



Liquid

Toll Logistics is rapidly growing its national liquid distribution fleet controlled by stringent safeguards.

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Specialisation in key areas is one of the ways to ensure higher safety standards and it's here that companies such as Toll Logistics can grow strongly with a customer base that covers the fuel, food grade and industrial gases sector.

The company currently runs almost 200 trucks nationally with all East Coast linehaul activities scheduled from its operational base in Wagga Wagga. From an engine perspective the driveline configurations are North American based, predominantly powered by Cummins, Caterpillar or Detroit engines.

Through 2004 the company added 16 new Kenworths (T404s, K104s and T401s), and a similar number is expected for delivery through 2005. This brings the total tally of Kenworths in the fleet to 40 within three years.

Mick Mathews (Liquids Fleet and Compliance Manager) is responsible for fleet replacement which is presently handled on a five year basis.

"Toll's has been impressed by the strength of the Kenworth product and its resultant resale value," said Mr. Mathews.

"The new Kenworths join a variety of prime movers that include Ford LTS and HN80s, Mack Gantums and CHRs. These were acquired largely from the purchase of vehicles that were operating in existing fleets subsequently purchased by Tolls.

"Looking to the future the company is currently investigating a more open purchase policy that might see other manufacturers finding it easier to get a hearing with Freightliner's Argosy and International in the running," Mr. Mathews added.

The new kid on the block is the International Eagle 9200i. Powered by an ISX Cummins rated at 500hp and with a torque output of 1850 ft lbs in a 4900mm wheelbase it's now running in B-double configuration on a twice daily trip carting jet fuel from Sydney to Canberra airport and standard fuel for the Woolworth's petrol distribution network.

Jeff Schubert is one of the regular Eagle drivers and he is getting used to the comments from other truckies as he heads in and out of our National capitol.

"On the road the Eagle really stands out," said Jeff. "Journey times between Canberra airport

and the Banksmeadow fuel terminal are very consistent whether running empty on the uplink or full on the return. "It's very easy to maintain good consistent journey times due to the gearing of the truck and the power available," he said.

The paintwork in Toll's green and yellow was completed by the company's own workshop in Wagga and with alloy rims and new tanks the total combination is certainly eye catching.

The truck started out as a day cab, ex-factory in Dandenong and prior to painting gained a low roof sleeper by Truck Art in Wagga. The original twin exhaust stack was changed to an under-chassis muffler system with a single left hand stack and this has significantly reduced interior cab noise to the point where Jeff commented on how quiet the truck is on the highway. At the rear is the Hendrickson PriMaax PAX 460 air suspension rated at 18 tonnes.

The Eagle is fitted with a manual 18-speed Eaton RTLO 20918B but as Gary O'Connor, Toll Logistics' South Australia and Wagga Business Manager pointed out that selection is no longer company policy.

"All trucks we buy now are spec'd with the Eaton Auto-Shift and that's common to all Kenworths. We are also using the Ultra-Shift gearbox which doesn't have a clutch pedal but currently that is only rated for single trailer operation. As soon as we can get total clutchless operation we will," he added.

On the topic of fuel economy and with a regular 8000 km trip each week at 62.5 tonnes with empty one way running the ISX Cummins is returning a consistent 5.27 mpg (53.57 l/100kms). This is a marginal improvement on the Kenworth's running with the 530hp Detroit Series 60 where the average fuel consumption for B-doubles is coming in at a regular 5.1mpg.

Toll was spared the well documented problems of regular engine failure with its Signature powered fleet and Gary O'Connor puts this down to regular maintenance practices and frequent oil changes. "We do our regular servicing in-house at Wagga and our vehicle tracking systems are very comprehensive. We run full oil changes at 30,000kms using Premium Blue Valvoline with greasing at 10,000km intervals," he said.

