

Hino 300 Series 4X4: Tried, tested & proven 4 Australia

Devised specifically with the Australian fire services in mind, and thoroughly tried, tested and proven for Australian conditions, the Hino 300 Series 4x4 sets a new benchmark for light duty 4x4 truck specifications and driving performance.



Daniel Petrovski

Daniel Petrovski has been the Manager of Product Strategy for Hino Trucks and Buses in Australia since 2014. His role incorporates the critical business functions of all product planning and strategies for all Hino vehicles in Australia. He writes about the extensive testing process Hino undertook in developing its new 300 Series 4x4 light duty truck.

The Hino 300 Series 4x4 is available in single cab and crew cab configurations, both powered by a 165hp (121kW), 464Nm, 4 litre diesel engine mated to a 6-speed manual overdrive transmission and a dual range 4x4 transfer case – this driveline combination offers exceptional flexibility and efficiency both on and off-road.

Operational safety is class leading with the standard inclusion of Vehicle Stability Control (VSC), a first for a Japanese-built truck in this category, together with 4-wheel-disc brakes and a reversing camera.

The 4x4's six-speed manual transmission and a two-speed transfer case provide the ideal combination of gears to suit any terrain. A 6.369:1 first

gear transmission ratio and a low range gear ratio of 2.2:1 enables a crawling speed of just 2.3 km/h for the trickiest of off-road conditions.

In developing the vehicle, Hino conducted focus groups and test drives with key fire authorities around Australia, which provided us with input into the payload, safety and performance specifications they require from a light duty 4x4 truck.

There was strong feedback from all involved that the ride and handling of the Hino 300 4x4 is superior to the offerings of the competitors.

As a result, the Hino 300 Series 4x4 features:

■ **7.5 tonne Gross Vehicle Mass (GVM)**

When we were developing the truck, there was not a vehicle in this category with a payload over 6.5 tonne GVM. So we developed the truck with a 7.5 tonne GVM.

▼ **The Hino 300 Series 4x4 features more safety, more power and torque, more gears and more comfort than its competitors.**



Image courtesy of Hino Trucks

■ **More power and torque than competitors:**

With a 165Hp (121 kW) engine that produces 464Nm of torque, the Hino 300 Series 4x4 delivers more power and torque than its Japanese 4x4 competitors.

■ **Highest level of safety in its class**

The Hino 300 Series 4x4 is the safest Japanese-built truck in its class with an impressive list of standard features including Driver and Passenger SRS airbags, Vehicle Stability Control, 4 wheel disc brakes and reverse camera. It's the only 7,500kg Gross Vehicle Mass (GVM) 4x4 truck in Australia with Vehicle Stability Control and reverse camera as standard features.

■ **4-wheel disc brakes**

All fire authorities we consulted with agreed – disc brakes were preferred due to superior stopping and easier servicing.

■ **Comfort**

The ergonomically designed interior features a magnetically dampened driver's suspension seat in both the single and crew cab models. Importantly, the Hino 300 Series 4x4 features a surefooted step arrangement and longer grips for three points of contact for all occupants when entering and exiting the truck. Crew cab models also feature independent rear crew passenger air-conditioning and heating to suit fire authorities operating in the extremes of the Australian climate.

■ **Chassis**

The Hino 300 Series 4x4 chassis allows easy body mounting, and flexibility to move components around to suit individual agencies requirements.

■ **Local development of accessories**

Hino has also developed a bull bar with 18,000 pound winch capability.

■ **Raised air intake**

This minimises dust intake on dirt roads and is a feature that was upgraded following our in-field testing.

Extensive Australian testing

Prototypes of the Hino 300 Series 4x4 have been used in day-to-day operations with a number of customers across Australia with two customers



Images courtesy of Hino Trucks

▲ **A low range gear ration of 2.2:1 enables a crawling speed of 2.3km/hr for the trickiest of off-road conditions.**

▶ **A raised air intake minimises dust intake on dirt roads and is a benefit during water crossings.**



taking part in long-term field testing: Cook Shire Council in Far North Queensland and Kennedy Drilling in remote Western Australia.

Hino test engineers have studied the vehicles in these operations, and those learnings combined with the testing carried at its durability facilities in Japan

produced a model purpose-built for Australian applications.

Hino has been testing prototypes of the 4x4 for over three years, with real-world customers whose feedback has enabled us to refine the specification of a truck built specifically for the Australian market.



Image courtesy of Hino Trucks

Real world testing

**Cook Shire Council,
Far North Queensland**

Mr Scott Johnson, Fleet and Operations Manager for Cook Shire Council is effusive in his praise of the prototype vehicle:

“It’s been an asset to our fleet and we’ve had minimal downtime with it – it’s gone everywhere we’ve asked it to, and carried out all the tasks we’ve requested of it,” said Mr Johnson who is also an Acting Lieutenant for the Cooktown Auxiliary Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES).

“The Cook Shire Council goes from Cooktown to the Jardine River in Cape York – we have 1600 kilometres of unsealed road in that area.

“We’ve had the prototype truck for three years now and we’ve done over 40,000 kilometres in it, at least 90% of that has been on dirt roads in operational use.

Mr Johnson gave his team the instruction to “use it but not abuse it” when driving the truck.

“It’s been with the road crew and the bridge crew working throughout Cape York and has done some hard yards on the corrugations with loads – there’s not many places it hasn’t been up here.

“The drivers like it, it’s one of their

favourite trucks for taking north in that range of trucks.

“It’s got through everywhere and we’ve carted it through with full loads, up and down hills, water crossings, and it’s still running,” he said.

**Kennedy Drilling
- Kalgoorlie, Western Australia**

Our second field-test customer, Kennedy Drilling specialises in RC, RAB and air core drilling and has an area of operation that covers almost all of Western Australia out through Northern Territory, over to Mt Isa in Queensland and down through South Australia.

They cover more than half of the country, and a lot of that is off-road, or severe off-road, towing trailers and operating through the scrub – it is essentially one of the harshest operations that we could find.

Maintenance Supervisor at Kennedy Drilling, Wade Bransgrove was also pleased with the truck, and was particularly impressed with the low range torque and hill climbing abilities:

“The low range torque has been perfect – it has definitely climbed up some rocky hills. Off road hillwise, it’s damn near unstoppable”

Mr Bransgrove was particularly taken with the air intake:

▲ An example of the Hino 300 Series prototype tested in Far North Queensland by Cook Shire Council.

“The low air intake on the test truck sucked up the dust but the most impressive thing for me was that the intake never bypassed.

“I’ve seen a lot of filters get to that point, they start to crush and let dirt passed and there goes your engine.

“I purposely let it do 10,000 kilometres before even checking if it could cope – and it could.

“The raised intake is going to be even better again.”

One of Hino guiding attributes of durability was also evident in the Kalgoorlie testing.

“We have taken it on trips when the truck has been loaded well and truly to GVM with a 3.5 tonne trailer behind it – it did 1,000 kilometres on a dirt road like that and we didn’t have any problem with brakes or driveline, it took that in its stride very well.”

The Hino 300 Series 4x4 is available from Hino dealerships nationwide.

 For more information, go to hino.com.au/300/4x4/