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TORANA IS REBORN!

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**Holden unveils
twin-turbo medium-sized
hatchback concept in Sydney**

By MARTON PETTENDY

TORANA is back.

As revealed exclusively in GoAuto e-news last month, Holden has created – and now taken the wraps off – a stunning new mid-sized concept car that resurrects the Torana nameplate and features a twin-turbo version of the new Port Melbourne-built Alloytec V6.

Dubbed the “Torana TT36”, the hot-pink hatchback is tangible evidence that the idea of a medium-sized rear-drive Holden to rival the likes of BMW’s all-conquering 3 Series – a concept openly pursued at one point by former Holden boss Peter Hanenberger – remains alive and well at Fishermens Bend ... and beyond.

It’s also proof of the performance potential

available in Commodore’s 3.6-litre V6.

By applying twin KO4 Warner turbochargers, an air-to-air intercooler and variable valve actuation to its Alloytec 190, then dropping the compression to 9.0:1, Holden engineers were able to deliver a power peak of 280kW and no less than 480Nm of torque, with 90 per cent available from just 1600rpm.

Despite being officially described as a hand-built experimental engine, its output sends a clear signal that, come the next generation VE Commodore from 2006, Holden will be able to strike back at Ford’s successful XR6 Turbo with a force-fed six-cylinder of its own.

Combined with a heavy-duty six-speed manual transmission with a final drive ratio of a short 3:73 – and a kerb weight that should easily undercut Commodore’s – Torana TT36 would also be a

performance powerhouse in its own right. If it gets the green light.

Describing TT36 as Torana’s spiritual successor, Holden chairman and managing director Denny Mooney said the concept – originally named XP54, indicating it’s an experimental project and recognising Holden’s so-called Studio 54 design workshop in Melbourne’s outer suburbs – differs from previous Holden concepts by sharing elements of GM’s global vehicle underpinnings.

These are believed to include GM’s rear-drive Kappa architecture, from which the Pontiac Solstice roadster is built, but GoAuto also understands the Torana could have been modified heavily enough to take on a whole new GM platform name of its own.

Continued next page

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Torana is reborn

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One source suggests this new name could be Beta.

"Torana TT36 represents a revolution in concept car design at Holden. We've unveiled several examples of our design flexibility and build capability in recent years but this car is exceptional for yet another reason," Mr Mooney said.

"All recent showcars have been based on our Commodore V-car platform. Torana TT36, on the other hand, shares many basic structural elements with the latest GM sports concepts and much of its chassis componentry is sourced directly from GM.

"It is the first Holden showcar to merge Australian design and engineering expertise with GM technical resources. Quite simply, for us it is a 'game changer' in automotive design and production."

GM product supremo Bob Lutz is on record as saying a global market of 120,000 vehicles would need to be found to make Torana manufacture viable – a production volume Holden, which already produces 180,000 Commodore-based vehicles annually, is not in a position to meet.

But if a large section of Torana's potential market was found in Asian markets closer to Australia than the Wilmington, Delaware plant that currently produces all Kappa architecture-based GM vehicles, production of Torana by Holden in a dedicated Australian factory could prove a reality.

At the very least, Holden stands to gain lucrative royalties from its intellectual design property if Torana is produced offshore.

Completed only last weekend, construction of the Torana TT36 showcar began just five months ago following initial work by former Holden design director Mike Simcoe, who passed the baton to his successor Tony Stolfo, under whose leadership UK youngster Ewan Kingsbury finished the project.

Said to "showcase bold directional design themes", the four-seater hatch



features a minimalist black-and-white leather interior, panoramic glass sunroof extending from the steeply raked windscreen to the hatch and 20-inch, 10-spoke alloys.

"It's very performance-driven in terms of the size of the apertures, the air intakes and grille," said Mr Stolfo.

"The fenders and quarter panels are pumped to accentuate width and stance.

"It also displays some of the key proportions we'll see in future cars generally: front wheels forward, minimal overhang, high belt lines and a high deck. All these elements create strength and purpose and deliver expressive contemporary styling.

"The hatch style gives us a very fast line running over the top, and we've given it strong directional lines. In terms of overall design intent, it's far more sophisticated sports machine than street machine.

"And because it's a vehicle which delivers a really large interior compartment in relation to its exterior size, it shows off our packaging skills, which are a traditional Holden strength."

The original Torana was built locally between 1974 and 1979 and last conquered Bathurst in V8 A9X guise some 25 years ago.



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Freak of nature

Ford will push the Aussie ute to new limits with 550Nm of sheer grunt



By MARTON PETTENDY



FIRST it was the Typhoon. Now Ford Performance Vehicles has announced production of a second freak of nature – the turbocharged F6 Tornado hyper-ute.

