



DAF all mine

says R&J Tilt Tray Truck Hire

R&J's tilt trays are the start of a growing fleet of DAFs in Queensland's mines

North Queensland's coal mining industry was traditionally the domain of American-style trucks for equipment haulage and Japanese vehicles for lighter tasks. Now, a growing number of niche operators are choosing European-engineered DAFs for both duties, and R&J Tilt Tray Truck Hire is leading the way.

Founded in 1996 by Russ and Judy Elgar, the Mackay-based company started with a single tilt tray and has expanded to a fleet of 14. It handles a variety of work for the mines, everything from the delivery and disposal of parts and machinery to hauling 40-foot portable sheds, containers and boom-lifts.

The founders' son, Doug, was given a DAF tandem drive and was immediately sold on its performance, reliability and comfort. So much so, R&J committed to replacing its entire fleet with DAFs using a variety of DAF CF75 and CF85 rigids and prime movers.

"I've looked at DAF from both sides of the coin – as a driver and now as a manager – and the view is the same," Doug said. "DAFs are

the best trucks for this business. They have enhanced our business with lower operating costs, improved reliability and driver comfort, and they've also enabled us to gain more business with high performance trucks that can handle a wider range of tasks.

Today, R&J is Queensland's largest fleet owner of DAF Trucks, outside of Brisbane. And they've started a trend with mining operators in the region. There are now a number of DAFs working the mines in the Bowen Basin, and more are coming online each month.

DAF wasn't R&J's first choice but it will be the company's only choice, now and in the future. Doug says the CF75 and 85s are ideal for on-site haulage, providing not only high maneuverability and excellent fuel efficiency but also versatility. He demands different tasks from different trucks, and with DAF he can mix and match duties to suit his variety of prime movers and rigids.

After working with numerous makes, Doug says DAFs have also proved to be far more reliable and durable than any other brand he's

used. And they're surprisingly cheaper to operate and maintain than the Japanese trucks they've replaced.

"Some other brands may be cheaper to buy, but they don't last the distance and end up costing more in repairs and maintenance. Also, they don't give the driver the same degree of comfort. In our business, you don't travel a lot of kilometres, but you do spend a lot of hours behind the wheel. And that's why our drivers love DAF. The trucks are comfortable and a joy to drive. That's an important consideration these days. If you want to attract and keep good drivers, you have to give them good trucks," Doug said.

"I really can't say enough about DAF – and that includes their dealer, Brown & Hurley, in conjunction with Mackay Truck Parts and Service. They have given me great advice and support over the years. I wouldn't have bought so many DAFs if I wasn't happy with the entire package – great trucks backed by great dealer service," he added.

From heavy-duty haulage and intrastate distribution to specialist applications in various industries, DAF's CF series has been developed for the most versatile and demanding transport requirements. The models are available with a choice of engines – from 250 hp to 360 hp for the CF75, and from 360 hp to 460 hp for the CF85. The range can also be configured in a variety of manual and automated transmissions, wheelbases, chassis and axles, making these vehicles the perfect all-rounders.

And DAF has recently refreshed its entire range of trucks. In addition to new interior and exterior features, all models now incorporate the latest Euro 4-compliant engines which boast enhanced performance, improved fuel economy and even lower emission levels.