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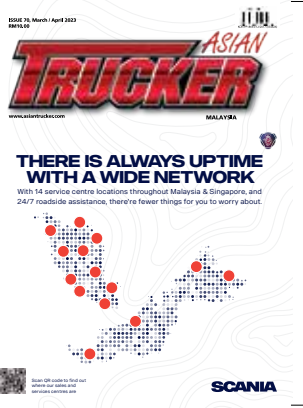
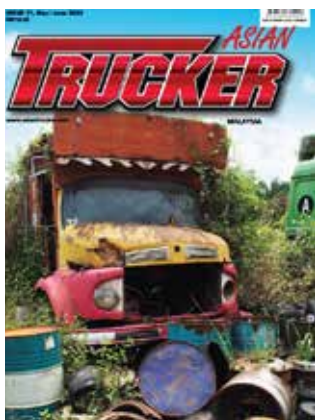


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Scania's Ecolution, they are currently the poster children of the initiative. When we interviewed their driver for the last issue's Trucker of the Month, we did not know that there was more to the story.

Another trucker has now been able to talk about his experience driving an electric van. The German courier service DHL has made a bold decision to add these vehicles to their fleet in a bid to do more for the environment. With a substantial distance now driven in this battery electric vehicle, we can now learn from his experience and transfer what we have learned to the bigger, heavy duty trucks which are now being introduced by the European manufacturers. Today, these trucks may still be exotics, but soon they will be a daily sight. On that note, I will be heading to Shanghai to speak at the Automechanika about the subject of Infrastructure for Electromobility.

Localisation is a hot topic too. Mercedes-Benz Trucks has taken a giant leap forward with the localization of their production in China. Not surprisingly, China is the biggest commercial vehicle market globally and being close to customers is important for any brand. Having reached a critical mass, a brand will benefit greatly from being more localised, more naturalised if you wish. In addition to setting up their localised business, Mercedes-Benz Trucks also boldly registered a service brand with Chinese characteristics and a sense of affinity called "BEN HAO YUN. What all this means in detail is being revealed in our country report.

Also on trial are new tail lifters, Hino trucks as first foray into having an inhouse fleet, a HAMMAR Sideloader and many other tools, assets, trucks and ideas that you will find in this issue. Maybe some of these daring endeavours have encouraged you to also try something new, something bold? If so, I would like to hear from you and how you managed as I can also learn from any innovation.

Drive safe, be safe

Stefan Pertz
Editor, Asian Trucker

To Boldly Go

Eventually, the theme from Startrek had to be used in one of my columns. This issue of Asian Trucker seems to be fitting under that motto. Earlier this year I had the idea to look at trucks on islands. In July I finally turned that into an exploration to Langkawi where I learned a lot about the boldness it takes to operate trucks there. While the idea of getting goods to the island via a ferry seems to be an easy undertaking, it is not. Interviewing operators from diverse industries, I found that there is a lot more to running trucks on an island, especially when it is a duty free zone. Venture straight to our cover story if you would also discover the secrets we unearthed.

Tapping into the SME market is Angka-Tan with a really fun vehicle, the JMC Vigus Pro White Series. Having had the opportunity to grab one for a test drive, I found the vehicle to be a fun-packed pick-up truck. Without much hesitation, I offered to help with the shopping for family members in lieu of stacking bricks into the bed of the truck. There was much to find out about the Vigus and I can conclude that the launch of the vehicle may have been a bold move, but surely one that will be rewarded as you will find out in our test drive report.

Trusting in the expertise of their truck supplier, Startrek not only has a fitting name to meet the above theme, but their boldness has given them a triple crown; the reward for their hard work in optimising their fleet operations can now be measured in dollars, cents and CO2 saved. While they are not the only ones partaking in the



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SCANIA

Starting Out with the Right Product



Dipping their toes into the world of road transport, Transcargo Worldwide Sdn Bhd banks on Hino as a dependable partner. Their order makes it one of the biggest for Truck Solutions Sdn Bhd.

A good year ago, Truck Solutions Sdn Bhd opened the strategically situated in West Port area. During the opening, Truck Solutions Executive Director, Edward Tan Kim Siong told Asian Trucker that the rationale for placing the Hino flag here was that there was a lack of support for the brand in the West Port area, especially for those operating in logistics and transport services. The idea to provide total support to customers of Hino Motors Sales (Malaysia) Sdn Bhd (HINO) has since born fruit and among many other customers, Transcargo Worldwide Sdn Bhd stands out, having received a batch of Hino vehicles on 10 August 2023.

Founded and headed by Ong Chin Kian and Ong Chin Keong, twins who are true blue freight forwarders who even know the exact time they were born apart, Transcargo Worldwide has rapidly grown since its inception 17 years ago. Initially a freight forwarder, the company has set up its main operation near KLIA in order to handle airfreights. They point out that they are somewhat special as they are one of the few that offer airfreight consolidation from Germany, having goods arrive twice a week. Over the years, the company has expanded into Penang and Johor as well; today, they are a leading integrated service provider in the country.

The move to add trucks has been motivated by their demand to be offering the best service possible. Ong (Chin Koeng) said that for certain clients the dependency on third parties for the transportation is not an ideal

situation “We want to be more flexible while also ensuring that we control the quality of the delivery of our services.” He went on to say that of the trucks they have received some would not immediately be put into service as they have yet to find drivers that qualify. “We check the drivers real thoroughly, from health screening to their track record with summons. Transcargo Worldwide would not want to employ just any driver simply because we have trucks now.” On the occasion, Transcargo Worldwide received 17 Hino Trucks, which added to their existing three entitles them for tax incentives, thus making the purchase an attractive one. The batch is broken down into ten units of Hino 300 Series Pro and seven Hino 500 Series.

The vehicles have been packaged with the Hino Membership Premium Plus, which gives Transcargo Worldwide a seven-year warranty for unlimited

milage with free brake lining provided as well as free brake discs every 60 000 Kilometres. Ong (Chin Kian) told Asian Trucker that the trucks are not only fitted with the HINO Connect Telematics system, which offers convenient access via the myHINO mobile app, but also with other tech-goodies. “Each truck is installed with three cameras. One dashcam to monitor the road ahead, one that is inside the cabin to monitor the driver and the third is installed inside the box so that we can monitor loading and unloading processes. We are planning to offer real time access of the streams to selected key customers as we want to be absolutely transparent with our services as well as offering a superior service to them.” Beyond the stringent requirements to join, Transcargo Worldwide and Hino are already in discussion about a full-fledged training programme for Transcargo Worldwide’s drivers at the Hino Total Support Centre in Sendayan.

Tan, representing Hino as their official dealer added that he has been delighted to have secured this client. “We clinched the deal based on the Hino promise of quality, durability and dependability. All these are very important aspects for clients like this as their reputation depends on timely delivery.” He further remarked that it is unusual that a client would make such a heavy investment now, considering that there is a lot of talk about the market softening. However, Ong and Ong stated that they aware of this, however, they see this as an opportunity to expand now and be ready for an eventual upswing. “I can see that the plan to set up a Hino dealership here was a good, a right move for us. That said, now starts the hard part where we need to provide a top-notch aftersales service in order to keep these clients that have given us their trust.”





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MAN is the Choice for Mekar Angkut

Kota Bahru-based Mekar Angkut Sdn Bhd has taken delivery of 15 units of the new Euro V-powered MAN TGS prime movers as it expands its transport business.

The company's new MAN Truck fleet comprises ten units of the MAN TGS 4x2 variant used as car carriers and five units of 6x2 variant used as tankers for carrying palm oil. At a simple handover ceremony held at MAN Malaysia's new integrated headquarters at Shah Alam, Mekar Angkut Executive Chairman Che Ibrahim bin Che Ismail explained his reasons for choosing the new MAN TGS.

"We have had good experience with the performance and reliability of MAN Buses in our express bus business, Ekspres Mutiara. Initially, there were some reservations about the aftersales support since we are based at Kota Bahru. However, after personally seeing their current set-up and investment at Shah Alam and receiving the firm commitment from its management, I am convinced and confident that we have made the right choice," said Che Ibrahim, popularly known as Pak Nik.

According to MAN Malaysia Managing Director Andrew O'Brooks, MAN Trucks with Euro V engines as standard lead the way in driver orientation, fuel efficiency, assistance systems, digital networking and above all, sustainability.

Nasrun Osnan has driven several brands of European and Japanese trucks before in his 10 years as a truck driver. His latest ride is a brand-new Euro V-powered MAN TGS 4x2, one of new MAN Trucks purchased by Mekar Angkut Sdn Bhd.

The new MAN had already clocked more than 1 000 km when we caught up with him and asked him for his verdict. "The MAN TGS's power and pick-up are excellent. It will just take off with a touch on the accelerator. Climbing hills is easy and you feel safe taking corners. Gear shifts are smooth."

When probed further about what else did he like about the new MAN TGS, he resoneded that "The small steering wheel is almost car-like and the cabin is spacious with a comfortable bed at the back. Overall, it is a very good truck!"

With his easy smiles and eagerness to strike different poses, Muhammad Shahiran bin Maslan looks like he is having fun all the time. But his job is serious and the responsibility heavy. He delivers brand new cars from an assembly plant in Rawang on his double-deck car carrier to dealers all over the country.

His MAN Truck, in striking red and black camouflage pattern that is synonymous with Kota Bahru-based transporter Mekar Angkut Sdn Bhd, is often the centre of attraction in rest areas. Fellow truckers would amble over and check out the features.

Our question was simple – how is your experience with the new Euro V-powered MAN TGS 4x2 that he had just been assigned to drive by his employers?

"The MAN TGS's retarder is simply the best. You don't need to step on the brakes and the truck will descend steadily, even with a heavy load. I love the design and the seat is very comfortable, like those you find in sports cars!" **F**





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RISDA Fleet Receives Four Hino Prime Movers

RISDA Fleet Sdn Bhd is expanding its transportation fleet by adding more HINO prime movers, demonstrating a strong reliance on the trusted HINO brand.

Hino Motors Sales (Malaysia) Sdn Bhd with Soon Seng Motors Enterprise (1988) Sdn Bhd has recently handed over four units of 700 series trucks, model SS1EKRA to its existing fleet customer, RISDA Fleet Sdn Bhd. The handover ceremony took place at Hino Total Support Customer Centre (HTSCC) in Sendayan.

Established on February 2, 2002, RISDA Fleet Sdn Bhd operates as part of the RISDA Holdings Group of Companies (RISDA), which is a subsidiary of the Rubber Smallholders Development Authority (KRH), an agency under the Ministry of Rural and Regional Development (KKDW). RISDA Fleet serves as the logistics division for both RISDA and KRH, facilitating the distribution of agricultural input subsidies as part of the RISDA rubber replanting program, primarily benefiting rubber smallholders in Malaysia.

Present as the Guest of Honour was Encik Ahmad Zainal bin Abdullah, Deputy Director General of Development, RISDA, to witness and officiate the ceremony. The four units of trucks were handed over by the Director of Hino Malaysia, Ahmad Yasmin Yahya, together with the Director of Soon Seng Motors Enterprise, Jason Lee, to the Chairman of the Board Director for RISDA Fleet, Dato' Hj Mohamad Sahfri bin Ab Aziz.

Commenting on the occasion, Ahmad Yasmin Yahya remarked, "On the occasion of RISDA's 50th anniversary, we extend our gratitude to RISDA Fleet for entrusting us as a transportation solution. We are honoured to contribute to their growth journey with Hino trucks. The HINO Prime Mover is a part of our 700 Series model line-up and signifies our commitment to product quality and safety enhancement."

Having strong confidence in the Hino brand, the Chairman of the Board Director for RISDA Fleet, Mohamad Sahfri bin Ab Aziz highlighted the factors that influenced their decision to choose the HINO brand, "Hino laid a strong foundation for us, particularly through truck trials and technical support. Their trucks which are designed for reliable operations while maintaining reasonable maintenance costs solidified our choice to integrate more Hino trucks into our fleet."


Anticipating future growth, RISDA Fleet is actively exploring the addition of more HINO trucks to its fleet and is already engaged in discussions with HINO for the next batch.

Hino Prime Movers

An ultimate built-up of Japanese engineering, the prime mover, SS1EKRA comes with 16-speed manual transmission EURO-3 common-rail engine and is capable to perform at GCW 70 000kg with the 6x4 axle configuration. Without stressing the vehicle with high payload, this will definitely increase the lifetime of the vehicle. The fuel consumption level is considered economical, especially for operations that require high traction with operation at maximum payload.

A unique feature of the SS1EKRA is the Inter & Cross Differential Lock, which elevates the vehicle's performance, making it exceptionally well-suited for challenging environments like hilly terrains, muddy paths, and rough landscapes. This distinctive feature is of particular significance to RISDA Fleet, aligning seamlessly with the demands of their operations in plantation areas. Safety takes precedence at HINO. The truck is equipped with an Anti-lock Braking System (ABS) to prevent skidding, and it includes an Energy-absorbing Steering Column to absorb impacts, providing extra protection for drivers. These active safety features enhance overall control and security during hauling operations.

Professional Driver Training

HMSM is committed to enhancing driving skills among commercial vehicle operators, exemplified by the establishment of the Hino Total Support Customer Centre (HTSCC) in Sendayan. RISDA Fleet has enrolled its drivers in HTSCC' training, recognizing the potential for improved fuel efficiency through enhanced driving proficiency. The training curriculum offers intensive modules focused on driver safety, eco-conscious driving practices, and vehicle familiarity. 





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Argo Transport's management team receiving their new HAMMAR Sideloader in front of Wisma Argo

Argo Transport's Addition of Sideloaders a Major Productivity Boost

Having trialled a Sideloader for three years, Argo Transport boosts its productivity by adding a new HAMMAR.

On a bright morning in August, a truck pulling a HAMMAR Sideloader pulls up in front of a new office block. It is the home of Argo Transport in Pasir Gudang. The Sideloader, already put to work before it could be officially handed over, is one part of a range of investments in their future. They already mentioned their growth plan when Asian Trucker met them last in June 2020, however, the pandemic slowed them down as it did with the entire industry. Now, Ivy Tan, Director, Argo Transport Sdn Bhd and Teh Fai Yen, are hitting the ground running with renewed energy to reap the rewards of their patience.

It was learned that the addition of a second Sideloader was originally planned for 2020. Argo Transport's foray into the Sideloader business was done with a comparable product. "We wanted to try different brands to see which is the one that is actually the best solution for us. However, we needed to postpone this until now, as the market was not very stable during the pandemic." In the meantime, Argo Transport has also moved into a new office building that houses them now on three floors, providing ample space for expansion as well as in-house training and facilities for staff to unwind.

Teh explained that there have been a lot of considerations to define the specifications for the new HAMMAR Sideloader. For instance, the unit is powered by a genset. This, as he explains, is giving them an extra layer of dependability. In case a truck is not available or breaks down, another truck can be coupled with the Sideloader. "You can not do this if you use the PTO version as you are then limited to the truck that has the PTO installed."

The other option that Argo Transport has added is the remote control using Bluetooth. Eliminating the limitations of a wired remote control, it makes it easier for the operators to manage the loading and unloading of containers. Via a few buttons the Sideloader is operated with ease, although Teh mentioned that some drivers may prefer the previous version with joysticks.

The HAMMAR-supplied unit is the second such trailer operated by Argo Transport. As this specialised tool requires the drivers to understand how it works and to feel comfortable with it, Tan has given drivers a chance to try the unit and to see if they are comfortable with it. "Some drivers are not very keen on using a Sideloader. We have to respect that. There are now several drivers we have trained on the use of the machinery and in case one driver is on leave or on another job, we have other drivers that can also manage the HAMMAR Sideloader," she added.

This year, the market has normalised after the pandemic. Tan and Teh expect that there will be a substantial growth in demand for transportation services. What they also noticed is that there are now more Sideloaders operating in the Southern region of Malaysia, however, there are still not enough. "When we added the first unit, we said that we doubled our capacity. Now that we have another unit, we increased our efficiency further, however, it is still not enough to cope with the demand we are generating," Teh explained.

Having used their first unit for three years now, Argo Transport has gained significant insights into how to best use this asset. Shunting is done much more effectively while the company is able to move a lot more containers too. "Last week, we moved 60 containers with the HAMMAR already. If we had more Sideloaders, we could have done even more." Tan revealed that there are already plans in place to add two more units of HAMMAR Sideloaders in the near future to cope with the increased volume of containers that need to be moved. **T**



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NSLOA Celebrates 88th Anniversary

Returning after a legendary event in 2018, the association took the opportunity to bring the industry together after a forced hiatus, making the event a double celebration of the industry and an end to Covid related restrictions

It was an event many had been waiting for. The NSLOA Trucking Carnival returned in the shape of the 88th Anniversary Gala Dinner. Held on 19 August in the Regent Hall in Seremban, Negeri Sembilan Lorry Operator's Association (NSLOA) received tremendous support from members, sponsors and guests, seeing a full house during the event. Prior to an adrenaline-fuelled evening programme, several brands joined forces to set up a mini-exhibition during which members and business partners had the chance to network and update themselves about the latest offerings from these suppliers to the industry.