The 270kW/550Nm Tornado, which will become FPV's new entry level model when it goes on sale in January at \$51,950, was heralded at today's Australian International Motor Show opening, where the Blue Oval will focus its limelight on Ford's GT supercar, a Fiesta ST show car and a new Courier V6.

Also debuting in Sydney is the production F6 Typhoon sedan, FPV's MkII range, the MkII BA Falcon range and a Focus Zetec R variant.

F6 Tornado will represent the second turbo model in FPV's line-up and, as the workhorse sibling to the F6 Typhoon sedan, is set to push the Aussie ute concept to new limits by offering an unrivalled 550Nm of torque from just 2000rpm.

While the force-fed engine's torque peak outgrunts the best on offer from HSV as well as FPV's own V8 GT sedan and Pursuit ute models, like Typhoon the Tornado will produce a more restrained 270kW of maximum power at 5250rpm.

Powered by the same F6 270 turbo engine as Typhoon, Tornado's 4.0-litre DOHC six features a 50 per cent larger 12-core intercooler, dual-entry ram-air box, heavy-duty conrods, beefier valve springs and an FPV oil cooler.

It will be available exclusively with the FPV-

specific close-ratio Tremec T56 six-speed manual transmission with 3.73:1 final drive ratio (GTs run a taller 3.46:1 ratio) and AP Racing twin-plate clutch.

"The FPV F6 Tornado adds an exciting new dimension to the burgeoning ute culture and will be a car that will literally blow our customers away with its performance, handling and value for money," said FPV managing director David Flint.

Like F6 Typhoon, Tornado will come with FPV Performance brakes comprising twin-grooved 325mm front and 303mm rear rotors with blue twin-piston front and single-piston rear callipers, or optional four-piston Brembo brakes with cross-drilled and ventilated 355mm front and 330mm rear rotors.

Similarly, Tornado will sport 18 x 8.0-inch double five-spoke alloys, FPV front bumper, mesh grille with F6 badge, FPV sports seats with Technic fabric and FPV logos, and FPV's trademark dash-mounted starter.

Naturally, standard kit will include air-conditioning, power windows, soft tonneau and 100-watt, six-CD Prestige Sound, with both a lockable winged hard tonneau and alloy sports bar optional.

Unlike Tornado, Typhoon will be at Darling Harbour in the metal, and orders are currently being taken prior to production in mid-October.

Pricing is set at \$58,950.

Alongside F6 Typhoon is a revised MkII FPV line-up comprising a Tremec T56 six-speed manual with Shift Alert across the range, plus internal, external

and equipment upgrades.

Ford's Sports Sequential Shift four-speed auto becomes a no-cost option on GT and Pursuit, with pricing increasing \$350 in most cases and the base GT manual price rising \$500.

FPV MkII pricing sees GT now pegged at \$61,350 in either manual or auto guise, GT-P priced at \$70,200 for either version and both auto and manual Pursuit variants set at \$53,340.

Other FPV MkII changes include revised suspension settings for sedans (14 per cent firmer spring up front, 10 per cent at rear), unique new 19-inch alloy wheels for GT-P, a standard soft tonneau and optional stripe package for Pursuit and revised colour options and a new-look optional FPV exterior stripe package with Boss 290 hood decal.

New twin-pod Sports Instrument gauges, positioned on top of the Interior Command Centre toward the driver, include oil pressure and oil temp gauges on GTs, plus a turbo boost gauge for F6s.

MkII FPV sedans receive an upgraded ICC with large TFT colour screen, dual-zone air-conditioning and Premium Sound system as standard, while all FPVs get BAII's auto headlights and illuminated window switches.

Also on display in Sydney will be the PH Courier V6 due on sale here in 2005 in both 4x2 and 4x4 versions and featuring a class-leading 154kW/323Nm 4.0-litre V6 and optional five-speed auto on Crew Cab models.

As well as the 410kW/678Nm supercharged 5.4-litre V8-powered Ford GT, gauging public response for its potential release in Sydney is the 110kW 2.0-litre Fiesta ST show car, along with the new Focus Zetec R variant.

A five-door manual or auto hatch, Focus Zetec R comprises 17-inch alloys, unique front/rear bumpers and side skirts, unique large rear spoiler, alloy pedals, leather gearknob, scuff plates, Zetec R mats and 'R' decals, offering \$4,200 of extra value for no extra cost.



FPV GT



Magna's last stand



By MARTON PETTENDY

MITSUBISHI hopes its last ever Magna will go out with a bang following the release of an updated TW Magna and KW Verada – led by a new GTVi AWD variant – at this week's Australian motor show.

Due for replacement in as little as six months, the controversially styled and slow-selling TL/KL Magna/Verada range will make way for an all-new sedan in the first half of next year, based on Mitsu's front-wheel drive PS platform that also underpins the US Galant – a name the Magna's replacement is likely to adopt.

