# YORK TALK

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### IN THIS ISSUE

South Africa: Afrit assembly line make giant leaps	2
Thailand: York serves up another round of growth	3
Africa: Once upon a time in Kenya	4-5
Australia: Having a go for charity	6-7
India: Critical moves	8
China: York China strengthens ties with Hebei Hongtai	9
Australia: Riordan and York plant the seed for success	10
Australia: BTE bulks up Aussie manufacturing	11
Singapore: Victory for York Singapore	12





MAKE GIANT LEAPS Read more on page 2

**BUILT FOR GROWTH** SPN Trailer and Service Company has turned to York Thailand to help it expand into the export market. Read more on page 3

**CELEBRATING NUMBER ONE** York Singapore chalk up a hard-earned victory at the first ever TATA Family Fiesta in Singapore in November. Read more on page 12



### YORK SOUTH AFRICA

### Afrit assembly line make giant leaps

### Southern Africa manufacturer Afrit has transformed its production and stores department driving a more efficient payload and a high return on investment for increased York products.

One of the biggest transport names in Africa, Afrit is currently one of the leading trailer manufacturers in South Africa with approximately 25 per cent market share. And no doubt this success comes down to Afrit's continuous drive for improved efficiency and better performance, as the latest changes to its manufacturing facility prove.

Just 12 months ago, the manufacturing facility in Rosslyn housed a small store area of just 500 square metres and a more hands-on axle assembly line. Working closely with York, Afrit has optimised its axle assembly line to ensure only the best quality products are supplied to its customers. Along with the highly organised and smooth flowing axle assembly department, the facility now also features an extra-large store of over 5,000 square metres.

New quality guidelines and safety procedures are in place, and all axle assembly staff have received in-depth training on all changes. With all assembly areas running according to the new efficient way of working, delivery of products are able to be fulfilled in "just in time".

Afrit's Stores Production Manager, Mr Anton Rademan, emphasises the high quality standards: "Afrit is currently manufacturing more trailers than ever before, whilst continuously enhancing the product yet unfailingly remaining focused on never compromising on quality."

"Working with Christo Els from York enabled us to identify product and packaging problems and challenges, so we were able to make improvements to the best benefit of Afrit, York and all our customers."

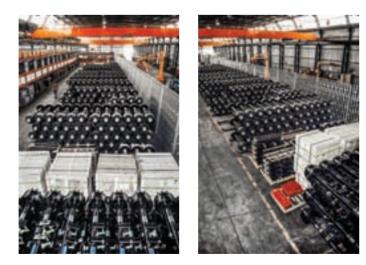
And it doesn't stop there. Recognising that trailer running gear has a particularly significant impact on both maintenance costs and fleet uptime for a vehicle operator, its ongoing development is continuously being stepped up by Afrit.

Future improvements are earmarked to include further automation of the axle assembly line plus continuous training and motivation of staff to be able to supply the York axles to an even wider market.

"Afrit has been working closely with York to optimise its axle assembly line."



Efficiency at its core: Afrit's store size has been increased from 500 square metres to around 5,000 square metres



## York serves up another round of growth

### Partnering with York can be a surefire way of ensuring business growth, as SPN Trailer and Service Company is finding out.

SPN Trailer and Service Company is a Thailand trailer manufacturer with its factory located in the Chonburi province. For over a decade, SPN has been building top quality trailers for the Thailand transport industry, with customers drawn mainly from the construction sector as well as the heavy-duty equipment industry.

Although SPN builds a small number of semi-trailers it is more widely known and respected for its heavy-duty low-bed trailers. The low-beds, which range in width from 2.5–3.0 metres, comprise around 95 per cent of SPN's order book - a sign of the company's speciality and skill in this type of build.

A strong feature of SPN's trailers is the use of York axles. SPN especially favours York's 5015 axle, with the TL1850, the 9501 and the 9508 with a long track length (2350 mm). For the other components, SPN uses the YTE28A landing gear and brake chamber also.

"SPN is looking to expand into the export market as a way of growing the business. Having York axles underneath the trailers is proving hugely beneficial. For example, a current customer in Laos has recently made an order confident that the York equipment will prove reliable and provide lowest total cost of ownership," said Mr Siam Tanon, York's Assistant Manager - Sales.

