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Hornsby Shire Council has added a Hino Hybrid diesel-electric truck to its fleet in a move to save on fuel costs and reduce its greenhouse emissions.

The Hino Hybrid combines a 4.0-litre 110kW diesel engine with a 23kW electric motor which run in parallel.



It is claimed to provide up to 20 per cent improved fuel economy compared to a similar conventional truck, and to reduce CO2 emissions by 25 per cent.

The Hino Hybrid is a 6500kg-capacity vehicle best suited to urban applications. It was delivered through Sydney dealer Best Hino.

“Hornsby Shire Council became aware of Hybrid concept about three years ago through Jeff Morgan at Best Hino, so we’ve always had an eye on it,” said Frank Amato, the council’s engineering resources coordinator.

The Hino Hybrid was released in Australia in May.

“We’ve examined bio-diesel and other alternative fuels to find ways of reducing consumption, but the hybrid looked like the way to go so we went ahead with it.”

Mr Amato said that Hino Hybrid was used by the council’s engineering welding service workshop, which repaired council infrastructure such as gates, fences, hand rails and any other structures requiring welding.

“Our drivers say it is unique to operate – a little different at first when the engine switches off when stationary – but it is comfortable and pleasant to drive,” Mr Amato said.

Hino designed its latest-generation hybrid truck to achieve significant emission reductions.

It reduces emissions of particulate matter (PM) and oxides of nitrogen (NOx), as well as carbon dioxide.

The diesel engine in Hino Hybrid easily meets Euro IV emission requirements.

Hino Hybrid includes many of the key features fitted to the all-new Hino 300 Series light-duty truck range that help make driving safer and easier.

Hino Hybrid's four-wheel disc brakes are ABS anti-skid-equipped, and all disc brakes are auto-adjust.

In addition, dual SRS airbags with pretension seatbelts for both driver and passenger enhance occupant safety in the event of an accident.

Hino's Easy Start Uphill Start Assist technology electronically maintains braking force, even after the driver takes his or her foot off the brake pedal – negating the need for handbrake starts.

The Easy Start feature allows the driver to seamlessly move off from a stationary position.

“Our drivers took only a morning to get used to the Easy Start function, and they soon realised how it made taking off a breeze,” Mr Amato said.

He said the council would evaluate Hino Hybrid’s overall performance to determine further purchases.