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Issue 123 2019

HINO LAUNCHES A NEW STANDARD

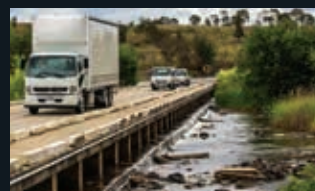


**WE HEAD TO JAPAN
TO GET THE INSIDE STORY**

ISSN 2206-1495



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New
Model

A NEW STANDARD



THERE IS ALWAYS A LOT HANGING ON A NEW TRUCK LAUNCH, THAT GOES WITHOUT SAYING AND IN THE CASE OF HINO'S NEW STANDARD CAB 500 SERIES IT IS ESPECIALLY TRUE. T&TA WENT TO JAPAN TO FIND OUT ALL THERE IS TO KNOW ABOUT SECOND PART OF HINO'S NEW 500 SERIES MODELS AND RECKON THEY MIGHT HAVE A WINNER ON THEIR HANDS.

If there is one area where out and out market leader Isuzu is potentially vulnerable it is in the bottom end of medium duty. It is here where Hino is closest to its archrival in volume and where the new Standard Cab 500 Hino will play.

The Standard cab comes to market 18 months after Hino launched its bigger medium duty models, the Wide Cab 500 as it has dubbed them.

The new Standard Cabs first broke cover at the 2017 Tokyo Motor Show and Hino has been hard at work refining the spec and the detail for the Australian versions in the year since then.

The trade press were hosted in Japan by Hino in November to preview the new Standard Cab 500. It's been 12 years since Hino hosted the Australian truck media to its home country, which only serves to underline how important the new truck is to the company.

Hino will tell you it is happy to be a profitable number two in the market rather than pursuing Isuzu in a status race for number one and sacrificing the profit in the process. However no matter which way you look at it Hino is in the business of selling trucks and the more the better so if they can get an advantage and take some sales from its opposition, then so be it.

In fact that is exactly what it believes will happen with the strategy it has adopted with the new Standard Cab 500, but then again every manufacturer says that at launch.

In this instance Hino has put most of its eggs in the safety and standard equipment basket choosing to spec the new range with the largest array of primary and secondary safety features that has ever been seen in a medium duty truck in Australia.

Hino says it has crunched the numbers, spoken with key fleets and its dealers and believes it can sell an extra 300 FC, FD, FE 500 series models in 2019 over the 2018 tally for the trucks that will be directly updated by the new models.

The company's general manager of brand and franchise development, Bill Gillespie reckons that to take those extra 300 sales it will mean winning sales away from that ever present dominant rival Isuzu and probably Fuso as well. That will not be an easy task as we proffered earlier.

It is not easy to directly compare segment sales numbers, based on the Truck Industry Council's stats, because there is an overlap with the light duty sector as well as another overlap with the heavy segment at the upper end with the Wide Cab 500 Series. So just looking at the Medium Duty

numbers on the TIC spreadsheet can be confusing. However if Hino does meet its goals and sells another 300 Standard Cab 500s next year and the extra 500 as it hopes to sell in 2020, then it believes a lot of those sales will come from Isuzu. Only time will tell if Hino can win the hearts and cheque books of those often loyal Isuzu buyers.

Having said that Hino will be serving up an incredibly well equipped, economical and up to the minute truck that will meet Euro 6 specs through Japan's pPNLT (post Post New Long Term) emission standards, making it potentially the greenest of the Japanese bunch in this sector of the market.

Hino customers will be able to choose from 54 different vehicle specifications across the 500 Series Standard Cab range of FC, FD and FE models giving a wide array of variants to fill various niches.

As we said earlier and as Hino drove home to Aussie journos on the media trip, safety will play a key role in the way the company markets this new truck. Hino claims it is the best equipped, light medium truck to ever hit Australian roads and we have to agree with the claim, thanks to a list of standard features that includes a Pre-Collision System, Vehicle Stability Control, Autonomous emergency braking, pedestrian detection, a reverse camera with infra-red night vision capability with audio and Safety Eye to name some of the systems the truck has as standard.

The new truck also includes Adaptive Cruise Control and a Lane Departure Warning System. The Adaptive Cruise Control maintains the speed set by the driver and utilises the Safety Eye to continuously scan the road in front of the truck. If a slower vehicle is detected in front, it will reduce the engine acceleration and even engage the engine brake to adapt the truck's speed to that of the other vehicle.