"SPN's owner, Mrs Sasaruethai, has been pleased with the way the York axles have performed to date, especially how easy they are to maintain throughout their lifespan. She is hopeful that partnering with York will help SPN continue to grow even further in the future."

"A current customer in Laos has recently made an order confident that the York equipment will prove reliable and provide lowest total cost of ownership.'

### YORK THAILAND











Built for growth: SPN Trailer and Service Company has turned to York to help it expand into the export market.





### Once upon a time in Kenya

You may remember a little while ago we asked readers to help us find the oldest York axle still working today. We think we're onto a winner with this trailer from Rongai Transport - though we invite readers to prove us wrong!

Built back in 1975, it was originally a tandem axle trailer fitted with York 15-tonne axles. It has since been converted into a triaxle with the addition of a third York axle. Interestingly, Rongai Transport does have even older York axles in their fleet, perhaps from the 1960's, but unfortunately their age cannot be verified.

With all this history in one trailer, it's no surprise that Rongai Transport has its great own story to tell. The company was founded in 1947 by Mr Gordon Eccles who arrived in Mombasa, Kenya, at the end of the Second World War. Eccles had served in the Royal Army Service Corp in Ireland, North Africa, and finally Italy with the 1005 Italian General Transport Company. Eccles, or "Boss" as he was known, was dispatched to Mogadishu, via Nairobi and Nanyuki where he served as Staff Sergeant in charge of a military workshop keeping army supply vehicles serviced and repaired.

Aged just 23, Eccles was in no hurry to return to England so he found himself a job on Ngata Farm. Surrounded by mechanics who were mostly Italian Prisoners of War, Eccles felt guite at home and it wasn't long before he made a Kenyan-born friend, Geoff Dwen. They saw the opportunity for an agricultural workshop in the Rongai Valley to serve local farmers, many of whom had invested in agricultural machinery of their own. And so began Rongai Workshops.

Today Rongai Workshops and Transport Limited is a multi-million-dollar company with a fleet of 85 vehicles, moving 12,000 tonnes of cargo per month across East Africa. But back in 1947, its goal was to provide local farmers with a repair and maintenance service for their agricultural equipment and machinery. The original workshop was little more than a wooden shed, and machinery brought in for repair or service was parked outside, security not being a major issue in those davs.

"York axles truly come into their own on Kenya's bad roads and ubiquitous diversions, not to mention the notoriously dangerous driving."





Family ties: Managing Director Vanessa Evans with her sister Cheryle, Health & Safety Director, and Rongai's long-running 1975 trailer.

"New from old" was Rongai's motto. Agricultural trailers were built in the workshop to customer specification, mostly using second-hand components bought at auctions. In its heyday, Rongai Workshops built around 300 farm trailers of varying shapes and sizes for local farmers, as well as exporting to neighbouring countries such as Uganda. It's a testament to the quality workmanship that some of these trailers can still be seen working on Gicheha Farm in Rongai today.

### **Race against time**

In the sixties, the company won its first regular transport contract with The Kenya Co-operative Creameries, who approached Rongai to assist with milk collection from farms west of Nakuru. Transporting liquid cargo was no mean feat; it was a constant race against time to get fresh milk to the factory before the heat of the day and navigate along roads turned to guagmires in the rainy season. Milk wasn't the only perishable cargo Rongai handled - red onions and capsicums were also on the move to Nairobi for export to India and elsewhere in Kenya.

### Changes brewing

It was the Kenyan tea producers in the seventies who changed the path of Rongai Transport forever. When producers shifted their tea transport from rail the scope and size of Rongai Workshop has to road, Rongai began a long and valued association changed considerably since its early days, the with the tea growers of western Kenya and with York fundamental business model stands true. axles and suspensions - both of which are still going strong today. Rongai began with a small fleet of nine Mrs Evans is confident that the company will articulated Leyland Beavers pulling York tandem axle continue to provide value to its customers, and says drop-sided trailers. Originally bought second-hand, that York axles are part of this promise. hailing either from the UK or built locally, many of these trailers are still running, each clocking up over roads and ubiquitous diversions, not to mention the 3,000,000 miles.