In his welcome address in front of some 1 300 guests, Lee Hung Yang, President, Negeri Sembilan Lorry Operator's Association thanked all exhibitors and members for their enormous support to make the event a memorable and successful one. "I would like to thank the Organizing Chairman, Mr. Jonio Tan Yoong Juan and his committee for their dedicated effort in making this event so enjoyable," he said.

"Today we have 222 members. I believe we will be able to achieve more than 300 members in a few more years. I challenge my new committee to turn up their turbochargers and press on," was his message to the gathered crowd.

During the event, MAN Truck & Bus (M) Sdn Bhd (MAN Malaysia) officially became a member of the Negeri Sembilan Lorry Operators' Association (NSLOA), the oldest transporter association in Malaysia. MAN Malaysia Managing Director Andrew O'Brooks said that the company was delighted to be part of an institution that was established way before an independent Malaysia, having contributed so much to nation building.

"As a leading Truck and Bus manufacturer that has been in Malaysia for more than three decades, we believe that MAN with our knowledge of the local industry, global insights, and technological leadership, can play an active and constructive role in this dynamic association to help drive the Malaysian transport industry forward. We are pleased MAN Trucks are already the preferred choice for many NSLOA members," he said.

Returning as the Guest of Honour was Yang Berhormat Anthony Loke Siew Fook, Minister of Transport, Malaysia, who had also been the Guest of Honour during the last NSLOA Trucking Carnival in 2018, the 83rd anniversary of the association. In his speech he pledged to introduce further positive changes to the policies affecting the transport industry during his second tenure as Transport Minister. To support the association in their work towards a safer and more sustainable environment, Loke allocated RM 20 000.

Highlighting the relationship with the association, he lauded the proactive approach of NSLOA in pointing out ways to improve the efficiency of the transport industry. "I am not an expert in such matters and therefore appreciate the support of associations, like NSLOA, in making me aware of how we can work together in order to strengthen this crucial industry," he said. Loke pointed out that there are many regulations that may no longer be up-to-date and which may need to be revised. **F**





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FUSO Canter Euro 5 Drives Sustainable Trucking into Malaysia



In connection with their second lucky draw, Hap Seng Trucks Distribution announced the launch of the FUSO Canter Euro 5 in Malaysia, scheduled for 2024.

Malaysia General Distributor of Daimler Trucks, proudly announces the forthcoming launch of the FUSO Canter Euro 5 light duty truck in 2024. In their words, this is not just another product but a symbol of their ongoing commitment to environmental responsibility and operational excellence. As the Canter reaches the significant 60-year mark, the FUSO TF Canter Euro 5 promises a harmonious blend of great tradition and continued innovation.


Derrick Sim, Chief Executive of Hap Seng Trucks Distribution Sdn Bhd, expressed, "In today's climate of rising ESG (environmental, social, and governance) awareness, our FUSO TF Canter Euro 5 is not just compliant with emission laws, it embodies sustainability with its robust and excellent eco-friendly design. This next-generation truck champions cleaner emissions, unparalleled fuel efficiency, and a higher payload. With it, we assure our customers that, with every journey they embark upon, they drive a little greener. The future beckons, and we are excited to present this model soon."

The FUSO Canter's legacy spans over six decades, being the backbone for countless businesses worldwide. First introduced in 1963, inspired by the elegance and power of a horse's stride, Canter was designed for resilience. It has since

lived up to this expectation. Over 4.5 million units sold empower businesses from swift last-mile deliveries to the challenging terrains of cold chain operations. It comes to no surprise that the Canter is one of the Iconic Trucks featured in the book with the same title.

To mark the 60 years of this iconic truck, the FUSO Canter 60th Anniversary contest was organized early this year and will continue to run until December 2023. The September draw is the second of a series of three lucky draws, with the total value of prizes to be won amounting to RM 900 000. The second draw was for trucks purchased and registered with the Road Transport Department (JPJ) between 1st January 2023 to 31st August 2023. The final draw will be held in the first quarter of 2024, for trucks registered between 1st January 2023 to 31st December 2023.

"Marking 60 years of commitment, innovation, and exceptional performance, the FUSO Canter 60th Anniversary contest, with a RM900 000 prize pool, stands as our tribute to loyal customers. Highlighting our initial grand prize of a Mercedes-Benz C-Class C200, we proudly announce the second draw's result, Sim added.

"Each lucky draw entry signifies a journey of trust in Canter's legacy. Congratulations to PAD MARKETING SDN BHD for winning the Mercedes-Benz C-Class C200 and ten others for FUSO vouchers. To further journeys together," Sim concluded. 





Over 478 Scania vehicles from over 42 customers in Malaysia are part of Scania Ecolution. These good companies and good drivers are also part of the global effort to achieve their ESG and Science Based Targets together with Scania. Scania is committed towards minimising emissions from its products and its own operations. These include cutting CO2 emissions by 20 percent from its land transport per transported tonne by 2025 (using 2015 as a baseline), and 50 percent from Scania's own operation. As an Ecolution partner with Scania, the good company and their drivers play a part in the journey towards achieving the reduction of CO2 emissions in line with the Science Based Target initiative (SBTi) drawn at the Paris Agreement in 2015.

“The Scania Ecolution partnership has managed to significantly lower fuel consumption of Starttrek’s Scania fleet and reduced CO2 emissions by 704 610 kg in the period of 2021/2022. That is equivalent to planting approximately 10 570 trees. This achievement helps us work towards meeting our Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) goals.” stated Muhammad Rifaie, Senior Operation Executive of Starttrek Carriers.

Starttrek specialises in the carrier transportation of all types of vehicle with minimal handling and maximum safety. One of the 15 Starttrek carriers is an enclosed luxury carrier that maintains confidentiality of the cars transported. All 15 Scania G-series prime movers, known for fuel efficiency, increased payload, and improved productivity for long distance trips are tailored to Starttrek’s semi-trailer’s needs to ensure that every technical aspect between both assets (trailers and prime movers) work together as intended.

Starttrek Captures Top Three Wins in Scania’s “A Good Driver Competition”

Starttrek Carriers Sdn Bhd scores all three wins for Scania’s ‘A Good Driver’ Competition 2021/2022 truck category and is the best ‘A Good Company’.

All three winners capitalised on the Scania Ecolution Fleet Management System (FMS) Control 1 training to score these top three spots by achieving the best fuel economy and CO2 emissions reduction. They were recognised at Starttrek’s facility in Puncak Alam. Muhammad Rifaie Abdul Rahman of Starttrek Carriers received the recognition of the best ‘A Good Company’ (AGC) from Daniel Tan, Solution Sales Director of Scania Southeast Asia.

“Congratulations to Khairul Anwar who is the ‘A Good Driver’ (AGD) champion driving the Scania truck registration VGV 6398. Mat Sarimi driving Scania registration VGV 3968 is the first runner-up and Zaizul Fakerurozi driving Scania registration VGV 3986 truck is the second runner-up. Starttrek’s data analyses of its drivers’ performance resulted in the AGD and AGC wins and reduced CO2 emissions for future generations.” stated Daniel Tan, Solutions Sales Director, Scania Southeast Asia.

Under an AGC, drivers automatically qualify as long as they are part of the Scania Ecolution partnerships and drive the specific vehicles under the programme. The vehicles they drive are marked with a Scania Ecolution sticker plus a t-shirt with AGD Qualifier Badge.

To win, a good driver’s driving must result in the best percentage of kilometre per litre improvement throughout the duration. This is tracked using Scania’s Fleet Management System. The 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners will then be crowned with a certificate and a host of attractive Scania premium prizes. The best that drives consistently in a safe, fuel-efficient, and environmentally friendly way will receive a Champion Jacket with AGD Champion Badge. The companies, where winners work, receive service vouchers worth RM 5 000/3 000/1 000 respectively.





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All About EVs at Automechanika Shanghai




Asian Trucker will be delivering a presentation at the Innovation4Mobility Mainstage which, despite the name, is more than just a single stage. It consists of a forum area, a networking lounge, a start-up area and a product showcase, and will highlight pressing topics including connected and autonomous driving, hydrogen fuelling and fuel cell technology, and intelligent chassis and drive technologies, to name a few.

In this presentation, Asian Trucker will discuss the implications of the switch to new energies, looking at the infrastructure around the vehicle being affected. The change in propulsion system has significant impacts on the workforce, legislation, workshops and transporters themselves. Stefan Pertz, Editor of Asian Trucker and Asian Buses magazines will be presenting first-hand insights he has gathered in the Green Repair Forum.

Sources:

“Global electric vehicle sales grow strongly with China as the main driver”, people.cn, 1 March 2023, <https://qr.messefrankfurt.com/Tfe85> (Retrieved: June 2023)

2. “China’s new energy vehicle sales expected to exceed 9 million units in 2023”, CNII, 22 February 2023, <https://qr.messefrankfurt.com/j4a9b> (Retrieved: June 2023) 

Automechanika Shanghai is, of course, an event that needs no introduction. As one of the most influential shows under the Automechanika brand’s global portfolio, it consistently offers fresh perspectives on the latest developments in automotive parts, accessories, and servicing.

This year’s edition will take place from 29 November to 2 December across 12 halls at the National Exhibition and Convention Center (Shanghai). With a sprawling 280 000 sqm of floor space and an estimated 4 800 exhibitors attending, it is a remarkable display of the sheer scale and diversity contained within the automotive sector. As such, there’s no better place to get a pulse on where the industry is heading.

From this standpoint, China has emerged as a global leader in the new energy vehicle (NEV) market. This year, the country is set to sell approximately two thirds of the world’s NEVs, all of which are contributing to its national target of carbon neutrality by 2060. In further pursuit of its adoption goals, the country is moving quickly to develop a network of charging stations, battery swapping facilities, and related transportation infrastructure in both the passenger and commercial vehicle sectors.

Reflecting this push for innovation, this year’s edition of Automechanika Shanghai will be run under the theme “Harnessing Innovation4Mobility”. There will be four Innovation4Mobility features which will combine an assortment of forums, presentations, workshops, and product displays. Each will be focused on a different theme from the NEV aftermarket to customisation and more; while the topics might differ, they each contribute to a common goal of advancing the automotive sector into a more sustainable and user-friendly future.



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Events & Exhibitions

Japan Mobility Show 2023

Date : 28 October – 5 November 2023
 Venue : Big Sight, Tokyo, Japan
 Contact : <https://www.japan-mobility-show.com/en/>

The Japan Automobile Manufacturers Association, Inc. is pleased to announce that "JAPAN MOBILITY SHOW 2023," Tokyo's new motor show, will be held from October 26 (Thursday) through November 5 (Sunday), 2023, at Tokyo Big Sight (occupying the entire venue) in the Ariake district of Tokyo's Koto-ku. In addition to automotive industry participants, organisers are looking for new partners — in startups and in other industries, whose activities extend beyond mobility as such — to join the show.

In view of this projected broader scope of participation, we are considering expanding the total area of the show to include multiple sites in Tokyo Waterfront City in the vicinity of Tokyo Big Sight (the main venue) in order to accommodate new exhibits, programs, and activities, so as to make the show experience optimally enjoyable for its anticipated one million visitors.

Exhibitor recruitment—from the auto industry (passenger cars, commercial vehicles, motorcycles, vehicle bodies, parts and machinery) and from next-generation mobility-related and other industries saw the recruitment of additional exhibitors and participants for various special organizer-sponsored programs will start at a later date.

Roads & Traffic Expo Thailand 2023

Date : 1 – 2 November 2023
 Venue : BiTEC | Bangkok International Trade & Exhibition Centre, Bangkok, Thailand
 Contact : kym.chua@terrapinn.com

Over the last decade, Thailand has invested heavily in improving and expanding its infrastructure network. Recent infrastructure development has helped to drive the government's Eastern Economic Corridor Initiative (EEC). The above has resulted in a number of projects being developed at the national and local levels. Private investors can participate in the upcoming infrastructure projects through the government's long term policy.

After a successful launch in 2022 The Roads & Traffic Expo Thailand will gather 2,500+ leaders in infrastructure to explore the amazing opportunities in Thailand. Join us in November for a packed expo floor with multiple content tracks, and plenty of networking.

In 2023, we will be focusing on smart cities, tunnels and bridges, intelligent traffic, road construction, and road safety monitoring.

There will be a lot of networking opportunities on the exhibition floor. We also have multiple seminar rooms, where you can see product demonstrations.

The Showcase, Learning and Fun are all interconnected by networking. Before, during, and after the event, you can exchange ideas, create brand awareness, establish friendships and partnerships and grow your professional network.

Atransport logistic Southeast Asia 2023

Date : 1 – 3 November 2023
 Venue : Sands Expo and Convention Centre, Singapore
 Contact : <https://messe-muenchen.de/en/events/transport-logistic-southeast-asia-2023.php>

transport logistic Southeast Asia is the latest edition of the world's largest trade show for transportation and logistics industry. It is poised to become the most influential meeting place for logistics, mobility, IT and supply chain management in Southeast Asia region. Based on the established concept of the Munich exhibition, and benefiting from the extensive global network of Messe Munchen, transport logistic Southeast Asia will bring together the world's leading service providers, to meet, network and trade with top buyers from the region. The event will also comprise of a high-level summit where expert speakers will share key trends and insights on some of the most forward-looking topics.

Taipei Smart City Summit & Expo 2024

Date : 19 – 23 March 2024
 Venue : Taipei, Taiwan, Nangang Exhibition Center

Smart City Summit & Expo (SCSE) will be addressing the growing demand for sustainable development and solving urban issues, we bring the industry and public sectors together in the most comprehensive intelligent solution event in Asia-Pacific. As artificial intelligence technology develops, the applications begin to play a key role in government delivery of citizen services. Smart cities are entering a new phase of Smart City 2.0 by integrating AI as well as IoT technologies into services.

The exhibitors gathering here in the event will showcase a wide range of products and services like cutting edge information technologies services, energy management services, transportation services and many more related products and services.

Tyrexpo Asia Bangkok

Date : 15 – 17 March 2024
 Venue : BiTEC | Bangkok International Trade & Exhibition Centre, Bangkok, Thailand
 Contact : <https://www.tyrexpoasia.com/>

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Trucks on Islands

Asian Trucker hopped to Langkawi to find out how transportation of goods is done differently on islands.

Trucks and transport missions come in all shapes and forms. The job of transporters is challenging as the movement of goods is typically governed by tight schedules with cost pressure added. Adding a layer of complication, transporting goods onto and off an island is a different discipline altogether. As we discover, there is a lot of trucking going on in Langkawi, however, it has been as difficult as transporting goods across itself. What we were told is that there is not much going on in terms of trucking and we wanted to find out if that was true.

Getting goods onto an island requires a lot of planning and preparation, even though it may be a regular tour. Denice Chong, Head of Transportation Department, Bengteng Trucking Services Sdn Bhd (Bengteng), shared with Asian Trucker about the challenges transporters face when moving goods to Langkawi. In the case of Bengteng, this is an extra-delicate undertaking as they move frozen food items for one of Malaysia's most popular fast-food chains. Lack of efficiency and experience such as bad handling, wrong practices, and insufficient paperwork can cause further issues and increase the cost of cold chain logistics. Improper placement of goods or not maintaining the right temperature in the trailer can damage the shipments and affect profitability.

"We have been in the market for over 30 years. Today, our core business is cold chain road transport, which we have been involved in for the past 20 years. Hence, we have a lot of experience with this kind of jobs." Besides Langkawi, Bengteng also covers other Malaysian islands and cross-border to Singapore. The 150-strong fleet moving perishable goods comprises of 1-tonne, 5-tonne and 40-footer container trailers. Currently, the supplies to Langkawi make up about ten trips per month. A bottleneck for the operation is the ferry. Slots on the ferry would need to be booked



in advance. Especially holiday periods and school holidays put stress on the ferry service as there is more demand for space on it. Knowing about this, Bengteng ensures that slots are booked way in advance as there can be no delay in getting the goods to the island as missing the ferry would result in loss of income for their client. A day without the ingredients for their food would be catastrophic in terms of lost income and damaged to their reputation.



Key to the successful delivery is the driver. The route is serviced by one dedicated driver, who has been trained on all aspects of this type of mission. With the increased responsibility comes a motivational boost in the form of monetary incentives.

To ensure the quality of the products, Bengteng deploys their Telematics system to also monitor the temperature inside the box of the truck. Goods are first moved to a warehouse in Juru, where they will be transferred to smaller trucks, such as the one heading to Langkawi. The actual Langkawi trip will be between Juru and the island. While the distance may not look very long, the time the goods are in transit is significant. As a first leg, the journey to the ferry takes between four to five hours all in. Another two hours are added for the ferry ride. Waiting times and the trip to the actual discharge location add more time for the tour. Chong swears by Japanese brand LCV trucks as they are known for their reliability.

Chong explained that servicing the truck is of utmost importance. “What should never happen is that the truck breaks down and that the cooling of the goods is interrupted. Therefore, we not only ensure that the service is done on time all the time, but we also have a checklist for the driver to go through before entering the ferry.” Points to check include the engine, the air conditioning, its compressor and other components related to the cooling mechanism. During the transit, the engine would have to continue to run, as the cooling unit depends on the engine to be powered. Although there has never been a failure of the cooling unit according to Chong, one should not take any chances: insurance for goods in transit on ferries is a must.

