



STAND AND DELIVER

Brian Anderson.

Sharing their business name with a famous English firearms and motorcycle manufacturer, Brian and Sharon Anderson have built a successful crane truck business primarily servicing southeast Queensland and utilising a fleet of specialised trucks including three DAFs.

Founded in 1861, the Birmingham Small Arms Company Limited (BSA) was a major British industrial conglomerate manufacturing military and sporting firearms, bicycles, motorcycles, cars, buses and bodies, among other things. Some 143 years later, on the other side of the world, Brian and Sharon Anderson started

a company called BSA Transport, where the name lives on but the similarities, on the whole, end there. The couple provides a first class crane truck service to customers primarily in southeast Queensland, having begun in accordance to a plan that they were, quite memorably, promptly forced to abandon. "In 2004 I'd just left a management

position with a large taxi truck company and we decided to buy one crane truck so I could semi-retire," Brian says. "That plan lasted for about three seconds and 36 trucks later here we are today." Brian says it soon proved impossible for the couple to keep the business at one truck because as word got out about the great service the company offered, they were inundated with requests for their

services and had no choice but to expand it to meet the demand.

"We have built some very strong relationships with several companies over the years and they have been rock solid in their support for us which has formed the mainstay of the business," Brian says.

One such company is a steel frame and roofing manufacturer which BSA Transport has been servicing since 2008 and which currently keeps 10 to 14 of the company's trucks busy on a daily basis.

One of these is a DAF CF single drive



DAF LF 290 6x2.



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prime mover that BSA bought back in 2011 and that has been providing sterling service to both companies. Brian explains that this truck has had an unusual life. After a few years as a prime mover at the customer's request, it was turned into a 14-pallet rigid curtainsider with the chassis lengthened and a lazy axle added.

"Several years later they decided they needed a prime mover again so we removed the body and the lazy axle, shortened the chassis, and it once again became a single drive prime mover which now pulls an 18-pallet tandem axle semi-trailer," Brian says, adding that the truck has now done over 700,000km and still going strong.

The company's policy is to keep its trucks for around 10 or 11 years, which is to say this prime mover will likely be retired

before too long.

Brian talks about the excellent reliability of the truck being matched by the outstanding service BSA receives from the dealer Brown and Hurley at Yatala — conveniently located just a 20-minute drive from the company's depot at Kingston.

"You've got to have reliability and backup and as far as I'm concerned Brown and Hurley and DAF put a big tick in both these boxes," he says. "The service is second to none."

Brian explains that there were a couple of minor issues with the "old girl", (his fond reference to his first DAF), but that the issues were swiftly dispatched by the proficient team at Brown and Hurley. "In the last eight or nine years it's only been off the road for one or two days," he affirms. "Virtually nothing goes wrong

with them, they're reliable, comfortable and our drivers love them."

The second DAF Brian purchased is a 510hp CF85 8x4 rigid with a nine-metre tray and rear mounted HMF 32 tonne-metre crane. This versatile unit is set up to pull a tri-axle pig trailer and does a lot of concrete pipe haulage.

Meanwhile, the newest DAF in the fleet is a 6x2 LF290 with a nine-metre tray and liftable 'pusher' axle that Brian says makes it ideal for delivering steel reinforcing mesh for concrete slabs at domestic building sites.

This LF is Euro 6 compliant and has all the safety fruit including Adaptive Cruise Control (ACC), Forward Collision Warning (FCW), Advanced Emergency Braking System (AEBS), Lane Departure Warning System (LDWS), Vehicle Stability Control (VSC), protective cab suspension and construction; driver's air bag and two seat belt pre-tensioners, reverse warning and engine immobiliser system.

The steer axle has parabolic leaf suspension with shock absorbers and a stabiliser bar and a maximum load capacity of 7.5t. Wheelbase, as measured between the steer and Weweler pusher axle, is 6.9m, and the drive axle with a ratio of 4.1:1 rides on air suspension with a maximum load capacity of 20t. Brakes are EBS controlled ventilated discs on all axles while a polished alloy bullbar completes the picture. Power comes from a 6.7 litre six-cylinder diesel engine producing 217kW (295 hp) at 2,300 rpm and peak torque of 1,100Nm (811lb/ft) between 1,000 and 1,700rpm. This feeds into a ZF AS Tronic 12-speed transmission with ratios ranging from a 10.37:1 first gear to an 0.81:1 overdriven top. Other standard features include an exhaust brake, 430-litre capacity aluminium fuel tank, spray suppression, front underrun protection (FUP), 50-litre AdBlue tank and LED rear lights.

According to Brian, the pusher lift axle on the LF is far better than a tag axle in terms of not getting hung-up on uneven ground and he says the longer wheelbase doesn't adversely affect the turning circle. "Delivering into new housing estates and turning around in tight cul-de-

sacs you need a truck that's highly manoeuvrable and the LF certainly doesn't disappoint in this respect," Brian says. "In my experience, the turning circle on the DAFs is superior to that of the Japanese brands." Brian also has high praise for the ZF 12-speed automated manual transmission (AMT) in the DAFs which

he says shifts more smoothly and with more intelligence than the torque converter automatic transmissions in some Japanese trucks.

"We spend a lot of time training our drivers to ensure they operate the gear in the required manner and we do our own servicing so we can keep an eye on how the trucks are being driven," Brian

says. "For example, if we detect excessive clutch wear, we alert the driver and ensure corrective action is taken."

As for the future, Brian says the fourth DAF truck will be joining the fleet next year as part of the standard replacement policy that sees the trucks turned over every 10 to 11 years with around 750,000km on the clock.

While his semi-retirement plan didn't go exactly to plan, Brian says the couple's son and daughter are now fully involved with running the business, which means he has more time to visit customers and drive one of the trucks when necessary. Further down the track Brian says he and Sharon are looking forward to more trips to various parts of Australia in their

custom-built RAM truck and caravan. "With the kids now basically running the show, in a few years' time I reckon we'll be ready to see a lot more of what this great country has to offer," he says. With the reliability and dependability of the DAFs along with the top-notch service from Brown and Hurley, they should have nothing to worry about. PM



DAF CF85 8x4.