From mid-October, however, Mitsubishi Oz will attempt to extract maximum leverage from a revised TW/KW Magna/Verada range that, strangely, will be badged as a Series II. Less confusing is the extra value Magna now offers via unchanged pricing.

In the absence of the funky CZ2 concept car, which was damaged on arrival in Australia, the star of Mitsu's show is the new KW Verada GTVi AWD sedan variant, a combination of the former Verada



Verada GTVi AWD

GTVi and Verada AWD models.

Subtle styling and paint changes across the realigned TW/KW range also aim to give the swansong Magna/Verada better value for money.

Continuing the rationalisation of the Magna range, which began with the discontinuation of VR variants in July, the Verada GTVi AWD 'QuadTec' variant joins the range in place of the front-drive Verada GTVi and Verada AWD models.

While the KW Verada range now reads Ei, GTVi AWD and Xi, the Ei's extra kit comes without change to the current price and the new GTVi AWD variant arrives at the same \$46,990 pricetag of the front-drive KL Verada GTVi. Similarly, despite the updates, TW Magna pricing remains unchanged.

The mid-spec Magna LS sedan (but not wagon) disappears, leaving the TW Magna range with ES sedan and wagon, LS wagon, LS AWD sedan, VR wagon, VR-X sedan and VR-X AWD sedan.

All Verada variants now carry larger, more distinctive front and rear bumpers to further differentiate them from Magna.

There are new 10-spoke and multi-spoke 16 x 6.0-inch alloys on both the Ei and Xi models respectively. GTVi AWD gets new seven-spoke 16 x 7.0-inch alloys.

In line with other AWDs, the new GTVi AWD variant gets the same specification as Verada Ei, except for a 159kW V6, larger ventilated brake discs all round with twin-piston callipers up front. Of course, GTVi AWD also gains 'AWD QuadTec' badging on its bootlid and 'AWD' rear door badges, along with all variants' 'Series II' badges.

Completing the exterior look is an "argent with bright border" grille and sportier, darkened taillights and foglights (instead of bright for other Veradas), while inside the GTVi AWD there's a full black dash, black carpet and black embossed leather-wrapped steering wheel.

Seats and door trims are black leather with perforated inserts and the armrest console lid is finished in stitched black leather. The floor console, HVAC panel and power window switch panels feature a mid-grey metallic look-finish.

Further down the range, the entry level Magna ES and LS wagon receive body-coloured headlight bezels to tone down their Olivier Boulay-designed front end, while LS also adds a new seat trim.

With the front-drive LS sedan deleted from the range, Magna AWD becomes LS AWD and also receives body coloured headlight bezels, new trim materials and sew pattern, 16 x 6.0 sparkling silver alloys, two extra speakers (now eight), colour-keyed protective mouldings and wing mirrors, plus AWD badging changes.

Records tumble in buying frenzy

THE Australian automotive sector has broken through the 700,000 sales mark for the first three quarters of 2004, after more than 80,000 new vehicles were sold last month.

According to VFACTS figures released

VFACTS wrap

yesterday, a record-breaking 710,247 vehicles were sold in the nine months ending September 30 – a five per cent (or 33,559 unit) increase on last year's benchmark.

FULL REPORT: [CLICK HERE](#)

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HSV *torques* it up

By BRUCE NEWTON

THE Aussie V8 performance car war steps up another level with the unveiling of the 6.0-litre HSV Z Series range at the Australian International Motor Show in Sydney today.

Armed with fundamentally the same LS2 pushrod engine as the C6 Corvette and Aussie-built Pontiac GTO in the US, the Z Series – as well as GTO Coupe and WL Grange – comes standard with 297kW at 6000rpm on the ECE rating, or 305kW DIN.

Why the differentiation? Because DIN is the way that Ford measures power, which means by that scale the HSVs are now 15kW ahead of their FPV V8 rivals – the GT, GT-P and Pursuit Ute.

HSV has now also passed FPV on torque, producing 530Nm at 4400rpm compared to the 5.4-litre DOHC 'Boss 290' which produces 520Nm at 4500rpm.

HSV has not only given its greatest rival a new target, but also set itself the poser of just what to do with its own traditional flagship, the GTS, which will have to bunk up in power again from the standard models.

As a consequence, the reappearance of GTS is no guarantee before the arrival of the all-new VE Commodore-based HSVs in the first half of 2006.

That's also when Holden is expected to step up to its version of the LS2, trading in the Gen III version of GM's legendary small block, which has been available here since 1999, for the Gen IV.

It should be noted that LS1 has not disappeared entirely, with the limited edition Coupe 4, the all-wheel drive Avalanche XUV crew-cab and Avalanche SUV sticking with the 270kW version until VE time.