Among others involved in trucking, Asian Trucker also connected with one consultant, labelling himself “Botak”, who offered insights beyond the obvious when it came to trucks on Langkawi. To fully understand the issue with trucks on this particular island, Langkawi, one has to roll back a bit and view the island with an outside-in view. What makes Langkawi attractive as a tourist destination, its status of being a tax-free destination, is also an issue that makes operating trucks and delivering goods very tricky. In his words, the mistake that businesses eyeing Langkawi as a business opportunity make is to see it as Malaysia. However, due to the tax-free status, one should see it as Langkawi as separate from Malaysia. Here is Malaysia and there is Langkawi.

Being outside Malaysian tax territory, it is akin to driving a truck into a different country. To enter Malaysia, one has to fill out forms and file them according to the regulations. Bringing goods to Langkawi is easier than sending them from the island to the mainland. Being a tax-free island, there is not much concern about what is being shipped onto the island. However, any goods moving the other direction would be treated as an export from Langkawi or, depending on where you are, import into Malaysia. This means, that goods imported from Langkawi to Malaysia are subject to taxes and duties. According to Botak, it is not something that makes it impossible to deal with; as long as proper licences and documentation is obtained, there are no obstacles.

One issue that he identified is that Malaysian Truckers by and large, typically never leave the country with their trucks. Hence, they would not be aware of the fact that a country outside Malaysia would require paperwork and licences. It is the lack of this awareness that Langkawi needs to be treated like a separate sovereign state that has cost many transporters a lot of money and cause them damage to their brand, not being able to deliver on their promise to get the goods onto the island. Transporters may claim that they can deliver to any destination in Malaysia. However, sending goods to East Malaysia for instance does not require any tax documentation.

It is a costly mistake to make when logistics companies do not consider the implication of Langkawi having a different status. Upon arriving at the ferry terminal, one may realise that there are specific documents need to be filed. If these cannot be produced in time, the ferry will sail, the approvals not be granted and the truck grounded for a night. Resulting, hotel costs may add up, the truck may be needed in another place, thus the shipper may scramble to fulfil other orders. Accessing Penang is easy, compared to Langkawi, as the bridges are open 24/7/365. Ferry



schedules change according to the tides, and they have limited capacity. These complications may result in perishable goods getting spoiled and business relationships souring as there might be an argument about who is to pay for the additional costs.

In his role as business aggregator, Botak also deals with transportation onto and off the island. Having mastered the art of dealing with the ferry schedules, paperwork and demands of clients, he has found himself a working system that allows him to flexibly move goods. For instance, he would ensure that there is enough capacity booked on the ferries. In case a shipment needs to be prioritised, he will then bump one truck off the ferry and allocate the space for another. As an example, bricks can wait an extra day as there are plenty of bricks on the island, however, perishable food items need to be fast-tracked.

Besides perishable goods, there is another sector that has a certain sense of urgency attached to it: MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Events). Companies may opt to host their annual meetings, team building



and training in Langkawi, as may couples for the island as their backdrop for their wedding. The event set-ups may require equipment that is not readily available on Langkawi, hence it needs to be trucked in. The art is then to have the equipment on site on time as people will fly in and the event will have to be held on a specific date. Moving goods across the island is another challenge. The entire island is one postcode and outside Kuah, there is houses scattered everywhere with no bigger settlements. A first-class global business could have its headquarters two minutes away from the international airport, being in the middle of nowhere. As an exercise, one may do an online search for transport companies on the island and will come up blank. Only one highly specialised service provider can be found. Yet, farmers need their produce moved to the markets and hotels.

Anyone arriving in Langkawi will soon notice the very bright trucks that zig-zag the island. Proudly displaying their livery, the 17 vehicles of E-Idaman Sdn Bhd play a crucial role for the community and economy. E-Idaman Sdn. Bhd. (EISB) is jointly owned by Metacorp

Berhad and Cenviro Sdn Bhd to undertake the waste management business in the Northern region of Peninsular Malaysia namely Perlis, Kedah, Penang and Perak. The company has been appointed in 2011 to manage solid waste management and public cleansing in the appointed areas. To date, 300 000 premises, private as well as commercial, are being serviced by some 6 000 workers. Keeping the island clean is not an easy task; trucks play a crucial role in this job as they ferry the collected waste from the collection points to the landfill site on the island.

Waste collection is a job that requires discipline. In case a premise is not serviced on schedule, a complaint can be filed, resulting in a penalty being imposed on the waste management company. As daily routine, the truck drivers will attend a daily safety

Local produce is distributed across the island using trucks2





In discussion with Botak

briefing. Prior to departing from the yard, drivers will carry out an inspection of the vehicle to ensure that it is fully functional. The daily inspection is vital in order to detect any issues early on: once the vehicle has been deployed on the island it is not leaving it and any repair, service or maintenance is carried out on Langkawi. EISB swears by two Japanese truck brands as they are said to be extremely dependable while at the same time being highly suitable to be fitted with the required bodies. Again, it was pointed out that spare part supply is a major concern for EISB and they found that it is easy to obtain parts for the two brands in use.

Since the trucks will not leave the island, servicing will have to be carried out in the premises of EISB. To do so, EISB has trained and maintains its own team of technicians to carry out the servicing and repairs. EISB's in-house fleet management department sources the required parts from the official dealers and parts stockists and ensures that the trucks undergo a rigorous maintenance schedule with a planned service being carried out every 5 000 kilometres. In case needed, technical support from the mainland can be requested. However, it takes a couple of days for the brand principal to send staff to the island as the personnel needs to be allocated, the ferry booked, parts made ready and in some cases accommodation arranged.

A visit to the island is not only a logistical undertaking, but also incurring more cost than a service visit in a workshop on the mainland. One will notice that the trucks are always clean, which may not be what one expects from waste collection operations. However, there are good reasons for EISB to wash their trucks daily. One is the brand image, which has to reflect the fact that Langkawi is a major tourist destination and secondly, the salt content in the air is higher than on the mainland and washing the trucks every day reduces the corroding effect of the salty air, thus prolonging the lifespan of the vehicles.

In the unlikely event of truck breakdowns, the vehicles will be serviced in the EISB yard. Considering the situation, EISB holds spare parts in their own yard. In case the parts are not on hand, they need to be ordered from the mainland, sometimes resulting

in the broken-down truck being grounded for a couple of days. Taking a truck out of the fleet will impact the waste collection schedule and therefore, EISB has spare trucks on stand-by to jump in. As people are aware of the collection schedule, the general public would usually not take much notice of the trucks when they roam the island to collect waste. However, it is when the trucks do not collect the waste as expected that one takes note. Waste collection is a very important task, not only in view of Langkawi being a UNESCO heritage site, but also to prevent the breeding and spreading of diseases or infestations by rats, mice and other vermin. In essence, waste collection is also part of the health care system.

Having built a reputation for themselves, EISB has no difficulties attracting drivers, unlike being reported as being a major issue for operators on the mainland. Drivers for EISB can be easily spotted as they are wearing a very distinct uniform. However, operating in Langkawi is not without tricky situations: narrow roads sometimes disallow trucks to enter, and staff would have to wheel the bins to the trucks, rather than the truck moving along the road. Keeping track of the movements, EISB is using a telematics system installed on all vehicles. Langkawi being a relatively small place, it is not difficult to locate the trucks, however, the system keeps track of the movements in order to prove that the services have been performed as required. Not all roads on the island are well developed and tyre punctures happen due to the ruggedness of the pathways. What makes EISB special is that drivers are trained to operate each vehicle in the fleet. Drivers receive regular training in order to operate all vehicles so that they can switch to any application needed when a colleague is on leave.

Special purpose vehicles also play a role on an island the size of Langkawi. There are three fire fighting stations on the island, complete with trucks ready to go at a moment's notice. They might be one-offs and highly specialised, but they too need to be managed in accordance to the maintenance schedule, similarly to EISB to ensure that they perform without a hitch.

Every transporter's nightmare is a truck broken down. Here again, the difference between the mainland and Langkawi is one that has significant implications. On the mainland, a breakdown means that one could be an hour away from help and attention to the problem. Whoever

According to the UNESCO, Langkawi UNESCO Global Geopark is located in the far north-western corner of peninsular Malaysia. Located in the northern State of Kedah, it is unique in the sense that it was formed on 99 islands that together made up the legendary Langkawi Archipelago. The natural landscape of Langkawi is a combination between highly vegetated hills of rainforest and some rather barren rocks.

The Geopark has the best-exposed and most complete Palaeozoic sedimentary sequence in Malaysia, from the Cambrian to the Permian period. Langkawi UNESCO Global Geopark was part of Sibumasu Block. During Early Permian, the Sibumasu Block broke out from Gondwanaland, rifting northward and collided with the East Malaya-Indochina Block to form the Southeast Asian mainland. Later, during the Mesozoic, the islands underwent a major tectonic event that resulted in the emplacement of its numerous granitic rocks. At the same time, the entire Peninsular Malaysia was uplifted, including the Langkawi islands. Much of the geological development was somewhat linked to what had happened in the old supercontinent Pangea and southern hemispheric Gondwanaland since more than 550 million years ago. What we have in Langkawi today is the combined result of these various processes and the ongoing weathering process that has taken place since the Langkawi land was brought to the surface around 220 million years ago.

is coming to assist might not have the right tools or parts, thus requiring the broken-down vehicle to be towed to the nearest workshop. On Langkawi, one could be anywhere within 20 minutes. Simply sending a motorbike rider to check out the problem first to address the problem with the right solution may will take only a short time. Ensured that the problem is correctly identified, fixing any truck is done much faster than on the mainland. Downtime is short in terms of assessing the problems. However, a vehicle could be stuck in the workshop for up to three weeks due to spare parts not being available.

Again, Langkawi being a tax-free island, purchasing parts is a tricky situation. Parts imported from China or Thailand could end up being cheaper as they would not have been taxed upon entry into Malaysia first before being sent to Langkawi. A part could also be faster in the hands of a customer if it is flown in from Thailand or Subang airport as that would circumvent the ferry trip. In a sense, Subang could be faster, closer than Alor Setar when it comes to the provision of parts or staff needed on Langkawi. Strangely, it appears that none of the truck brands operates a parts centre on the island.

Another peculiarity is the absence of food trucks. While the traditional Lok Lok and modern coffee shops on wheels are commonplace in many places throughout the peninsular, this business model based on small trucks and vans seems not to have made inroads on the island.

Besides larger shipments of goods, smaller items, send via post, also need to get on and off the island. Documents may need to be sent and there is, of course, the trusted Pos Malaysia which also operates on the island in order to fulfil postal needs. Being always hands-on, Charles Brewer, Group CEO, Pos Malaysia Berhad, explained how the postal service works on the island. Parked outside the post office in Kuah are several trucks. These trucks are owned and operated by Pos Malaysia. Brewer explained that Pos Malaysia prefers to use their own fleet to get the mail on and off the island in order to have full control over the process and to manage cost.

On average, some 300 parcels need to be sent to Langkawi on an average day. There are days, especially during



festive seasons, when this number increases. On top of the bulkier parcels, some 85 000 mail items (letters, documents) arrive on the island every month. Pos Malaysia centralises its fleet in Alor Setar and utilising either 1-tonne, 3-tonne or 5-tonne trucks, the mail items and parcels are delivered to Langkawi. The type of truck being used depends on the volume and the time of the day of the week. Langkawi follows the Islamic working week and thus, Thursdays are usually a little slower as they are like Fridays. Delivery schedules are also impacted by the tidal schedule as the ferries sail accordingly.

Once more, one notices that the vehicles used by Pos Malaysia on Langkawi are Japanese brands. When asked about this, Brewer has a simple explanation. It is again the availability of spare parts that has swung decision the way of the Nippon brands. In addition, the holding company of Pos Malaysia, DRB-HICOM, also has a truck assembly, which produces the very trucks Pos Malaysia is using. Brewer pointed out that other service providers in the same category also use the same brand of trucks because of the spare part availability. The importance of dependability and reliability becomes clear in major events. Pos Malaysia was also one of the official logistics provider for the Langkawi International Maritime Exhibition (LIMA), a major international event, which puts Malaysia in the limelight. Nations depend on Pos Malaysia to deliver on time and without any hitches.

Furthermore, the truckers also need to be able to handle the special requirements specific to the island. Trucks need to be weighed before leaving for Langkawi as well as upon arrival. While the truck is stowed on the ferry, the driver is separated from his vehicle. Truckers drive the vehicles to the ferry, then make their way back to the yard. Upon arrival of the truck in Langkawi, a driver stationed on the island will come to collect the vehicle. Once the truck has been laden with the mail items leaving the island, the driver would then return it to the ferry, depositing it after a short trip for his colleagues from the mainland to collect. Thus, the drivers only operate either in the island or on the mainland. As there is a guaranteed delivery time for postal items, the trucks need to get onto the ferry, come rain or shine. Unlike truckers

Local brands adjacent to the transport industry can be found on the island



in other operations, these drivers are paid a monthly, fixed salary and will not get paid per trip. Likely the top skill needed is the ability to drive defensive with the ability to anticipate road conditions. Preventing any incident or accident on the road is paramount, as the brand has a lot of visibility besides having to manage the pressure of the tight delivery schedule.

Postal items for Langkawi have to be delivered within three days of delivery to Pos Malaysia (D + 3), meaning a letter dropped off on Monday would have to be in the mailbox of the recipient in Langkawi on Thursday. Pos Malaysia's trucks typically arrive in Langkawi after the customs office has been closed and thus, the vehicles will be parked overnight and collected first thing in the morning. Considering that the transfer by ferry takes up two days, this is a very tight operation that requires every part of the transportation chain to work flawlessly. Although this process may seem costly and time consuming, it is yet again a cheaper and more effective option than, say, air freight. One has to consider that Pos Malaysia consolidates mail items coming from every corner of the country in Alor Setar. This is something that cannot be done with other means of transportation. Plus, there is typically no urgency to have a mail item delivered on the same day. Brewer proudly announced that the D + 3 performance from January till the end of July was 99.3 percent.

This level of commitment and performance does not happen by accident. Supporting the operation are two workshops on the island and four more in Kedah. Nationwide, Pos Malaysia taps into 88 workshops, making Kedah one with a high concentration of workshops. To identify and prevent any issues with the truck, a pre-departure check is carried out whenever a truck is leaving for or from Langkawi. Unlike EISB, Pos Malaysia uses the option to have severe cases of repairs done on the mainland. A cost analysis has revealed that labour cost on Langkawi can be higher than on the mainland and thus, if the scope of repairs needed is severe, the vehicle is taken off the island.

While a few big events may be in the public eye of the entire region, it is small events that happen every weekend. Those wanting the event to look like Langkawi will ensure it happens in Langkawi, as opposed to have an event in an anonymous location, which could be a hotel in Kuala Lumpur. Any equipment that needs to be shipped in competes for space on the ferry as well as being locked up for longer than if it was used on the mainland, due to the nature of Langkawi being a tax-free island serviced by ferries. Oftentimes, people are then taken by surprise when the goods are shipped back to the mainland. For instance, one may hold an event to showcase luxury goods, which can enter the island without tax. Sending them back however, would require them to be declared as they are an importation. Suddenly, a bag for a few thousand Ringgit Malaysia may attract hundreds in taxes to be paid. Unless, of course, someone like Botak handles the temporary importation the correct way, using the correct process.

On the ground, in Chenang, one could meet Huzaimi Bin Hussien. The 50 year old Penangite is the very driver Chong talked about taking frozen goods onto Langkawi. His schedule sees him travel to the island every three days, making it a total of ten to 11 trips a months.

He loves driving his truck as that has always been his interest. By now, he has been driving for almost 20 years, while his current truck is the smallest truck that he has ever driven. Having driven all over Malaysia and into Thailand, moving timber, fishes, sugar, and rubber, he says that he has aged and therefore prefers driving short distance. He is proud to say that his 27-year old son drives a truck too.

When in Langkawi he will have to stay over in a hotel provided by the company. Luckily, he has relatives and friends he can visit while in town as he can only leave the next following morning when the customs procedure is completed and the ferry sails again. When asked, there is nothing that he dislikes about the job as it is also a lot of fun. Over the years, he has made many friends on the island, so the overnight stays are not a burden to him.

Even though the job is a lot of fun, as he says, there is also some serious business to be considered. The ferry schedule differs each month and this is the schedule to be followed, the ferry cannot be missed. In July, when we met, the ferry left at 1.30 am from Kuala Perlis. Business on the island never stops and even though if it is a public holiday he will have to journey to Langkawi as scheduled. His route planning would need to be based on this schedule, so does his rests and preparations. The one thing that irks him though is that drivers in Langkawi seem to be less stringent with adhering to the rules, making driving a truck a little more difficult as he would have to adjust his driving style accordingly.

Huzaimi loves driving alone and after many years, he has the routine down to a t. Already being used to it, there is not much preparation needed before setting out to Langkawi. Every time he returns to mainland he will refuel and set the vehicle up



for the next trip. Part of the preparations is to immediately pack his clothes for the upcoming trip as well. Being a solo driver, it is his responsibility that the truck is always in top condition. In case of any problem, it will have to be fixed in the workshop in Penang as service centres in Langkawi may not have the right parts or expertise.

