a permanent inspector, Johan De Jonge is based on site.

Greenlees says having an inspector on site builds good relations between workshop staff and the inspection service, and helps build a wider understanding of the CoF process and requirements. He says that technicians can take vehicles over the brake rollers before an inspection is carried out and get the inspector's advice if they are unsure of legal limitations for components, but as soon as an inspection starts, the inspection lane is solely under ITAS' control.

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He comments that the heavy vehicle efficiency programme is simply about working together to re-establish best practise in safer and more economic driving, fleet management, tyre management, dispatch and scheduling.

TNL covers a wide variety of trucking applications and operations, from metro deliveries to line-haul. The South Island company fleet is made up of general freight trucks, container truck and trailers, tippers, reefers, and tankers.

The only two categories of freight not handled by TNL are livestock and logs.

The company has a wide variety of truck brands too. Currently it prefers to buy MAN and Western Star heavy vehicles, but there are a number of other brands in the fleet including: Freightliner, Mitsubishi Fuso, Isuzu, Kenworth, Hino, DAF and Foden.

Kyle says that while South Island-based TNL are the first to undergo the EECA BUSINESS Heavy Vehicle Fuel Efficiency programme, they will be followed by sister brands RoadStar and Hooker Pacific, which all trade under the TIL Freight umbrella.

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Kiwi Truck Tyres prove their worth

DIESELtalk editor Robert Barry spoke to two transport operators who have switched to the New Zealand designed and Chinese manufactured Kiwi Truck Tyres (KTT) for their bulk haulage fleets about their reasons for doing so.

Bennett Fertilisers director Jamie McDonald told *DIESELtalk* that his investment in the KTT steerer, driver, and trailer tyres not only paid for itself in more mileage and better durability from the casings, but the greater traction has been hugely beneficial to the drivers when delivering fertiliser and other bulk goods to rural properties.

"John O'Donnell came to see me personally with a trailer tyre that he reckoned didn't hold rocks and offered us more tread depth for the same price as we were paying for another brand," says McDonald. "I was more than happy to give them a try."

The Bennett Fertiliser fleet is comprised of 10 trucks and trailers, with a mixture of brands including Kenilworth, DAF, Isuzu, and Mack. The trucks are now fitted with the Kiwi 20 steerer, the Kiwi 23 driver, and the Kiwi 17 trailer tyre.

"We are spending far less time towing trucks out of paddocks because the Kiwi drivers really are a little bit like tractor tyres, they have much better traction than the tyres we had fitted previously," says McDonald.

"I like the fact that they are new tyres and not retreads, it offers us greater safety and less likelihood of a tyre blow-out which can be incredibly damaging to the truck and sometimes to other road users."



Kiwi 23 driver tyre



Kiwi 20 steerer tyre



Kiwi 17 trailer tyre



"We are having a good run with the Kiwi Truck Tyres and we'll be sticking with them. It also helps that we get very good service, as their warehouse is close by and generally we get same day delivery when ordering new tyres."

Another satisified KTT customer is Gordon Dahm from Tokoroa-based Rod Dahm Contractors, a family-owned transport company which is primarily focussed on the forestry and logging industry.

Dahm says that he has been fitting Kiwi to a number of trucks on the fleet for more than two years as "normal run of the mill tyres don't meet our need for tyres that can withstand harsh and heavy duty operating conditions."

"They are quite a bit heavier than normal tyres but they certainly last longer, and we also enjoy an excellent retread rate as well from the Kiwis that we've fitted to the fleet.

"We have two particular trucks that operate in extremely harsh conditions and they have been fitted with the Kiwi steerer and driver tyres, which have wide and solid side walls which the drivers say provides a more stable ride, the trucks don't seem to roll around as much when fitted with Kiwis as they do with other tyres.

"The Kiwi tyres offer good traction, and we've got a brand new truck on the road fleet operating in quite severe conditions and the Kiwi truck tyres fitted to that are going reasonably well.

In regard to his relationship with Kiwi Truck Tyre owner and director John O'Donnell, Dahm says he's all for helping small business operators to get ahead.

"Everyone's got to make a dollar, and John came up with the product we needed, and we'll continue to support him because we like the product."

Lightest rims in the business

Papakura-based TATES Ltd has added a new range of alloy Alex Rims to its product line-up which have been wholly designed to meet the need of transport operators looking for efficiency as well as aesthetics.

Not only can large amounts of weight be shed by fitting these rims, there's greater rigidity over standard steel rims and operators can benefit from the visual likeness of chrome wheels, but without the high maintenance associated with those according to TATES. Ltd



Well known as the suppliers of ROR axles and suspension systems, V.Orlandi couplings and all manner of transport and trailer equipment, TATES completed it's product line up with these high quality polished alloy rims that not only save weight but can also be used on most common truck applications as well.

The rims are forged then machined to exacting standards and heat treated to harden before finish polishing is applied to the exposed facing.

The sizes start at 6" wide X 17.5" diameter with 10 stud holes at 225 PCD [pitch circle diameter] or 6 stud JIS [Japanese Industrial Standards] for those light trucks of Japanese and Asian origin.

Next up is the 7" X 19.5" with 8 stud 275 PCD and 10 stud 285 PCD.

This is the size claimed as the lightest in our market, compared to those currently available, saving dollars in running costs over their long life.

There are also 8.25" X 22.5" in 10 stud of both 285 and 335 PCD with 24mm or 32mm sleeved lug nuts available for truck applications as is the aforementioned 7" X 19.5" and 11.75" X 22.5".

Lug nuts are available in zinc or chrome finish, both are covered to protect threads.

The Super Single size (as they are referred to) in 11.75" X 22.5" 10 stud 335 PCD are available in zero offset for trailer and 120mm offset for front of truck applications.

An optional ceramic clear coating is available for ease of cleaning, needing only soapy water to return to new look.

With the total weight saving, extra strength and durability, it will see out the life of any rig.

Transport operators needing more information on these alloy rims may contact TATES directly on 09 299 7777 or 09 299 9911.

BUSINESS AS USUAL SAYS NAVMAN WIRELESS EXECUTIVE

The announcement of a merger between vehicle telematics firm Navman Wireless and its US competitor Teletrac Inc, is fantastic news says Navman Wireless Asia Pacific vice president Ian Daniels, but he says for now its still business as usual.

"This process started last year, and its fantastic news from our side of the fence," Daniels commented to *DIESELtalk*.

"For now it's business as usual but no doubt in the future there will be a platform unification.



Navman Wireless Asia Pacific VP Ian Daniel.

"It is a good and logical move which will certainly bring greater benefits to New Zealand customers down the track, once the current platforms are unified, bringing the best of both to fruition," says Daniel.

"Collectively having a unified roadmap of research and development spend will be an enormously powerful tool for our current and future customers," he says.

Daniels also told *DIESELtalk* that the company is currently flat out hiring new staff locally and has a number of vacant positions to fill.

The combined company will be run by an executive management team selected from both Teletrac and Navman Wireless.

Current Navman Wireless president and chief executive officer, TJ Chung will lead the joint company.

The merged company will continue to operate under both the Navman Wireless and Teletrac brands and fully support all current customers and platforms in its ongoing goal to drive the industry forward.

"It became clear in our race to being the predominant global GPS fleet and asset tracking solution, that the leverage of combining Navman Wireless and Teletrac was in the clear best interest of both companies' current and future customers," says Chung.

"We realised that both companies were highly synergistic and we had the opportunity to leap forward by partnering strength on strength."

The joint company's technology currently tracks more than 500,000 vehicles owned by more than 40,000 organisations on five continents, making it one of the world's largest fleet management providers.

Headquartered in Glenview, IL, it has offices in Garden Grove, California, Dallas, Texas, Monterrey, Mexico, Keele and Cranfield in the UK, Auckland, New Zealand and Sydney, Australia.

More than just specialists in automotive and light industrial coatings

While Resene is a well known brand of paint for application on domestic and commercial buildings, not many people are aware that the company has an automotive and light industrial arm that caters to truck and passenger vehicle collision repairers, sandblasters, engineering workshops, trailer manufacturers, and a nationwide fleet care network of truck applicators.