Confusingly, the VZ Monaro's engine is now called "LS1 Plus" although it produces 260kW. Sheesh, marketing!

HSV's upgrade from the 285kW/510Nm 5.7-litre LS1 took two years, cost \$5 million and involved 26 test cars and 22 engineers. It is unquestionably the company's biggest ever development program.



PRICING:

	New	Old
Maloo	\$54,250	\$53,500
Maloo R8	\$61,450	\$60,700
ClubSport	\$61,850	\$61,100
ClubSport R8	\$70,990	\$70,440
Senator	\$71,990	\$75,635
GTO	\$78,690	\$77,690 (m)
Grange	\$89,750	\$87,250

* All prices manual and automatic

As much as 6.0 litres and 297kW peak power are the headline grabbers, HSV insists the real improvement is LS2's increased bore, raised compression ratio, larger throttle body diameter and myriad other detail changes delivering a wider torque spread.

In fact, no less than 87 per cent of peak torque (463Nm) kicks in from 1600rpm and the output never drops below that figure until after 6000rpm.

The returns in terms of performance figures is stunning. The key 0-100km/h acceleration time in six-speed manual form drops from 5.4 to 5.2 seconds, while as a four-speed auto it's actually quicker at 5.1 seconds, down from 5.6 seconds.

The 4L65E auto is also quicker across the standing 400 metres, dropping from 13.7 seconds to 13.3 seconds, while the manual stays at 13.5 seconds.

Top speed for the auto sedan jumps from 258km/h to 274km/h.

Continued next page

THE RANGE:

Z SERIES comprises ClubSport, ClubSport R8, Maloo, Maloo R8 and Senator. The GTO Coupe, Grange and all-wheel drive Coupe 4, Avalanche and Avalanche SUV complete the HSV line-up.

Gone for now are the Senator Signature and the GTS sedan and Coupe.

The dropping of the Signature and the introduction of HSV's Luxury Performance stream is intended to focus potential buyer interest on the Senator, which has been bulked up in equipment and re-priced to make it a more obvious choice for ClubSport graduates who don't want to go to the more focussed option of the R8, or take the stretch to the long wheelbase luxury of the Statesman-based Grange.

To achieve that, Senator is now priced at \$71,990, just \$1000 more than the R8 and down from \$75,635. Significant additions to an already long equipment list (apart from the changes already detailed) include rear park assist and eight-way power front seats. HSV is forecasting a sales rise from 250 Senators in 2004 to 500 in 2005 as a result.

The other updated models rise in price by a minimum \$550 (R8) to a maximum \$2500 (Grange) and get detail equipment additions like floor mats and seat back pockets.

Overall, HSV is forecasting sales to rise from an anticipated record 4020 in 2004 to 4300 in 2005. The aim is 5000 sales by 2005.





HSV is all torque

Continued from previous page

The manual goes from 260km/h to 270km/h. The Maloo is also now rated at 270km/h, but the GTO Coupe tops all of them with a 284km/h top speed.

And why have there been more appreciable gains for the LS2 in auto form? Fundamentally, HSV says, it comes down to the torque improvements, a 10 per cent higher stall torque converter and a lower differential ratio.

There's some other impressive figures that are claimed for the engine, like a seven per cent fuel economy improvement, four per cent weight reduction and Euro III emissions certification, which is enforced in Australia from January 1, 2006.

While the core LS2 engine is fundamentally that used in the C6 and GTO, albeit with some ECU recalibration, its installation in right-hand drive required the design of a new wiring loom – no easy task in this era of CAN-BUS technology – and the adaptation of various ancillaries from one side of the engine to the other.

Of course, in V8-mad Australia the engine story is king, but that wouldn't be doing justice to the rest of the program, which meant significant changes right through the drivetrain and mechanical package.

There's an updated Tremec T56 manual gearbox called the M12 with shorter ratios that's used not only in US models but in the VZ Monaro as well.

Mated to a taller final drive (the auto and manual are now matched on 3.46:1), the overall effect is slightly shorter gearing, aiding acceleration.

A heavier duty clutch borrowed from the C6 goes



Senator

with the gearbox.

The Maloo has also had specific work, the upgrade in power/torque prompting HSV to engineer the installation of the full blown control link independent rear suspension, which in turn allows the fitment of traction control for the first time.

There are some roll-ons from the VZ Commodore program, like a new power steering pump and electronic throttle control, which allows the use of the far more sophisticated Bosch 8 ABS and traction control system. No sign of stability control as yet though, which is the same story as the VZ Commodore V8s.

There isn't much to tell about suspension and brakes, the highlight being the update of the Performance braking system with more rigid C6-type twin-piston front callipers for a higher clamping force and increased brake pedal feel.

There is also an impressive new AP Racing Six-Piston Brake system available as an option on the R8 models.