Reconfirming an observation, Botak states that there are only a few truck brands present on the island. There is, contrary to what one may believe, a lot more in-island transportation going on than “cross-border” transportation to the mainland. Being an almost self-contained economy, the movement of goods is mostly between the people and businesses on the island. According to him, Langkawi is not what it seems to be: there is more business that is non-tourism than tourism. For example, the shipyards generate a lot of business. When refurbishing a superyacht, their owners may opt to have this done in Langkawi as the operation does not close during winter. Tons of leather hides, ship propellers and other products need to be trucked in. Refurbishing or building ships is a business that generates a lot of income for the local economy, but it is not tourism.

Besides that, there are a lot of goods produced on the island that are transported within the island or exported. Langkawi only produces ten percent of the rice it needs with the rest being imported. Most visitors to Langkawi would arrive during their weekend, when they only get to experience only the coastal road between Kuah and Chenang. As most of the goods movements happen between Monday and Thursday, tourist may get the impression that there are no trucks on the island and that there are no school kids going to school either. Schedules are shifted, due to the fact that Langkawi is following a different working week.

Three days of investigating the transport industry in Langkawi has shown that there is indeed a lot of transportation going on, however it is difficult undertakings to get goods on and off the island. Opportunities seem to be presenting themselves in abundance and challenges can be overcome with smart solutions that offer customers the best possible service despite all the obstacles that are inherent in the nature of transportation on an island. **F**



The cause of a breakdown can be quickly identified. Fixing the problem can take time though as spare parts may need to be sourced and shipped to Langkawi

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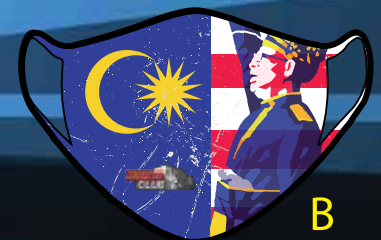


Rekaan Pilihan :



A

or



B



Opportunities and Changing Times

Always positive and fully loaded, our Trucker of the Month is among the first to experience new technology to make his job easier.

AT: Please introduce yourself.

IBI: I am Ismail Bin Ibrahim and I am 31 years old. I am from Selangor and I am married with one child. Currently I am working for DHL Express in Glenmarie, where I have been a driver for the past six years.

AT: What made you choose the profession of a delivery driver?

IBI: I really had no choice. I was self-employed with a catering business with my brother. When that did not work out, I just choose what I thought I could do. It was hard to look for a job. It was when I asked a friend if there were any job recommendations that I was introduced to DHL. As catering requires a van, I was already a bit familiar with the role of a driver.

AT: Please tell us about your daily routine.

IBI: In the morning we will have a 15-minute briefing to discuss issues faced and how to resolve them together with other drivers. If there are too many or unfulfilled delivery we will discuss with other drivers and seek help. There is one driver per van. We will then each load our vehicles. When we scan the first item, we start to already think about our route to take for that day. I am now very experienced in this, I know the roads and with proper planning in the morning, I manage well. We are all out in the morning until 1-2pm to deliver.

In the afternoon we go out to collect from pre-defined spots where we have to keep a very specific schedule. Sometimes the road conditions are difficult and there could be delays. This is the more challenging part of the day as the collection is to be done according to the schedule. There are many factors that influence how quickly we get from point to point.

AT: We notice that your van is a battery electric vehicle. How is the experience with that?

IBI: There are huge differences between Diesel and electricity as "fuel". For instance, Diesel produces a lot of carbon emissions. You need to drive to a petrol station to refuel a Diesel-powered van while the EV only charges after work here. It is more convenient with the electric van as the charging is really easy.

Also, the automatic functions in the EV vehicles is favourable: there are only three settings, Park, Drive and Reverse. Operating such vehicle is much easier and I can focus on the road. What's more is that there is less noise and vibrations from the vehicle when driving. It is very quiet, which is less stressful. Remember, we are on the road all day, every day! In the Klang valley there are a lot of traffic jams and Diesel engines produce lots of smoke, which will affect the environment.

I was afraid to run out of battery on my first few drives. There are not many charging points, and it takes a lot a time to re-charge at the moment. I hope in the future there will be more charging points. Now that I am used to it and with proper planning, I ensure that I can finish my job without any hiccups every day. Me and my colleagues now share ten EV nationwide, of which four are here in Glenmarie. DHL plans to have 51 by end of the year.

We have also been trained on how to handle this vehicle as here are safety aspects that are different from Diesel or petrol-powered vehicles. You have to be more careful around the EVs. I think this is good for the environment and if I can afford it, I would also drive an electric private car. At the moment, these are too expensive though.

AT: Where is your favourite place to eat when you are out for deliveries.

IBI: My favourite food places are in Kota Damansara. My usual restaurant where I stop sells mixed rice. I like that because I try to eat a balanced meal. They also have good facilities in the area here I can pray and continue my work after my break.

AT: What do you not like about the job?

IBI: Three things: traffic jam, rude people on the road, and bad weather.

AT: Which is a route you would like to drive with a truck?

IBI: I would like to drive up North. Penang and the places around there.


AT: Would you like your child to become a professional driver too?

IBI: I would not control what my kid would want to do when it comes to the choice of occupation in the future. It is up to my child to seek a career.

AT: DHL drivers are easily recognisable by their uniform, and you wear a safety vest. How do you feel about these items in your job as a driver?

IBI: I think that whatever job or work one takes, a proper uniform is important. Discipline is crucial in a job like this and putting on all the proper PPE and uniform every day makes us more professional.

AT: Any final comments?

IBI: Sometimes there is no choice when comes to finding a job to make a living. Once you start you can find joy in whatever you are doing. Although there are challenges, all can be fixed. 





In addition, electric vehicles have to be treated differently when it comes to the handling of the drive train. Safety in this context encompasses the batteries and the wiring for the drive train. Using high voltage, these trucks require specific SOPs to power down for safe maintenance and service operations. The event was also to make drivers aware of this as it will eventually impact them when they switch from ICE-powered vehicles.

“It was a privilege of discussing our latest safety features at the recent gathering with the Asian Trucker Drivers Club here at Volvo Trucks Malaysia. The event was made even more impactful with MIROS shedding light on major contributors to commercial vehicle accidents—a valuable lesson for everyone focused on making our roads safer for a better tomorrow,” said Amanda Ng, Vice President, Volvo Logistics Sale and Marketing.

Participants commented that the event had been a real eye-opener as many had yet to experience electric trucks. Asian Trucker Drivers Club expressed its sincere appreciation to both, Volvo Trucks as well as those having taken time out of their busy schedule to join the session. **F**



Electrifying Preview of Electric Trucks

Volvo Trucks Malaysia hosted a safety briefing for the Asian Trucker Drivers Club, allowing a preview of their electric truck, which is now available in Malaysia.



Skillful drivers are highly sought after as their driving behaviour has a huge impact on the bottom line of transport companies. Also, they have to master the latest vehicle technology, the most sophisticated fleet management systems, road safety, and with market liberalization, understanding local rules and languages may be a crucial asset for truck drivers as well as for the employers, when carrying goods across the country.

In consideration of the implementation of electric trucks in Malaysia, Asian Trucker Drivers Club partnered with Volvo Trucks Malaysia to have a privileged look at the things to come. With Volvo Trucks now offering electric trucks in Malaysia, it is just a question of time when we will see this new generation vehicle in action on our roads. As the technology is fundamentally different, the safety features are also different. Said Stefan Pertz, Editor of Asian Trucker “Modern trucks have amazing safety features. However, only when a driver knows how to operate them correctly, these features will be fully effective. This is why we organise events like this: to remind truckers about how to be a safe, a confident driver.”

Hidden Existence: Ghost Trucks

Rather than a brand of trucks, the term “Ghost Truck” describes those vehicles that are operating in construction sites, logging camps, quarries, and similarly tough environments. The moniker is oftentimes used by Chinese truck makers, who have seen an opportunity to offer a special vehicle for these Applications. Typically, these trucks are not road legal and may not need to be registered. Operating out of the view of the public, they become ghost trucks whereby nobody really knows how many there are.





Hino Smart Driving Contest 2023: Elevating Truck Drivers' Skills and Safety

Hino Motors Sales (Malaysia) Sdn Bhd is proud to announce the return of the HINO SMART DRIVING CONTEST after a three-year hiatus. The competition is part of Hino Malaysia's efforts to promote its Hino Smart Driving Program, which is hosted at the Hino Total Support Customer Center (HTSCC) in Sendayan.

On 23rd September, the Hino Smart Driving Contest 2023 brought together 20 truckers from 11 different companies who went through the preliminary rounds in August, all eager to participate in this friendly competition. The aim was to enhance their skills and foster camaraderie within the same profession, with the theme "Challenge to Be the Best Driver to Transport Every Happiness for A Sustainable Future".

The event was graced by the presence of YB Anthony Loke, our Minister of Transport, who attended to celebrate this glorious occasion. YB Anthony Loke also gave a speech, extending his best wishes to all the participants before the contest commenced. The event was officially officiated by YB Anthony Loke, alongside Atsushi Uchiyama, Managing Director of Hino Motors Sales (Malaysia) Sdn. Bhd.

YB Anthony Loke mentioned in his speech, "Today's theme, "Challenge to Be the Best Driver to Transport Every Happiness for a Sustainable Future," resonates with our government's vision. We aim to reduce road fatalities by half by the year 2030, as outlined in the Road Safety Plan 2022-2030. Driver training programs, such as those offered by Hino Total Support Customer Centre, play an important role in achieving this goal. These courses equip drivers with the necessary skills and knowledge to drive safely and efficiently. With improved skills and awareness, we do hope that drivers understand and start practicing safer driving to protect themselves as well as the other road users."

Hino initiated the HINO SMART DRIVING CONTEST with the primary goal of assessing and improving the driving skills of truck drivers, particularly those operating HINO trucks. Participants were put through a series of exciting challenges and programs, comprising practical tests. The event benefited from the state-of-the-art Hino Total Support Customer Centre (HTSCC), the first Hino training centre outside of Japan. This facility allows Hino truck drivers in Malaysia to refine their professional skills, with a focus on road handling, safety, and fuel-efficient driving techniques.

Mr. Atsushi Uchiyama, Managing Director of Hino Malaysia, explained that the Hino Smart Driving Contest seeks to recognize and celebrate the achievements of drivers while also enhancing their company's reputation. "This competition is a remarkable opportunity for drivers to showcase their skills and be motivated to strive for excellence. It not only recognizes the drivers but also boosts the company's image," Uchiyama remarked.

He further emphasized, "Through this competition, we aim to elevate our brand image and enhance the productivity for our customers' drivers. We want them to take pride in being valued Hino customers and drivers." The evaluation of participants was comprehensive, encompassing three main areas: practical driving skills, driver familiarization with a focus on daily vehicle inspection, and fuel-efficient economy driving.

The driving skills section comprised seven practical sessions on different tracks, including s-junction, garage parking, crank course, parallel parking, turn-back course, uphill/downhill, and emergency braking on wet roads. Daily vehicle inspection required participants to complete a thorough truck inspection, covering engine, brakes, clutch, oil leakage, visibility, electrical equipment, and tires. Participants were also assessed on their fuel-efficiency driving techniques and consumption while operating their vehicles.

The one-day battleground awards prizes in each category, including Champion, 1st Runner-up, and 2nd Runner-up. The grand prize, known as the Overall Champion, includes a trophy and a cash incentive of RM5 000. In addition, the champion's company will receive a

RM5 000 service and parts voucher, the Champions Cup, and a mock cheque. The total value of prizes for this contest amounts to RM22 000. **F**



Shell Fleet Solutions Evolves into Integrated Business Mobility Solutions Provider

Shell Malaysia through its business mobility division, Shell Fleet Solutions, has officially launched its Accelerate to Zero Programme in Malaysia.



Shell aims to be the partner of choice for fleet owners in Malaysia in their transition towards decarbonisation and accelerating growth. Whether you are a small business owner or a large global enterprise, we provide integrated fleet solutions enabled by our people, technology and data to help achieve your business and sustainability goals," she said.

Although the focus of the event was on the upcoming electrification of commercial vehicle fleets, it was acknowledged that ICE-powered vehicles would still play a vital role in the transportation ecosystem for a number of years to come. To this extend, Shell offers sophisticated fleet management solutions that can assist transporters not only in reducing fuel consumption through driver training and route planning. This service, as part of a comprehensive package offered, is to be further boosted throughout the region going forward. **T**

With the Malaysian fleet sector facing unprecedented challenges in the market that include supply chain disruptions, driver shortages, pressure to decarbonise, vehicle optimisation and rising costs, the Accelerate to Zero (A2Z) programme is designed to help fleet owners optimise their operations, grow their businesses, and achieve their sustainability goals.

The launch of A2Z sees Shell Fleet Solutions evolving from a traditional fuel card provider to a partner of choice for simpler, smarter, and sustainable integrated solutions comprising:

- Shell Card – The newly revamped Shell Card is the key to unlocking all the solutions and enabling integration to a fleet's day-to-day mobility expenses, including fuel, telematics, lubricants, and electric vehicles (EVs) charging through the Shell network.
- Shell Recharge – Shell's EV charging ecosystem provides corporate fleets with a complete package of hardware, software services and support solutions designed to meet their specific EV infrastructure requirements. Customers can also tap into Shell's expanding network of charging points.
- Shell Telematics – This solution combines integrated Shell Card data, 'live' vehicle tracking, vehicle performance monitoring and more to provide corporate fleets with critical data and business intelligence to help them achieve greater sustainability.
- Carbon Compensation – While adopting measures to avoid and reduce emissions is pivotal to reducing carbon emissions in the long and medium term, management of less-avoidable emissions is still a necessity in the interim. Customers can now opt to compensate for the carbon emissions from their fuel purchases through carbon credits generated by Shell projects.

Speaking at the official launch of A2Z, Shell Fleet Solutions Malaysia General Manager Joanna Lean said that the integrated solutions aimed to empower fleet owners in making better business decisions to stay competitive not just in Malaysia but the region.

"Decarbonising a fleet can be a complex, costly and challenging endeavour. Fleet owners must navigate a changing regulatory, technological and commercial landscape, while maintaining a high level of service to the business and employees, as well as managing their costs in a volatile world.



The Revelation of Mercedes-Benz Trucks' Localization Production in China



On July 19, 2023, Mercedes-Benz Trucks held a Technology Experience Day in Hefei, China, showcasing its unwavering commitment to placing customer demands as the core driving force, adhering to positive research and development, and dedicating itself to promoting high-quality development in the Chinese logistics sector through innovative technological advancements.

During the Technology Experience Day, Mercedes-Benz Trucks demonstrated a series of innovative technologies, including the ADA 2 Second Generation Active Driving Assistance System, ACC Full-Speed Adaptive Cruise Control, and the Second Generation MirrorCam Electronic Rear-View Mirror. Marcus Kliewer, Vice President of Research and Development at the Mercedes-Benz division of Foton Daimler Automotive, stated during the event that Mercedes-Benz Trucks meets the high reliability and timeliness requirements of the logistics market with practical and leading-edge cutting-edge technologies.

In 2016, Mercedes-Benz Trucks announced its plan for localization production in China - setting up the Mercedes-Benz division under the Foton Daimler Automotive Co., Ltd. in a joint venture. The company invested over 3.8 billion yuan in Huairou, Beijing, to establish an exclusive manufacturing factory for Mercedes-Benz Trucks, with an annual production capacity of 60 000 heavy trucks. On September 23, 2022, the first Mercedes-Benz Truck rolled off the assembly line in the new plant and was officially launched on December 10 of the same year.

Why Localize

China is the world's largest heavy truck market, with over 1.6 million heavy trucks produced and sold in 2020, and an ownership of nearly eight million vehicles. With the transformation and upgrading of the logistics and transportation industry, the demand for high-end heavy trucks from Chinese customers is growing rapidly. Experts predict that by 2025, models priced above 400 000 yuan will account for 40 percent of the market. Faced with such opportunities and challenges, foreign commercial vehicle brands are accelerating the process of localization to adapt to the changes and demands of the Chinese market.

As a leading global commercial vehicle and engine manufacturer with a century-long brand history and technological expertise, Daimler Trucks possesses a strong reputation. Mercedes-Benz Trucks, as the high-end heavy truck brand under Daimler Trucks, is renowned for its outstanding quality, performance, safety, and energy efficiency. To better serve the Chinese market and customers, Daimler Trucks decided to produce Mercedes-Benz Trucks in China and achieve product localization.

Challenges and Solutions: Brand Culture Localization

International truck brands entering the Chinese market face both tremendous opportunities and challenges. On one hand, the Chinese market is vast with diverse demands, and there is a strong interest and demand for international brands and services. On the other hand, the market structure in China is complex, with strict policies and regulations, a unique cultural atmosphere, and fierce competition between local and international truck brands. To succeed in the Chinese market, international truck brands not only need to understand and respect the cultural background, aesthetic values, consumption habits, and values of Chinese consumers, but also present the brand's unique identity in a localized manner. They need professional and localized operational strategies to quickly adapt to market changes and build good relationships with the government, partners, and customers. Only by localizing brand culture can they better grasp the opportunities, meet the needs of Chinese consumers, tackle challenges in the Chinese market, and achieve long-term development of the brand in China.

