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## **NRMA MOTORS INTO LPG AUTOGAS**

NRMA Motoring & Services, one of the country's largest private vehicle fleets, aims to convert 95 per cent of its Roadside Assistance vehicles to run on cost-efficient and clean-burning LPG Autogas by 2008.

By doing so, the NRMA estimates it will save over \$1 million in annual fuel costs and simultaneously reduce the greenhouse gas emissions of every LPG-converted vehicle by 15 per cent, amounting to 406 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> over the past year.

NRMA logistics manager Sam Caruana said the NRMA's switch to LPG Autogas commenced in 2004.

"We recognised our responsibility as the country's largest road service organisation to capitalise on Autogas' significant environmental and economic benefits – thereby providing an example for other road-based businesses, our members and other motorists to follow," Mr Caruana said.

"We trialled dedicated E-Gas Ford Falcons in early 2005, which proved to be very successful in delivering operating cost reductions and meeting our green agenda.

"Our uptake snowballed from there – we never looked back."

Mr Caruana said the NRMA has since negotiated with several manufacturers to supply Autogas vehicles, and most recently introduced 90 dual-fuel Toyota HiLux vehicles to its fleet.

Impco Fuel Systems performed the HiLux LPG conversions for the NRMA, fitting its BRC Sequential Injection system to the vehicles.

Impco dealer development manager Brett Smith said the BRC Sequential Injection system uses the latest-generation LPG kit technology and offers performance indistinguishable from that provided by petrol-powered engines.

“Our system replicates the HiLux’s normal operating conditions, so it drives as a petrol-powered version would.

“Without the indicator, you can’t tell which fuel the engine is using,” Mr Smith said.

He said that Autogas afforded significant savings over petrol, despite 20 to 25 per cent more of it being consumed to match distances achieved by petrol.

“Yesterday, unleaded petrol cost \$1.40 per litre, but I filled up for 48 cents per litre using Autogas. That’s a saving of 80 cents per litre, including the higher consumption factor.”

Mr Caruana said the NRMA had already accrued some impressive savings by using Autogas.

“Running a fleet is a very expensive business. Our vehicles are on the road every day, sometimes re-fuelling twice daily, so reducing fuel costs is extremely important.

“Using Autogas has proven to be a practical way to do that. We conservatively estimate Autogas fuel cost savings will exceed \$1 million in the 2006–07 financial year and we’re expecting that figure to increase.”

Mr Smith said that the NRMA purchased a third party engine-only warranty for the LPG-converted HiLuxs and that Toyota’s factory warranty is retained.

LPG Australia's industry development manager Phil Westlake said he was impressed by the NRMA's Autogas uptake.

"It's very pleasing to see such an iconic vehicle fleet is about to achieve virtually full LPG penetration.

"Fleet-centric businesses such as the NRMA are increasingly embracing the bountiful economic and environmental benefits Autogas readily provides," Mr Westlake said.

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NRMA logistics manager Sam Caruana said converting 95 per cent of its vehicle fleet to LPG Autogas will save over \$1 million in annual fuel costs and reduce the greenhouse gas emissions of every converted vehicle by 15 per cent.