



Movers and shakers

CONTAINER TRANSPORT EQUIPMENT SPECIALIST, **O'PHEE TRAILERS**, HAS A TRACK RECORD FOR SHAKING UP THE INDUSTRY WITH ITS PRODUCT DEVELOPMENTS – SOMETHING IT IS AIMING TO REPEAT WITH TWO NEWLY LAUNCHED TRAILERS.

It's been half a decade since Brisbane family business O'Phee Trailers, now operating as part of the Drake Group, disrupted the Australian container handling market with the launch of a new, innovative side-loader range sold under the O'Phee BoXLoader name. Using the latest technology by French crane expert BXL, it promised ease of use coupled with proven local craftsmanship and O'Phee's famed service attitude. Since then, the O'Phee BoXLoader brand has benefitted greatly from the steady rise in container traffic between Australia and Asia, quickly turning into a household name among the container transport fraternity. "There is a lot of potential out there for innovative equipment like the O'Phee BoXLoader," says Mick O'Phee. "Think about it, a side-loader is the perfect point-to-point delivery tool. It can reduce handling and

transfer costs at the port and make the whole supply chain more efficient along the way. "More and more fleets are starting to see the O'Phee BoXLoader as a multi-purpose unit that can make them more responsive to our ever-changing marketplace, so we're very excited to see just how far we can go with the product." To keep building the O'Phee BoXLoader brand, O'Phee has developed the side-loader to offer a choice between the successful 'MultiLoader' model and a 'Step-Over' model. Its latest development is the brand new 'Speedloader' model launched at the Brisbane Truck Show in May this year. "This new innovative design is all about speed of operation and tare weight saving – meaning more payload for the user," Mick says. The new chassis design is constructed

of 800 grade quenched and tempered steel, a high-tensile steel that gives a significant tare weight savings over existing models. Although the Speedloader boasts a faster operation, Mick assures that safety is not compromised – it is actually enhanced through the innovative design, he notes. "Quick and safe operation is improved through the Speedloader's simple innovative design with a 'fixed' stabiliser leg. The user is kept out of harm's way with wireless remote control operation, and no longer has to position the leg to suit the weight of the container. Now, it's always automatically positioned correctly to suit light or heavy containers, removing any possible errors and ensuring a precise landing." Mick says that matched with a rigid trailing arm suspension with solid axle connection,



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the Speedloader gives a higher performance and dependable durability while still maintaining a smooth ride. "This new chassis design, combined with lighter manufactured cranes and the fixed stabiliser leg for trailer to ground/ ground to trailer transfers, allows fast and accurate movements saving the operator time, which results in more freight movements in a single day." The Speedloader caught the attention of the Brisbane Truck Show Awards, nominated in the Best Trailer, Best Technology Innovation and Best Australian-designed and -engineered product categories, alongside

O'Phee's other new launch, its Retract-X Container Skel, which was also nominated for the Best Australian Manufactured Innovation Award. "The Retract-X is a total departure from the currently available retractable skel designs," Mick says. "Using the same high tensile steel as the Speedloader, it incorporates an innovative rigid box frame construction that is easier to extend and retract under load." The Retract-X uses variable king pin and lock pin locations to maximise various transport weights, which can be maximised thanks to the low tare weight, which O'Phee says

is the lightest tare weight in the Australian marketplace today.

"Operators are more and more concerned with increasing their payloads as margins tighten across the industry," Mick says. "That is also one of the main reasons we were quick to jump on the Performance-Based Standards (PBS) scheme as soon as it was introduced."

Mick says O'Phee Trailers' PBS venture took off after the company unveiled its new A-double design in 2009, following successful trials in the previous year that validated the A-double concept. Permitted to run at 79 tonnes Gross Combination Mass (GCM) at the time, the new combination consisted of a single trailer capable of carrying one 20-foot container, which pulled a second trailer using a converter dolly. The second trailer was able to carry two more 20-foot containers or a single 20/40 container. That was then soon evolved further and O'Phee introduced the 40/ 40 combination at 85 tonnes GCM. With its history of shaking up the industry with each trailing equipment development, as a pioneer in PBS and with its BoXLoader and Retract-X, the new innovations in container transport equipment from O'Phee are likely to have a similar disruptive effect, Mick says.



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