The Mercedes-Benz Trucks localization project team summarized their value proposition as "In China For China" with the slogan "Shining in the East, Driving Steadily into the Distance." These eight words reflect Mercedes-Benz Trucks' commitment to producing and tailoring trucks for China, expressing their blessings and confidence in Chinese customers and the logistics industry. Additionally, Mercedes-Benz Trucks also registered a service brand with Chinese characteristics and a sense of affinity called "BEN HAO YUN." This brand name incorporates "Benz" while also implying smooth transportation and prosperous business. Through these localized cultural expressions, Mercedes-Benz Trucks demonstrates its emphasis on and respect for the Chinese market while fostering a closer connection and emotional bond with Chinese customers.

Product Price Optimization

In 2022, the Chinese heavy truck market saw a sales decline of 52 percent due to economic downturn. Import-brand heavy trucks with prices higher than domestic ones made users hesitant. In the minds of Chinese customers, Mercedes-Benz Trucks were typical representatives of expensive import-brand heavy trucks, with individual vehicle prices exceeding 800 000 yuan and even surpassing 1 million yuan with additional fees.



To better adapt to the Chinese market and change the inherent perception of Chinese customers toward import-brand heavy trucks, Mercedes-Benz Trucks introduced two series of locally produced heavy trucks: Actros and Actros C. Both series adopted the successful Actros technology platform with an integrated price range of 500 000 to 700 000 yuan. The powertrains of the two series differ slightly: Actros is equipped with Mercedes' latest third-generation OM 471 straight-six-cylinder engine and Mercedes Powershift 3 12-speed intelligent AMT gearbox, providing various horsepower versions such as 450hp, 480hp, and 530hp, with maximum torque ranging from 2200Nm to 2 600Nm; Actros C is powered by Cummins 12L/13L engines and ZF TraXon gearbox, offering multiple horsepower versions from 410hp to 580hp, with maximum torque ranging from 2300Nm to 2600Nm.

It is evident that the localized Mercedes-Benz Trucks are priced much lower than the imported ones. Besides price optimization, Mercedes-Benz Trucks have two advantages in post-use aspects that attract Chinese customers: fuel efficiency and resale value. Thanks to intelligent design and technologies, Mercedes-Benz Trucks achieve optimal matching and optimization of powertrains through intelligent shifting strategies, coasting in neutral, and PPC power system predictive cruise control. Additionally, Mercedes-Benz Trucks focus on aerodynamic design, such as incorporating electronic rear-view mirrors, to reduce wind resistance and fuel consumption. Compared to similar models, Mercedes-Benz Trucks save eight percent to 14 percent on fuel consumption. Over a distance of 300 000 kilometers in a year, this translates to a fuel saving of 4 liters per 100 kilometers, resulting in cost savings of 85 000 yuan annually.

Moreover, Mercedes-Benz Trucks retain high residual values in the second-hand market after five to seven years, higher by 80 000 to 100 000 yuan compared to other domestic high-end trucks. Combining the benefits of fuel efficiency and resale value, Mercedes-Benz Trucks can offset the price difference with domestic high-end trucks, making “Mercedes dreams” achievable for more Chinese users to enjoy efficient, reliable, safe, and energy-saving transportation solutions.

Innovative Marketing Methods

After its launch, Mercedes-Benz Trucks attracted widespread attention in the Chinese logistics and heavy truck industries, partly due to its experiential test drive events that were scene-based and tailored to the practical transportation needs and scenarios of customers.

Additionally, Mercedes-Benz Trucks introduced a new communication theme called “Switch to Mercedes-Benz for a Try.” It encouraged customers to replace their existing brand with a Mercedes-Benz Truck, run the same routes for comparison, and see if the Mercedes-Benz Truck could bring more value to them. Mercedes-Benz Trucks’ test drive activities follow five principles: real vehicles, real goods, real people, real cargo, and timely. Only under such genuine conditions can the fuel consumption and performance of Mercedes-Benz Trucks be accurately evaluated.

Mercedes-Benz Trucks’ test drive events cover different routes across the country, with distances of over thousands of kilometers, such as from Beijing to Kunming, Beijing to Urumqi, and Shanghai to Urumqi. Throughout these long-distance round trips, customers can experience firsthand the comfort, safety, and fuel efficiency advantages of Mercedes-Benz Trucks. This scene-based approach also showcases the technological capabilities, performance, economy, and brand value of Mercedes-Benz Trucks, allowing customers to have a comprehensive and profound understanding of the brand.

Furthermore, to accurately target customer groups, Mercedes-Benz Trucks organized exhibitions in logistics parks. By bringing the trucks into logistics parks and collaborating with dealers, Mercedes-Benz Trucks can communicate closely with end-users.



Service Network Development

The coverage of after-sales service networks, response speed, and how customer service handles repairs constitute the “Iron Triangle” for truck manufacturers to enhance customer loyalty through after-sales service. The manufacturer’s service philosophy, core values, and culture are conveyed to users in every interaction. In this process, the manufacturer can create greater value for the brand. When customers need to purchase vehicles again, their experience with after-sales service will have a decisive impact.

After localizing Mercedes-Benz Trucks, many improvements were made in after-sales service to address past pain points associated with imported brands, such as inadequate network density, difficulty in obtaining spare parts, and higher costs. The specific improvements include:

Increasing service outlets to cover major logistics hub cities nationwide. Mercedes-Benz Trucks plans to reach 100 4S stores and 50 2S stores by 2023, thereby reducing service radius, improving service efficiency, and response speed.

Establishing two parts center warehouses in Beijing and Ezhou and utilizing air logistics for urgent

parts delivery within 24 hours to over 60% of cities nationwide and within 48 hours to over 98 percent of cities, thereby ensuring parts supply and avoiding vehicle downtime due to parts shortages.

Publicizing parts prices and implementing one-code anti-counterfeiting management for parts, achieving visibility and transparency in parts logistics, enabling customers to purchase genuine parts with peace of mind, and also supervising inventory management and consumption at service stations.

Additionally, Mercedes-Benz Trucks reduced service labor fees and introduced service contracts, allowing customers to enjoy professional Mercedes-Benz Trucks services at lower prices. The company also conducted systematic training for service personnel to improve their technical capabilities and service quality.

Competition Strengthens Century-Old Brands

In 1923, the first batch of trucks equipped with diesel engines, the Mercedes-Benz 1C, was introduced. This truck featured the OM5 four-cylinder engine with 45hp power, a top speed of 40 kilometers per hour, and a load capacity of 5 tons. This truck marked a breakthrough in the

truck industry with diesel engines and also earned Mercedes-Benz a strong market presence and reputation.

One hundred years later, in 2023, Mercedes-Benz Trucks began comprehensive localization production in China. This move not only caters to the demands of the Chinese market and customers but also contributes to enhancing Mercedes-Benz Trucks' competitiveness and influence globally. Specifically, Mercedes-Benz Trucks' localization in China can bring benefits in several aspects:

Firstly, attracting talent in the automotive industry: China is the world's largest producer and consumer of automobiles, with several internationally competitive automobile manufacturing enterprises and professionals. Localizing the production of Mercedes-Benz Trucks in China can attract and nurture more automotive industry talent, covering various fields such as design, engineering, management, and marketing. Additionally, Mercedes-Benz Trucks can establish closer collaborations with domestic partners, universities, and research institutions to facilitate more technology exchanges and talent development, providing support for Mercedes-Benz Trucks' global development.

Secondly, optimizing supply chain efficiency: Producing Mercedes-Benz Trucks in China can lower costs, enhance price advantages, and improve market responsiveness. It also allows customization and differentiation of products based on the specific demands of Chinese customers. Furthermore, local production reduces dependence on imported components, lowering transportation costs and risks while shortening supply cycles and enhancing adaptability to market changes. Leveraging the strengths of domestic suppliers, Mercedes-Benz Trucks can undertake more localized customization and innovation to meet the diverse needs of Chinese and other regional customers.

Thirdly, enhancing product adaptability and safety: China's extensive road freight transport network presents various challenges with different road grades, terrains, climates, and seasonal variations. These demand higher performance and safety standards for freight vehicles. Localizing the

production of Mercedes-Benz Trucks in China enables more product testing and optimization based on actual market conditions and customer feedback, thereby enhancing product adaptability and safety to meet the transportation needs in different roads and regions.

Fourthly, promoting technological innovation and leadership: China's road freight transport industry is facing challenges and opportunities in terms of transformation, upgrading, and green development. It requires continuous improvement in transportation efficiency, cost reduction, and pollution reduction. Localizing the production of Mercedes-Benz Trucks in China allows better utilization of Daimler Trucks' global technological resources, introducing the latest technology platforms and solutions to provide advanced truck products for Chinese customers. Simultaneously, Mercedes-Benz Trucks can conduct localized research and development and customization based on the specific characteristics and demands of the Chinese market, driving innovation and upgrades in areas such as energy conservation, environmental protection, intelligent connectivity, and autonomous driving.


Fifthly, expanding after-sales network coverage and service capabilities: China's vast territory and regional differences in economic development, population distribution, and transportation demand pose varied requirements and challenges for the use and maintenance of freight vehicles. Localizing the production of Mercedes-Benz Trucks in China enables better understanding of the characteristics and demands of the Chinese market and customers. Accordingly, it allows the establishment and improvement of after-sales networks covering all provinces and cities nationwide, providing timely, professional, and attentive after-sales services to ensure the operational efficiency and satisfaction of customers. This valuable experience can also

contribute to the establishment of after-sales service networks in similar countries or regions worldwide.

Lastly, enhancing brand influence and reputation: Producing Mercedes-Benz Trucks in China showcases Daimler Trucks' confidence and commitment to the Chinese market and manufacturing. It also allows leveraging the experiences and feedback from the Chinese market to elevate the quality and standards of its global product lineup. Moreover, fostering win-win development with Chinese partners, including suppliers, dealers, and service providers, enables the sharing of technology, resources, and markets, creating more employment opportunities in Chinese society.

Conclusion

The localization production of Mercedes-Benz Trucks in China reflects Daimler Trucks' confidence in the Chinese market and manufacturing capabilities and represents a crucial element in Daimler Trucks' global strategic layout. Through local production, Mercedes-Benz Trucks can better meet the needs of Chinese customers, offering more competitive and valuable products and services. It also promotes technological progress and quality improvement in the Chinese automotive industry, creating more employment opportunities and social value for Chinese society.

This serves as a valuable lesson for other international brands as well. In a vast and diverse market like China, international brands need to operate with differentiation, catering to the unique characteristics and demands of the Chinese market by providing more diversified and personalized product choices. Additionally, a focus on localized research and development and innovation is essential, along with establishing closer collaboration with domestic partners, suppliers, dealers, etc., to achieve mutually beneficial development. 





The sourcing is based on Malaysia's market demand, mostly it is the Japanese brands and two specific European brands that are popular. A secondary market is Hong Kong, however, Gwee admitted that the vehicles sourced there are typically not in the right configuration that makes them attractive and thus a lot of re-fitting would be required.

Assembly and Testing

After its acquisition, the vehicle is dismantled into its components. Once landed in Malaysia, each component is checked, refurbished whereby wear-and-tear parts are being replaced in accordance with the factory specifications. Only those components that are worthy of refurbishment are retained. Wear-and-tear components like tyre and batteries for example are discarded and are replaced with new ones. The components, sub-systems and systems are re-assembled to form the rebuilt vehicle. Each rebuilt vehicle is subject to stringent checks and tests to achieve its original specification and performance. Besides, each rebuilt vehicle undergoes various road-worthiness tests. This includes brake test, wheel alignment test and smoke test.

A major difference between the assembly of new and rebuilt units is the way they are assembled: new trucks are plug and play, whereby each unit only takes a few hours to complete. In contrast, a rebuilt truck may have dents, scraped paint and malfunctioning parts that need to be sourced and



Rebuilding Trucks

Being touted as an alternative to new vehicles, rebuilt trucks have been a common sight on Malaysia's roads. We explore how exactly these vehicles make their way to the customers.

Asian Trucker got exclusive access to the operations of ECO-R (Malaysia) Sdn Bhd (henceforth ECO-R), a member of Sendok Group to find out all about the process of rebuilding and selling trucks here in Malaysia. Wesley Gwee, Commercial Vehicle Director, known by his FaceBook and TikTok handle "Truck Prince", made time to explain about the ins and outs of this business.

Sourcing

It all starts with the sourcing of the vehicles. Gwee explained that there are generally two regions that are well established as hunting grounds for suitable trucks as they use right-hand drive: Japan and the UK. The trucks destined to be sold in Malaysia are acquired through auctions. Prior to bidding, either his colleagues in county or knowledgeable business partners will have scrutinised the goods on offer. There are certain regulations in place for the sales of such vehicles in the Malaysian market. "We are not allowed to bring in fully assembled commercial vehicles, all vehicles must be fully CKD kits and we can only import trucks that have already been available here.



replaced. Oftentimes, since the vehicles are used, the interior of the cab needs to be refurbished as well. A seat upholstery may be worn out and needs to be replaced for example. Prior to delivery, the vehicle may need a new paint job and a thorough cleaning. Once the mechanics are done with all of the above, ECO-R will start to distribute the refurbished trucks to either truck dealers and or directly to end users.

Attention to the Detailing

Although people on the ground check out the vehicles put up for auction, a certain number of vehicles typically turns out to be unsuitable for the process of rebuilding. In such case, parts can be salvaged and remanufactured for resale through their service network. "It is imperative that we only pick vehicles with their engines, chassis and components in good condition."

One challenge Gwee faces is the need for a bigger number of identical trucks required by a customer. Vehicles offered for auction are generally single units or very small fleets. Therefore, it may take a long time to gather a homogenous fleet made up from rebuilt vehicles. This, according to Gwee is a situation that does not occur very often though as most customers are SMEs, which require only small fleets, if not just one unit at a time. "What we do is to focus on vehicles that have already been sold in large quantities in other markets in order to ensure that our clients can easily access spare parts." Before the vehicle can be sold, a full service is being administered to each truck, complete with a flushing of the fuel tank. "The actual refurbishment of the trucks is the most challenging part in the entire process from sourcing to selling," Gwee explained.


A trade-off of rebuilt trucks is that they are being sold with limited warranty. ECO-R offers a warranty on their rebuilt trucks that exceeds that recommended by the Commercial Vehicles Rebuilders Association Malaysia. However, buyers should be aware that their warranty is not as extensive than the one provided for a brand-new vehicle. "There are of course trade-offs. There must be a down-side to this kind of offering too," Gwee said.



Benefits of rebuilding trucks and what to pay attention to:

- 1) The use of rebuilt trucks enables users to reduce the initial capital expenditure and transportation cost. As these trucks are imported as CKD, tax incentives apply.
- 2) As the trucks come in at a lower cost, smaller companies will be able to retain profit while being able to access affordable vehicles. Exact figures are difficult to calculate, however the difference to a brand-new vehicle is significant.
- 3) Development skills in refurbishment as part of an effort in pursuing a sustainability agenda. Remanufactured parts can be used to reduce waste.
- 4) Access to ready-made vehicles with special equipment, reducing delivery times.
- 5) Loans for the vehicles are available; Sendok offering warranty on the vehicles

Sendok Advantage

Gwee said that "We are one of the top commercial vehicle tycoons in Malaysia. And we have a special license to import and assemble rigid and prime mover trucks, buses, vans, and pickups. We have more than 40 years of experience in the commercial vehicle industry and through our service network and affiliated companies can offer a one-stop service." Those opting to upgrade to a new truck may also turn to Sendok Group as they are happy to evaluate a rebuilt truck they have sold to a client for a trade-in. 



Driven: Angka-Tan Motor's JMC Vigus Pro White Series 4x4 Pick-Up

The JMC Vigus Pro White Series is the perfect workhorse for corporates and SMEs, designed and built to help business owners to achieve the best business performance and goals.

The JMC Vigus Pro White Series is the perfect workhorse for corporates and small and medium enterprises (SMEs), designed and built to help business owners achieve the best business performance and goals.

Angka-Tan Motor Sdn Bhd (ATM) introduces the JMC Vigus Pro All-Essential White Series. At a competitive and affordable price of just RM 99 888, the JMC Vigus Pro White Series is the best-priced automatic transmission 4x4 workhorse in the 1-tonne pickup segment, making it a perfect workhorse for corporates and SMEs.

The JMC Vigus Pro White Series is the extension of the successful JMC Vigus Pro Premium Series. The JMC Vigus Pro family now has two options for the customers: the White Series catering for business and trade owners who seek cost effectiveness, and the Premium Series for discerning owners. Asian Trucker took out one of the White Series pickups as a vehicle that would be suited to cater to the transportation needs of businesses.

First Impressions

It is a big vehicle. As it should be, being a workhorse that is moving goods as well as a crew. The car seats a team of five with ample space in the bed. The test vehicle came with a roller shutter and hooks to lash cargo. Devoid of any frills or fancy decorative items, the Vigus Pro clearly is a tool that is going to fit well with the business community. Although it may look smaller than competitive vehicles, the bed is the same size. Parking is tricky in tighter spots like shopping malls basement car parks. However, that is to be expected of a vehicle of such size. The key fob has buttons to lock/unlock the vehicle remotely. One would still have to turn a key in an ignition: when put to use, multiple drivers may use this vehicle and having the key in the ignition will minimise the search for the key fob.