Resene Automotive and Light Industrial or RALI, (*www.rali.co.nz*) also looks after the corporate image of large clients such as Air New Zealand and Toll Holdings, through a national network of 14 branches and a select number of resellers.

RALI supplies its own Kiwi manufactured line of products such as Cromax, Cromax Pro, Cromax Imron Fleet Line, and Durapox to industrial and marine customers, as well as the industrial lines from DuPont.

The Cromax Imron Fleet Line is a comprehensive range of locally manufactured products including primers, urethanes, enamels, flexible coatings for curtain-



siders, rust inhibitors and truck wash products.

As well as 20 mobile direct service vans, RALI also has a fully set up mobile waterborne paint laboratory that can formulate, mix and spray Cromax Pro independently on any vehicle in any suitable business throughout NZ.

RALI marketing manager Jo-Anne de Villiers says a significant point of difference is that the company has technical experts supporting the sales team, who will visit clients to help solve any issues and processes they may be experiencing.

The company offers customers assistance with colour formula retrieval and matching tools as well as support and information, plus help with application faults and cures, as well as



ongoing training in applications as well as general business practice.

"We are all about best practise, and we'll work through our systems and processes to find the solution for a customer," says de Villiers. "We can't sell you the paint if the substrate is not suited to it, not everything is an off-the-shelf solution."

RALI has the advantage of having it's own chemists and research and development specialists in house.

The company also hosts a Fleetcare applicator conference annually, which is normally held in September but instead this year it will be held in conjunction with the Brisbane Truck show in May.

de Villiers says the conference will not only address a list of action plans from the previous conference, but delegates will also get the opportunity to address issues such as human resources, marketing, compliance, health and safety and other business-related issues.

"Past Fleetcare network conferences have always been very popular with our clients and their partners. Many are small business operators who work in the business together, so it gives them a great opportunity not only to get away from the business for a break, but also the opportunity to network and share ideas and experiences with like minded people," says de Villiers.

Hi-tech LED beacons for heavy vehicles

A range of new, high-tech, LED flashing beacons from Eurotech provide an affordable solution for use on service vehicles, and around construction/mining sites says Narva.

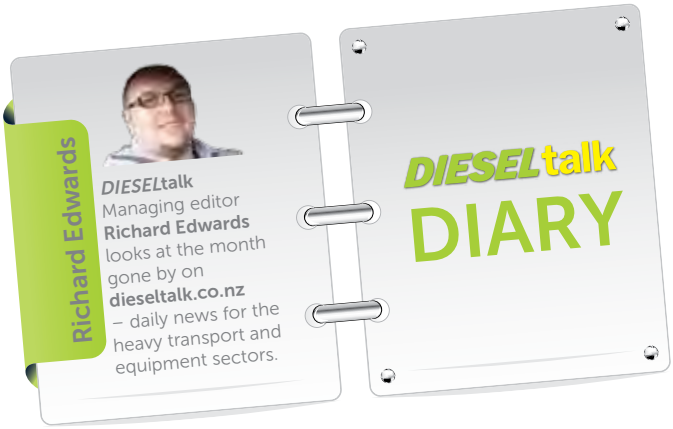
The Eurotech beacons perform two light functions in one, being able to both flash and rotate, and offering six adjustable flash patterns thanks to advanced LED technology. Because they are constructed to Class 1 performance parameters, the lights are highly visible, even in strong sunlight.

Another advantage of Narva's Eurotech is that they meet the heavy vehicle regulation 2013, number 77, making them suitable for on-road use.

Buyers can choose from two sizes, a low profile option (P/No. 85254A) and a standard height (P/No. 85260A) alternative, both available with a flange base. The flange base units allow al-



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February 2

Jade signs 9-port deal with Abu Dhabi

Jade Software has started the new year by signing a multi-million dollar contract to supply nine ports in Abu Dhabi.

The company says the deal will strengthen its position in the terminal operating system market, as well as growing its Middle Eastern market share.

The Abu Dhabi deal brings Jade's total number of marine terminal contracts in 2014 to 29 in total.

February 4

Greedy landlords pushing truck service tenants north

A real estate agent says that Auckland's North Shore landlords are pushing heavy vehicle servicing providers out of the area, because they want to attract 'clean' tenants such as distribution businesses who need larger offices which generate more rent.

Bayleys North Shore commercial leasing agent Rosemary Wakeman told the *NZ Herald* that Silverdale continues to attract tenants who cannot find suitable and affordable premises on the North Shore.

February 5

Truck and machinery wharves under threat from cruise liners

Two Ports of Auckland wharves which are used for imported new and used trucks, light commercials, cars, as well as heavy plant, equipment, and machinery, are under threat from a council group that wants one demolished and the other to be extended for cruise liners says a report commissioned by Auckland Council.

The Port Study final report written by New Zealand Institute of Economic Research specialist Nick Allison says a council group has proposed that Captain Cook wharf be extended, and Marsden Wharf be demolished to accommodate the growing number of cruise ships entering Auckland harbour.

Currently both Captain Cook wharf and Marsden wharf are multi-cargo wharves which are primarily used by large car-carrying ships which deliver both new and second hand imported cars, pick ups, trucks, camper vans, light commercial vehicles, farming equipment as well as construction and logging heavy equipment and machinery.

February 9

Weak construction demand impacts Volvo Trucks

Truck manufacturer Volvo Group has moved from a 548 million Kronor surplus last year, to posting a fourth-quarter loss of 3 billion Kronor ($364 million) due to weak demand for construction equipment.

Volvo Group says the markets outside of North America for construction equipment continue to deteriorate, and the business is experiencing "strong headwinds".

February 10

Heavy vehicle rule changes welcomed

Transport operators are welcoming the pending changes to the Vehicle Dimension and Mass (VDAM) rule, because this will allow them to take advantage of the full potential of their heavy trucks.

According to the *Timaru Herald*, NZTA project manager Kevin O'Kane commented in December that the rule change would address the 'anomaly' which meant that breaching any heavy vehicle permit would result in a hefty fine.

February 11

Further cut to Fiat van price

Fiat Chrysler NZ has announced a further cut to the price of its Scudo medium size van.

The RRP for the van has dropped to $26,990 plus on road costs and GST, a saving of $3000.

David Smitherman, chief executive officer of FCNZ says the new price will appeal to company accountants.

February 12

Southland transport company boss injured in NSW crash

Southland's HW Richardson Group managing director Scott O'Donnell was one of three people injured last week in New South Wales when their stationary rental vehicle was rear ended by a truck.

The three businessmen were travelling to the annual Bathurst 12-hour race with two other GT3 Endurance Limited team mates as part of a two Porsche team entered in the Class B category.

Christchurch construction company director Phil Mauger, and Christchurch Mag & Turbo warehouse owner Hayden Knighton were seriously injured, while O'Donnell suffered cracked ribs when the truck rear ended their BMW X3 rental car, sending it hurtling into three cars in front of them.

February 13

Auto Logistics CFO up for award

The chief financial officer of one of the country's leading vehicle transport companies is up for an award for his work.

Brent Norrish, CFO for Palmerston North-based Auto Logistics has been nominated in the SME Financial Leader of the Year class for the 2015 New Zealand CFO Awards.

Finalists were selected by a panel of judges from a record number of entries.

Company director sentenced to home detention

The director of a house-moving company has been sentenced to four months home detention, and his company fined $60,000, after a house he was transporting brought down a power line.

The power line was left live on the side of the road, killing six lambs, five ewes and two sheep dogs. The shepherd narrowly avoided being electrocuted in the incident.

Arthur Britton's company, Britton Housemovers Limited, was sentenced yesterday in the Hastings District Court on charges under the Electricity Act 1992, and Health and Safety in Employment Act.

February 16

Pollution incident costs freight forwarder dearly

An Auckland freight forwarder is paying a hefty price for causing Auckland's most destructive freshwater and marine pollution incident in decades.

Jenners Worldwide Freight was fined $103,000, and ordered to pay $25,000 costs, after being found guilty at the Auckland District Court of spilling over 1000 litres of purple dye into the Oruarangi Stream and Estuary and the Manukau Harbour in South Auckland.

