

ently to the interstate runs. He has recently taken delivery of a third FV54 and is planning to add a FS52JS twin-steer (8x4) in the future.

"This will give an increase in payload," he says, "and balance that by raising the power rating to 405hp in conjunction with an 18-speed gearbox. But we're very pleased with the FV units and their 345hp and 10-speed Mitsubishi transmissions.

"Compared with the high horsepower engines that some subbies run, we're getting double the fuel economy they get," he laughs. "Our engines return 2.2km/litre and they'd be lucky to get 1.4km/litre! And we have greater pallet space than a conventional semi." When he compares relative capital costs, he says he's also in front. "I can buy virtually two complete rigs to their single prime mover and trailer," he asserts.

"Because my Fusos work 24/7, a new one will cover 600,000km in two years. After that I run it in the local fleet for three years where it will do 50,000 a year. That's 750,000km in five years. By then, I've gained the best years out of it and its resale value is high as the engine is still only half-way through its first life-to-overhaul."

Given this, Doug buys a new 'interstate-capable' Fuso every year to replace the one joining the local fleet. The older truck becomes a viable back-up to the interstate runners, should one of them be temporarily grounded. Even so, he claims he's only had two breakdowns on the highway over the past five years. "Moreover, Melbourne Fuso dealer Austrans handled the situations very quickly," he reports.

"My drivers like the truck's air seat and cruise control – which saves them stiff legs on those long stretches of the Hume; and they appreciate the 'set-and-forget' climate control in the cab. "The only feature they'd like to see would be a CD stacker to save changing discs!"

From Doug's perspective though, his business is more than happy with the truck/trailer concept. It has made possible the service that was missing in conventional semi-trailer wisdom. ■



SLIP INTO SOMETHING MORE COMFORTABLE

Fuso Financial
Fast track approval
Flexible repayment terms

Ask for a competitive quote today.
Contact an authorised Fuso dealer
or call 1300 730 200.



FUSO Financial

FUSO Financial
DaimlerChrysler Financial Services
Authorised by MITSUBISHI FUSO.

Finance to approved business customers only. Conditions apply. Mitsubishi Fuso is an authorised finance company of DaimlerChrysler Financial Services Australia Pty Ltd ACN 074 134 517.