It is a solid-built vehicle that offers some interesting design features. For instance, the wheel wells are fitted with plastic guards, preventing mud from getting into the crevasses of the chassis. Wheel wells

will be easy to clean with a water hose – a smart feature for easy maintenance. Getting inside, the full floor carpeting also prevents dirt from being trapped in the footwell. The instrumentation is clear, clean and very orderly arranged. The finishing of the dashboard, the stowage compartments and the seats are surprisingly luxurious. One will immediately feel that there is a lot of value for the money in this vehicle.

The sitting position, mirrors placement and the vehicle's design provide an excellent view. Thanks to a reverse camera, driving backwards is easy. The mirrors capture the surroundings nicely, there is very little in terms of blind spots, and the A-column is hardly noticeable during driving. Although it is a big vehicle, driving it comes easy thanks to these features.

Powertrain

The White Series still come with the remarkable and powerful PUMA 2.0L



TDI diesel engine, the first-in-class ZF 8-speed automatic transmission with manual mode and the BorgWarner four-wheel drive system. The PUMA 2.0L TDI diesel engine delivers exceptional performance on and off the road. With its advanced fuel injection system and turbocharging technology, the engine provides impressive power and efficiency, ensuring a smooth and responsive driving experience. The proven and tested power train will give owners and drivers peace of mind.

This may be a Chinese vehicle, priced competitively, however the developers clearly had their priorities right.

In daily operation, the vehicle has ample power to swim with the traffic on the highway while being easily manoeuvrable in tight corners. Shifting is smooth; the engine produces a nice sound, making the Vigus Pro feel like a mini truck. While the driver will feel the engine at work, the cab is surprisingly quiet. All the buttons needed to manipulate the powertrain are within easy reach and designed with the intuition of operating them. The exception may be the gear shift stick. Putting the Vigus Pro in gear requires the gear shift stick to be pushed forward for the reverse gear and backwards for the forward gears.

The Ride

The JMC Vigus Pro White Series is focused on offering the best essentials, focusing on performance without excessive features. It is this promise that the vehicle keeps. The instrument cluster offers all the functionality one needs without offering too many distracting display options. One would expect the steering wheel to be round, instead, it is one of the flattened ones typically found in more lifestyle-oriented vehicles. The cab is designed for five passengers, however, with all seats taken, it gets crowded. The driver seat could move a little more back; as a driver, one may find the seating position awkward on longer trips. As the vehicle is designed as a workhorse where passengers/driver would go only short distances, this should not be a problem. Positive comments were given by any rider on the smoothness of the ride, thanks to the suspension. Similar, popular vehicles have been said to be wobblier at lower speeds and bumpier at higher speeds.

As for the BorgWarner four-wheel drive system, it offers a low-range transfer box for off-road and SUV applications. This system allows drivers to switch between

two- and four-wheel drive modes, providing improved traction and off-road capabilities, which could be useful for certain applications requiring short drives off-road. BorgWarner's system incorporates electronic or mechanical controls to engage or disengage four-wheel drive. It ensures reliable performance and flexibility in various driving conditions, making it the must-have pickup truck for all businesses. Peddle shift buttons on the steering wheel add to the luxury feeling of the vehicle.

Build Quality

ATM now offers additional accessories to meet customers' various demands. Customers can choose accessories such as roller shutters, providing convenience and security for their cargo. Alternatively, the canopy is available, offering versatility and protection. All accessories come with one year warranty. All JMC Vigus Pro are locally assembled at the state-of-the-art Tan Chong Motor plant in Serendah, Selangor. It is available for viewing and test drives at 30 ATM dealerships nationwide, complemented by a network of 20 Tan Chong Ekpress Auto Servis aftersales service workshops.


With the competitive price, the JMC Vigus Pro White Series is covered by a 3-year or 100 000km warranty. The interior trimming comes with air-breathing fabric seats. The leatherette seats and other accessories such as DVR, tinting, door visor, kicking plate and tailgate assist remain with the Premium Series, with a 5-year or 150 000km warranty. Overall, the Vigus impresses not only with high-quality components, luxury interior and top-notch build quality. The vehicle offers many accessories and features that one would not expect in a vehicle at this price point.

Final Assessment

The JMC Vigus Pro White Series is positioned as a workhorse for the SME sector. Not only is it comprised of top-



grade components, but it also is a lot of fun to drive. A few minor things could be improved, i.e. the driver seat position. Further, other vehicle offers wheelhouses with detachable trims. If a driver would dent the wheelhouses of the Vigus Pro, it would require more extensive metal work rather than an exchange of a part. While the vehicle is well built, it could do with a bit more styling to make it stand out more from the crowd of other utility vehicles.

When looking at the issues raised, one has to remember what this is not meant to be: a lifestyle product. As a workhorse, the JMC Vigus Pro White Series has left an impression. Those needing a pickup truck to run their business will find a highly satisfying driving experience for a highly attractive price. A lot of thought has gone into the design of this vehicle in terms of functionality and the accessories offered are adding value to it as a business proposition. Resale value may be an issue which needs to be assessed later. Would we recommend this vehicle to SMEs to meet their transportation needs of up to a ton? Absolutely! 



A smart feature for easy maintenance of wheel wells.



Seizing it up: a contractor running over to have a closer look when we parked for some photos



ETG parts are selected and approved parts only, manufactured according to German Standard. “We have a dedicated team that audits our suppliers by visiting their production facilities to check their quality compliance. Among the 30 000 plus part numbers, customers can also find parts for trucks that are not officially sold here in Malaysia. Working with trustful wholesalers and resellers only, ETG is a well-known aftermarket brand and a reliable option for various markets and customers.

Once the minimum order volume is reached, goods are shipped from the central warehouse in Germany, arriving here a few weeks later at the purchaser’s warehouse. “Typically, my clients will have rolling orders for a year for the parts they forecast.” One may ask if it is worth paying a premium for a German brand when there are alternatives in the market. Mr. Alfred points out that the benefit of using ETG’s products is that their quality is consistent. Market observation has shown ETG that cheaper products may be of a high standard when the first batches are being sold, but after that it can be hit and miss.”

“ETG’s quality is its biggest value and especially for technical parts, Europe is still the worldwide leader, and consistency is key,” he emphasised. Issues with aftermarket parts arise typically when a technician is not properly trained in how to install the parts.

“Our product department is connected to all our suppliers, and we are always happy to assist with demand planning or technical expertise.” ETG is already established and successful on other continents (Middle East, South America, Africa). Now they are ready and excited to support their growing partners in the Asia region as well.

What Oon has observed is that the European market is no longer different from Asia. The availability of aftermarket parts, the competition and cash flow is rather similar. However, he noted that in some markets there is a preference for OEM parts, while others are flooded with fake or counterfeit parts. “In this context, we try to educate the market, we need to understand the need of the operator and support them partnerships and loyalty to our dealers. This is what Meyer Glitza (ETG) stands for.”

Part-nership as Winning Formula

Their simple slogan, ‘being your lifetime partner’ denotes the business philosophy of ETG. Standing for Engine Technic Germany, the brand works with every business partner on their core values of offering high quality products, sustaining credibility, reliability and fairness in the pursuit of this slogan. Meyer-Glitza, Frese, GmbH & Co KG (Meyer-Glitza, Frese) has earned an excellent reputation in the automotive parts industry over the past 150 years since its founding.

Locally, Mr. Alfred Oon Ching Hsiang, Sales Director, Asia Pacific, ETG (Asia Pacific) Pte Ltd, is responsible for managing the brand in the region. Based out of Malaysia, he is handling the portfolio of Meyer-Glitza, Frese, which has since grown to include components beyond engine parts. Shock absorbers, slack adjusters, belt tensioner and several other product groups can now be obtained from Meyer-Glitza, Frese via ETG.

“What we do is to reverse engineer the OEM’s components and then source them globally with the quality matching that of the original manufacturers. “I have been in this industry for decades and what I found is that fleet operators opt for aftermarket parts once the vehicle is older than the warranty would cover. And if you can save thousands of Ringgit Malaysia on servicing per truck it multiplies,” he said.

The portfolio that customers can chose from here in Malaysia are either OEM spare parts, such as Kongsberg, FTE, Relo, Kaco, and others, or aftermarket parts, branded ETG. The latter are Quality parts for European trucks. Besides being competitively priced,



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Hyva's Slide Lifter is Giving Tuck Sun a New Edge

Adding a new tool, Tuck Sun is hoping to capture more market share as they can now boldly go where others may not be able to access collection and drop-off points.

Tuck Sun is adopting a holistic approach in terms of upstream and downstream value-added services by providing customers with innovative supply chain management technology. It is not surprising to find them trying new technologies and tools. Their latest addition is a slider lift with 2-tonne capacity, which Hyva installed on.


Tail lifts have long been a common tool in the transportation industry as they offer easy loading and unloading in difficult environments. Whenever there are no forklifts or extendable loading ramp available, a tail lift gets the job done. In Malaysia, it is not unusual to find smaller operators not having loading equipment as their volume may not be sufficient to justify the investment into such assets. However, they still need to have goods delivered or collected and this is where a tail lift is shining.

As Tuck Sun Logistics Sdn Bhd Group Managing Director Kuan Kok Onn explains, the company not only deals with haulage, but also with distribution. The missions for the latter require the trucks to deliver to retail shops. "Retail shops, generally, like shop lots, do not have loading bays or forklifts," Kuan elaborates. To unload the goods, one would then use the slider lift to lower the pallets from the cargo hold to the ground, where they can be retrieved using a pallet jack. Other collection or delivery points may have a loading bay with a raised platform. Either way, this is where the slider lift shines as it offers the flexibility to be used regardless of the availability of any ramps.

Using tail lifts, Tuck Sun has already gained valuable experience in using such equipment. "However, this is our first slider lift and we have received this unit at the beginning of August," Kuan said. The D Hollandia cantilever lift installed by Hyva is running of its own power pack; not requiring a Power Take-Off (PTO), this is a cost-effective

solution. "The advantage of a slider lift is that it is easier to be on the same level as a loading dock." Kuan revealed that this is an initiative Tuck Sun has taken whereby he described it as a "Chicken and egg situation", whereby customers may not be aware that such solutions exist. In line with the company's motto of being innovative, Tuck Sun has a long history of working with Hyva as the supplier has repeatedly proved that their solution would be forward-thinking.

In its travel position, the slider lift is safely stored underneath the chassis of the vehicle. It is ideal for operations needing frequent loading or access to loading docks, and all applications requiring quick and free access to the cargo space. In cases where the height of the truck aligns with a loading dock and no ramp is needed, a truck with a slider lift would allow for faster access to the cargo hold as there is no tail lift that needs to be lowered first. "We asked Hyva for a solution to our issues faced when we are handing delivery jobs and they suggested this slider lift to us as an alternative to the cantilever lift that they also offer. D Hollandia, world's biggest supplier of tailgates, in partnership with Hyva, is offering a wide variety of lifts. They have in their range the standard cantilever lifts, column lifts, slider lifts and also passenger lifts. For their trial, Tuck Sun had their first slider lift installed on a brand-new 19-tonne GVW UD CKE 42R truck. "Pre-sales is obviously an important issue when you are deciding on such a lifter as it would need to fit the chassis exactly."

Once the specifications have been tied down, the installation only takes a few days once the truck has been completed by the body builder. Regular service comprises of regular checks of the hydraulic and electrical systems with oil being changed in regular intervals. 





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295/80R22.5	18	KT869	17.00	M	152/149	9.00	298	3550/3250	900	238
295/80R22.5	18	KT852	15.50	L	152/149	9.00	298	3550/3250	900	250
295/80R22.5	18	KT855	21.00	K	152/149	9.00	298	3550/3250	900	250
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Lu & Sons Celebrate 40 Year Partnership with HINO with Upgraded 3S Facilities in Bintulu

Lu & Sons Engineering Sdn Bhd has reached an exciting milestone as the company celebrates 40 years of partnership with Hino Motors Sales (Malaysia) Sdn Bhd (HMSM). The relationship between the authorized Hino 3S Dealer Lu & Sons Engineering Sdn Bhd and Hino Malaysia started in 1984.

Lu & Sons started their company as Lu Motors Parts Engineering in 1983 as a service and repair workshop. A year later, Lu & Sons embarked on its journey as an authorized 2S (Service and Spare Parts) Hino centre when it was established in 1984. Progressing over time, Lu & Sons became a trusted service provider for numerous Hino vehicles, earning the confidence of the vehicle owners. During that period, there was no Hino sales centre in Bintulu, and customers interested in purchasing Hino vehicles had to go to Miri. Many customers inquired about the possibility of vehicle supply, which Lu & Sons decided to upgrade from a 2S to a 3S Hino centre on July 26th, 1997.

Lu & Sons' remarkable success has found its foundation in the unyielding dedication and tireless efforts of their associates, further reinforced by an all-encompassing culture of Customer-Centric service deeply embedded within the fabric of the organization. Spanning a remarkable 40-year journey, and presently boasting three branches across Bintulu, Kuching, and Sibul, Lu & Sons has consistently upheld its commitment to providing top-tier plastic enclosure products and services.



The ceremony took place at Lu & Sons Engineering Sdn Bhd in Bintulu, Sarawak. During the event, HMSM's Managing Director, Atsushi Uchiyama, presented a memento to Lu & Sons Engineering Sdn Bhd's Managing Director, Lu Kui Tiong, in appreciation of their dedication and hard work during their 40 years of partnership. Following the memento presentation, a handover ceremony of the Hino 200 Series lorry to the customer Art and Sign Shop. A photo session and a viewing of the upgraded facilities were part of the continuing ceremony.

Products and Services Offered as Hino Authorized 3S Dealer

As the pioneer Hino 3S centre in Bintulu, Lu & Sons Engineering now offers comprehensive services encompassing sales, spare parts, maintenance, and repair, primarily focusing on the plantation and construction sectors.

A noteworthy achievement occurred in 2014, when Lu & Sons became the pioneering Hino 3S dealer to introduce the 700 series prime mover to Malaysia, a segment encompassing Hino's heaviest vehicles. This upgraded version, capable of producing up to 460hp, significantly narrowed the performance gap with its European counterparts. Lu & Sons identified its potential in segments such as logging, container transport, and palm oil tanker haulage, successfully selling all 6 units from the initial batch.

Expectations for Future Business Direction

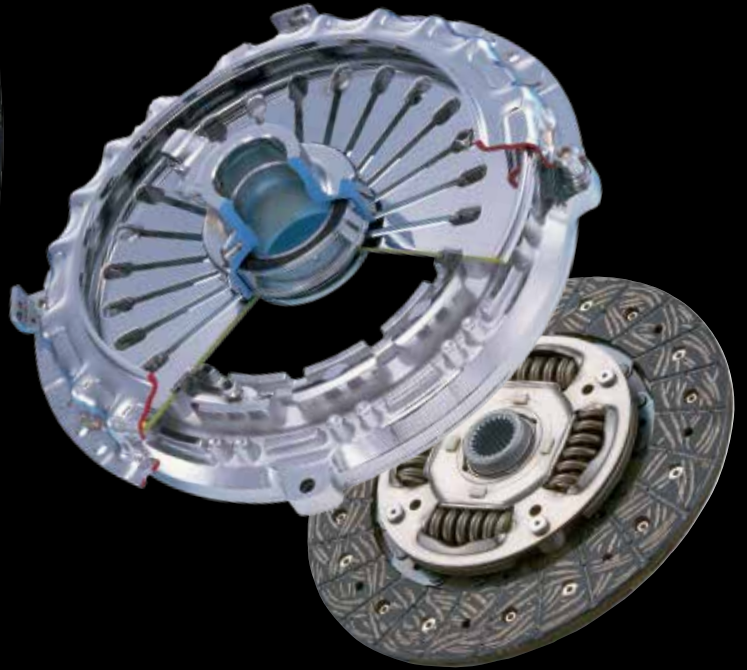
Looking ahead, Lu & Sons has undertaken a comprehensive facility enhancement by introducing a fresh and modern facelift to their premises. This includes the transformation of various spaces, notably the customer waiting room, reception area, meeting room, training room, awards room, prayer room, conference room, and the addition of a mechanic display board.

As they set their sights on the horizon of 2023, Lu & Sons is poised to engage in introspection, revisiting their humble beginnings, and acknowledging the milestones that have paved their path. This contemplative journey will serve to illuminate their achievements and pave the way for a blueprint of aspirations that will guide them into an even more prosperous and impactful future, notably to be "The Best in Town".

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Central Pahang Isuzu Customers get Enhanced Facilities



Residents and business operators along the central belt of Peninsular Malaysia will now be able to enjoy enhanced Isuzu sales and service support following the opening of the revamped Isuzu Temerloh 3S outlet.

Located strategically along the main thoroughfare leading into town, the outlet operated by Pacific Motor Sdn Bhd showcases Isuzu Malaysia's latest corporate identity while providing a host of sales and after-sales facilities to meet the needs of the growing population of Isuzu owners in the region.

The new 3S Centre was officially opened by the Chief Executive Officer of Isuzu Malaysia Shunsuke Okazoe who lauded the new facility as a modern and comprehensive outlet able to serve the needs of customers for many years to come.

"Isuzu has made significant inroads into the Malaysian market, not only in terms of sales penetration, but also in building our reputation as a leading brand of high quality, dependable and innovative vehicles. The opening of new and improved facilities such as the Isuzu Temerloh 3S Centre will bolster our aim to provide our customers with an enhanced experience that meet and exceed their expectations," said Okazoe.