The July 2013 dye spill killed all eels and fish in the stream, and just under half of the mud snails and other species in the estuary.

Mana Transport placed into liquidation

Porirua-based Mana Transport has been placed into liquida-

Continued on page 12

Continued from page 11
tion owing more than $3 million to secured and unsecured creditors.

Preliminary documents from liquidator Rodgers Reidy show that the company owes employees $105,000 and the IRD $775,015.

Trade creditors are owed more than $1.3 million. A general security agreement of $1.05 million was verified and ranked in favour of GE Capital Limited by the liquidator, and this security interest has seen the financier repossess all 35 removal and freight vehicles, two vans, a forklift, and the company director's personal vehicle.

Lower dairy payout sees flatter Port profit

The Bluff port operator, South Port New Zealand, expects annual profit to be relatively flat this year as farmers buy less fertiliser, stock food and fuel.

According to *BusinessDesk* a company statement reports that earnings are expected to be $6.5 million to $7 million in the 12 months ending June 30, from a record $6.68 million last year.

The port operator has posted a 23% increase in first-half profit to $3.3 million as revenue rose 11% to $16.2 million.

February 17

Assessing the state of roading by truck

A truck-based traffic speed deflectometer (TSD) unit that has the ability to see under the surface of highways and measure their strength will be employed by the New Zealand Transport Agency for an initial year of operation.

NZTA already has two trucks with technology mounted on them which provide information on roads and pavements.

The new TSD looks like an ordinary truck and semi-trailer unit but it contains a bank of computers, lasers, and cameras inside, which can identify cracks in the road, profile the surface and provide information about strength according to *TV3 News*.

Software engineers offered signing bonus from EROAD

Electronic road user charges and transport services company EROAD, is offering $10,000 signing bonuses for software engineers.

The company says the bonuses will be on offer until May 1 to fill 40 roles it has open currently, reports *BusinessDesk*.

dispute with Ports of Auckland

A dispute between Ports of Auckland and the Maritime union which began in 2011 came to an end this morning.

Maritime union national president Garry Parsloe says a stopwork meeting of members held today unanimously voted in favour of the new collective employment agreement.

He says the agreement will be signed off with the employer shortly.

Refrigerated logistics deliver record AHG revenue

Australian-based Automotive Holdings Group (AHG), which also owns a number of car dealerships in New Zealand, has reported a record half-year profit with its Australian refrigerated logistics division delivering record revenue of AUD $319.1 million for the half-year, 51.9% up on the previous corresponding period.

According to *Trailer Magazine*, AHG managing director, Bronte Howson says the results reflected a strong performance driven by the integration of the Group's recent acquisitions and continued growth.

February 19

Farmers prefer to buy tractors from dealers

Waikato led the way in tractor sales in New Zealand during 2014, in a year when sales approached record highs.

A total of 4061 tractors were purchased between January and December, including 3419 of at least 40 horsepower (hp), the most common measure for farm tractors. Sales are up from 3065 40hp tractors bought in 2013.

Tractor and Machinery Association (TAMA) president Ian Massicks says the figures show continued commitment by farmers to buy from local machinery dealers rather than taking the risk of purchasing online from an overseas supplier.

Port of Tauranga sees half-year net profit rise

The Port of Tauranga has delivered an increase in half-year net profit thanks to increased container volumes, as well as increased dairy and meat exports, offsetting the drop in log volumes.

In the six months to 31 December 2014, Port of Tauranga says it handled 426,512 TEUs (up 11.9% on the prior year), while total cargo volumes increased 1.2% to 10 million tonnes.

Port establishes new forest product facilities

Ports of Auckland and CHH Lodestar have signed an agreement to establish new facilities to handle and pack Lodestar's Auckland-based forest products cargo.

Lodestar has appointed Netlogix as their materials handling specialist to operate the facilities which will be located at Ports of Auckland's Wiri intermodal freight hub, and the Waitemata sea port.

Commercials lead in Colonial result

Colonial Motor Company has released its financial results for the second half of 2014, with revenue up but profits down slightly as lower dairy prices and a competitive market hit its bottom line.

Revenue for the group, which has truck, tractor and automotive retail and servic-

Continued on page 13

Hi-tech LED beacons for heavy vehicles

Continued from page 10
ternative and synchronised operation of up to four strobe units.

The low profile option is also available in two additional mounting configurations: a magnetic base (P/No. 85258A), which features a 12/24V cigarette plug with an on/off switch and pattern selector for easy scroll through operation, or a flexible pipe mounting base (P/No. 85256A) with a DIN style connection.

With a non-volatile memory, the beacon recalls the last flash pattern used, so there is no need to set up a preferred pattern after it has been turned off each time. The flash pattern adjustment switch makes changing patterns convenient and easy.

Modern optic technology featured in the lamp's design magnifies the light output, creating a powerful, solid and seamless projection of light that meets the SAE Class 1 rating.

Boasting reverse polarity protection, fully sealed (IP65) solid state circuitry and virtually unbreakable polycarbonate lenses, the Eurotech LED beacons offer shock and vibration resistance.

Eurotech beacons are available from automotive and transport outlets throughout New Zealand.

Continued from page 12

ing operations, was up 15% over the same period of 2013, at $410.4m – including the contributions of Jeff Gray BMW, that was acquired during the period.

Company trading profit was down 3% from the second half of 2013 to $8.355m.

February 20

Police tractor to shut gate on rural crime

Waikato Police believe a new 'Police' branded tractor will act as an 'a-tractor' for farmers as they seek to address rural crime issues at field days being held nationwide.

Inspector Paul Carpenter says the idea behind the concept came from conversations at last year's National Fieldays at Mystery Creek.

Port of Tauranga gears up to compete with Auckland

Port of Tauranga is to buy two new gantry cranes and will shortly put out for tender dredging work that will allow it to accommodate bigger container vessels than rival Ports of Auckland can handle.

The Tauranga port's board has signed off on the purchase of two super post-panamax gantry cranes, capable of handling vessels of 22 or more containers wide reports *BusinessDesk*.

The company aims to be ready to accept 6500 TEU (twenty foot equivalent container) vessels by August 2016, as part of a strategy to strengthen its position as a major freight hub. Currently it can handle 5000 TEU vessels 'at the top of tide.'

February 23

Online retail sees Freightways first-half profit jump 21%

New express package volume created by online retailers has seen Freightways post a 21% gain in first-half profit.

The company has lifted sales and fattened margins at its courier and information management units.

Profit rose to $26.3 million in the six months ended Dec. 31, an all-time high for the interim result, from $21.7 million a year earlier, says the company in a statement. Sales climbed to $241.8 million from $218.3 million according to *BusinessDesk*.

February 24

Airport junction upgrade under way

Transport Minister Simon Bridges has turned the first sod of a new $146 million dollar underground interchange at Kirkbride Road and George Bolt Memorial Drive near Auckland Airport, which will divert traffic beneath the road for 580 metres.

The existing interchange at State Highway 20A and Kirkbride Road is heavily congested during peak travel times and is expected to get worse with projected population and traveller growth.

"With freight volumes set to double in the next 20 years, it is critical we not only have a safe, reliable roading network, but also ensure vital links for the distribution of goods and services between the region's ports and industrial areas," says Bridges.

Marac-parent announces jump in profits

Heartland New Zealand Limited, which operates in the vehicle finance market mostly under the Marac brand, has announced a net profit after tax of $23.5m for the half year ended 31 December 2014

That result was up a huge 41% on the second half of 2013.

The Business and Rural divisions both experienced strong growth, increasing by $80.9m and $44.3m respectively, while consumer lending continued to perform well growing $46.9m.

February 25

Tourism Holdings doubles first half profit

Tourism Holdings, the largest camper van rental business in Australia and New Zealand, has more than its doubled first-half profit after cutting costs and fattening margins.

The company improved earnings across its businesses by selling off excess fleet capacity and focussing on margins.

DHL Express expands operations at Auckland Airport

DHL Express is set to double the size of its existing facility at Auckland Airport.

