



FLYING HIGH

Eighteen years ago the first Cummins gensets for Norfolk Is were transported to shore by whaleboats.

Norfolk Island, the former penal colony and now tourist destination located 1,600 km off the east coast of Australia, was abuzz with excitement recently when a Royal Australian Air Force Boeing C17 Globemaster landed and disgorged three new Cummins generator sets from its cargo bay.

It was a far cry from 18 years ago when the first Cummins gensets landed on Norfolk Island, transported to shore by whaleboats!

Those three original gensets, installed in the Norfolk Island power station in 2001-2002 and exemplary in their performance in the succeeding years, had each notched up around 89,000 hours when they were decommissioned in 2018.

They were actually second-hand units when they arrived on Norfolk Island in mid-2000, each having clocked up around 33,500 hours powering the processing plant at the Marymia gold mine in a remote area of Western Australia in the 1990s.

Amazingly, they were transferred from ship, anchored offshore in the South Pacific Ocean, to Norfolk Island on whaleboats. Two boats were lashed together using telegraph poles and the gensets moved one at a time, one boat filled with ballast to keep the rig balanced.

With OH&S and equipment value demanding a more sophisticated method of transport for the new 2018 gensets, the RAAF stepped in with a Boeing C-17A Globemaster to safely transfer the units from the Amberley air force base near Brisbane to the airport on Norfolk Island.

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RAAF Globemaster lands at Norfolk Is with the new Cummins gensets.

Staying with proven reliability.

For simplified installation, the new gensets are identical – bolt hole-to-bolt hole – to the old units rated at 1 MW. They are designed around Cummins' legendary KTA50 engine, the long-established mechanical 50-litre V16 that is installed in more applications in more markets than any other comparable engine.

Even the paint scheme was requested to be the same – the old-style Cummins beige instead of Cummins Onan green that has been the standard colour of Cummins gensets for some years. The KTA50 has certainly earned the respect of Ray Grube, chief mechanical officer at the Norfolk Island power station. "We've never been so happy with an engine. It's so reliable, parts are cheap and it's user-friendly for mechanics," he states without any prompting.

The life-to-overhaul strategy for the new genset engines will be the same as the old units – 30,000 hours. "Our plan with the original KTA50s was to overhaul at 24,000 hours but when we dismantled the first unit and saw the condition of it we decided to extend to 30,000 hours," says Ray.

"The old generators were serviced meticulously, one of the keys to their longevity," says David Levinge, who headed up the project for Cummins Brisbane. "The customer's commitment to Cummins' recommended service intervals translates to first-class reliability and durability." ■

Top right: New Cummins gensets, identical to the old units, are designed around Cummins' legendary KTA50 engine.

Bottom right: Norfolk Island power station team: Ray Grube (kneeling); back row (left to right) Gary McCoy, John Christian and Dylan Quintal-Christian. Absent: Aaron Graham.

