

A bigger slice of the pie

FOR INDEPENDENT PETROL AND CONVENIENCE COMPANY, **UNITED PETROLEUM**, THE LATEST DELIVERY OF TWO NEW 23-METRE B-DOUBLE COMBINATIONS BUILT BY **MARSHALL LETHLEAN** ARE OFFERING ITS GREATEST PAYLOADS YET. THANKS TO INNOVATIVE DESIGN, THE LONGER COMBINATIONS ARE NAVIGATING THE COMPANY'S NETWORK OF SERVICE STATIONS WITH EASE.



One of two 23m B-double tanker combinations from Marshall Lethlean.

United Petroleum has a national fleet of company-owned trucks and tankers that deliver petroleum and LPG into its network of service stations around Australia.

The national fleet has grown to include 65 tankers, operating in both single and B-double combinations. The most recent addition to the fleet from Marshall

Lethlean, two 23-metre B-double combinations, were delivered in May 2018 – with one set based in Victoria and the other in Queensland.

This is the first time United Petroleum has incorporated these longer B-double sets into the fleet. Capable of carrying up to 62,750 litres per combination, they represent a substantial 10 per cent

capacity gain when compared to the company's standard 20-metre B-doubles, which can achieve up to 57,000 litres. Our 23m design was conceived from the ground up," says Orlando Iluffi, Business Development Manager at Marshall Lethlean. "This is not just another modified 25m B-double and it is the reason for such great manoeuvrability



Each of these new B-double sets operate seven days a week, running 13 shifts per week.

“For us, it is not so much a matter of replacing existing equipment, but adding more into the fleet to help cater to our growing number of service stations.”

while operating at the full 68.5 tonne GCM. The unit’s fantastic swept path was achieved after many computer simulations were analysed to determine the optimum tanker dimensions.” The rear barrel’s unique tapered front section is also a first for Marshall Lethlean, lowering the barrel height to improve the tankers’ stability and improving the safety of the vehicle. “Being larger capacity tankers, they give us better payloads, with almost an extra 6,000 litres per delivery. That means we can get more product into the ground, so it is a longer window before we need to go back and refill, improving the efficiency of our business,” explains Garry Kevelham, National Fleet Manager at United Petroleum. Each of these new B-double sets operate seven days a week, running 13 shifts per week. “These B-doubles are a little longer than

our previous 20m long combinations, but they can manoeuvre a lot easier and safer into our smaller sites because of the steerable axles. This is the first time we have included steerable axles on our B-doubles and we decided to include them on these sets because of the extra length. It means that drivers can get into what we refer to as our 20 metre sites, even though these combinations are 23 metres long. The drivers love it and have said these B-doubles turn a lot smoother, with the rear trailer actually driving around, rather than dragging behind.” In his role as National Fleet Manager, Garry looks after the maintenance, repairs and running of all of the company’s trucks and trailers nationally, as well as the purchase of any new gear. “When it comes time to buy new tanker equipment, I look for reliability. It needs to be a good

brand that runs a good tanker, with maximum payload, and all of the latest safety features as well,” he says. United Petroleum’s fleet currently features several tankers by Marshall Lethlean, including 10 B-doubles and four tri-axles, with the majority of these based in Victoria.

“Marshall Lethlean’s build quality is excellent. We have had very little off-road time with our Marshall Lethlean tankers, apart from regular servicing and maintenance. We have developed a really good relationship with the sales people there and the workshop. And whenever we have needed anything, they have jumped on it right away,” says Garry. The two new B-double combinations are also serving as mobile billboards, with each of the tankers covered in Pie Face livery. This follows United Petroleum’s recent acquisition of the bakery chain, with its pie products now being sold through the brand’s service stations nationally. The Pie Face rollout is part of United Petroleum’s evolving retail strategy, which aims to ensure that its sites continue to meet the changing needs of its consumers.

United Petroleum currently operates approximately 400 service stations around Australia, with more and more locations opening each year. With continued growth projected for the business, Garry says that this will bring about the need for additional transport equipment to cater to the company’s growing freight task. “The two new B-doubles built by Marshall Lethlean weren’t purchased to replace any existing equipment, they were purchased to cater to our growth. For us, it is not so much a matter of replacing existing equipment, but adding more into the fleet to help cater to our growing number of service stations.”

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