The expansion, which is due to be completed in December 2015, will see DHL's warehouse and office facility increase from 2500 square metres to 5000 square metres.

New Zealand country manager Tim Baxter, says the expansion, which will see the existing DHL Express warehouse almost double in size, will allow shipments to be processed twice as fast and up to 20 new jobs will be created in the process.

Mitsubishi exec says new Triton will double its sales

Mitsubishi Motors New Zealand is predicting that the first all-new Triton ute in nine years will have a five-star safety rating, and will double its sales tally here.

The Triton and the L200 from which it was derived have been around since 1978, and this is the first full redesign of Triton in nine years.

Mitsubishi's head of sales Daniel Cook says the new Triton ute has; a bigger tray capacity, a stronger body, a driver's knee air bag, significantly greater torque than before, requires less frequent servicing, and it offers fuel economy from 7L/100km.

February 26

Southpac Trucks wins Australasian service dealer award

For the second consecutive year Southpac Trucks has won the Australasian PACCAR service dealer of the year award.

The award was presented to Southpac Trucks chief executive officer Maarten Durent and chairman Graham Gibbons at January's PACCAR dealer meeting in New South Wales.

"Winning two years in a row is a great achievement and one that our staff and all the New Zealand dealer network are very proud of," says Durent.

Road workers rescue fallen wheelchair user

Two road workers rescued a stranded Auckland man using an electric wheelchair when it broke down and left him crawling to push it 6 metres down a path to seek help.

The two good samaritans hoisted the non-functioning electric wheelchair on to the back of their truck and drove the wheelchair user, 44-year-old Philip Rawson who has spina bifida, safely back to the Elizabeth Knox home and hospital.

Rawson says the two men treated him with absolute dignity, they had run to his aid when he called out for help after the electric wheelchair broke down and wouldn't move.

February 27

Truck window advertisement may have caused death

A Christchurch trucking company has been warned by the coroner against covering left-hand cab windows with advertising material, after one of its drivers was convicted of killing a cyclist because he did not see her before making a left turn.

Last year John Herridge, 75, was sentenced on a charge of careless driving causing the death of 22-year-old student nurse Sharla Haerewa in April that year.

According to *NZME* a coroner's report into her death revealed the passenger door window of Herridge's truck was "covered with advertising material".

Modest rise in new truck sales

Heavy vehicle registrations showed a modest rise in February, with market leader Isuzu making the biggest move in the market.

NEW HEAVY TRUCKS OVER 23,001KG FEBRUARY 2015

MAKE	FEB '15	FEB '14	% Change	% of Market	YTD '15	YTD '14
ISUZU	25	21	19.0	13.8	46	38
VOLVO	22	23	-4.3	12.2	35	35
HINO	18	11	63.6	9.9	32	27
SCANIA	16	4	300.0	8.8	25	13
DAF	14	10	40.0	7.7	28	17
MAN	13	5	160.0	7.2	26	21
MACK	12	1	1100.0	6.6	21	6
UD TRUCKS	12	7	71.4	6.6	23	13
FREIGHTLINER	10	7	42.9	5.5	27	18
KENWORTH	10	15	-33.3	5.5	35	26
OTHER	29	30	-3.3	16.0	58	62
TOTAL	181	134	35.1	100.0	356	276

NEW MEDIUM TRUCKS 9001-23,000KG FEBRUARY 2015

MAKE	FEB '15	FEB '14	% Change	% of Market	YTD '15	YTD '14
ISUZU	25	13	92.3	37.3	40	21
HINO	13	16	-18.8	19.4	30	29
UD TRUCKS	10	8	25.0	14.9	22	17
MITSUBISHI FUSO	7	9	-22.2	10.4	13	15
IVECO	4	2	100.0	6.0	7	6
OTHER	8	10	-20.0	11.9	13	28
TOTAL	67	58	15.5	100.0	125	116

NEW LIGHT TRUCKS 3500-9000KG FEBRUARY 2015

MAKE	FEB '15	FEB '14	% Change	% of Market	YTD '15	YTD '14
ISUZU	37	25	48.0	42.0	60	44
MITSUBISHI FUSO	18	19	-5.3	20.5	34	32
FIAT	10	13	-23.1	11.4	36	31
HINO	9	23	-60.9	10.2	21	38
FORD	4	1	300.0	4.5	7	1
MERCEDES-BENZ	4	13	-69.2	4.5	15	18
OTHER	6	14	-57.1	6.8	19	19
TOTAL	88	108	-18.5	100.0	192	183

The overall sector was up 8.3% to 354 units from 327 units in 2013.

Isuzu in first position was up 50.8% to 89 units from 59 in the previous corresponding period - taking 25.1% of the over 3500kg trade.

Hino was second on 40 trucks, down 21.6% for an 11.3% share, followed in third by Mitsubishi **Fuso** on 37, down 9,8% for a 10.5% stake.



Michael Doeg

New heavy trucks (over 23,000kg) saw a 35% increase year on year with 181 units registered, while medium trucks (9001-23,000kg) also saw a year on year increase of 15% with 67 registrations as opposed to 58 in 2014.



New light trucks (3500-9000kg) dipped 18% in February 2015 with 88 registrations as opposed to 108 registrations in February 2014.

The market was a mixed bag, some brands such as Isuzu saw increased sales across all three truck sectors, while others saw significant increases in heavy truck sales but not so much in the medium and light sectors.

The light commercial market was also very strong with a nearly 10% increase in year on year sales for February. **Toyota** lead with 647 light commercials registered, followed by **Ford** on 463, and **Nissan** in third on 266. Despite the Triton being in run out mode, **Mitsubishi** took fourth place on the light commercial sales chart with 210 units registered.

Isuzu Trucks sales and marketing manager Michael Doeg says the 89 units registered in February was a very good result for the Japanese truck manufacturer. It lead the market in every sector.

Heavy truck (Giga) registrations accounted for 17 units, medium truck (F series) accounted for 34 units and light truck (N Series) accounted for 38 units.

Doeg says amongst the Giga sales were a number of

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Fresh imports inspected in drug bust

A huge combined Police, Customs and Department of Internal Affairs operation was undertaken at the Port of Auckland last week – including the searching of hundreds of new imported vehicles, including 30 new heavy vehicles.

Police say 12 people had been arrested, 144 vehicles had been checked, one person had been summonsed to appear in Court on drug related matters.

More than 200 imported new vehicles at the port and 30 heavy vehicles were checked by the Commercial Vehicle Investigation Unit.

Detective Inspector Chris Cahill says the object of the exercise, which was based on sound intelligence collated by the District Intel Unit, was to disrupt the activities of criminals involved in organised crime.

"Further to that, a clandestine laboratory was located in Mt Wellington and three firearms and ammunition were seized," Cahill says.

"More than 100 Police assisted by Customs Service and Department of Internal Affairs staff worked on Operation Disrupt and I've no doubt we achieved our objectives and enhanced the safety of all Aucklanders."

Continued from page 14

the older run out 460HP and 530HP models and some new Euro V 400Hp units.

"From a seasonalised perspective enquiry is still very strong and it is looking likely that we will have a good year, but I don't want to jump the gun just yet," says Doeg.

"The market is still very strong, there is activity across all of our sectors, its a positive outcome of an overall strong economy, there is consistent enquiry and purchasing across the board.

"This year has had an even stronger start to truck sales than the previous period in 2014, year to date truck sales account for 3% of the market, against 2.8% last year, and year to date truck sales to February 2015 number 650 units, as opposed to 538 units in the same period in 2014.

"Its been a very strong start to the year," he says.

However for Foton Trucks, February was a month that the distributor Ateco Automotive would most likely want to forget, with only one new truck registration, although the company did sell 39 Foton Utes.

Foton truck and ute sales manager Bruce Clarke was philosophical about the result, commenting that January which is normally a soft month was a busy one with lots of enquiry, which he felt was possibly a carry over from the interest in December, but February has been very soft despite reasonable enquiry levels.

"Its a bit patchy out there at the moment, normally the start to year sees a soft month in January followed by a busy February, but this year has been the reverse for us," he says.

"Enquiry levels are good and I think things will rapidly pick up again."

