

## MITSUBISHI CHALLENGE

WORDS & PHOTOS JIM GIBSON

### Chapter 9

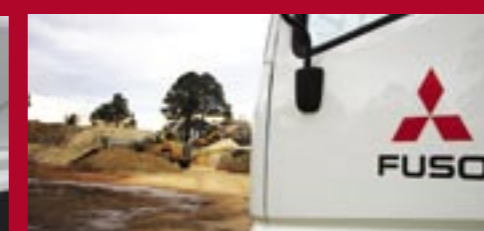
We check out how good a dog handler Mitsubishi/Fuso's flagship FV405 makes in the tough tipper business



Below: Alec McKellar behind the wheel of the FV405



Left and above: The FV405 has an excellent wheel cut giving it a 15.4m kerb-to-kerb turning circle  
Right: ANL Terrey Hills manager Stuart Robson



**W**e had driven the well-mannered FV 405hp model in the past with a dog trailer in tow, but decided to call in at Australian Native Landscapes' (ANL) yard at Terrey Hills in Sydney, where they had one on evaluation as a tipper and three-axle dog rig and get their opinion.



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defence, a lot of operators think just because they can't hear the engine roaring, the truck isn't going so well.

The 405hp FV is no powerbroker, but as a local truck and dog combination it should perform the task quite well – and for less financial outlay than some of its higher powered competition. Its cycle times wouldn't be too far behind by the end of a day.

ANL runs a large number of Mitsubishi trucks in its big fleet – the Terrey Hills yard for instance is only part of the

group's NSW operation. It has 22, ranging in size from Canters (one has travelled 585,000km) to FS model 8x4s.

It also runs some Sterlings, Kenworths and managing director Pat Soars is renowned for the good-looking Peterbilts he imports and dresses up.

There are some 15 of these North American glammers in the total ANL fleet.

The FV405 is powered by Mitsubishi's 6M70 six-cylinder turbocharged and intercooled 12.9-litre diesel engine.

It has four-valves per cylinder, driven

by an overhead camshaft. The engine is fitted with Mitsubishi's efficient Powertard engine-brake as standard – its operation is via a decompression valve. The 12.9-litres deliver 302kW (405hp) at 2200rpm and offer up 1765Nm torque at 1200rpm.

We find the secret in driving this engine is not to let the tacho needle fall too low. Use the ratios available in its 18-speed Fuller Roadranger transmission. Keep the momentum going and grab a lower gear a little earlier, before the revs drop off too far.

Having made the change to a lower ratio, read the road; if you think it'll crest the hill in that gear, then let it pull-down and have its torque lift you over the rise.

The Mitsubishi 21,600kg rear axles are the anchor points for Mitsubishi's four-airbag trailing arm suspension with air dump control. It has double acting

shock absorbers. The front rides on long taper leaf steel springs, also with double acting dampers.

Mitsubishi's tight turning circle is legendary, giving the big Fuso a 15.4m kerb-to-kerb pirouette.

Foundation brakes are air-actuated, taper roller drums front and rear with automatic adjusters.

The standard wheelbase is 4550mm with a 3488mm CA, making it ideal in standard form for tipper application.

The cab has three easy steps to ascend and depart by and its 90-degree door opening is a bonus.

Once inside it takes on all comers, the driver's seat is air suspended with auto height control and it has multiple adjustments in all directions.

The steering wheel adjusts both fore and aft as well as up and down.

Instrumentation is comprehensive as is the warning light and buzzer system.

Radio and cassette player and air conditioning are standard fare, as are the electrically controlled mirrors and the central locking.

Stuart Robson, ANL's Terrey Hills manager, says, "We get a good run from our Mitsubishi/Fuso fleet and that's why we continue to buy them. Reliability is important in our type of operation and it's very rare that a Mitsubishi would let us down. We did have problems with the Canter gearboxes for a while, but Mitsubishi seems to have fixed the problem now.

"We service them on regular basis between 15,000km and 20,000km on site and if any additional work is required, it is done at our Badgerys Creek maintenance workshop.

"We would have to look seriously at the FV405 as a truck and dog combination, for the product's proven reliability and competitive price." 