

Hino 300 Series hit the highways via Truck Stops NZ

It seems to be the month for road shows.

HINO IS THE MOST RECENT

edition to the road show calendar list, as the company launches the 300 Series light duty truck range up and down the country.

Let's be very clear on this: **NZ Cargo magazine** was invited to take a sneaky peek at the new-generation 300 Series late last year, but for a number of reasons, Hino New Zealand has taken a bit of time to bring everyone up to speed with what the trucks have to offer.

We're clarifying this point only because the new-generation trucks have already appeared in a previous edition, which some astute readers may well remember from 2011.

This road show then, is the official launch of the 300 Series and highlights the advances Hino has made across the range, which encompasses both diesel and hybrid model trucks.

Hino's 300 Series plays in the light duty market, which is becoming increasingly more competitive, given the reduction of used import trucks available from overseas markets.

In recent times, all light duty truck suppliers have upped the ante with their product offerings and each player has a point of difference from the others.

Hino's ace-in-the-hole are its hybrid offering, and the availability of an automatic six speed transmission

available across the 300 Series line up of narrow and wide cab trucks.

NZ Cargo magazine and its sister publication, **NZ Truck and Driver**, will be looking at the Hino hybrid in an exclusive drive test very shortly, so for the moment, we'll focus on what Hino has done to its staunch stalwart of light duty commercials.

The Hino 300 Series has seen a complete redesign, inside and out, significant upgrades to both active and passive safety features and enhancements to the Euro V-compliant, 4-litre, turbo-diesel engine.

In order of announcement then, let's look at the overall redesign.

CABIN

All Hino's now comply with the internationally recognised European Structural Standards Regulation No. 20 (ECE-R29) for cabin strength.

As to the 300 Series in particular, the new exterior design offers enhanced aerodynamics for improved fuel economy.

Cabin entry and exit across all 300 Series models has been improved, with larger door apertures, wider opening doors, larger steps and increased foot and leg space.

Special attention has been paid to maximising visibility and minimising blind spots.

The windscreen pillars on new

wide cab models are only 65mm wide, compared with 100mm or more for 300 Series' nearest competitors.

Improved convenience, storage and driving comfort, instruments, switches, audio systems and remote central locking for all doors (including the rear doors on crew cabs), and an integrated engine immobiliser are all part and parcel of the 300 Series enhancements.

All models have factory-fitted Denso air conditioning while crew cab models have an additional rear air-conditioner unit, complete with cup holders.

Hino designed the 300 Series wide cab to suit a range of drivers, from 146 to 203cm height.

Driver comfort has been maximised by adopting a tilt and telescopic-adjustable steering column, and providing 240mm of fore/aft seat slide adjustment with an inclined seat slide to allow drivers of all heights to better tailor the seat position to their needs.

The cabin features include a new, easy-to-read LED backlit instrument cluster with multi-information display and Eco light, improved switch operability and increased storage space.

It also has two coat hooks in the rear trim and the industry-first feature of a long-life, low-drain LED cabin light.

ENGINES

The improved Euro-5 and Enhanced

Environmentally Friendly Vehicle (EEV) compliant 4.0-litre Hino turbo-diesel engine is offered with two power ratings.

Wide cab manual models have 121kW of power at 2500rpm and 464Nm of torque at 1400rpm, while standard cab, wide cab automatic and hybrid models are rated at 110kW and 420Nm.

Gains in power, torque and fuel efficiency have been achieved largely through upgraded turbocharger pressures, a new intercooler and high pressure (common-rail) electronic fuel injection.

The new 300 Series meets the

requirements of ADR 80/03 and the Enhanced Environmentally Friendly Vehicle standard (EEV), which is tougher than Euro 5 – without needing AdBlue or any other additive.

The three fuel filter engine uses cooled exhaust-gas recirculation system and closed crankcase ventilation as well as a diesel Particulate Active Reduction System (DPR) system.

SAFETY

Hino's new-generation 300 Series claims the title of the safest light-duty truck on the New Zealand market by virtue of the application of vehicle stability control (VSC) as standard.

This is the first application of this technology in the light truck sector and, here is a quick look at what the system does:

VSC assists the driver in maintaining control of the vehicle. It helps prevent the vehicle from skidding out of control should it deviate from the driver's intended path through a corner.

VSC provides optimal traction in cornering to complement the way in which anti-skid brakes (ABS, also standard on the 300 Series), provide optimal braking performance and stability under braking.

It also dampens strong understeer or oversteer to ensure vehicle stability.

The VSC system includes a dedicated electronic control unit (ECU), which controls VSC, ABS and traction control (ASR).

All new Hino 300 Series models have four-wheel ventilated disc brakes (first introduced on the preceding Dutro model and still a unique feature to Hino light trucks) with ABS braking, electronic brake-force distribution (EBD)

and Brake Assist.

Standard passive equipment on all models includes SRS airbags for both driver and passenger coupled with emergency locking retracting (ELR) pre-tensioning seatbelts.

TRANSMISSIONS

Hino's 300 Series has the choice of manual or Aisin automatic transmissions across its diesel-engined range, and Hino says it is the only Japanese truck manufacturer to offer a full automatic transmission in the light-duty market.

The automatic transmission has a host of electronic control features including a fuel-saving torque converter lock-up in five ratios and a 'neutral control' feature, which electronically switches the transmission to neutral when the truck is stationary and the brakes are applied.

All manual transmission and AMT models have Hino's ES (Easy Start) hill-start assist.

Easy Start maintains braking force after the driver takes their foot off the brake pedal and automatically releases the brake once the clutch engages and the vehicle begins to move. Easy Start operates in both forward and reverse.

With the manual transmissions, the Easy Start technology electronically maintains braking force, even when the driver takes their foot off the brake pedal.

For more information and detail regarding the Hino 300 Series, the road show will continue through the month of March.

Presentations and technical details are part and parcel of the events being held at Truck Stops NZ centres in major cities around the country. **CG**

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Hino's 300 Series crew cab caters for all occupants.



Holding out for the hybrid test. Watch this space.