NEW TRUCK MAKES ALL WEIGHTS OVER 3500KG – FEBRUARY 2015

MAKE	FEB '15	FEB '14	% Change	% of Market	YTD '15	YTD '14
ISUZU	89	59	50.8	25.1	154	107
HINO	40	51	-21.6	11.3	83	95
MITSUBISHI FUSO	37	41	-9.8	10.5	74	74
SCANIA	23	7	228.6	6.5	38	19
UD TRUCKS	22	15	46.7	6.2	45	30
VOLVO	22	23	-4.3	6.2	36	37
MAN	17	12	41.7	4.8	36	57
DAF	15	11	36.4	4.2	30	18
MACK	12	1	1100.0	3.4	21	6
MERCEDES-BENZ	11	21	-47.6	3.1	31	46
OTHER	66	86	-23.3	18.6	184	163
TOTAL	354	327	8.3	100.0	732	652

NEW BUSES OVER 3500KG – FEBRUARY 2015

MAKE	FEB '15	FEB '14	% Change	% of Market	YTD '15	YTD '14
SCANIA	5	2	150.0	27.8	11	8
MITSUBISHI FUSO	4	5	-20.0	22.2	9	4
FACTORY BUILT	3	2	50.0	16.7	15	3
ISUZU	2			11.1	8	4
MAN	2	3	-33.3	11.1	5	20
OTHER	2	15	-86.7	11.1	11	38
TOTAL	18	27	-33.3	100.0	59	77

NEW LIGHT COMMERCIAL MAKES UNDER 3500KG – FEBRUARY 2015

MAKE	FEB '15	FEB '14	% Change	% of Market	YTD '15	YTD '14
TOYOTA	647	601	7.7	22.9	1115	964
FORD	463	371	24.8	16.4	967	737
NISSAN	266	272	-2.2	9.4	520	563
MITSUBISHI	210	171	22.8	7.4	332	339
HOLDEN	206	167	23.4	7.3	445	346
ISUZU	202	165	22.4	7.2	378	287
VOLKSWAGEN	113	98	15.3	4.0	252	207
MAZDA	111	103	7.8	3.9	196	201
SSANGYONG	72	77	-6.5	2.6	145	130
HYUNDAI	55	115	-52.2	1.9	122	165
OTHER	476	427	11.5	16.9	1006	863
TOTAL	2821	2567	9.9	100.0	5478	4802

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Used trucks lift slightly

In the used import truck market, volume was up 30.8% to 119 units from 91 a year ago.

Toyota lead on 45 trucks up 50% for a 37.8% share. **Isuzu** was second in 16 and **Hino** in third place on 13.

Used heavy trucks (over 23,000kg) saw a 100% increase year on year with 6 registrations in February 2015 as opposed to 3 in February 2014. Kenworth lead the charge with three registrations followed by Hino with 1, and Mack also with 1 used heavy truck registrations.

Used medium trucks (9001-23,000kg) also had a dramatic percentage lift (166%) in February 2015, with 8 units registered as opposed to 3 last year. **Nissan** lead the charge with 2 units, followed by **DAF**, **Ford**, and **Factory** Built with one used medium truck each.

Used light trucks (3500-9000kg) had a smaller percentage increase of nearly 30% but numbers were healthier, 101 units registered this year as opposed to 78 in February 2014.

Toyota lead this segment with 42 units registered, an increase of 44% over last February, followed by **Isuzu** on 16 units (an 11% decrease), **Hino** and **Nissan** each took 11 registrations, followed by **Mitsubishi** on 10, while Fiat and **Iveco** saw two used light truck registrations each.

New tractors saw a small drop from 149 units registered in February 2014 to 117 in February 2015, (a 21% decrease). **John Deere** held its position as market leader in this segment but saw its sales tally drop from 65 units in February 2014 to 33 last month (a decrease of 49%). **New Holland** also had a minor drop of 9%, from 22 units registered last year to 20 in February 2015.

Case however saw a 1200% increase with 13 new tractors registered in February 2015 as opposed to one in the previous corresponding period.

Used tractors had a small increase of registrations at 3.3%, with 62 units in February 2015 as opposed to 60 in the previous corresponding period. **John Deere** lead with 8 units, followed by **Massey Ferguson** with 7, and **New Holland** on 6 used tractor registrations.

Used imported light commercials under 3500kg sold 681 units this February, a 15% increase on the 592 units sold for the same month last year, and the biggest February year-to-date figure since 2008 according to the Motor Trade Association (MTA).



MTA chief executive Warwick Quinn

The Toyota **Hiace** led with 262 units, followed by the Nissan **Caravan** with 61 units and the Toyota **Dyna** with 31 units.

The used import vehicle market continues to rise, with a 15% increase in the sales of both passenger and commercial vehicles against the same month last year

MTA chief executive

Continued on page 17

USED HEAVY TRUCKS OVER 23,001KG – FEBRUARY 2015

MAKE	FEB '15	FEB '14	% Change	% of Market	YTD '15	YTD '14
KENWORTH	3			50.0	5	
HINO	1	1	0.0	16.7	2	2
MACK	1			16.7		
OTHER	1	2	-50.0	16.7	5	7
TOTAL	6	3	100.0	100.0	12	9

USED MEDIUM TRUCKS 9001-23,000KG – FEBRUARY 2015

MAKE	FEB '15	FEB '14	% Change	% of Market	YTD '15	YTD '14
NISSAN	2			25.0	2	
DAF	1			12.5	1	1
FACTORY BUILT	1			12.5	1	
FORD	1			12.5	1	
OTHER	3	3	0.0	37.5	13	22
TOTAL	8	3	166.7	100.0	18	23

USED LIGHT TRUCKS 3500-9000KG – FEBRUARY 2015

MAKE	FEB '15	FEB '14	% Change	% of Market	YTD '15	YTD '14
TOYOTA	42	29	44.8	41.6	60	49
ISUZU	16	18	-11.1	15.8	36	39
HINO	11	6	83.3	10.9	24	13
NISSAN	11	10	10.0	10.9	24	20
MITSUBISHI	10	3	233.3	9.9	20	9
FIAT	2	1	100.0	2.0	6	7
IVECO	2			2.0	2	
OTHER	7	11	-36.4	6.9	14	25
TOTAL	101	78	29.5	100.0	186	162

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Truck arrivals the best in five months

Some 260 new trucks over 3.5 tonnes arrived in New Zealand last month, the highest number since 368 crossed our wharves in October.

This was, however, three units less than in February last year.

Used trucks over 3500kg did not fare as well, however, with 56 arrivals - the lowest number since 39 used trucks arrived in November, but the total was 10 more than in February last year.

Light commercials continued on their buoyant trajectory with 2056 new light trucks, vans and utes (under 3.5 tonnes) being landed here last month.



This was the best month since 2789 new light commercials crossed our wharves in October last year, and was well ahead of the 1796 used vans, utes and light trucks (under 3500 kg) imported a year ago.

Used light commercials, however, were down a little at 375 units - compared with 707 in October last year, and 380 in January. But the numbers were still ahead of the 263 used light commercials landed here in February 2014.

Continued from page 16

Warwick Quinn says 2015 had started well for all segments.

"All sectors grew, and we're seeing a sustained rally in used imports in particular. The early part of the year can be slightly slow, but this one has continued at the same level as last," says Quinn.

