

Driving harder in the **'Year of Change'**

Diamonds come up trumps at MTA's third – and most successful – National Dealer Conference.

Dealer conferences are always periods of reviewing past performances and looking forward to the future. The 2004 conference held in Sydney in January was no different – with one exception: its significance was marked by the attendance of two important visitors from overseas. Representing Mitsubishi Fuso Truck & Bus Corporation (MFTBC), in Japan, were Mr Bert van Dijk, Senior Vice President, Corporate General Manager, International Business, Sales & Service and Mr Tetsuya Kaku, Manager Asia, ASEAN & Oceania Department, International Sales & Service Office.

The visit recognised completion of Mitsubishi Trucks Australia's third year of operation – and the first year under the new Mitsubishi Fuso Truck and Bus Corporation (MFTBC) ownership structure. Attended by dealer principals and senior staff from Mitsubishi Trucks national dealerships, the conference addressed key issues affecting both manufacturer and customers in the months ahead.



Senior executives at the Road to Growth conference in Sydney (left to right) Mr Tetsuya Kaku, Mr Richard Eyre, Mr Bert van Dijk and Mr Roy Mizuno, President & CEO, MFTBA.

Working under the theme "Road to Growth", delegates heard of the changes that will enhance the brand image of the Mitsubishi truck and bus range in the Australian marketplace.

Some of the more noticeable shifts will be the introduction of the FUSO brand in all communication materials, model range and new Dealership signage. Our new Fuso identification will become a familiar symbol for both our customers and dealers as we strengthen our presence in the competitive Australian truck and bus markets.

DaimlerChrysler (DC) now holds a 65 percent stake in Mitsubishi Fuso Truck and Bus Corporation (MFTBC), Mitsubishi Group Companies hold 35 percent. This

represents a very significant increase in investment by Daimler Chrysler (DC) and signals their commitment to improving their position in the Asian and Oceania regions by utilising the strengths of the Mitsubishi Fuso truck and bus brands, products, manufacturing facilities and dealership resources.

For our customers, the combination of Mitsubishi's proven reliability and the strength of Daimler Chrysler, the world's largest truck manufacturer, will result in a continuation of class leading products and improved customer service through an even stronger Dealer network.

MTA itself has recently undergone a name change to one that reflects the local company's new parentage and partnership within the globally-recognised Mitsubishi Fuso truck and bus brand. Now that the legal process is complete, Mitsubishi Trucks Australia has evolved into Mitsubishi Fuso Truck & Bus Australia Pty Ltd (MFTBA).

Dealers heard that MFTBA's strategies for 2004 are to continue their strong focus on customer support, and to work closely with their dealers to grow their businesses and increase market share through competitive spec'd and priced products, according to National Marketing & Sales Manager, Patrick Collins.

Patrick told dealers that if they concentrated on Mitsubishi Trucks successful core models while working to improve their relationships with customers, the growth objective would be achieved.

"Next to our primary objective we'll be working to establish the stature of our FUSO corporate brand identity, building its profile and closely aligning the name FUSO with our excellent range of Mitsubishi Fuso trucks and buses".

Recent consumer research confirmed our own belief that our trucks rate very highly, particularly in ride, comfort and overall performance. This research convinced us to continue with the Mitsubishi Fuso Truck & Bus Motorcade for another year, only this year it has been expanded to six trucks and a Rosa bus.

Richard Eyre gave recognition to the many excellent performers within the dealer franchisee network. "Many of our dealer partners have invested heavily in staff recruitment and training, equipment and premises and sometimes the investment is not always money, it's sometimes as simple as allocating time to make sure all the simple things are performed correctly".