

NZ

# CARGO

THE MAGAZINE THAT FITS IN THE BACK

APRIL/MAY 09



## INSIDE

- Nissan's Newcomers pg 6
- Ute Top-ia pg 16
- Sign Science pg 25
- Dig Me pg 49
- Special Avenis pg 54

## *O-fish-ally Tested* - Isuzu's Gen 6



VANS • UTES • WAGONS AND STUFF...

## TCL on the move to

# East Tamaki



### ***There's been some monumental moves in the trucking industry of late – quite literally.***

Isuzu retailer TCL - has relocated for starters, so if you wanted to get up close and personal to the Gen 6 Isuzu line up of trucks, don't go to Penrose – unless you were looking at leasing them from the TR Group that is.

If you wanted to specifically get the low-down on any of the Gen 6 Isuzus- or any other Isuzu for that matter - you'll need to head across to East Tamaki, more specifically, to Lady Ruby Drive at the Stevensons yard there.

This is TCL Isuzu's new home, and there's some very good reasons why.

In the first place, Stevensons Group now owns the TCL Isuzu franchise as of October last year and – given the popularity of the trucks and the number of them needing fast service options – Stevensons Group, quite rightly, felt they could make use of the extensive service facilities at the Lady Ruby Drive site.

As well as the service applications of the workshop, TCL is now in the position of being able to offer chassis extensions and modifications on site, before the customers even take delivery – another advantage of the much larger East Tamaki sales and service site.

“The Penrose site was a good one,” says Chris Sanson, “but we can all see the advantages of the relocation to East Tamaki. “With the expansion in the Isuzu line up thanks to the Gen 6 range, we were outgrowing Penrose quite quickly. Frankly, the move couldn't have come at a better time.”

Added to which, the close proximity to major transportation users in the East Tamaki/Highbrook area, made the Lady Ruby Drive site

much more attractive when it came to demonstration or client calls. Stevensons site has the advantage of being able to carry more in terms of parts and accessories, and streamlines internal processes, which our customers will appreciate.”

“Our service managers now have greater lines of communication with the actual drivers of the vehicles,” adds Chris. “They can address the issues which a fleet manager might not be familiar with and get those resolved.”

### Cool ride – The Gen 6 NLR250S

So, now you know where to find TCL Isuzu, now why should you find them?

Well, for starters, you'll want to find them if you are in the market for a light commercial coolbox truck, which can be driven on a car license.

See the one in the foreground of the picture? That's the one we're talking about.

Technically speaking, this is the NLR250S AMT and we're taking this opportunity to road test it and give you our thoughts on the first of the Gen 6 Isuzus we've been able to run around in.

First, some vital statistics: the NLR 250S AMT has a six speed automated manual transmission, which operates without the need for a clutch pedal.

It runs a 3-litre, four-cylinder turbo diesel, which is Euro4 emission compliant, equipped with a diesel particulate diffuser and offers 110kW at 2800rpm and 375Nm of torque from 1600 to 2800rpm.

It has a GVM of 4500kg, a turning circle of 8.9 metres, a wheelbase of 2490mm and an overall length of 4735mm. Oh

yes, and it offers independent front suspension (IFS) for greater comfort and control.

Right, that's all the technical stuff out of the way – or is it?

Isuzu is not accepting mediocrity with any of the Gen 6 trucks – the company is punching high above its weight and is actively targeting its competition on a point for point basis. It just so happens that Isuzu is making its points a lot larger.

Take the diesel particulate filter technology for instance, which contributes to the Euro4 emission compliance.

Isuzu says the DPD system allows its smaller engines to put out 1/6<sup>th</sup> the particulate matter of a comparable power and torque output EPA 04 engine – identifying that the Euro4 emission test to be tougher than the US EPA test.

It doesn't stop with environmental awareness either. Isuzu is setting huge store in its safety equipment too, so, while the cab of the NLR is larger than that of the outgoing NKR and has better all round visibility, it is also better equipped, with driver's airbag, anti skid regulation, ABS brakes, pre tensioning seatbelts, electronic brake force distribution...hold on, this is starting to sound like a car!

Well, that's a good thing for a truck that can be driven by anyone holding a car license isn't it?

We were impressed to see an iPoddie connecting thingy for the stereo along with air conditioning, electronic remote locking and electric windows too.

So, the drive? Well, you are in a truck and you're reminded of the fact by the flat angle of the steering wheel, but coming from a car focused writer's perspective, the NLR is a sweetheart to drive.

The IFS goes a long way to ensuring ride quality and precision and instrument and control placement is about as intuitive as you can possibly get.

As to the transmission, Isuzu has refined the AMT so well, you now begin to wonder why the car industry hasn't started implementing it in mainstream passenger vehicles, and as to driving position?

The metro driver is well looked after in terms of in-cabin ergonomics, as well as cabin ingress and egress. We suspect that long haul drivers are going to be hard pressed to complain either.

Could we, then – as critical car people – fault the Isuzu NLR? Erm, no, not really, which sort of left us wondering why we dribble over all the flash cars which can't generate income when there's a perfectly good profit-making truck available! ■