

Queensland's largest towing company shifts to Allison automatics

One of Australia's largest vehicle towing and salvage operators, Ready Towing has made the first steps towards converting many of its 220 tilt tray tow trucks from manual to automatic by adding four Allison equipped UD MK 6's to its extensive fleet.

BRISBANE, AUSTRALIA: Ready Towing's four automatic UD's have proven to be more efficient, productive and economical, as well as being reliable and popular with drivers.

Established in the early 1960s with a single Ford F-series tow truck, Ready Towing has become part of the landscape in the burgeoning South East corner of Queensland and is now the largest tow truck operator in that state. A company does not grow in the competitive tow truck industry without constant innovation and the ability to embrace new ideas and technology.

The switch to automatic trucks is in line with the Ready philosophy which has moved the company from pick-up based trucks with hook-and-job towing rigs to the latest technology, tilt tray trucks equipped with automatics, state of the art turbo diesels and the latest electronics and safety equipment.

The UD trucks which are now on the Ready fleet are equipped with Allison 2500 Series automatic transmissions and have been performing well beyond expectations.

According to Ready Towing's operation manager, Rob Shervey, the switch to automatics was viewed with some suspicion by drivers, but those assigned to the four UD's now consider themselves the most fortunate in the company.

"Fatigue management is a big factor these days, and the drivers using the Allison equipped UD's have reported that these vehicles are easier to drive, less tiring and more efficient in Brisbane's increasingly difficult traffic," said Rob Shervey.

"Automatics are now part and parcel of Australian trucking, but they had to earn their stripes with the Ready fleet, and they've done that, proving to be economical as well as more efficient and smoother to operate," he added.

“From light to very heavy duty trucks, automatics are becoming more commonplace, so when we needed to add some new trucks, we cast an eye over everything that was available.

“We tried some automated manuals, but they did not perform to our expectations, so when UD introduced Allison automatics, we decided to give them a try.

“The UDs are special as far as we’re concerned. This was our first experience with automatic transmission-equipped trucks, and the drivers are satisfied but more importantly, they are more productive because they are less fatigued after a day at the wheel,” he added.

Shervey says the company has a very diverse vehicle fleet ranging from 4.3 tonne Hinos through Isuzus and UD medium duty tilt trays to Volvo, Mack and International heavy duty wrecker trucks. “With such a wide variety of trucks and specification available today, it would be foolish to wed yourself to one brand,” said Rob.

“The evidence was strong that automatics are a better proposition than a manual or automated manual, particularly in city and suburban environments. This is where the Allison automatic shines.

“It’s still early, but fuel consumption has been very good, and combined with greater efficiency the Allison equipped UDs mount a compelling argument,” he said.

“There is also strong evidence that repair and maintenance costs to the drive-train will be less and that re-sale value will be higher for an automatic tilt tray truck.

“On that note, Ready trucks have an excellent reputation among buyers of second hand trucks, and our rigs are always in demand because we look after them to preserve resale value. The automatics will only enhance this in our view,” he added.

These factors were all part of the consideration in selecting the Allison-equipped UDs. At this point they are performing beyond expectations, both for the management team at the company’s Virginia headquarters in suburban Brisbane, and for the drivers lucky enough to be assigned to them.

“Once a driver spends a day or two behind the wheel of an Allison equipped truck, any scepticism about the performance of automatics quickly disappears, and you find it difficult to move them back to a manual,” Rob laughs.

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The switch to automatic trucks has also opened up the range of drivers available to Ready in a labor market with a distinct shortage of highly skilled drivers.

'We have had to look at a wider range of potential recruits in recent times and have employed five female drivers over the past couple of years. I think it will be easier to attract more drivers with automatic trucks on fleet,' he said.

All of the trucks are finished in the Ready yellow and blue branding which is so familiar in South East Queensland, it has almost become iconic.

With such a wide range of tow vehicles available no job is too small or too big for Ready Towing. The company is regularly called upon to move everything from very large pleasure boats to helicopters, pre-fabricated houses and heavy machinery.

While this type of work is rewarding, it's the traditional "smash", "trade" and "family car breakdowns" that keep the team of drivers and back-end office staff busy 24/7 providing the bulk of the business.

About Ready Towing

Ready towing was founded in 1963 by Matt Ready who forged the beginnings of what is now a towing empire with a single Ford F-series jib and hook-towing rig.

Matt Ready recognised the benefits of delivering a good service at a fair price but could never have imagined that more than four decades later tow trucks bearing his name would number in the hundreds.

Today the company is the largest towing operation in Queensland with 220 vehicles servicing the general public, business and many government contracts. While Matt senior is now retired the business is still growing under the stewardship of his son's Mark and Matt Jr.

About Allison Transmission, Inc.

Allison Transmission, Inc. (Allison) is the premier global provider of commercial duty automatic transmissions and hybrid propulsion systems. Allison products are specified by over 250 of the world's leading vehicle manufacturers and are used in many market sectors including bus, refuse, fire, construction, distribution, military and specialty applications.

Founded in 1915, the Allison business is headquartered in Indianapolis, Indiana, U.S.A. and employs approximately 2,700 people. Regional headquarters with dedicated support staff are located in China, The Netherlands, Brazil, India and Japan. With a global presence in 80 countries, Allison has over 1,550 distributor and dealer locations. More information about Allison is available at www.allisontransmission.com.

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looking statements are made include, but are not limited to: the loss or consolidation of any one of our significant customers; our substantial indebtedness, which could adversely affect our financial health, restrict our activities and affect our ability to meet our obligations; the adverse impact of competitors' actions; the discontinuation of a particular vehicle model for which we are a significant supplier; the discovery of defects in our products, resulting in delays in new model launches, recall campaigns and/or increased warranty costs and reduction in future sales; increases in cost of or disruption of the supply of raw materials; increased crude oil and energy prices and overall economic conditions; and continued volatility in and disruption to the global economic environment. Although we believe the expectations reflected in such forward-looking statements are based upon reasonable assumptions, we can give no assurance that the expectations will be attained or that any deviation will not be material. All information is as of the date of this press release, and we undertake no obligation to update any forward-looking statement to conform the statement to actual results or changes in expectations.

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Photographs



Operations manager Rob Shervey is impressed with the UD and says: "This was our first experience with automatic transmission-equipped trucks and the drivers are pleased, but more importantly they are more productive because they are less fatigued after a day at the wheel."



Allison equipped UD MK trucks are new to the Ready Towing fleet and are exceeding expectations.



Allison automatic transmissions make the Ready Towing UD's more manoeuvrable while the unique tilt trays demonstrate the ease of winching vehicles onto the tray in tight areas.



Ready towing drivers find the Allison automatics easy to operate and a big benefit in reducing fatigue.



The Allison 2500 Series automatic transmission is fitted to the UD MK6 trucks used by Ready Towing