For drive impressions, go to www.goauto.com.au from this afternoon

STYLING:

AS forecast previously, HSV's design director Julian Quincey has used the Z Series update as an opportunity to start splitting the line-up into two streams – Sports Performance and Luxury Performance.

Vehicles in the performance category include Maloo, Maloo R8, ClubSport, ClubSport R8 and GTO Coupe. Luxury models are the Senator, Coupe 4 and Grange. The two Avalanches hover outside the grouping, remaining fundamentally unchanged.

Both sports and luxury streams get new design 19-inch alloy wheels and Pirelli P Zero 245/35 ZR19 tyres as standard, as well as HSV's version of the fender vents that are also seen on Commodore SS.

The HSV performance variants get an aggressive twin nostril fascia, more overt spoilers and intakes than the luxury models, and more open alloy wheel designs to expose the brake callipers and discs.

The GTO Coupe picks up the bonnet scoops from the Holden Monaro, but misses out on the new performance fascia for cost reasons.

The Luxury models, while still intended to be aggressive, have been softened with a single-piece grille with HSV badge front and centre, chrome trim and more complex wheel designs. The look is familiar because it was previewed somewhat by the Coupe 4.

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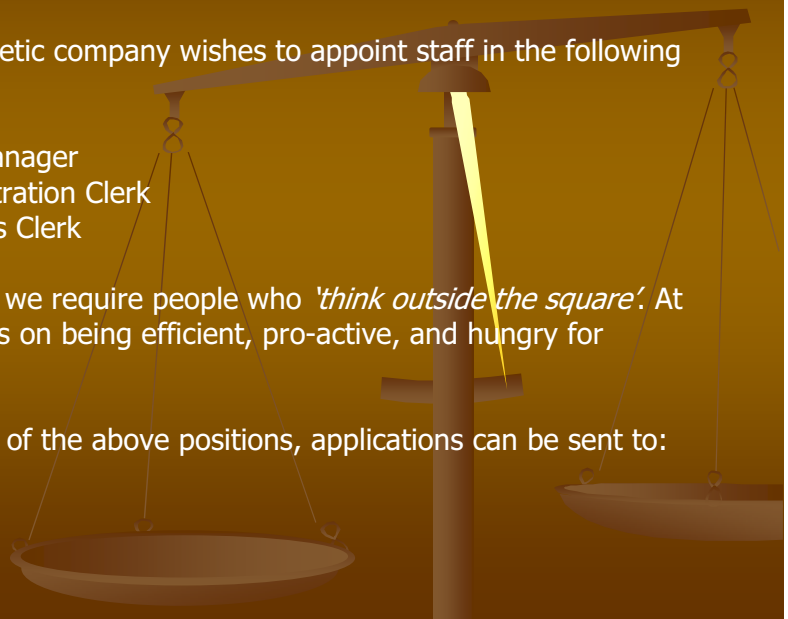
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Disco dynamite



Land Rover's third generation Discovery sets the benchmark in the SUV market

By MARTON PETTENDY

FORD has a lot riding on Land Rover, which in turn has plenty riding on the third generation Discovery – the fortunes of which depend significantly on Australians.

Once a stronghold for Discovery sales, Australia is home to more than 40,000 Discoverys, making it the world's third largest Disco market and the seventh largest for the famed British off-road brand.

But despite a redesigned Series II Disco in 1998 and a subsequent facelift in late 2002, a raft of accomplished SUV newcomers – most notably Toyota's Prado – have seen Disco fall out of favour.

Although it still represents two-thirds of Land Rover's sales locally, with just 1388 sold so far this year Discovery remains a long way behind its best year of 4658 sales in 1997.

Enter Discovery 3, the first of a raft of new Land Rovers to be produced under Ford control.

Due to be launched Down Under in April next year, Discovery 3 builds on the model's unique mix of off-road ability, seating for seven and either

turbo-diesel or V8 grunt at a sensible price that has attracted a strong following in Australia over 15 years since the 1989 original.

Throw in a new Integrated Body-Frame platform, new V6 diesel and V8 petrol engines, air suspension and clever new adaptive chassis technology in a clean, functional and instantly recognisably new body, and it's not surprising that Land Rover Australia says Disco 3 is perfectly suited to Australia.

The local arm expects 2400 sales in the remainder of 2005 and 3000 Disco sales annually thereafter.

This will be no mean feat in an SUV market saturated by the likes of Ford's cut-price Territory, Toyota's Kluger and Mitsubishi's Pajero on one end, and luxury entrants at the other such as BMW's X5, Mercedes-Benz M-class, Audi Allroad, Porsche Cayenne, VW Touareg, Volvo XC90, Honda MDX and Lexus RX330.