The great paint job was completed by Toll's own workshop in Wagga Wagga



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International Eagle 9200i

In 2001 Iveco started importing left hand drive Eagles from Chatham, Ontario and converted them to right hand drive at the company's Dandenong factory. This proved to be impractical and in February 2004 all Eagle production shifted to a dedicated production line at Dandenong.

This latest move saw many changes to the product with a stronger cab floor, alterations to steering, dashboard, headlights, tail lights, windscreen, braking system and a redesign of the air conditioning ducting to improve air flow.

Buyers of the Eagle have a few options open to them as far as engine choice is concerned. The Eagle 9200i is available with 12.7lt Detroit Series 60 at 500hp and 1650 lbs ft of torque or the Cummins ISX with 500hp and 1850 lbs ft. Either come with a standard 18 speed manual Eaton or the AutoShift. Cab options vary between the day cab, HiRise Sleeper ex factory, or day cab with a low roof sleeper by Truck Art of Wagga as supplied to Toll.

Moving up to the Eagle 9900i there's also the option of a CAT C15 with ratings of 475, 500 and 550 hp (354,373 and 410kW) with up to 1850 lbs ft of torque and a maximum GCM rating up to 131 tonnes. Cab choices include a HiRise Sleeper and Day Cab. Transmissions options are once again the 18 speed manual or Eaton AutoShift option.

competency based training that reinforce occupational health and safety. Further checks and training are also completed each year that cover the safety requirements of loading and unloading.

"The ramifications for management of not controlling the speeding issue or not thinking about occupational health and safety issues are very clear," said Gary.

Toll completes a risk analysis on all its equipment, including access and exit from vehicles and this may be a driving force in the future when it comes to vehicle replacement.

"We look at how easy it is for a driver to enter and leave a cab and we require a three point of contact level for safety at all times. This might lead to some cabover manufacturers rethinking designs to make access into the truck easier and safer," Gary added.

One final legislative point that does seem illogical for such well organised and controlled distribution operations concerns the NSW authorities' withdrawal from the National Mass Management Pilot Programme. This has cut back the total gross weight of vehicles from 64 tonnes to 62.5 tonnes. Also, by NSW refusing to allow B-double combinations to take advantage of the same weights that apply in other States it reduces the efficiency of the operation by five per cent. Yet another example of legislation controlling profitability in transport. ●

Tyre pressures and rotation are handled by Toll's own fleet maintenance programme with all tyres fitted being Bridgestone. The company does not run re-caps due to the better reliability of new tyres and in order to prevent guard and light damage if tread separation occurs on a retread. Spare tyres are carried on long haul operations simply because mobile telephone coverage to gain service support on some national highways remains incomplete.

The Toll Liquid Distribution fleet is monitored for them by My Fleet and uses the Ezy-Trak on board computer system to measure parameters such as engine speed, road speed, and brake applications and drivers hours amongst other data.

From a driver's point of view the system provides significant safeguards, even down to its ability to hold a snapshot of the three minutes vehicle and driver activity prior to any accident. This is an invaluable tool for management and also a reliable witness for a driver to substantiate safe driving attitudes and

responses should an accident occur. From a management perspective the system generates an email to the business manager of the vehicle fleet if the system detects overspeeding and this is seen as a major safety initiative.

"Our duty of care responsibilities covers all aspects of our transport operation," said Gary.

"This starts before a driver even gets into the vehicle and covers the type of clothing worn and also footwear. We operate a neck to toe policy of clothing and the traditional thongs and stubbies are definitely not part of the wardrobe.

"We invest heavily in the training of our drivers and are very aware that the cost of a fully trained driver being off work sick for ten days can stretch into thousands of dollars. With this in mind our pay rates are higher than industry average and it is our aim to keep our skilled drivers as long as they wish to stay on the road," he said.

Every Toll driver goes through an extensive driver training programme which is reinforced through two random competency checks run

The walnut dashboard adds a nice touch of quality finish to the Eagle



Gary O'Connor of Toll Logistics at Wagga (on left) with Eagle driver Jeff Schubert.