### Moving to bigger and better things

Leyland Super Beavers, then hefty Hippos, were gradually incorporated into Rongai's fleet in the '80s to expand the fleet and move heavier loads. Rongai recognised the advantages of growing global containerisation in the shipping world and was amongst the first to convert its fleet to skeletal trailers and fitted twist locks for containers. An on-site container base followed, and Rongai bought its own containers to serve as trailer bodies. It worked ever closer with shipping lines servicing the tea trade to offer direct export services and, later, with importers of containerised cargo.

**York**Talk

### YORK AFRICA

It wasn't until the late 1990s that Rongai began to upgrade the old Leyland Hippos and Super Beavers to newer generation TL11 turbo engines and gearboxes to improve fuel economy and power. The introduction of ERF EC11 trucks into the fleet in 2005 consolidated its enhanced operations and efficiency strategy. Sourced from the UK and reconditioned in their workshop, these 'new' tractor units can now be seen trucking cargo to Mombasa, which is now home to Rongai's well-established

container yards. Looking to the future The Boss steered Rongai Workshop through 60 years of change, always remaining fiercely devoted to Leyland and York – a loyalty that has proved its worth many times over with the York trailers, axles and suspensions still going strong after more than 40 years in some of Africa's harshest conditions.

Rongai is still a largely family-run company with dedicated and experienced staff in all ranks of its workforce. When Eccles passed away in April 2010, his daughter Mrs Vanessa Evans took up the reigns as Managing Director, having held the post as Operations Manager for 30 years. She has led the company through continued growth. The commercial fleet now comprises around 100 vehicles, and while

"York axles truly come into their own on Kenya's bad notoriously dangerous driving. They have proven to be extremely reliable and, obviously, built to last - even in East Africa. This guality and reliability is still found in the York axles being manufactured today and that's why, when new trailers are added to the fleet, the axles will be York," she says.



### YORK AUSTRALIA

### Having a go for charity

### A new curtainsider built to raise money for a cancer charity is catching eyes on Australia's east coast.

The curtainsider was built by Heath Busch Transport Sales and Hire for interstate haulers Thompson Brothers Transport. The Busch name sits proudly on the back doors alongside that of York Transport Equipment, as the two major sponsors of the trailer. Together with more than 50 smaller sponsors whose names adorn the curtains, the trailer has raised an amazing \$180,000 for the McGrath Foundation, a cancer charity founded by retired Australian cricketer Glen McGrath.

Almost every part of the curtainsider is finished in a bright pink colour, including the sponsors' names on the curtain, to match the official colour of the McGrath Foundation.

Thompson Brothers Transport recently celebrated 50 years of running freight up and down the east coast of Australia and this eye-catching new trailer is set to continue that proud tradition and get some kilometres under its belt before long - which is sure to translate into invaluable publicity for the McGrath Foundation's inspiring charity work.

York has been working closely with Heath Busch Transport Sales and Hire for a number of years now, hence the partnership on this new build. For owner Mr Heath Busch, the ability to deliver reliability and lowest total cost of ownership for its products is what sets York apart from other axle suppliers in the Australian transport industry.

"I hire trailers as well as sell them. The first two tippers I bought for my hire business came with York on them and to be honest they've always been fantastic," said Mr Busch.

"Then when I started manufacturing my own equipment I contacted several axle suppliers. David Carroll at York was the first to come back to me and he's provided a great service ever since. Any questions or problems that need sorting are just a phone call away."

Mr Busch has a long history in the transport industry. He was an owner-driver for about ten years before moving to Dubbo, a major regional centre in western New South Wales, where he sold Kenworth and Western Star trucks for another decade. A short spell running a used truck and trailer yard was boosted iust over a year ago with the purchase of local livestock trailer manufacturers Shanks Trailers.

"I initially bought the company just for the land and then in the end I took on the employees and started building myself. I'm having a go at everything, mostly drop decks and dollies at the moment, but we've also just started building our first cattle crate. I swore I'd never get into manufacturing, but I just can't help myself!" Mr Busch added.