USED TRUCK MAKES ALL WEIGHTS OVER 3500KG – FEBRUARY 2015

MAKE	FEB '15	FEB '14	% Change	% of Market	YTD '15	YTD '14
TOYOTA	45	30	50.0	37.8	64	51
ISUZU	16	20	-20.0	13.4	39	43
HINO	13	7	85.7	10.9	31	17
NISSAN	13	12	8.3	10.9	26	23
MITSUBISHI	12	3	300.0	10.1	23	11
KENWORTH	3			2.5	5	
FIAT	2	1	100.0	1.7	6	7
FORD	2	3	-33.3	1.7	2	4
OTHER	13	15	-13.3	10.9	28	54
TOTAL	119	91	30.8	100.0	224	210

USED LIGHT COMMERCIAL MAKES UNDER 3500KG – FEBRUARY 2015

MAKE	FEB '15	FEB '14	% Change	% of Market	YTD '15	YTD '14
TOYOTA	360	302	19.2	52.9	671	598
NISSAN	132	139	-5.0	19.4	262	247
MAZDA	34	21	61.9	5.0	77	47
FORD	24	22	9.1	3.5	41	58
MITSUBISHI	24	12	100.0	3.5	42	29
ISUZU	22	30	-26.7	3.2	50	68
HINO	13	7	85.7	1.9	31	17
CHEVROLET	12	17	-29.4	1.8	27	28
FIAT	9	4	125.0	1.3	21	18
HOLDEN	8	9	-11.1	1.2	17	22
OTHER	43	29	48.3	6.3	86	87
TOTAL	681	592	15.0	100.0	1325	1219

NEW TRACTOR REGISTRATIONS – FEBRUARY 2015

MAKE	FEB '15	FEB '14	% Change	% of Market	YTD '15	YTD '14
JOHN DEERE	33	65	-49.2	28.2	67	125
NEW HOLLAND	20	22	-9.1	17.1	40	46
CASE	13	1	1200.0	11.1	19	12
TRACTOR	10	8	25.0	8.5	19	10
DEUTZ-FAHR	8	13	-38.5	6.8	15	21
CLAAS	7	5	40.0	6.0	14	11
CASE IH	5	6	-16.7	4.3	11	16
MASSEY FERGUSON	5	5	0.0	4.3	16	15
KUBOTA	4	10	-60.0	3.4	10	18
FENDT	3	5	-40.0	2.6	7	15
OTHER	9	9	0.0	7.7	14	17
TOTAL	117	149	-21.5	100.0	232	306

USED TRACTOR REGISTRATIONS – FEBRUARY 2015

MAKE	FEB '15	FEB '14	% Change	% of Market	YTD '15	YTD '14
JOHN DEERE	8	8	0.0	12.9	21	23
MASSEY FERGUSON	7	10	-30.0	11.3	23	33
NEW HOLLAND	6	6	0.0	9.7	20	15
TRACTOR	6			9.7	7	7
DAVID BROWN	4	6	-33.3	6.5	4	8
INTERNATIONAL	4	3	33.3	6.5	5	5
SAME	4	1	300.0	6.5	5	3
OTHER	23	26	-11.5	37.1	51	49
TOTAL	62	60	3.3	100.0	136	144

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Automatic tyre changer for light commercial and passenger vehicles

It's the world's first fully automatic tyre changer for light commercial and passenger vehicle tyres, hence its US-based manufacturer, Hunter, has called it the Revolution.

The Revolution can handle a wide range of wheel and tyre combinations, from as small as 12-inch rims up to 30-inch rims (and up to 50-inch tyre diameters). Designed and made in the United States, the Hunter Revolution is powered by a 230V single phase motor, which enables it to be set up in any New Zealand workshop.

Hunter says that thanks to its fully automatic processes the Revolution allows technicians to change tyres effortlessly in around two minutes. It also operates in an identical manner, regardless of whether the tyre is standard, large, low profile or even a run-flat.



First demonstrated at last year's Automechanika in Frankfurt and the SEMA accessory show in Las Vegas, the new Hunter Revolution has been in high demand in the US and Europe since its release, according to local distributor Stocks Equipment.

It says that demand continues to be so strong that only a limited number were available for the first shipment to New Zealand.

"Until now, a workshop would put its more experienced people on the tyre changing machine, to ensure the job is done properly and there is no damage to an expensive alloy rim," says Stocks Equipment division general manager William Singleton.

"But operator experience is no longer a major factor. A less experienced technician can easily carry out this task because the Revolution is fully automatic – all the operator has to do is load the wheel on to the plate and step on the 'go' pedal for each of the functions. The machine pretty much does everything else.

Even loading the wheel/tyre is made much easier, thanks to the built-in lifter that takes all the effort from this operation, which saves operators from straining their backs, and then disappears out of the way.

Once the wheel is on the plate, the Leverless tool head breaks the bead and de-mounts the tyre without any damage to the rim or the rubber. All the technician is required to do is press down on the Go pedal at floor level and hold it, to allow the programme to sequence automatically – the operation can be paused by releasing the pedal at any time.

The whole operation – demounting an old tyre and replacing with a new one – takes little more than two minutes. The Revolution also has a fast inflation system that automatically fills the tyre to the desired pressure – Hunter says it's 33% faster than traditional foot pedal inflation systems.

"That factor alone should have people queuing up to buy the Revolution, because it will pay for itself very quickly with increased productivity," says Singleton.

The technician can see the steps on the touch screen display as the machine works through the programme and make any adjustments or changes as necessary, though there shouldn't be any need for them. As with many Hunter systems, there are animation and help videos that can be called up on to the screen to help technicians who require additional information and assistance.

Growth says Truckometer

Signals from the ANZ Truckometer in February are consistent with solid growth across the economy; and the economists are are picking nearly 3% annual average growth over 2015 – despite drought impacts.

While ANZ economists are keeping a nervous eye on offshore developments, with New Zealand's two largest trading partners experiencing slowing growth,

New Zealand itself is bucking that trend and showing considerable pep.

The ANZ Truckometer indices for light and heavy traffic flow gave a mixed picture in February – monthly indicators do typically oscillate from month to month.

The ANZ Heavy Traffic Index fell 1.3% in Februay, but it was off a strong lift over the previous two months (seasonally adjusted). The ANZ Light Traffic Index leads GDP by six months. It lifted 1% in February, after being flat the previous month (sa).

The two indexes show solid growth when monthly noise is smoothed out. The heavy traffic index lifted 1.7% in the three months to February and the light traffic index 1.4%.

Seasonally adjusted traffic flows fell on 8 of 11 roads in the Heavy Traffic Index in February, whereas traffic on 7 of 10 roads in the Light Traffic Index rose.

Accredited employers scheme a top priority

From an estimated pool of 4000+ motor industry employers only 28 are positioned to channel offshore talent as effectively as they could be. 99.3% of industry could potentially benefit from reading this article.

While it is refreshing to see many New Zealand employers training fresh skills, as indicated in earlier reports, the sustained growth many companies are experiencing is adding pressure to skills shortages.

Preparing to source international skills with ease while keeping up with training initiatives has proven a sensible solution for many medium to large motor industry employers. We are surprised more companies are not aware of the Immigration NZ Accredited Employers Scheme, and this article highlights the benefits.

Recently our immigration advisors recommended the following:

"In our opinion, the best step any company can make that is serious about securing top offshore talent is to become an accredited employer through Immigration NZ."

With the necessary preamble out the way, required for us to comply with immigration advice, let's just say we whole heartily agree with this comment.

If in doubt as to whether you should make the effort to become an accredited employer, you need to complete a quick GOOGLE search: Type in "Immigration NZ Accredited employers" and up will come the list of employers who have taken the effort to become accredited.



Russell Phillips is New Zealand's most experienced automotive recruiter, and has operated a specialist recruitment company since 1991. He reports for *AutoTalk* on the employment market monthly.
www.automotiveemployment.co.nz

Many of the state-owned enterprises are accredited including NZTA, Kiwi Rail, Solid Energy and more. So too are many of the national distributors and many leading dealership groups in both the automotive and heavy diesel sectors of industry. In all, 28 leading motor industry companies are now accredited.

Why have they taken this step and why should you? To answer this question the employer first needs to understand that the rules of engagement with Immigration NZ changed during the recession. Many occupations were removed from the essential skills lists during the recession and some occupations never featured on it in the first place. The following question and answer scenario explains the benefits - and this could apply to many other occupations.

Q [Candidate to recruiter] I am a top sales person living offshore, my licensed immigration advisor has recommended I secure a role with an employer who is accredited by Immigration NZ. Do you deal with any of these companies?

A. [Recruiter to candidate] Yes we do deal with employers who are accredited. The candidate may then be referred to an accredited employer. It is important to note that many candidates will also go directly to an employer who is accredited as they were directed by the Immigration Advisor to the Immigration NZ website where this list is posted.

Is your company on this list?