But after extensive testing over varied terrain at the international launch in northern Scotland, it seems Disco 3 is Land Rover's best shot yet at SUV-crazy Aussies, who have always had a soft spot for Discovery.

Indeed, if expected pricing of between \$56,000

and \$91,000 – representing only an incremental price increase over the current Discovery (excluding the basic \$49,990 run-out version) – proves accurate, perhaps it's the much more expensive, BMW-developed Range Rover that should fear the new Disco most.

Interestingly, Land Rover admits the larger, vastly less expensive monocoque-on-ladder-chassis Discovery offers a wider breadth of ability than the Range Rover flagship, which it says will always appeal to a different buyer.

But while it's true Disco 3 trades luxury for functionality, a 400km-plus loop over the greasy, varied roads of northern Scotland revealed the new Discovery delivers ride quality, steering performance and body control on par with the top-shelf Range Rover.

The range is expected to open under the luxury tax threshold at around \$57,000 for the entry level Discovery S, powered by a Ford-sourced 4.0-litre petrol V6 producing 160kW at 4500rpm (13 per cent more than the outgoing 4.0-litre V8) and 360Nm of torque at 3000rpm.

Continued next page



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Disco dynamite

Continued from previous page

The 4.0 V6 will be an auto-only variant – as with all new Discoverys – meaning an adaptive six-speed ZF unit badged 6HP26 and featuring Command Shift semi-manual mode.

Next up, still under \$60,000, will be the Discovery S TDV6, featuring a new 2.7-litre turbo-diesel co-developed with Peugeot that also powers Jaguar's S-Type (in which it features twin turbochargers) and the 407 sedan in some markets. Also numbering 24 valves, the oil-burning V6 produces 140kW at 4000rpm and a V8-beating 445kW at just 1900rpm.

TDV6 Discos will also be available with an Aisin six-speed manual transmission similar to that found in some VZ Commodores, as a no-cost option, and together with the diesel auto is expected to comprise 50 per cent of Australian Disco 3 sales.

The most powerful Discovery S will be motivated by Jaguar's new 4.4-litre 32-valve V8, which by 2006 will replace the similar capacity BMW V8 that powers Range Rover. Displacing an under-square bore like the TDV6, the new AJV8 delivers 220kW at 5500rpm and 427Nm at 4000rpm.

Expect to pay an extra \$9000 to step up to the mid-spec, air-sprung SE version of each engine variant, meaning the base Discovery S sticks with traditional steel springs and will not be available with the optional third row of seats and its extra associated airbags.

Similarly, S variants eschew leather trim but still score items like dual-zone climate control and a six-speaker 4x17-watt CD sound system, although SE Discos get nine-speaker, six-CD 6x50-watt Harmon Kardon audio.

The premium HSE equipment level will continue and also comprises three engine options. The Discovery HSE V8 tops out the range at a little over \$90,000 for extras like satellite navigation, adaptive Xenon headlights and a 14-speaker Logic 7.1 seven-channel digital surround sound system with MP3 player.

Available from SE level upwards is Discovery 3's drawcard, Terrain Response, which is part of the Range Rover-sourced air suspension system.



Discovery interior includes 17.5 litres of cupholder volume!

Comprising the choice of five modes via a central rotary dial (distilled from 50 surface "footprints" researched worldwide), Terrain Response adjusts ride height, differential locks, traction control, hill descent control, throttle response and transmission performance to ensure the correct set-up and maximum performance over a variety of surfaces. An electronic rear diff called E-Diff is also available.

Longer (4835mm), wider (1915mm) and taller (1887mm) than before, Discovery 3 has a car-like monocoque body that wraps around a steel ladder chassis like that of traditional off-roaders.

Dubbed Integrated Body-Frame, it's a similar construction to that of Pathfinder and Explorer and affords a 380mm longer wheelbase (2885mm), wider front and rear wheel tracks (1605/1612mm), a big 240mm of ground clearance (with air suspension) and 255/330mm of front/rear wheel articulation.

Wading depth increases to a Land Rover best of 700mm, there's 3.3 turns of steering lock and the turning circle reduces to a tight 11.45 metres, towing capacity rises to a hefty 3500kg and the approach, departure and ramp-over angles are 37.2, 28.1 and 27.9 degrees respectively.

Land Rover claims a descent and ascent angle capability of 45 degrees, plus the ability to traverse side slopes of up to 35 degrees.

Land Rover claims its 0-100km/h targets were met, with the V8 completing the sprint in 8.5 seconds but the TDV6 taking considerably longer at 12.8 seconds.

While maximum interior loadspace increases to a huge 2558 litres (via two metres of flat floor and excluding four gloveboxes and 17.5 litres of cupholder volume!), a downside of the increased size is a drag co-efficient of just 0.41Cd.