Daniel Petrovski, Hino Australia's manager of product strategy, reckons the level of safety on this truck has never been seen before in a Japanese-built medium duty truck in Australia.

"This is complemented by the superior torque, increased power and reduced fuel consumption of the all-new heavy-duty Hino A05 turbo charged five-litre four-cylinder diesel engine," said Petrovski.

Hino claims that it is the only Japanese manufacturer to offer Vehicle Stability Control (VSC) as standard equipment on every on-road model in its light and medium duty ranges, from the 300 Series light duty to the 500 Series 6x4 350 horsepower FM models.



"THE INTERIOR IS QUITE UNIQUE IN THE AUSTRALIAN TRUCK LANDSCAPE, WITH INCREASED DAY-TO-DAY FUNCTIONALITY"



Along with the list of high tech crash avoidance systems Hino says the new Standard Cabs also boast an impressive list of passive safety features including a driver SRS airbag, in-built UN ECE R29-rated cab strength on single cab models and ADR84/00 compliant Front Underrun Protection (FUP).

Apart from a new cab and all that safety the other headline feature in the new truck is the aforementioned new modular five-litre four cylinder turbo diesel A05 engine, which is based on its larger sibling, the AO9, seen in the larger updated 500 Wide Cabs launched 18 months ago. The AO5 is as we say, modular, so like its counterparts at Scania, Hino is using lots of common componentry across the two engines despite the fact that one is a four and the other is a six.

The high capacity four cylinder does have good torque as we sampled in an all too brief drive in several variants of the new 500 on a Hino proving track near Tokyo. It felt flexible and tractable including in some hill starts and stop go driving. We'd like a more detailed and searching test of the new truck which will come in our next edition

but on the surface the engine is smooth, quiet and flexible and apparently proving very economical.

Hino will serve up three different power ratings across the 500 Standard Cab range all using the four cylinder five-litre, with the 11-tonne rated FC and FD models using the A05-TE with 240hp at 2300RPM and 794Nm of torque at 1400RPM.

The 14 tonne GVM rated FE crew models are powered by the A05-TD with 240hp at 2300RPM but with more torque at peak of 833Nm at 1400RPM, while the top of the range 11 tonne FD and 14 tonne FE models receive the A05C-TC with peak power of 260hp at 2300RPM and a class-leading torque rating of 882Nm at 1400RPM.

Another addition that will win friends is the fact that the new Standard Cab is the first Japanese medium duty truck below 15 tonnes GVM in Australia to be fitted with a true engine brake.

"This means that medium duty market customers can now benefit from the improved drivability and operational efficiency that the Jake brake can deliver," said Daniel Petrovski.

Mated to the new A05 engines is an array

of transmissions that will please just about every sector of the market with Allison's six-speed 2500 Series automatic now available across the entire cab chassis range with the Standard Cab 500, which Daniel Petrovski says is a move that confirms the trend to automatics in the Australian market.

Alongside the Allison auto, manuals will still be available with the six speed Hino LX06 fitted to the 240 horse FC and FD 1124 and the new MX06 six-speed manual in the 260 horse FD models, while the 260 horse FE models get the new MX07 seven-speed manual with an additional cog and Hino claims a wider ratio spread than its Japanese rivals.

An AMT option on the MX06 six and MX07 boxes is also being offered on the FD and FE.

While Euro 6 is yet to be legislated in Australia, Hino, as we mentioned before, has set the bar high with the pPNLT A05 engines and there compliance to the equivalent of Euro 6, which still hold some appeal to a growing number of fleets needing strong environmental and emission credentials in their trucks.

So breaking down the model mix within

the three Standard Cab variants and the FC model is now rated at the same 11-tonne GVM as its sibling the FD delivering a significant increase in payload for the FC, while FE models continue to be offered with wither a 12 tonne or 14 tonne GVM depending on operational requirements. Hino is also crowing about its FC factory tipper, which has been given a significant boost thanks to that new 11 tonne GVM.

There are now three Standard Cab variants offered with a short cab on the FC, what Hino is calling a rest cab with an ADR42 compliant sleeper available on both the FD and FE along with a crew cab available in both FD and FE. Interestingly the crew cab variant is new to the FE with Hino claiming it is the only Japanese 14tonne 4x2 crew cab available on the market.

One thing that will raise comment and spur interest in the new Hinos is a departure from the boring grey interiors that have so long been the benchmark for Japanese 'white box' trucks. Instead Hino will have striking reddish brown contrast panels across the cockpit along with a Toyota inspired dash and instrument layout that

will we believe become the new standard amongst light and medium duty trucks.

