



# It leaves a trail of suds

The terminal tug-turned-truck wash works up a lather of excitement



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A TERMINAL tractor is grabbing plenty of attention as it ventures out on to the open road in Victoria.

Normally, these strange-looking machines spend their time lugging various trailers around yards and terminals with only the briefest foray on to a road, usually a few metres to another worksite, but a young truck cleaning entrepreneur has other ideas.

Ben Hennock is using an Ottawa terminal tractor as a road-going truck cleaning tool.

The majority of Hennock's Wash It truck washing fleet, including five Iveco Daily vans

and five other utes, is in Brisbane, but he bought the Ottawa tractor through importer Daysworth International for work in Melbourne. Daysworth says terminal tractors are much more practical for trailer-moving than prime-movers, use less fuel and are far less taxing on drivers.

The odd shape, with the cab to the right side of the body, is designed so the driver can see both front corners.

Hennock, 25, opted for the terminal tractor because his teams wash five times as many trailers as prime movers. The tractor can be driven out to a site, hauling its own large trailer with water tanks and all the wash equipment, bringing the trailers to a central point to be washed, then returned.

Elsewhere, Hennock says, "We use the owners' trucks to bring the trailers out to be washed."

This can occasionally reveal dents and scratches and can damage turntables and

**Mobile marvel:**  
The Ottawa is the star in Wash It's fleet

quick-releases "and we automatically get the blame... Using the Ottawa means there is no such problem."

He says teams also save time because with a terminal tractor, the driver can hitch trailers without getting out of the cab.

Many people have never seen terminal tractors because they rarely hit the road. They use conventional diesel engines — in the Ottawa it is a straight-six Cummins, with Allison automatic transmission.

Hennock believes his Ottawa could be the only terminal tractor that spends so much time on the road. He drove into uncharted territory because Ottawas, though they can be road-registered overseas, are normally only set up for a top speed of about 20km/h.

"They never need to do any more than that... at a terminal," he says.

He worked with Daysworth to change the differential and the tailshaft to lift the operating speed so the Ottawa could safely travel on highways at up to 85km/h.

Another problem was the suspension, or lack of it. In place of regular springs the Ottawa has large rubber blocks — all that it needs to work at low speeds.

Even so, Hennock says the ride in his road-going version is not overly harsh. "It really wasn't as bad as I thought it would be," he says. "The suspension driver's seat does take a lot of the bumps out."

Hennock reckons he puts up with a fairly hard ride every day in his own work vehicle. "The

ride in the Ottawa isn't that far off my Ranger ute, but then again it does ride on (massive) 22-inch rims," he says.

Hennock started washing trucks when he was 12. Figuring there was a dollar to be made, he started the truck wash business about seven years ago and it expanded during the drought — so quickly in fact that Wash It made BRW's top 100 fastest-growing companies list last year.

**Big splash:**  
The Ottawa's eye-catching graphics