Given there are only 28 of these motor industry employers who are accredited by Immigration NZ, guess which employers are picking up a large share of talent channelled by the advisors?

While we work hard to help non-accredited employers secure top oversees hires, sometimes the candidate has no choice but to secure a role with an accredited employer. Of an estimated 4000+ auto industry employers, less than 28 are accredited, which means 99.3% of motor industry employers could potentially improve the channelling of offshore talent.

If I were an executive of a NZ national automotive or heavy diesel distributor, I may consider the benefits of becoming an accredited employer. I would not stop there either. I would also encourage those dealerships in my network to also become accredited.

If I was a dealer principal or CFO of a dealership, I would be proactive and take the initiative, making this my number one human resource priority.

BNZ's chief economist, Tony Alexander, commented in his weekly report, *The NZ Observer:* "Employment/jobs growth is very strong, at the end of last year employment was 3.5% ahead of a year earlier with fulltime job numbers up 3.8%. People are so confident of finding work that the participation rate (the proportion of the working age population in work or actively looking for it) rose to a record high of 69.7%."

This means New Zealand employers are by and large successfully extracting talent from the New Zealand labour market pool. It also means with unemployment decreasing, at the rate we are heading, talent is drying up. New Zealand government statisticians predict unemployment will move towards a low of 4%.

It is hard to imagine there will be sufficient skills available from the New Zealand talent pool and companies are competing against one another to secure the same skills. It makes becoming an accredited employer a no brainer!.....doesn't it?

The accreditation process does take time and there is a financial cost. Our recommendation is to engage the services of a licensed immigration advisor, and start the process. Automotive Employment NZ will happily recommend an immigration advisor if you do not already have one.

Retaining employees with good job benefits

Once you have quality employees on board, how do you keep them from jumping ship? One way is by offering a good 'benefits' package.

Many small-business owners mistakenly believe they cannot afford to offer benefits. But while going without benefits may boost your bottom line in the short run, this penny-wise philosophy could strangle your businesses chances for long-term prosperity. There are certain benefits good employees feel they would like to have.

Heading the list of like-to-have benefits is life and medical cover. If you tell these applicants no benefits are offered, often top-flight candidates will head for the door.

The positive side to this coin is if you offer the right benefit, then your business may just jump-start its growth. Give employees the benefits they value, they'll be more satisfied, miss fewer workdays, be less likely to quit, and have higher commitment to meeting the company's goals. If employees feel their benefits needs are satisfied, they'll be more productive.

A recent survey reveals workers are now after higher salaries and better benefits from employers rather than the need to feel secure. Job security was workers' number one priority in previous years. Now Kiwi employees are seeking better pay and improved workplace perks. More than 20% of New Zealanders now view a competitive salary and employee benefits as the most important factor in choosing an employer.

This is well up from previous years, with the number of Kiwis valuing long-term job security becoming less and less. A pleasant working atmosphere is now the third most important employment factor, with interesting job content coming fourth, followed by a good work/life balance. This level of flexibility, being a non-monetary benefit, is an easy way to increase levels of engagement and productivity in staff.



Eamon O'Connor is a director of O'Connor Warren Insurance Brokers, which specialises in transport and logistics insurance. He will be sharing his expertise on risk management and insurance matters in *DIESELtalk*. He can be contacted at: eamon@oconnorwarren.co.nz

Latest Statistics NZ figures show that there are over 35,000 businesses in New Zealand that employ more than 10 people – but only 2000 of them have group insurance for their people at the workplace.

The main benefits of employee insurance at the workplace are:

1. There is usually no need for medical underwriting to get cover

2. Employees often don't need to complete any paperwork at all – they are covered automatically

3. The premiums are extremely low through the bulk buying concept of a group programme

4. Getting a quote is easy. No names are needed – just dates of birth, occupation, salary, gender

Having a benefit like a life or medical programme in place can also help an employer attract and retain key people – particularly in a competitive labour market.

O'Connor Warren Transport has announced the launch of its new specialist life and health division. The development of what will be a key segment to our overall offering reflects demand for increased services from our growing client base. Do not hesitate to contact the O'Connor Warren Transport team to discuss all your business – and now life, health and employee benefits requirements.

HPMV permit applications now available online

A new online high productivity motor vehicle (HPMV) permitting system will be rolled out by the NZ Transport Agency nationwide after a successful implementation in Auckland.

This new system will enable all HPMV operators to apply for their permits online from mid-March 2015.

Applying online means operators will have the benefit of a system which offers a range of features including tracking each step of their permit's progress and remembering details to make repeat applications much easier and faster says the Transport Agency.



Harry Wilson

The Agency says the system will also enable permits to be processed more efficiently, saving time for both the NZTA permit issuing officers and customers.

Transport Agency freight director Harry Wilson says the new system is centralised, meaning that the permitting team will receive all permits through one channel.

"This means that our permit issuing officers will have a much better understanding of permit demand and so will have the ability to more effectively manage workflow which will speed up permitting time for our

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Ten-strong Daily fleet keeps it's cool

After trialling an Iveco Daily for use as an air-conditioning service vehicle several years ago, Queensland Thermo King (QTK) Group, made the shift to an all-Iveco fleet from another brand.

QTK Group sells and services a wide range of truck and trailer refrigeration equipment as well as bus and coach air conditioning systems. Servicing of the refrigeration units is undertaken by its technicians at customer sites and depots, sometimes hundreds of kilometres away from it's Brisbane headquarters.

The Iveco Daily service vehicles are fitted with custom-made bodies that feature internal work benches and storage for spare parts and trade-related tools. They can carry up to 200 litres of oil and enough equipment to stay on the road for a week without returning to home base.

A unique feature of the bodies is an extendable work platform. Once on site, the van is backed-up to the trailer with the technician undertaking repairs and maintenance on the refrigeration system from the safety of the enclosed work platform.

According to QTK group operations manager, Grant Turner, the company's refrigeration technicians also appreciate the Daily's comfortable driving environment.



"From Brisbane we have customers as far north as Bundaberg, we go inland of Toowoomba and as far south as Murwillumbah, and our technicians travel all manner of road conditions to get there," says Turner.

"The technicians can do big hours on site or can sometimes drive to five or six different locations in a day, and while cab over trucks are uncomfortable, the Daily is more like driving a car in terms of ride quality and seating position. They also have plenty of power (125 kW and 400 Nm) and handle well."



Most of QTK Group's technicians don't have heavy vehicle licences, and Turner says that the Daily provides a good combination of payload, drivability and robust underpinnings that have so far kept the fleet away from the workshop aside for scheduled maintenance.

"We've opted for the six-speed manual gearbox, on price it's hard to go past this specification and we've had a great run out of them – combined with cruise control the two work well. Our younger technicians are by no means experienced heavy vehicle operators, yet they're driving around in a vehicle that weighs more than four tonnes and the gearboxes are up to it," says Turner.

"We pretty much just put tyres and brakes on the Daily's, and even then we're getting 80,000 kilometres out of a set of tyres. Service intervals are out to 40,000 kilometres so we only need to have them worked on once a year."

He says that any downtime on the service vehicles is costly for QTK Group, both in terms of loss of income and also lost reputation.

"With the previous brand of van we were using, there were a few mechanical problems and tow trucks were always involved, it's not a particularly good look," says Turner.

"When vehicles are off the road it costs the company money, firstly to fix them and get them back on the road, and secondly there's lost revenue.

"And we need to also ensure high levels of service for our customers."

Continued from page 20

customers," says Wilson.

While the permit applications will be centralised, the decision to issue or decline a permit will still rest with each region's permit issuing officer.

Wilson says that operators will be able to continue using a manual system for permits indefinitely, although it is expected most will opt for the time-saving option of online applications.

The new system will be simple to use, and the permitting team will be on hand to help HPMV operators with support and advice, just email HPMVinfo@nzta.govt.nz

The online permitting system will be available through the Transport Agency websitehttp **://www.nzta.govt.nz/vehicle/your/hpmv/apply.html.**

Luxury workhorses

DIESELtalk managing editor Richard Edwards and editor Robert Barry each spent a week behind the wheel of the top of the line pick ups from Volkswagen and Holden. Here are their impressions of these luxury tough trucks.