'The trailer has raised an amazing \$180.000 for the McGrath Foundation."





Striking: The eye-catching Thompson Brothers Transport curtainsider comes complete with York Duratrac tri-axle air suspension and maintenance free long life axles.

**York**Talk

### YORK AUSTRALIA



This ability to 'have a go' is crucial to the long-term success of a small manufacturer. For example, the recent dry spell in outback New South Wales is creating a demand for livestock trailers that Heath Busch Transport Sales and Hire is flexible enough to fill, making great use of the lifelong skills that Mr Busch brings to the job each day.

"My background includes some time jackarooing and I've even worked in a bank for five years. Being behind a desk is not for me - I've loved trucks since I was a boy - but the knowledge I got from the bank has been invaluable. I combine that financial skill with the hands-on experience and the customer base I developed selling trucks.

Everything contributes to what I do," he said. "It's been



YORK INDIA

### **Critical moves**

Nobody knows how important safe and reliable parts are to a vehicle better than Linde India. The company carries critical elements such as oxygen cylinders in cryogenic tankers to the whole country – and it's York they rely on for the job.

Linde India Limited (formerly BOC India Limited) is one of the leading industrial gases company in India. Linde India owns and operates India's largest air separation plant in Jamshedpur and runs more than 20 production facilities and filling stations across the country. It supplies more than 20,000 gases and mixtures, on top of providing a range of related services.

And the key to Linde's success? The strong supply chain network they have built, which helps them to reach any of their customers in any corner of the country. Within this thriving network, York is proud to be a preferred partner in Linde India's land transportation systems.

Linde India has a total fleet of 430 cryogenic tankers across the country – including a large fleet of over 118 company-owned cryogenic tank semi-trailers of which 95 per cent are fitted with York aggregates.

Most of the semi-trailers are running in Jamshedpur, which is located in the eastern part of the country and is home to the most treacherous road conditions in the country. In order to combat the bad road conditions and high downtime, while still maintaining high service levels, Linde deployed York's flagship air suspension unit, Tecair 1, onto 12 of its fleet back in 2010. The Tecair 1 suspensions have been running smoothly ever since, clocking over 150,000 kilometres of the most treacherous road conditions in the country without any repair or maintenance problems.

In fact, with York Tecair 1 suspension, these trailers provide almost double the tyre life compared to mechanical suspension fitted semi-trailers – a true testament to York's promise of delivering the lowest total cost of ownership.

Mr Kapil Hazra, Manager of Bulk Distribution at Linde India, says York's renowned air suspension unit has been able to pull off incredible tyre mileage in the worst road conditions and has never faced any issues with regards to the maintenance or parts availability for over three years now.

"Air suspension has helped us recover a precious amount of lead-time that is normally incurred in mechanical suspension, as fleets with air suspension units are capable of traversing more distance than their mechanical suspension counterparts," Mr Hazra explains.

Although air suspension units command a premium against their similar rated mechanical suspension units, the direct cost savings delivered by the higher tyre mileage, ultra-low maintenance and low downtime overshadows the price upfront.

And then there's the safety element – by far the greatest potential cost to a company that deals with transporting gases and mixtures. With the use of York's Tecair 1 suspension, the key consignment in the cryogenic tankers is safely secured from any kind of irregularities on the road thanks to superior parabolic leaf spring design. Even the worst road conditions on the eastern belt of India are no match for York.

The team at Linde India has lauded York's service team on their commitment to provide unparalleled service support. In fact, Linde's operations team is so confident on York's aggregates and unbeatable service, they have identified York aggregates to be their preferred choice on all their land transportation systems.

That goes for its existing gear too. With growing demand for critical gases, Linde is committed to deliver across the country with the lowest downtime and lead-time. To achieve this, Linde plans to convert to York aggregates across its entire fleet. The team is quite confident that, with the right brand of aggregates and their world-class maintenance practices, the fleets will stay on road for simply miles ahead.

"With York Tecair 1 suspension, these trailers provide almost double the tyre life compared to mechanical suspension fitted semi-trailers."







