



Ready for the future, ready to box

MELBOURNE-BASED HAULAGE COMPANY **CHALMERS** CAN DRAW BACK ON A CENTURY OF EXPERIENCE PROVIDING CONSTANT SHAREHOLDER RETURN IN THE FLUID BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT THAT IS THE AUSTRALIAN TRANSPORT SECTOR. TO MAINTAIN A LEADING ROLE IN THE COMPETITIVE CONTAINER HANDLING INDUSTRY, THE COMPANY NOW ADDED **O'PHEE'S** NEW BOXLOADER TO THE BRISBANE FLEET.



Mick O'Phee and BXL CEO Vincent Sastre

Operating two of the country's largest container storage and handling facilities in Melbourne and Brisbane, Chalmers' formula of success is a simple equation. "Respect each client's unique requirements with attention to detail and a high level of service," says John Carew, Director of Chalmers' Brisbane Division.

It is no surprise that he did not hesitate to trial O'Phee's latest innovation in the field after the privately owned trailer manufacturing company presented the new O'Phee BoXLoader in April. After all, the new concept uses the latest technology available on the global market, promising ease of use and a rapid return of investment.

Representing the company's engineering expertise, O'Phee unveiled the first ready-to-use O'Phee BoXLoader in May at the Brisbane Truck Show. The Single/ B-double

and road train rated trailer is the result of an international collaboration between O'Phee and French company BXL, which has gained renown in the European transport industry over the past 16 years. "BXL is a challenging alternative in the global side loader market, offering new technology and an acknowledged savoir faire," says Chairman and CEO of BXL, Vincent Sastre. "The liaison of BXL and O'Phee is the perfect marriage between two privately owned companies, each with a different field of expertise." Based on O'Phee's tried and true light tare, high quality trailer frame technology, the new O'Phee BoXLoader is equipped with BXL's 35t side loading cranes. "A double extension stabiliser gives it excellent stability, enabling it to handle containers of 20' and 40'," Vincent explains.

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BoXLoader will revolutionise the industry," Mick adds. "It is based on the latest and most powerful software and computer system to ensure a high technological level and a maximum optimisation of both crane and stabiliser performance. Therefore, the cranes are also equipped with CanBus technology and oil pressure sensors measuring the position of both cranes and stabilisers, together with the weight of the container, in order to prevent dangerous operations."

In the field, the new technology has already proven itself. "It's more stable than other products on the market, and stability and safety is paramount at Chalmers," says John. "The stabilizer legs on the trailer reach further, making the whole system more stable. We deliver freight to Toowoomba, Gold Coast and Brisbane, and sometimes the landscape is quite rough. But the O'Phee BoXLoader's capability to load and unload safely in a difficult environment is second to none."

The new vehicle complements Chalmers' fleet of six side loaders, and the demand for special transport equipment is growing. "We retired one vehicle that was about eight years old and needed a replacement. Mick O'Phee had the idea to give the O'Phee BoXLoader a go, and we trusted in Mick's expertise. Ever since, the trailer hasn't been off the road, and we're very glad we made the decision," says John, who joined Chalmers' in September 2000 to help boost the Brisbane branch.

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"It was an ambitious venture to push into the Brisbane market at the Port of Brisbane, and I remember the pain we went through to establish the business here. But it was worth it - we now have what is arguably the best non-stevedore port based import/export facility in Brisbane." Unlike the start-up in Queensland, implementing the new O'Phee BoXLoader



The new O'Phee BoXLoader in operation at the O'Phee headquarter in Queensland.

did not present a challenge to the Chalmers' business. "It's the first trailer coming off the production line, and we expected some teething troubles that would make us send it back. But it didn't happen at all." According to John, the O'Phee BoXLoader went straight to work after the Truck Show and has been working ever since, enriching Chalmers' fleet of 140 trailers, 110 of which are made by O'Phee. "When I started 11 years ago, I inherited a fleet of four prime movers and four B-double combinations. Over the last 10 years, the fleet has grown notably, and I've always relied on O'Phee trailing equipment.

"We started off with 14 staff, and now we employ about 150 people. I am fortunate as I can draw back on reliable equipment and a great team, and together we create ongoing growth."

Relying on O'Phee for a whole decade, John has no intention to change the winning team. "Mick and Sharon help us develop

anything we require, be it a B-double or specialised equipment. I heard good things about BXL in Europe before, and I know Mick and Sharon build a very good product, so I knew the O'Phee BoXLoader would be a winner."

Being a wharf carrier, Chalmers Brisbane does not have an advertisement budget to promote the new investment. But according to John, there is no need for additional promotion anyway. "Our gear is our advertisement," says John. "Therefore it's a real plus that O'Phee is able deliver a sparkling product that will retain a quality appearance in the long term. If you give an O'Phee trailer a good wash, it will retain the gloss, whilst competing equipment can already look tired after the first year." Staying true to the traditional Chalmers colour scheme, the new O'Phee BoXLoader was designed to represent Chalmers commitment to exceed customer expectations in Australia's East. "It's a brilliant look, the crane is maroon and the chassis is white, just like all our gear for the past decades."

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The Chalmers story

Humble beginnings are often quoted in the history of Australia's transport industry. Yet Chalmers, established in 1882, can lay claim on the timeworn expression.

John McBeth Chalmers, the son of a Scottish immigrant, started a small business in Melbourne to become one of the earliest providers of organised carrier services in Victoria. The original philosophy and work ethic of the founder and his commitment to providing efficient customer service have been continued ever since. To date, the Chalmers family still holds the majority of the company, continuing the Chalmers reputation for service and innovation.