And, although Land Rover says it hit all its weight and fuel consumption targets, kerb weights range from 2486kg for the 4.0 V6 S to a bulky 2718kg for the 2.7 V6 HSE. The current Discovery weighs 2075kg, while X5 weighs 2200kg and even LandCruiser V8 is lighter at 2588kg.

FULL REPORT: [CLICK HERE](#)



DRIVE IMPRESSIONS:

The Gen III Disco is uncompromising in its quest to deliver simple solutions to motoring's problems

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PAY PLAN GUIDE

Submissions by Friday 12th November 2004

Pay Plan Guide is a unique management tool for dealers to provide assistance in reviewing pay structures of dealership staff.

It is a survey that is compiled using a comprehensive and confidential database containing yours, and other dealership's salary and commission structure data.

The survey covers 27 key positions. Dealerships are grouped by region and state and we further drill down into each department and classify them as "large" or "small"

To be a part of the December 2004 Pay Plan Guide and have the opportunity to compare your dealership's pay structures with like dealers, please contact Jacquie Gerig on 02 93720831 or click on the link below for a subscription form and brochure.

www.horwath.com.au/expertise/motor/services_payplan.asp

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Storm is brewing

Discovery 3 is just the first of several new Land Rovers over the next four years

By MARTON PETTENDY

DISCOVERY 3 may be only the ninth new Land Rover in the company's 55-year history, but it's also the first of five new products to spring from the famous British brand in five years.

Having delivered its third generation Discovery to European markets last month (due on sale here in April following its Australian debut at the Sydney motor show this week), Land Rover's new T5 Integrated Body-Frame platform will soon underpin next generation versions of the entire range.

Next cab off the Land Rover rank will be a new model aimed directly at BMW's X5 and the Porsche Cayenne, priced between Discovery and Range Rover but sized between Freelander and Rangie, which is now dwarfed by the new Disco.

Dubbed Range Stormer when it was unveiled at this year's Detroit motor show, the new L320-codenamed model is likely to retain its subsequent Range Rover Sport moniker and will be revealed in full (five-door) production trim at January's Detroit show.

Expect the high-po SUV newcomer on sale here in the second half of 2005 following its Oz premiere at next year's Melbourne motor show, while a two-door Range Rover Sport is expected to follow the five-door later on.

Also due to appear late next year, in time for the 2006 model year, is a facelifted Range Rover, which will also feature Terrain Response from Discovery 3 and Range Rover Sport, along with the sports Rangie's top-shelf 4.4-litre supercharged V8.

Expect Terrain Response to be further developed for Range Rover and its more compact Sport stablemate, via additions such as variable anti-roll bar technology like BMW's Dynamic Drive and adjustable tyre pressures.

The Rangie facelift will follow a MY2005 update to be revealed this week in Sydney. The 2005 Rangie receives a new fibre optic wiring



system, upgraded DVD-based touch-screen interface from Disco 3, Bluetooth-compatible phone, Harman Kardon sound system and the VentureCam external video camera.

MY2005 Range Rover will appear in Sydney alongside a new HSE Freelander variant, which adds perforated leather trim, rear park distance control, side rub strips and 17-inch alloys.

Production of the new supercharged V8 starts in April, the same month Discovery 3 is due on sale here. Land Rover Australia hopes to maintain supply of the current Disco until then, despite strong demand for the current model at its \$49,990 runout pricing, and is already experiencing unprecedented pre-orders for the new Disco.

The third new Land Rover to sprout from Disco 3's T5 platform will be a redesigned Freelander compact SUV in 2006, with perhaps the most interesting new Land Rover to follow in late 2007 – a long-awaited redesign of the marque's signature Defender.

Currently undergoing hot debate at Land Rover HQ, the direction of the next Defender will be decided by Christmas this year, before its development "kick-off" under the Ford process in March 2005. Production is slated to begin in late 2007, with Australian sales due by early 2008.

Before then, strict new emissions regulations will force Land Rover to replace Defender's current engine with a 2.7-litre V6 from Mondeo two years before the end of its life. Increasingly stringent emissions and safety regulations notwithstanding, there are

some groups that would prefer Defender received no change at all.

Although the possibility of that remains a reality if a deal over lucrative spare parts supplies can be struck with a Turkish-based factory that currently produces Defender, it's likely the traditional hard-core Defender customer base will be out-voted

by a younger, larger group of potential buyers wanting a Jeep Wrangler-style urban SUV warrior.

"It comes down to the question: how many will we sell to this group, or to this group? But we also have to ensure Defender remains a true Land Rover," said Land Rover Australia managing director Steve Morten.

Based on a more compact version of Disco 3's T5

platform and as such unable to be produced in Defender's traditional three-door, five-door and utility bodystyles with different wheelbases, the next Defender is likely to become a five-door proposition only, although a soft-top version remains a possibility.