The Isuzu Temerloh 3S Centre sits on a spacious plot of land measuring over 7 000 square meters, allowing



it to comfortably accommodate Isuzu lorries and pick-up trucks that visit for maintenance care.

The six service bays are able to quickly turn around service appointments, allowing customers to speedily get on their way after ensuring their Isuzu vehicles remain in tip-top condition.

Inside the new facility is a comfortable waiting area complete with refreshments while prospects looking for the latest Isuzu D-Max model will

be able to browse in the comfort of the air-conditioned showroom and use the environmentally-friendly digital information panels. Those seeking the ideal Isuzu truck to serve their business needs will also find experienced and knowledgeable consultants ready to assist.

Pahang remains strategically-important for Isuzu Malaysia with Isuzu trucks capturing a dominant 72 percent share of the market from January to July this year, making it the No.1 state for the company in terms of market share.

Isuzu D-Max pick-up trucks have also gained significant inroads in Pahang to move into a clear second position on the pick-up truck sales charts. Sales of the third-generation Isuzu D-Max jumped by a whopping 7.2 percent between January and August this year to capture a healthy 24.4 percent of the market.





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“ASEAN and China are two of the fastest growing economies in the world. As the region remains poised for growth, GEODIS sees the extension of our Road Network to China as an opportunity to enhance our multimodal solutions and connectivity across major air hubs and seaports to give customers greater flexibility and reliability. We have made significant investments to our security, infrastructure, and capabilities to ensure a safe and efficient flow of goods for our customers. Ultimately, we want to provide them with a competitive advantage to grow their business,” said Onno Boots, Regional President and CEO of GEODIS Asia Pacific and Middle East.

Recognizing the need for high security, GEODIS has made significant investments into advanced IoT security equipment and processes to safeguard high-value shipments throughout the Road Network. With GPS-tracked, sensor-equipped containers, prime movers and trailers, the Road Network is monitored 24/7/365 by a professional command centre, providing real-time, end-to-end visibility of shipments actual locations. Customers can access automated updates of shipment milestones including border crossings via GEODIS’ freight management solution.

The Road Network will be equipped with industry-first truck safety and driver assistance features such as brake assist, stability control assist, hill hold assist, and driver fatigue monitoring, to ensure utmost safety of people, vehicle and cargo.

GEODIS also targets heightened economic, operational and environmental performance through high-utilization double-deck container loading, and reduction in carbon emissions through their fleet of new prime mover trucks. Last year, GEODIS added to their fleet seven new Mercedes-Benz Actros prime movers in Malaysia, equipped with the latest in security and safety technologies.

The completion of the GEODIS Road Network from Singapore to China is part of the company’s continued investment to boost its capabilities and infrastructure to match their customers’ growth in the Asia Pacific region. **F**

GEODIS invests in Asia, Expanding Road Network from Singapore to China

G EODIS is driving its growth in Asia with strategic investments in its capabilities and infrastructure in the region. The company has expanded its Road Network from Southeast Asia (SEA) to China – solidifying its position as a leader in providing secure day-definite, cost-efficient, and environmentally-friendly solutions connecting Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam and China.

The Road Network features advanced IoT technology and equipment for transporting goods securely for the High Tech, Semiconductor, Automotive, Engineering, Retail, and Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) sectors. Investments have also been made to increase service frequency and to enhance its capabilities with dedicated customs brokerage and trade compliance teams at major border crossings to facilitate the seamless movement of goods. The Road Network integrates with major air and seaports to offer customers a variety of multimodal options to meet the challenges of today’s fast-moving environment and their need for agile and flexible supply chains.

The Road Network to Shenzhen will officially launch on 23 August 2023 and will subsequently be extended to Hong Kong, and in the near future to Indonesia, connected by an inter-modal road-sea service. In recent years, trade between ASEAN and China has grown rapidly, underscoring the significance of logistics in facilitating trade. Road freight has become one of the fastest-growing modes of transport in the ASEAN freight market with Thailand and Vietnam looking to invest further in infrastructure to support cross-border trade. The Road Network will enable GEODIS to access the expanding logistics sector in Asia Pacific, projected to reach US\$4.5 trillion by 2029 with an anticipated growth of 5.24 percent from 2023 to 2029.



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Since 1927, PRESTONE has protected drivers and their vehicles with cutting-edge products.

One of the long-time users of PRESTONE products is Interway Transport Sdn Bhd. Mr Cheok Tuan Lim, Executive Director of Interway Transport spoke to Asian Trucker about their experience and how these additives help to improve the performance of the fleet.

Interway Transport had chosen PRESTONE products to be used in their trucks. PRESTONE COMMAND Heavy Duty 50/50 Prediluted Coolant, which is one of Prestone's key products. "What we like about this is that the truck makers also approve these additives," Lim said. In Malaysia, the addition of the Coolant helps to reduce the temperature inside the engine block and the intercooler, thus protecting the asset. When first

hearing about the addition of coolant, Lim set out to research the matter as he was initially under the impression that any coolant would do. However, every 200 000 kilometres a fresh filling would require the right specifications of Heavy Duty Coolant to be used. Through his research he found Allegiance Malaysia as one supplier of suitable fluids. Even though the cost is manageable, it is still crucial to pick the right product to avoid damages to the engine.

Although Lim admitted that it is hard to prove that the product will have a significant impact on the performance of the trucks, Lim has seen the amazing proven result of having used it over time. Whenever an engine comes up for an overhaul, the components are in a much better shape than those that are not protected by the additive. However, PRESTONE being a US brand, Lim has trust in their products. Lim stated that it is important that one follows the specifications of the OEM.

After cooling system overhaul, Lim recommends the use of the PRESTONE Command Heavy Duty 2in1 Flush & Degreaser. Innovation and easy to use, reduces downtime by cleaning and degreasing in one step. This product is an advanced cleaner that safely dissolves corrosion and scale without damaging metals, or disassembling the cooling system. It is an oil encapsulation

system that strips grease and oil from all surfaces and flushes it away. Just one use helps prevent overheating, a major cause of engine failure

It is a small additional cost that can prevent damage to the engine, which would be satirical when you consider that one has just spent good time and money on the refurbishment of an engine." The key difference between European and local transporters according to Lim is the acquisition of vehicles as he said "In Europe you lease your trucks and thus you don't have to care about them. Here, we own the vehicles and need to take care of them for up to 20 years!"

Interway Transport moves containers, as well as heavy goods with a fleet of around 400 trucks. Thus, their trucks are subjected to a lot of hard work: either driving long distances or moving heavy loads. "Malaysia's transporters must know the standard, follow trends and developments to prevent damages to their trucks and avoid breakdowns," Lim said. In his workshop, he is constantly trying to find ways to improve the performance of the fleet. "After the warranty ends, transporters must take care of their assets beyond the warranty period and we are grateful for partners like Allegiance Malaysia to offer assistance in this regard," he opined. **F**



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Talk to the Pro About ABS and EBS

The ZF [pro]Service is a commercial vehicle workshop service program that has aligned three existing concepts into one. Through it, ZF offers the expertise and unmatched technological knowledge of the world's leading commercial vehicle supplier into personalized service solutions for truck, trailer or bus workshops. Its customers can now benefit from an extensive portfolio and service offer. Asian Trucker spoke to Pei Jia Koh, Managing Director, Seri Zenith Engineering Sdn Bhd, to get more details about this ground-breaking new approach.

According to Koh, Anti-Braking System, ABS, Electronic Braking System, EBS, Trailerguard and Trailer Pulse are the most prominent and in-demand ZF products sold under the WABCO brand. Road traffic crash is the number one cause of accidental death in Malaysia, with 6500 people are cut short yearly.

Road safety is a shared responsibility for all of us. Having ABS and EBS will produce safer vehicles, safer road users and safer driving experience. Recently, Seri Zenith Engineering has also embarked on a campaign to train and educate workshops outside their own on these products to advocate road safety. With these products gaining popularity, we also swap imperial measurement to the metric system for consistency. Seri Zenith Engineering Sdn Bhd is aligned with the Malaysia Ministry of Transport plan to achieve 50 percent reduction in the number of fatalities due to road accidents by 2023 (Malaysia Road Safety Plan 2022-2030).

"We started this as early as 2018 to bring end-users, suppliers and service providers to the table. This has allowed us to provide benefits along the entire value creation chain and in return customers come back for follow up and advise." Koh said that

they understand that a trailer helps generate revenue and are great asset for transporters. They often look for low operating cost, high uptime and easy-servicing. Common challenges faced by transporters are brake jam, tyres overheating and cracker chassis. Seri Zenith Engineering believes that deploying sophisticated tools such as ABS and EBS is helping operators to avoid such incidents.

Insights from the customer post-installation of ABS and EBS was better handling and safer management for vehicles. Referencing their road safety event held in October 2022, he stated that some 60 percent of trailers manufactured by them featured ABS. Now that many customers have been convinced that ABS / EBS is a great investment for safety, tyre pressure monitoring is one of the next applications in the pipeline.

Koh opined that the introduction of the ZF [pro]Service is a very important step. While the maintenance cost for tools like ABS / EBS is close to nil, these systems need to be properly specced and when maintained, it needs to be done right. With the advancement of technology, workshop personnel also need to keep up abreast with new developments. As with great power comes great responsibility, to be certified ZF [pro] Service, one would have to comply with strict requirements.

A common misconception about ABS/EBS is that it would only be suitable for light and medium goods vehicles. However, when equipped with ABS and EBS, the braking distance for a heavy truck can not only be shortened, but the vehicle can also still be steered, promoting safer margins in an emergency situation. To ensure that a trailer is equipped with the right tools, it is vital that a workshop or trailer manufacturer understands how the individual items are combined into it's totality of a bigger sum. Hence, the ZF [pro]Service is the way forward in Koh's view and he is confident that through it, the industry will benefit as a whole in promoting safer vehicles, safer road users and safer driving experience. "Road safety is a shared responsibility for all of us and Seri Zenith is aligned with this mission," Koh emphasized. **F**

AUSTONE TIRES



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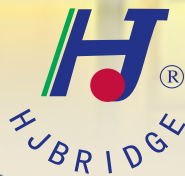
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Electric Mobility Changes Major Parameters in Tyre Development Process



Enno Straten, Head of Strategy, Analytics and Marketing at Continental Tyres EMEA, explains at the presentation of the new Generation 5 Conti Hybrid tyre line how Continental is shaping the transformation to electric mobility with specially developed commercial vehicle tyres and smart sensors.

Q: Mr. Straten, electric mobility has hit the fast lane, and the EU is predicting 30 million electric vehicles will be on Europe's roads by 2030. How far has electrification progressed with commercial vehicles?

ES: Electrically powered trucks play an important role in reducing CO2 emissions from road traffic – and therefore in achieving sustainable mobility. It is true that development has reached a more advanced stage with passenger cars – as well as with electric vans and electric buses – than with heavy-duty commercial vehicles. Electric vans are employed primarily by courier, express delivery and package delivery services; light electric trucks up to 7.5 metric tons are generally used for delivery purposes in urban areas to transport goods over the last mile. And an ever increasing number of local transport operators are running electric buses.

Q: What do these changes to drive systems mean for the tyre market?

ES: The rapid development of electric mobility has been accompanied by a surge in demand for suitable tyres in the commercial vehicle segment. The new drive system types and, in some cases, new vehicle concepts, are changing requirement profiles.

Q: What are these new requirements?

ES: First of all, tyres for electrified commercial vehicles do not yet differ fundamentally from tyres for commercial vehicles with diesel or gasoline engines. Having said that, certain parameters that play a major role for us in tyre development are changing. Uppermost on this list are load capacity, rolling

resistance and wear resistance. Vehicles with electric drive are heavier on account of the batteries they are carrying, but they also accelerate faster than vehicles with conventional engines. The driver can essentially call on maximum torque from a standstill. So greater forces are exerted on the tyres of electrified vehicles.

Q: Can you give us some specific examples of tyre developments?

ES: With the Conti Urban city bus tyre, we have developed a tyre with an increased load index specially for electric buses operating in urban areas. The load capacity of the tyre is geared to the higher weight of electric buses. For example, the Conti Urban HA3 315/60 R22.5 can carry up to eight tons per axle.

Q: You also mentioned rolling resistance as an influencing factor. What role does this parameter play?

Optimized rolling resistance allows the motor's energy consumption to be reduced, and that also applies for vehicles with combustion engines. Since the EU emissions directive came into force and the VECTO tool was introduced – if not before – commercial vehicle manufacturers have been concentrating on lowering CO2 emissions. And tyres have been one of their main points of focus.

Q: Another trend are smart tyres with sensors. What sort of developments are we seeing here?

ES: Yes, commercial vehicle tyres are being increasingly incorporated into the vehicle architecture for connected and automated driving. We also offer this technology as a professional retrofit solution with ContiConnect 2. Sensors fitted in the tyre provide information such as tyre pressure, temperature, wheel load, tread depth, wheel speed, wheel slip, and structural damage in the tyre. This information can be accessed



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and analyzed in real time. The result is improved handling properties, increased road safety and greater efficiency, combined with low costs.

Q: You mentioned working with commercial vehicle manufacturers. What do these partnerships look like in detail?

ES: A good example here is VDL Bus & Coach, a leading manufacturer of electric buses based in the Netherlands. We have been running a partnership with the company since the end of 2020 and have worked with them to develop initial prototype tyres for electric city buses. We have now tested these tyres in depth at our Contidrom proving grounds. VDL has been offering electric city buses since 2013. The driving environment with these buses is a departure from the familiar. To start with, there is the higher torque when pulling away and accelerating. And then you have the impact of recuperation – i.e. recovery of energy when braking. All of this subjects the tyres to particularly significant forces.

Our partnership with the Switzerland-based Designwerk Group's electric truck brand Futuricum works in a very similar way. In fall 2021, a Futuricum truck fitted with our EfficientPro tyres set a new distance world record at the Contidrom: 1 099 kilometers on a single battery charge!

Q: Those collaborations are with commercial vehicle manufacturers. Do you also have special partnerships with end customers – i.e. mobility providers?

ES: One example here would be our partnership with MOIA, a ride-sharing company operating in Hamburg and Hanover. We developed a special all-season tyre for MOIA, which offers even greater safety in combination with the Conti360° Fleet Solutions concept. Together with our service partner Vergölst we are working intensively on optimizing tyre performance and breakdown service. This has seen us successfully carry over our established 360° Fleet Solutions approach from the commercial vehicle space into MOIA's new and innovative mobility concept.

Q: Do you also work with traditional mobility providers, e.g. with local transport operators?

ES: Of course – the partnership with the Hamburg-Holstein public transport operator (VHH) is a case in point. VHH uses fully electric Lion's City buses from MAN. To ensure the tyres can deal with the weight of the batteries on board, the buses are fitted with our Conti Urban HA3 tyre. Our developers have increased the load capacity of this tyre specially to meet the requirements of electric mobility in urban areas. Two other examples also spring to mind – one in everyday usage scenarios and one in the context of smart tyres.

Q: Sounds interesting – please tell us more!

ES: The Stiegl brewery in Austria has been running an electric truck from MAN since late 2018. In this time, our Conti Hybrid HS3 and HD3 tyres have covered more than 23,000 kilometers on the vehicle. The truck is on the road for eight hours a day in the center of Salzburg and in a radius of 50 kilometers around the city. Stiegl report that our tyres have performed outstandingly across all driving situations.

Q: That's nice feedback! What example were you thinking of when you mentioned smart tyres?

ES: We launched a pilot project with SHARE NOW Denmark in which we successfully monitored the tread depth of tyres on electric vehicles in real time. Together with telemetry experts Traffilog, we linked information from tyre sensors and telemetry data from the fleet's vehicles with a cloud-based algorithm. We were then able to use this information to tailor our tyre service even more precisely to actual needs, instead of pursuing regular, scheduled servicing. **F**

Fleets and Electric Mobility

The European Commission has made clear stipulations regarding the use of low- and zero-emission commercial vehicles, meaning there is growing pressure on fleet operators to upgrade their vehicles accordingly. Time is running out, the costs are enormous and the market very unsettled. As far as the tyres are concerned, considerable gains can be made by using low-rolling-resistance, low-noise tyres designed for electric drive systems, professional tyre management, and digital solutions.

Mobility is currently undergoing a rethink. Electric mobility and sustainability are the most important elements and hold the key to a more climate-friendly, future-proof form of mobility worldwide. Electric vehicles produce fewer carbon dioxide (CO₂) greenhouse emissions, especially when they run on electricity from renewable resources. For years now, demand for electric vehicles has been steadily increasing – for cars, trucks, buses and vans alike. Sustainable and safe electric vehicles call for tyres offering exactly the same qualities.

When it comes to tyres, the same essentially applies for an efficient electric vehicle as for a low-emission combustionengined vehicle: lower energy consumption equates to a higher level of sustainability – regardless of the type of drive system. For an electric vehicle, achieving a greater range while using less power is the measure of particularly high sustainability. Energy consumption can be reduced by minimizing rolling resistance, but also by giving the tyres good aerodynamics. There is particularly strong demand for zero-emission electric fleets from municipalities and transport operators. The EU's revised 'Clean Vehicle Directive' from 2019 is one of the factors driving the switch to electric. With electric mobility evolving at such a rapid pace, there is also a growing demand for suitable tyres in the commercial vehicle segment. Manufacturers have been focusing their efforts on reducing CO₂ emissions ever since the EU regulation governing emissions came into force and the VECTO tool was introduced, if not before.

