

Poised to pounce

The coming year will see exciting times in the evolving Australian bus market.

With the insurgence of high-quality imported built-up buses to Australia, the traditional way of buying a bus, its associated costs and lengthy delivery times are no longer the only option.

Bus operators will be spoilt with choices and can expect competitive pricing and lead times of 3-4 months only with these tailored design imports.

White Motor Corporation (Australia) has made a move into the Australian market. This company has secured the exclusive importing rights for Higer, China's award-winning 2007 and 2008 Bus and Coach Builder of the Year.

Higer has also won the Equipment award and the Safest Brand of Choice award four years running (2004-2007). The Higer Bus, through innovative engineering, has been tailor made to meet Australian standards and conditions. This bus range is built tough and will stand the test of time.

White Motor Corporation states, "We had made many trips to China and it was Higer's commitment to quality and innovation that attracted us to the brand. It was also impressive that one of Europe's biggest chassis suppliers, Scania, has formed a strategic partnership with Higer to build bodies for selective Scania buses.

"White Motor Corporation's potential customers can only be impressed

as this proves the brand's legitimacy in the marketplace."

Although White Motor Corporation has only recently appeared on the Australian scene, the partnership began more than two years ago and it has been working tirelessly to bring the best possible product package to the Australian market.

2009 sees White full steam ahead, with an expanded product range nearing completion. You can expect to see the addition of the RoadBoss range to including 10.5 and 12.3 metre variants. In production also is the 8.5 metre MidiBoss with 33 seats to complement its bigger brother, the current Australian Complied 9.2 metre MidiBoss.

The SchoolBoss range will have a route bus feel with a two-step entry. A 9.5-12.3 metre model will also be available. This will be an economy pack aiming at those operators who only run school contracts. A 12.3m Lo-Floor CitiBus will arrive January 2009. Also expected is the 7-7.5m, 23-28 seat, LittleBoss, it will have a GVM of less than 8 tonne and will bring some strong competition to the small bus market.

White has been very selective with the bus componentry. All branded components are 100 percent genuine and warrantied in Australia by the relevant manufacturers.

"We have stacked our buses with 100 percent genuine quality components that are demanded in the Australian market."

Cummins, ZF, ThermoKing, Wabco, Powerdown and Meritor can be found throughout its range.

White has identified how after-sales service is a lynch-

pin in becoming and remaining a successful importer of built-up buses.

The team at White is putting in place a national parts distribution network in conjunction with a major logistics company with experience in the automotive parts distribution.

The network computer linked to the company's national dealers. This will ensure excellent parts and back up service. Dealer training will be another feature utilized as White aims to provide "industry leading after sales service".

As this was going to print, White was in the process of appointing national Australian dealers. The company will be appointing its dealers on the basis of reputation, bus industry experience and servicing and spare parts commitment. Appointed dealers will showcase buses on display and hold stock inventories of "hot moving parts".

Additionally, this year White will launch a range of seats on the Australian market. The seats are being designed to suit the Australian bus market. White's seats will be of quality build, light weight, ADR compliant and 100 percent warrantied in Australia. The seat range will include fixed and reclining ADR68 school/coach/tour specification, 2/3 School/Charter specification with lap-sash or lap belts or no belts at all. Leather and cloth will be available. With an innovative design incorporating variable leg and wall mount positions, a "one seat fits all" will remove the need for expensive custom-made seats. Lead times will be minimal as stock will be held in our warehouse, once operations are in full swing.

You will no doubt hear a lot about White over the coming 12 months. White and its dealers will be attending all major bus conferences and expos throughout Australia. Keep an eye out in *ABC magazine* for upcoming road trips of White buses as they get the product out there and put it through its paces. White is adamant that its products will be of excellent quality, well priced and backed up by solid support.

White Motor Corporation is here to stay. It's on an exciting journey and you're invited. ■