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### YORK CHINA

# York China strengthens ties with Hebei Hongtai

Hebei Hongtai Special Truck company is a respected Chinese trailer builder with a great reputation that spans all the way from China's rugged north to its spectacular southern coastline. Recently, Hongtai and York China have begun a close relationship that looks to be growing into a very strong partnership.

Founded in 1995, Hebei Hongtai Special Truck Co., Ltd (Hongtai for short) is one of the largest trailer builders in China's north. It produces an incredibly diverse range of products, including: oil tanker semi-trailers, stand-alone jacket cement tank semi-trailers, concrete mixer trucks, bulk cement trucks, and low bed semi-trailers. When every build is taken into account the Hongtai product list totals more than 80 variants and models, all of which have proven popular in transport industry markets across the whole of China.

York China's business relationship with Hongtai began slowly but surely back in the beginning of 2013 with the supply of axles and mechanical suspensions for Hongtai's trailers on a trial basis. However, Hongtai's engineers were very quickly satisfied with the quality and reliability of York's products. As such, the past several months have seen Hongtai place a growing number of orders for York axles and suspensions.

Now with the co-operation strengthening, it is expected that more than 100 Hongtai trailers with York products will soon be found running reliably across China's extensive highway network. And with Hongtai's production capacity reaching an impressive 5,000 units in 2013 – a figure that is expected to grow even further in the coming years – York China is very excited about the potential for this partnership to develop into something very special.

"Hongtai Trailers are built to high-quality specifications, which is one of the main reasons why they prefer to co-operate with York for the procurement of axles and suspension. Hongtai places great importance on the co-operation it has developed with York. And for our part York is determined to keep the customer continuously delighted with our quality, reliability and service," said Ms Susan Su, Customer Service Executive, York China.

Hongtai has been certified for the ISO9001-2000 and the national 'CCC' mandatory product certification in 2005. It is also approved as the designated special automobile production enterprises by the state economic and trade commission of China.

York. Simply miles ahead.

9



### YORK AUSTRALIA

### **Riordan and York plant** the seed for success

**Riordan Grain Services is living proof that from little** things big things really do grow. The Australian grain company has grown from a one person operation to a company employing 50 people with an annual turnover in excess of \$130 million. And now Riordan Grain Services has partnered with York for the next stage of a very exciting future.

Riordan Grain Services was founded by Mr Jim Riordan back in 1996. Armed with one truck and big ambitions, Mr Riordan operated in northern Victoria and southern New South Wales, buying grain direct from the farmer, finding the best market price for the farmer and delivering the grain on his truck.

"The buying and marketing of grain has always sat alongside the transport of grain as a part of our business," said Mr Joe Strawford, Transport Manager at Riordan Grain Services.

"We're still buying and selling direct from the grower, but we're also selling internationally now. Our business getting grain into export containers has grown significantly, to the extent that we're shipping 200,000 tonnes of grain annually in exports alone. When you add in the domestic market, we're handling around half a million tonnes of grain each year. That's a big figure. At peak harvest time we're loading between 70-80 trucks a day."

The timing of the harvests Riordan Grain Services attends to have been changing every year. Traditionally, the harvest in the warmer state of New South Wales would be about a month in front of the central Victorian harvest. However, that gap has now shrunk to about a fortnight, creating an overlap where Riordan equipment and personnel are working in both states concurrently.

This naturally places a bit of strain on the Riordan fleet, which has just grown with the addition of three new grain tippers built by Melbourne manufacturer Chris's Body Builders.

"This is my first purchase with Chris. I did a fair bit of research on his company and noted that he's growing all the time and is well respected throughout the industry. In particular, his personal approach, his one-on-one approach, is more appealing than the cold corporate approach. It matches the way we do business," Mr Strawford said, who has been with Riordan Grain Services since signing on as a driver in 2000.

"Chris doesn't just back his trailers: he backs all of the components as well, whether it be an axle and suspension or a hoist and tarp."



The purchase is also the first time Riordan Grain Services has used York equipment. York is a preferred supplier to Chris's Body Builders and these three grain tippers are running smoothly on Unitised axles and Duratrac suspensions.