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CLARIOS



Trying New Approaches

Injecting fresh ideas into an established business, this youngster is hoping to grow the business with unusual approaches.

Oftentimes we thank people for taking time out of their busy schedules. In the case of Edmond Wong, Managing Director, Kok Onn Transport Agency Sdn Bhd, this meant that he had to literally stop what he was doing by parking his truck. Being hands-on, he contributes to the business by providing leadership as well as the hours required to move goods.

When visiting, one will notice quickly that the business is somewhat unusual. For starters, Nilai is not typically associated with being a transportation hub. Wong's trucks bear the livery of one SLK Group. "We had a good reason to form this group. When you take three smaller players and join forces, you can actually start making moves. Besides my own business, there is a logistics services provider involved, as is a trading firm," Wong explains. From Nilai, Kok Onn, provides transportation services to the East Coast and northern parts of

peninsular Malaysia. The main products moved by Kok Onn are timber products needed for furniture manufacturing. These palletised goods, besides some FMCG and chemical products are moved by his fleet of eight trucks.

In business for 29 years, the business has been in the same location since its inception. At the tender age of 26, Wong took over the company from his father. "I grew up here and around trucks. Since childhood, I have been exposed to this kind of operation and that is why I became passionate about this kind of service we provide. If I did not have the experience, I wouldn't have chosen this profession." Painting the shop, helping with warehousing as a youngster, he decided to carry on the legacy of his father.

One of the first things he did was to add a MAN truck to his fleet. This was to trial a new generation of commercial

vehicles, equipped with engine technology compliant with EURO V emission regulations. "While you can ask others for their opinions, what they are doing may not be the same as your own operation. Regardless of the product or brand, there is always conflicting views, and one would really have to try for oneself." Wong explains that the purchase was motivated by the notion that he wanted to future-proof the business as there unavoidable changes coming. Backing the truck with a repair and maintenance contract, he has been gathering insights for over two years now. "One thing we noticed, is that the EURO V engines are more efficient."

Together with the new truck, Wong opted to also add optional technology to the trailer. Equipped with trailer EBS, the trailer is state-of-the-art, offering safety features beyond the legal requirements. Wong explains that he has good reasons to invest in this technology as he believes that not investing in new technology means one would downgrade oneself. "No, customers

are not asking for this, but we are using this one truck with ADR specs and the trailer with EBS to prepare ourselves as we are planning to increase capacity for chemical goods transportation." While the truck is still under warranty, Wong does not want to opt for spare parts from Allegiance, however trusts this supplier for components not related to the truck, such as the EBS.

"Driving myself is also giving us an advantage. This way, we know how our goods are transported and how all aspects of the business affect us." Wong likes driving up north, past Penang as the scenery is very nice. He also believes that being a driver himself garners the respect of the hired drivers. "By the way, there is a really good place to stop near Sungkai where a restaurant is also offering shower facilities for truckers." Being hands on, as well as a business owner, he sees opportunities in boosting the transportation industry in Malaysia in the coming years. However, he is critical of the current legislation as it is out-dated and needs a revision. "I also hope that the government will pull through with the plan to make the industry greener, although I am afraid that the plans will be postponed again and again." **F**



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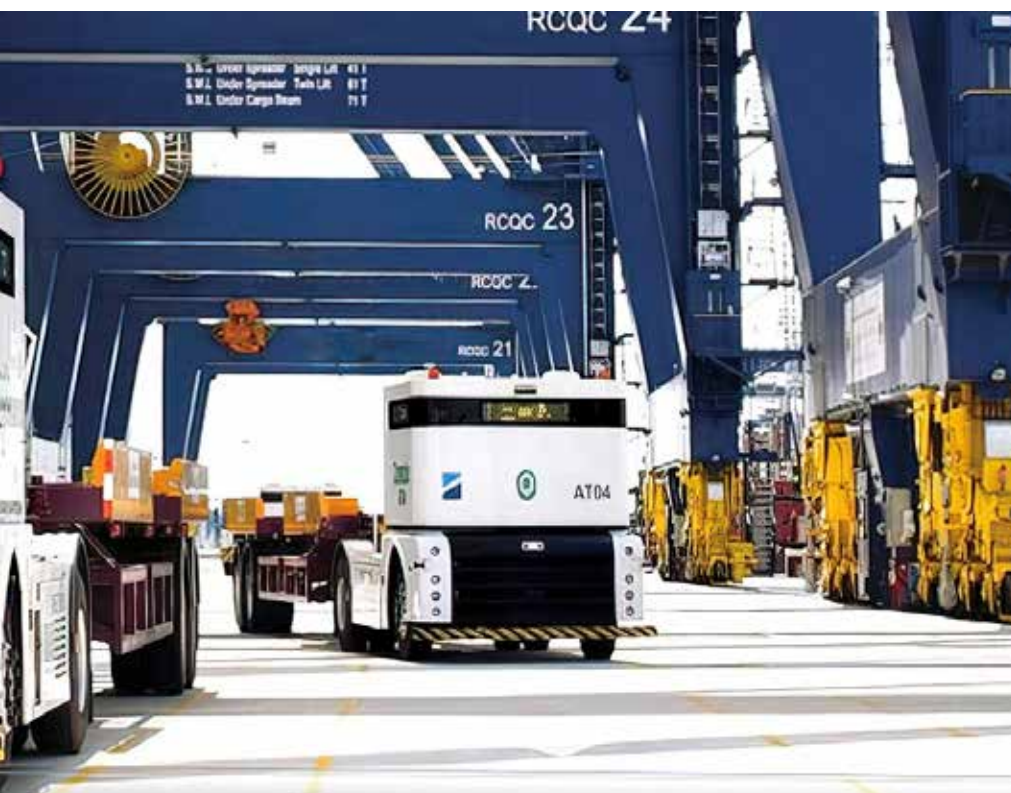
Q-Truck, Electric Heavy-duty Truck for Port Operations

Q-Truck, the world's first autonomous electric heavy-duty truck for smarter container logistics, is designed in-house by Westwell from the ground up. It forms part of the Qomolo line-up, a sub-brand of Westwell that showcases comprehensive autonomous driving solutions.

It has pioneered a design approach by completely eliminating the driver's cabin, thus achieving true autonomy. With a profound understanding of container ports coupled with self-driving algorithms tailored specifically to these usage scenarios, Q-Truck is capable of skillfully navigating and undertaking loading and unloading tasks alongside various manned and unmanned vehicles/facilities in ports.

Q-Truck is supported by Westwell's Fleet Management System (FMS), a comprehensive software platform encompassing an array of tools and features designed to facilitate real-time





monitoring, tracking, and reporting on the performance, maintenance, and operations of autonomous vehicles. By offering data-driven insights and a broader perspective, the FMS enables optimized route planning for each Q-Truck in the field. Accomplishing such tasks does not necessitate any significant infrastructural modifications because of standardized by-wire chassis design. Importantly, with just a 5-minute charge, Q-Truck can achieve full battery capacity and accomplish a 150 km route workload.

The truck has been successfully deployed in the Port of Felixstowe in the UK, which has sealed an agreement for 100 Q-Trucks. This marks a milestone, as an instance in Europe of deploying autonomous vehicles in mixed-traffic environments at ports, involving both manned and unmanned operations.⁷



Drive With Ease and Save Cost with Isuzu Smoother AMT

The automated manual transmission (AMT) innovation as a game-changer transmission solution for commercial vehicles has been heralded by Isuzu, the No.1 selling truck brand in Malaysia, with the offering of its very own AMT technology for its trucks.

Engineered as an innovative and intelligent gearshift technology, Isuzu's Smoother AMT transmission is a 2-pedal operation that does not require the driver to engage the clutch when changing gears like with a traditional manual transmission truck.

Isuzu trucks that are equipped with Smoother AMT technology offers the convenience of this aspect of driving as the gear shifting operation is automatically controlled by electronic computers and hydraulics system which operates the clutch and throttle to match revolutions for the gear change required, depending on the driving conditions.

Fitted in a wide range of Isuzu light to heavy-duty trucks including Isuzu ELF NLR130 Smoother and NPR150 Smoother and Isuzu GIGA EXR420 Smoother and EXZ460 Smoother that are available in Malaysia. The Smoother AMT is notable for providing better efficiency as it ensures smooth gear shifting and consistent torque in frequent stopstart driving environment.

Essentially, Isuzu trucks with Smoother AMT provide the combined advantages of an automatic transmission's easy-driving operation with manual transmission's performance and fuel efficiency.

Moreover, Isuzu trucks like the top-selling Isuzu ELF Smoother AMT offer great drivability and ease of operation for the less experienced drivers as well as for female drivers who tend to appreciate driving with less use of physical movements, given that these AMT trucks have only two pedals, the brake and the accelerator.

The gearbox which is designed like that of an automatic transmission also means much less fatigue for the drivers during start-stop operation driving or when manoeuvring in congested traffic or challenging road conditions. In a market situation where shortage of drivers remains a constant challenge for many truck operators, fleet with Smoother AMT can be a strong factor in helping to attract new drivers as well as in retaining them.

Additionally, Smoother AMT transmission offers another key benefit which is lower maintenance costs for the operator. The Isuzu ELF trucks with Smoother AMT has no clutch pedal, thus tend to be more cost-efficient as there will not be any clutch pedal wear and tear or replacement costs to deal with. This also contributes to better overall fleet uptime and uninterrupted business operation as it requires less preventive maintenance.

With the GIGA EXR/EXZ heavy-duty models with Smoother AMT, although these trucks do have a clutch pedal, driving them is easy as the AMT provides a much simpler way for drivers to operate the trucks. This contributes to reduced fatigue for the drivers and higher productivity.

There is a secondary ECONO Mode on Smoother AMT trucks that the driver can select to automatically change gears at lower engine revolutions, providing even greater fuel savings for operators.

Furthermore, with two-pedal operation, the driver does not need to worry about changing gears in heavy traffic and varying road conditions and can thus focus on the driving environment and enhance safety.

With Isuzu Smoother AMT-fitted trucks, operators who demand improved ease of operation, lower operating cost and driver retention can expect to experience benefits to their business as compared to those using manual transmission trucks in the same segments and applications. **F**



That Came as a Surprise

In order to create the content that you are enjoying, I am meeting a lot of people. Now it is mostly face to face again, but online meetings are just as well. It does not matter if I have interviewed someone a few times or if it is the very first time; there is always something that I can learn and take away from the meeting. Recently, I had a series of meetings to generate content for our story on trucks on islands. I also met with one consultant, labelling himself “Botak”, who offered insights beyond the obvious when it came to trucks on Langkawi. There were three things that really stood out as surprising, something that I did not expect and where I have learned a lot.

Probably the most surprising issue that I learned about was the fact that it is spare parts that are the most crucial items for any operation on an island like Langkawi. What I expected was that there are certain, very specific issues that transporters on the island face. Yes, there are, but what surfaced like a red thread throughout all the conversations I have had was those supplies of the right spare parts, in time and in the right quantity can be hard to source and send over from the mainland. Within this context, industrial washing machines are an exciting case study. Imagine that hotels would use different brands of washing machines or even different models of the same brand, even if the hotels are under the same holding company. If one machine breaks down, you would have to send your laundry to a professional service provider. Meanwhile, a sister property may have excess laundry capacity and could send a machine for some time (or cannibalise parts for some time, until replacements arrive). Imagine we could share more parts among truck brands! This would make servicing them easier, faster and cheaper.

As always, the discussions also focussed on the fact that the job as a truck driver is becoming harder and harder to fill. From what I heard, Truckers used to be held in high regard, in the heyday of economic boom a few decades ago. It was those people that would build the country and they were the backbones of many industries. As such, they were well respected and also well paid. Nowadays, it seems that the image of the trucker has been tainted. What we found was a number of companies that had no issues finding drivers. One stood out, being a waste management service provider. This profession may not sound very attractive, however, the drivers of the various vehicles all radiated pride. From what I learned, those companies that attract and retain good drivers are those that put the term “profession” out front and centre. The spotless, wrinkle-



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free uniforms and professionalism on display may be hinting at what it takes to set a business apart in a bid to return the job back to its former glory of it being a “Profession”.

Over the past years, I have seen the rise of a number of applications, Apps, that help transporters better manage their business. Our phone is now the office and everything can be found, arranged, settled or coordinated via the small ubiquitous tools we carry around with us day and night. Cut to our trip to Langkawi and we learn that much of the business is managed via WhatsApp groups, not sophisticated block-chained tools that give real time advise, prompting where the next opportunity waits. The pandemic has also highlighted where there are gaps in the use of tech. Langkawi is a safe heaven for superyachts. While under MCO, the questions was: how do we get supplies from the supermarket to the boat? Grab gets the goods to the mole, but then one needs a tender. Why not use E-Jetski hailing? Integrate the jetskies into the Grab app, and you have a supply chain from Cameron Highlands to the boat anchored at the shores of Langkawi. As it turns out, there are no suitable E-hailing apps for cargo on the island. While the volume of goods moved is not huge, consolidation of loads could ensure higher efficiency. Langkawi is essentially one big loop. Right now, goods that could be collected along the way will need separate collection or delivery. This, among the other insights seem obvious once one looks at it on the ground; however, all this took me by surprise as it all wasn't that obvious. **F**

“Perfect Motor”: MAHLE Combines Strengths of its SCT and MCT Electric Motors



With the SCT electric motor, MAHLE currently has the most enduring electric motor in its range. The traction motor can operate at high power for an unlimited period of time. This technological leap was made possible by a new cooling concept. The innovative integrated oil cooling not only makes the e-motor robust, but at the same time also allows the waste heat generated to be used in the vehicle's overall system. The new e-motor is unrivalled in its small size, light weight and efficiency. The extremely compact design also results in a material cost and weight advantage - a lighter motor requires less material in production and at the same time increases the possible payload in commercial vehicles.

The MCT (Magnet-free Contactless Transmitter) and the endurance champion SCT (Superior Continuous Torque) electric motor, which operate contactless and without rare earths, are among the latest innovations from the Stuttgart-based automotive supplier in the field of electric drives. Dispensing with rare earths in MCT technology not only makes production more environmentally friendly, but also brings advantages in terms of costs and raw material security. It is particularly efficient - at almost all operating points. The MCT electric motor shows its efficiency advantages to the full, especially in those areas that are frequently used in real road traffic.

The MCT electric motor shows high efficiency over a wide speed/torque range. The SCT electric motor, on the other hand, is designed to achieve the highest efficiencies at the optimized main operating points. Another strength of the SCT electric motor is its high continuous output. This is - despite the very compact and lightweight design - 93 to 100 percent of its peak power, as measurement results prove. This unprecedentedly high ratio, which is unique on the market, enables it to be used in electric vehicles of all kinds, even under very demanding conditions. Classic examples include driving an e-truck over mountain passes or repeated acceleration of a battery-electric passenger car. These scenarios are only covered to a limited extent by e-motors available to date. **T**

The MCT electric motor is characterized by high durability, because the necessary transmission of electric currents between the rotating and stationary parts inside the motor is contactless and thus wear-free. Therefore, the motor is maintenance-free and suitable for a wide range of applications.

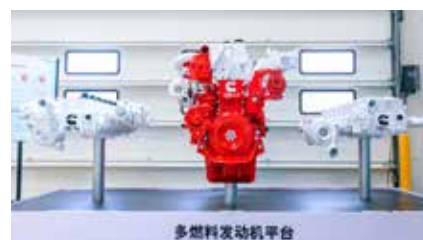
Hydrogen Combustion Engine Excites Customers at China Tech Day

During a Technology Day in Wuhan, China event at Cummins' East Asia Research & Development Centre showcased the company's latest product strategy for China-based customers, focusing on the China debut of its 15-litre hydrogen internal combustion engine. Meritor axles, Eaton Cummins Endurant transmissions and Cummins aftertreatment systems were also on display, highlighting the company's commitment to provide a broader range of products, as well as full powertrain integration capabilities.

The event signalled the introduction of Cummins' X15H hydrogen internal combustion engine and attendees witnessed its first start-up in China. Part of the company's industry-first fuel agnostic engine platform, Cummins' 15-litre hydrogen engine features direct-injection, lean-burn combustion, with ratings up to 542 hp and peak torque of 2600Nm. The zero-carbon fuel hydrogen engine can achieve brake thermal efficiency (BTE) up to 44 percent with brake mean effective pressure (BMEP) of 22Bar, supporting diesel-like power and torque capability.

Jason Wang, Cummins VP & General Manager of EBU China said, "Achieving zero-carbon requires collaboration and joint innovation. Cummins has long-term partnerships with its Chinese customers which allows us to fully understand their business requirements and sustainability goals. The combination of in-depth market insights and a culture of innovation well-positions Cummins to develop the right solutions that support our customers' businesses while reducing environmental impact."

Cummins X15H hydrogen engine is based on familiar internal combustion engine technology and can be integrated into a vehicle chassis without the need for a major product redesign. Its diesel-like performance means it's a viable zero-carbon fuel option for many applications, including heavy-duty haulage and vocational trucks. Commonality between the X15H and its diesel counterparts also supports existing parts supply and maintenance practices. **T**



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