An ISRI suspension seat is now standard across the range and that will give Hino a big boost thanks to the comfort and usability it delivers for professional drivers at the wheel for long hours. Hino has chosen the ISRI NTS2 driver's seat, which it says is the first time the newest version of ISRI's popular 6860 / 870 has been fitted standard to a Japanese truck.

"The ISRI 6860 has been the benchmark seat in terms of driver comfort and with the new NTS2 version, the driver has the benefit of improved comfort, extra adjustability in rear seat travel, and improved safety courtesy of SRS pretensioner seatbelt and a seatbelt warning reminder," Petrovski added.

Hino obviously says the aim has been to provide increased comfort, functionality and practicality with its ergonomically-designed dash and a new smart Multimedia touch screen system as well as all-new instrumentation and a larger LCD multi-information display.

The truck gets a new multi-function steering wheel with a rotary switch on the

left providing fingertip control of the multi-information display while the right hand rotary switch controls the Adaptive Cruise Control Hino claims this is another first for medium duty Japanese trucks in Australia.

Stealing an idea from upmarket Jaguar and Land Rovers the transmission control for AMT equipped Standard Cabs is a new rotary gear selector on the dash that toggles between drive, neutral and reverse while gear selections can also be controlled manually via a gear selector paddle on the steering column.

"The interior is quite unique in the Australian truck landscape, with increased day-to-day functionality, practicality and comfort, all set in a balance of carbon, silver and earthy tones," said Petrovski.

Externally the new Standard Cab has a new look that follows the family styling trend started with the Wide Cab with a new two bar grille and an enlarged Hino badge while headlamps with integrated indicators are set into the bumper. In the case of the FD and FE those headlights are the latest LED versions with integrated daytime running lights and fog lamps.

As a further fillip to its environmental



credentials Hino is claiming that the new truck is made from materials that will allow at least 95 per cent of the truck by weight, to be recycled at the end of its life.

“Our commitment to the environment at a local and global level goes far beyond the cleaner, greener operation of the new truck,” continued Daniel Petrovski.

“At our Koga Plant, where the 500 Series Standard Cab is produced, we have made many changes to the way we operate, from the reuse and recycling of water to reduce water consumption, the reduction of energy use in cooling and heating and the use of geothermal ventilation for climate control purposes.

“These are only some of the environmental initiatives that we are implementing as part of our Hino Environmental Challenge 2050,” he concluded.

Clearly the culture at Hino has changed significantly in the past decade and there is now a far more discernible ‘Toyota-isation’ of the truck maker in line with the Japanese giant’s controlling shareholding in it. This is seen in everything from the

company’s new production facility at Koga to the large number of executives who have come into Hino from Toyota roles and in the technology and design cues that pervade new models.

It is not a bad thing, Toyota is a large, wealthy and highly resourced automotive giant which will enable Hino to move faster and further than its rival Isuzu in a global development sense in the coming years.

Interestingly the recently announced technology tie up with VW’s Traton signals that even a Toyota controlled truck company can gain something from a cooperative agreement with a competitor. While some may see this as a VW take over, they are a long way from the reality. In fact the way we read it is a two-way tech flow where Traton has as much to learn from Hino as Hino does from its German counterparts.

Trust us Toyota would never cede control of its truck maker to a global rival. While the likes of GM and Ford got out of truck making and heavy vehicle businesses a decade or so ago the reality is that the smart

auto makers realise the value and synergies that can be had from having a profitable truck maker in their portfolios and in this we cite Daimler, VW and Toyota.

Interestingly Ford is re-entering the heavy truck market with its International Truck of the Year the F-Max in Europe from its Turkish plant while GM has started rebadging Isuzus in the States and looking at truck technology opportunities beyond its popular large pick up base. So with Toyota, Daimler and VW making the right call their US rivals are now trying to get back in, you can bet Toyota won’t be giving up on its Hino asset anytime soon.

Can the Standard Cab 500 make a dent in Isuzu’s massive lead in Australia? Yes, on paper, potentially it can. The problem with making predictions in this business is that the crystal ball can often be damaged on the rough road of truck selling and turning that potential into real sales is often more difficult than it seems. Only time will tell if the Standard Cab can win those extra sales for Hino but it certainly won’t be lacking in terms of spec or resources and most importantly the will to do it. 