Amarok Canyon

If you are a shrinking violet or prefer your daily driver to be a bit discreet then the Amarok Canyon in all of it's metallic copper orange glory, with the flared wheel-arches, 17-inch Roca alloy wheels, gloss black Canyon sport bar, Canyon roof light bar, and colour coded bumpers and mirrors, plus gloss black sill bars and rear bumper – isn't going to be your cup of tea.

If, however, you want to make a statement, this VW has "look at me" written all over it and you won't ever loose it in a car park. Theres a Canyon graphic which runs above the lower door sills which is complemented by another on the tailgate, least anyone not realise what you are driving.

The Canyon is kitted out with a New Zealand produced hard lid from Ute Master in black to complement the gloss black sport bar, and the metal load tray is protected by a very hard wearing and functional fitted 'bed rug' which is secured to the tray by velcro strips which means it can simply be 'unhooked' and lifted out for cleaning.

I'd never come across a 'bed rug' before and I have to say that it beats spray-on or plastic liners hands down, because loose items don't seem to slide around on it, and the ability to be able to pull it out and wash it with a hose is absolute genius.

With the bed rug, you still have access to the four tie down points in the bed if you need them.

Inside the car the orange theme continues with metallic orange accents around the circular internal air vents, and orange stitching on the Vienna art grey and anthracite leather upholstery, as well as the gearshift gaiter and steering wheel.

Our test vehicle had covered more than 8000km and while the engine and transmission are not even yet worn in, the lighter coloured upholstery on the height adjustable 'comfort' front seats was beginning to look a bit grubby, though all the other plastics and the interior in general was immaculate and nothing squeaked or rattled.





I can understand why many New Zealand buyers tend not to go for the lighter interiors even though they would be more preferable in our blazing summers than the funereal grey and charcoal interiors of many European vehicles.

The driver and front passenger both get one-touch seat heating, and the Canyon is fitted with semi-automatic climate controlled air con, as well as cruise control, electrically operated mirrors with defrost function, daytime running lights, rear camera, as well as front and rear parking sensors, which make placing the orange beast a lot easier in tight parking spots.

There's a factory Bluetooth system which hooks up quickly and the sound quality from the RCD 510 audio system is pretty crisp and clear.

Unfortunately, because of the height of the Canyon roof light bar (of which the lights work solely when full beam is selected by the driver) there were a number of parking buildings around Auckland that we had to forsake due to their height restrictions or we would have been coughing up for a replacement at $3000. Ouch.



Facts and figures: Volkswagen Amarok Canyon

- Price: $69,990
- Warranty: 36 months /100,000km
- Service interval: 20,000km or 12 months
- Safety: Driver and front seat passenger airbags, head protection airbags
- Crash rating: ANCAP Five-star
- Engine: Inline 4-cylinder twin turbodiesel 2-litre
- Transmission: 8-speed automatic
- Thirst: 8.3L/100km
- Dimensions: 5254mm(l), 2228mm(h), 1834mm(w).
- Towing capacity: 3000kg (braked capacity)
- Payload: 929kg
- Weight: 2111kg (unladen)
- Spare tyre: Full size alloy with OEM tyre
- Fuel tank capacity: 80 litres

Cleverly the rear bench seat in the Amarok Canyon is elevated higher than the front seats for increased visibility and the bench also has a 1/3 - 2/3 split upwards which allows extra storage space, or the back rest will fold down as one piece. There's also a small storage compartment for small items behind the bench seat, too.

Our test Canyon was specified with the 8-speed automatic transmission and a permanent four-wheel-drive sys-

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Amarok Canyon

Continued from page 22

tem which VW refers to as 4Motion. Should you prefer an on demand part time four-wheel-drive system, this is available with a six-speed manual transmission.

As the automatic Canyon is allowed another 20 Newton metres of torque to make a total of 420Nm from the 135kW 2-litre twin-turbo-charged diesel engine, rather than the 400Nm of the manual, you'd have to ask the question of why bother?

The combination of the maximum torque at 1750 rpm with an 8-speed transmission allows the Canyon to sprint away from standstill with very little fuss and drama. The beauty of the permanent 4Motion all-wheel-drive is that it makes the Canyon extremely car-like to drive and you need not worry about fish-tailing around corners in the wet, as leaf sprung pick ups are often known to do.

The Canyon does retain the traditional ladder frame chassis and rear leaf suspension as its competitors, which it needs to in order to be able to offer a decent payload of 929kg and a braked towing capacity of 3000kg.

Our week with the Canyon coincided with a number of outdoor social events and the vehicle was put to good use easily carrying trestle tables, portable BBQs, boxes of food and alcohol, as well as humans hither and yon. Everyone who rode in it complimented its ride comfort and amount of leg and head room.

Parting with the Canyon was bittersweet, its user friendliness and functionality as well as high specification and good on-road driving dynamics had won me over. This is one luxury workhorse that really does deliver the goods.

Colorado LTZ

The Holden Colorado has never been a star in the utility market.

Plugging away in third from a market perspective, the Colorado is one of the 'big boys' - like the Ford Ranger being a step larger than most of the other players in the ute market.

Going up in size pays dividends. The Colorado has a decent cabin should you need to carry a genuine crew, and it outguns most of its competitors with its headline 3500kg.

If there is one thing I have picked up driving these larger utes, it is that they are no harder to live with from the perspective of space - they do not feel that much harder to park for instance - but the extra cabin space makes a big difference.

Late last year Holden acknowledged what their high end commercials were being used for, and revised the LTZ to a new 'comfort' suspension package - revising spring firmness and damper tune. The effect is akin to the old ute track of chucking a few bags of cement in the tray. It feels far most stable and removing the empty tray bounce.

The downside - load drops from over a tonne to 849kg, not huge, but enough.

There were slight changes to the interior, new piano-black dash trim, but nothing major. The Colorado is a little dowdy inside compared to Ranger and Amarok, but is a comfy and usable workspace. A new sound-deadening package has also made a significant difference.

A big nod needs to Holden's MyLink system. It is a thoroughly decent touch-screen infotainment system, which includes the handy BringGo GPS system - housed in an app on your smartphone rather than coming with the vehicle.





The Duramax 2 2.8-litre diesel does great work, feeling brisk - and noise levels have improved over time with the model. The six-speed automatic is a reasonably smart shifter, but its aggressive hill-braking mode possibly needs an off-switch.

Handling is, well, ute-like. Amarok and Ranger may be chasing car-like levels of response, but the Colorado seems happy to be what it is. It is not bad, far from it. But not the sharpest tool on offer.

The Colorado is not the fine tailored work suit that the Amarok tries to be, and it is ok with that. It is more a pair of Dickies overalls and a high-vis jacket. And happy at that.



Holden Colorado LTZ 4X4 Crew Cab

- Price: $69,990 (but they will currently sell you one for $38,990 plus GST)
- Warranty: 36 months/100,000km
- Service interval: 9 months or 15,000km
- Safety: Front, side and full-length curtain airbags
- Crash rating: Five-star Uncap
- Engine: Inline four-cyclinder, 2.8-litre diesel
- Power: 147kW@3600rpm
- Torque: 500Nm@2000rpm (Auto only)
- Transmission: Six-speed automatic with Active Select
- Thirst: 9.1L/100km (auto)
- Dimensions: 5347(l), 1882(w), 1780(h)
- Towing capacity 3500kg (braked
- Payload: 849kg LTZ
- Spare tyre: Full size
- Fuel tank capacity: 76 litres

And at the current prices Holden is offering it is a heck of a lot of ute for the money.



EROAD RUC Star supervising

EROAD

"EROAD's over speed report is invaluable to me as the health and safety manager.

"It allows me to monitor our drivers' speeds at all times. I use the daily activity and fuel exception reports to ensure nothing looks out of the ordinary.

"EROAD is the total package though - it's awesome!"

Gordon Jolly
Health, Safety & Environmental Manager
MWN Civil Limited
Auckland

RUC STAR: MWN Civil

INDUSTRY: Construction and Civil Contracting



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