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**PEOPLE POWER KEY TO ISUZU 50-YEAR TENURE**

Isuzu Trucks is this year celebrating the milestone of 50 years of operation in Australia, with a key focus on the people and product that have contributed to this enviable achievement.

Of those 50 years of successful business, Isuzu can also lay claim to no less than 33 consecutive years of market leadership, amidst one of the most competitive truck markets in the world.

Joining a long line of key contributors to this milestone is current Isuzu Australia Limited (IAL) Director and Chief Operating Officer, Andrew Harbison, who lauded the ‘Isuzu family’ both past and present.

“There’s little doubt the story of Isuzu in this country has been underpinned by a fantastic product, born out of a union between a Tokyo ship-building company and an energy producer back in 1916, both motivated by one clear vision—to build quality vehicles.

“Although, perhaps hidden somewhat is the story of the people, and the commitment of those people in delivering superior support, better ideas and the best service in the business.”

“In 2022, we’ll celebrate our 50th anniversary milestone, but all with one eye on the future and a steadfast focus on helping build businesses for a long time to come, because we know that reputations are riding on us.”

**Foundational years**

Introduced to Australia by General Motors Holden (GMH) in 1972, Isuzu trucks were initially marketed as ‘Bedford by Isuzu’, which helped appeal to an audience unfamiliar with the brand. The Bedford tie-up built buyer confidence and stands as the nucleus to the Isuzu brand we know and trust today.

Just three years later, Isuzu’s proven performance and exceptional reliability saw the product gain widespread market acceptance and the ‘Bedford’ name was dropped—leaving the Isuzu brand to stand on its own in front of a keen Australian market.

**The ‘mothership’**

As ‘Y2K’ came and went, the brand announced the General Motors' sale of its 40 per cent stake in I-GM to Isuzu Motors Limited (Japan), marking an important new milestone in 2005—the Australian subsidiary was now to be 100 per cent owned by Isuzu**.**

General Motors (I-GM) President & Managing Director, Mr Masayuki Murata, presided over this transition and acted as an important conduit between the parent company and its highly successful Australian operation.

Mr Harbison continued, “Just like those that came before him, Murata-san became a fierce advocate of product development for the Australian market.

“It’s the contribution of people like Murata-san that have seen Australia end up as one of the most respected and envied Isuzu subsidiaries in the world. Moreover, Murata-san’s approach has set the tone for some of our other Japanese Managing Directors, Mike Yoda and Hiroko Yaguchi, to name a few.”

**Early adopters**

“Isuzu General Motors Limited (I-GM) was formed in 1989, and the year also marked the beginning of Isuzu’s truck market leadership in Australia,” Mr Harbison noted.

“Many exciting developments followed this period and well into the next millennium. Playing a critical role throughout this period were Isuzu giants like former Director and Chief Operating Officer, Phil Taylor.

“Phil’s legacy at IAL is as storied as it is lasting.

“Coming from a truck sales background, Phil brought some street smarts to the leadership at IAL and can be credited with modernising the Isuzu dealer footprint from a sales perspective.

“Phil was a people person at heart and recognised talent when he saw it. IAL’s internal processes and practices definitely took a huge leap forward under Phil’s watch, too,” Mr Harbison added.

“Phil will be remembered for his ‘take no prisoners’ approach to business and an internal drive for perfection that permeates through to today.”

**Generation next**

As IAL looks towards the next 50 years of business, a new breed of leadership has been warmly welcomed, with the business expanding its sales, innovation and strategy platforms.

“We’re extremely proud of our past, the achievements, the industry firsts and our mantle as a trusted road transport solutions provider for Australian businesses,” Mr Harbison said.

“Similarly, we’re acutely aware of what awaits us as an industry leader. Change is well and truly upon us, and we’re continually working to assemble the best and brightest in the business.

“We’ve bolstered our capabilities in a number of areas, principally under the overarching banners of ‘Strategy and Innovation’,” Mr Harbison concluded.

**ends**

**For further information, please contact:**        **For Isuzu Trucks releases and photos:**

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