



PUMPED ON FUEL SAVINGS

The search for improved fuel economy and reliability were the key reasons Matthews Transport selected the 15-litre Cummins ISXe5 in 2013 as its standard engine brand.

Based at Kojonup in a rich pastoral district 260 km south-east of Perth in Western Australia, the company is currently operating 14 ISXe5 engines in a mix of Freightliner Argosy and Kenworth K200 prime movers.

The company, which had its origins in the early 1930s and now spans four generations of the Matthews family, hauls mainly grain, liquid and bulk fertilizer, and livestock.

Company-owned trucks total 15 but the fleet can swell to 40 units and more when subcontractors are called in to move livestock. It's not unusual for Matthews to move over 100,000 head of export sheep in one hit from the feedlot at Kojonup to Fremantle port.

Owner of the business Neville Matthews, whose grandfather was the founder, believes the fleet needs to be upgraded regularly for the company to remain competitive. He points out the company operated Volvos for many years before changing to Freightliners and Kenworths over the last eight years or so.

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Top: One of the 14 ISXe5-powered trucks in the Matthews Transport fleet.



Neville Matthews (left) with son Josh and Cummins automotive business manager Brett Smith.

\$350,000 saving in fuel costs.

He estimates the company saved \$350,000 in fuel costs in 2015 with the Cummins ISXe5. This was with fuel consumption averaging 1.5 km/litre for its fleet of B-doubles and roadtrains. Prior to that, Matthews Transport was operating another engine brand in 14 Freightliners. "We constantly had our hand in our pockets with those engines," says Neville Matthews.

Neville's son Josh is involved in the business today along with sister Zara and brother Zac. Neville's sister Colleen Matthews also works in the company. Josh, 32, heads up the day-to-day running of the operation. He has had 10 years in the business – eight of those as a driver – and prior to that gained a Bachelor of Business (majoring in finance).

"We've found something that's good, something we wanted," Josh Matthews says of the 15-litre Cummins. "We wanted fuel economy, reliability and lower engine operating temperatures. We're getting all of those.

"Reliability is very good, without a doubt," he adds.

Positive driver feedback.

He points out that Eaton's Ultrashift Plus transmission – fitted in the Freightliners – is very well matched to the ISXe5, earning positive driver feedback. Another plus with the Freightliners is the easier access to the engine for routine servicing.

Until the emergence of the ISXe5, Cummins engines had been few and far between in the Matthews operation. "I think the first Cummins we had was 50 years ago and that was a C160 in an International C1840," recalls Neville Matthews with something of a grimace. The C160, a naturally aspirated 464 cu.in. (7.6-litre) in-line six, delivered an exceptionally modest (by today's standards) 160 hp at 2800 rpm.

Those days were a far cry from the fleet that operates out of Kojonup today – well-appointed Kenworths and Freightliners with 550 hp engines delivering near-zero emissions while providing very good fuel economy and reliability in gross weight applications up to 110 tonnes. ■