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IVECO durability and strong back-up prove a winner for Frews Transport

Established way back in 1921, Frews Transport is based in Darfield, about 40km inland from Christchurch. Throughout its history, the company has always focused on the agricultural sector.

“While we traditionally worked mainly in livestock transport and bulk general freight log cartage, these days we are also involved in fertiliser transport and spreading,” Frews Transport General Manager, Dean Frews, said.

“We use three IVECO Trakker 360 4x4s with spreader bodies for our fertiliser spreading. And we also have an IVECO Trakker 450 6x6, which provides us with the flexibility to interchange both tipping and fertiliser bodies on the one truck.”

The earliest of the IVECO trucks is a 2014 model, while the newest addition to the fleet started work in September last year, according to Dean.

“We first bought the vehicles because we needed something that was tough. In this sector they need to be able to bounce around farmland a lot. Probably half their time is spent off-road, in paddocks and so forth, so apart the bumps they need to be able to handle all the wet weather we get in this part of the world. And they do, they’ve handle it all,” he said.

This durability is no accident. It comes down to smart design. For example, the Trakkers’ high tensile steel chassis allows for twisting off-road while still providing the strength for the trucks’ high payloads.

And with permanent all-wheel drive and lockable diffs on all axles, both models provide outstanding traction in slippery conditions.

Given its location, the company sometimes ventures up into the Southern Alps for work.

“At times we operate in the flats between the mountains, so our vehicles need the power to pull 20 tonnes of load over the first pass which is pretty steep,” Dean said.

Both Trakker models have engines that can handle this type of task. The Trakker 4x4 is powered by IVECO's versatile Cursor 8, 6 cylinder, turbocharged diesel engine. This 7.8 litre powerplant produces 360 hp (265 kW) and 1106 lb ft (1500 Nm) of torque, ensuring plenty of power for the application.



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The larger 6x6, on the other hand, makes use of the popular Cursor 13, 6 cylinder, turbocharged diesel engine. It offers an impressive 450 hp (336 kW) and 1620 lb/ ft (2200 Nm) of torque.

“That’s the main reason we went for those engine sizes. You need that horsepower, otherwise it would take too long,” Dean said, adding that he and his drivers are very happy with how the vehicles perform on the open road.

He said the other big plus of the trucks is their reliability.

“The oldest must be getting close to 200,000 km which would be about 5,000 – 6,000 engine hours,” he said.

Even so, downtime has been kept to a minimum.

Dean said a couple of added pluses of working with IVECO have been the excellent support he receives and the good communication that has developed between the two companies.

This is high praise indeed, coming from an established business like Frews, with almost 100 years’ experience behind it.

“That’s what I really want. Good backup and knowing that if you do have a problem, there are parts ready to get you going again. That’s one of the biggest things because in this business these trucks do get knocked around,” he said.

Frews, which was established by his family and has not changed hands for four generations, has always prioritised this type of strong business relationship.

Dean said that Frews plans to continue doing what it has always done, i.e. serving the South Island farming community; and that one of the biggest challenges it faces is keeping up with the latest technology.

If they continue running IVECO trucks, this shouldn’t be a problem.

IVECO NEW ZEALAND

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