"I've put a bit of faith in Chris with his recommendation, but I've also researched the York products and I'm happy with that choice. Chris doesn't just back his trailers; he backs all of the components as well, whether it be an axle and suspension or a hoist and tarp. He backs 100 per cent of his products 100 per cent of the time," said Mr Strawford.

"The feedback I've had from Chris's customers is that the combination of Chris's Body Builders trailers and York running gear is a good mix. Time will tell, but I'm expecting a good result at the end of the day."

## **BTE bulks up Aussie** manufacturing

### Melbourne manufacturer Bulk Transport Equipment is happily proving that reports of the death of Australian manufacturing have been greatly exaggerated - all with a helping hand from York.

Bulk Transport Equipment (BTE) was founded just over seven years ago with the specific remit of selling pressure tankers in the Victorian market place. Its business model involved modifying imported tankers to suit local conditions, and the products proved popular from the word go. Before long the imports were complemented by a small amount of manufacturing, with the likes of customised dog trailers and specialised tippling skels rolling off the production line.

In mid-2009, BTE made the decision to really ramp up its manufacturing arm. Its old Seaford base was replaced by new 5,000 m<sup>2</sup> premises in the nearby suburb of Dandenong and staff numbers were recently doubled to accommodate the growth in output, with crane boom dollies, custom chassis and state-of-the-art walking floor trailers added to the BTE catalogue.

"We've been aggressive in the market and very innovative with a lot of different products. It's about getting out there and making it happen really," explained Mr Alan Griffith, a Director at BTE.

"We're going against the grain with predictions of the end of manufacturing in Australia, especially with the Australian dollar being so high for so long. There aren't many companies who have had growth like ours in the past couple of years. Our turnover has more than doubled in the last three years."

Mr Griffith brings a world of experience to his role at BTE. He was general manager at a number of well-respected manufacturers such as Freighter and Hamelex White. In fact, it was two of his colleagues at Hamelex White who later went on to start BTE as its first Directors.

"There aren't many companies who have had growth like ours in the past couple of years. Our turnover has more than doubled in the last three years."

However, Mr Griffith is quick to acknowledge the skills of the people on the factory floor as the key driver of BTE's success.

"We have a really good mix of clever engineering staff and talented production managers. This enables us to produce a wide variety of specialised equipment," he said.

This variety includes a new aluminium tipper body, which BTE plans will become the sort of reliable 'bread and butter' product that keeps the order book ticking over, while grabbing a good slice of the tipper market in the process. Other products include a lightweight chassis built out of 700 grade steel. While some voices in the industry doubt the longevity of this chassis, BTE calmly points to the fact that 30 of these units have been on the road without any failures, some for as long as three years now.

BTE's reputation, then, is growing day by day. Of course, inferior running gear will soon harm the best of reputations, which is why BTE places such faith in its relationship with York.

"We used to use York as our standard when we were at Hamelex White. We still specify York as our standard because we believe it's one of the better axles and suspensions, especially for tippers. The service we get from York, including the after sales, is very good. It all works for us," Mr Griffith said.

"We've built a few five axles on York recently, the first ones have just gone out, and our new tipper tri-axle dog is also on York. But it's really the aluminium tippers and lightweight chassis that are such an important part of our business model going into the future. So it's great that we can trust York and know they'll keep doing the job for us."



11



### YORK SINGAPORE

### **Victory for York Singapore**

It was celebration time for York Singapore as the team chalked up a hard-earned victory at the first ever TATA Family Fiesta held in Singapore on 1 November 2013.

York Singapore took part in the 5 kilometre and 2.4 kilometre runs and the telematch, competing alongside fellow TATA family members such as Natsteel Singapore, Tata Consultancy Services, Kalzip Singapore, Tata Technologies, Tata Communications, and Tata Power.



Communications, and Tata Power. Victory: York Singapore's team take a breather to celebrate their triumph.

The team of employees went out in full force, beating 29 teams to become the overall champions of the telematch and proving once and for all that they are able to compete against the best.

But win or lose, smiles all round showed it was an unforgettable and exhilarating event for everybody involved. Well done Yorkers – we are truly proud of you!

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