But Land Rover executives admit this route, which would spell the end of a trademark design that was born in 1949 and went on to make the brand famous, carries a certain level of risk.

Central to these decisions and the agreement to continue producing the current Defender are the British and Australian armies, which combined have a fleet of 20,000 Defenders.

Renewal of the Australian army's 4000-strong Defender fleet is part of a tender process that has received applications from Land Rover (Defender), Mercedes-Benz (G-wagon) and Unimog, among others.

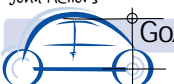


WHAT'S COMING:

- October 2004 – MY2005 Range Rover
- October 2004 – Freelander HSE variant
- Second half 2005 – Range Rover Sport
- Late 2005 – Range Rover facelift
- 2006 – Freelander redesign
- 2008 – Defender redesign
- 2009 – Range Rover redesign



Range Rover MY2005



Emotional rescue

Six new models over the next three years will send Suzuki in a new direction

By BYRON MATHIOUDAKIS

A KIA Carnival-caning seven-seat people-mover is among the key new products a resurgent Suzuki is rolling out between now and 2008.

Three sport utility vehicles including a Ford Territory-style "cross-over" – and a new small car and possibly a replacement for the 1990s Cappuccino convertible – are also expected to debut as Suzuki seeks to double its sales and alter its sagging image.

Suzuki revealed elements of its \$US1.5 billion future model strategy to GoAuto at last month's 2005 Swift launch at the Paris motor show.



People-mover and SUV concepts from Tokyo in 2003 point to forthcoming vehicles based on the all-new Swift (centre).

Double sales

SUZUKI Australia boss David Le Mottee wants to double sales from the expected 8000 units this year to 16,000 by the end of 2006. New product outlined above is central to this, but a greater concentration on the dealer network should also reap results. An increase in the number of dealerships is likely. Four or five new sites, in Melbourne, Sydney and possibly Perth, are on the cards. Currently the tally is 120 nationally. Aggressive marketing to a younger demographic using television is also a key strategy, which will begin with next February's Swift debut. Under 35-year-olds is the target audience. "If we can hook the younger buyers then everything will fall into place" is how Mr Le Mottee sees it. He expects to shift 5000 Swifts in 2005.

That car, a Toyota Echo rival featuring styling and engineering several notches above what people may expect from the Japanese economy brand, sits on a fresh platform that will underpin most of Suzuki's new model army.

This will include the forthcoming people-mover, which will be built off a stretched platform and allow seven occupants to be seated far more ably than the current Grand Vitara SUV-derived XL-7.

Speaking of the Grand Vitara, its replacement will eschew today's separate chassis construction for a monocoque platform that Suzuki says will be unique among the SUV throng.

This should liberate far more passenger and cargo space while greatly improving on-road performance and refinement compared to the 1998-vintage vehicle Suzuki sells at the moment.

The larger "cross-over" SUV, due out in 2007 but expected to be previewed in lightly disguised concept car form at the Detroit or Chicago motor show early next

year, will be Suzuki's largest vehicle in this class yet. It is expected to be offered in seven-seat as well as five-seat configurations.

At the other end of the SUV scale, a small city-based runabout is being developed with Italian car-maker and General Motors partner Fiat. That should arrive around the same time.

A new range of four-cylinders spanning 1.0-litre to 2.5-litre capacities are being developed, while the High-Feature V6 engine Holden manufactures in Melbourne will also be built by Suzuki in 3.6-litre format in Japan. Diesel engines are also figuring high in Suzuki's future, with an increase in the use of Fiat's acclaimed JTD direct-injection turbo-diesel engines.

Already available in European-bound Grand Vitara models, they are expected to debut in some versions of the forthcoming next generation SUVs.

On the fuel cell vehicle front, Suzuki is locked in with General Motors, developing a powerplant it expects to come to fruition as early as 2007 or 2008.

In the interim, it already markets a petrol-electric hybrid "Kei Car" in Japan (the sub-800cc segment Suzuki dominates with models like the Wagon R), although it sees the future of its hybrid technology in heavier SUVs.

Suzuki has promised that none of these vehicles are scheduled to appear as rebadged Chevrolets, Pontiacs, Holdens, Subarus, Daewoos or even Mazdas, as they have in the past. This has only served to undermine Suzuki's image, as it confuses customers and dilutes the brand's uniqueness.

Suzuki is also keen to rid itself of the dependable but dull image models like the current Vitara and Ignis light car have helped harvest.

"We want people to make an emotional connection with our cars," said Suzuki board member overseas marketing, Hiroataka Ono.

WHAT'S COMING

- 2006 – Grand Vitara replacement
- 2007 – Liana replacement
- 2007 – People Mover
- 2007 – "Cross-over"
- 2007 – "City" compact
- 2008 – Convertible

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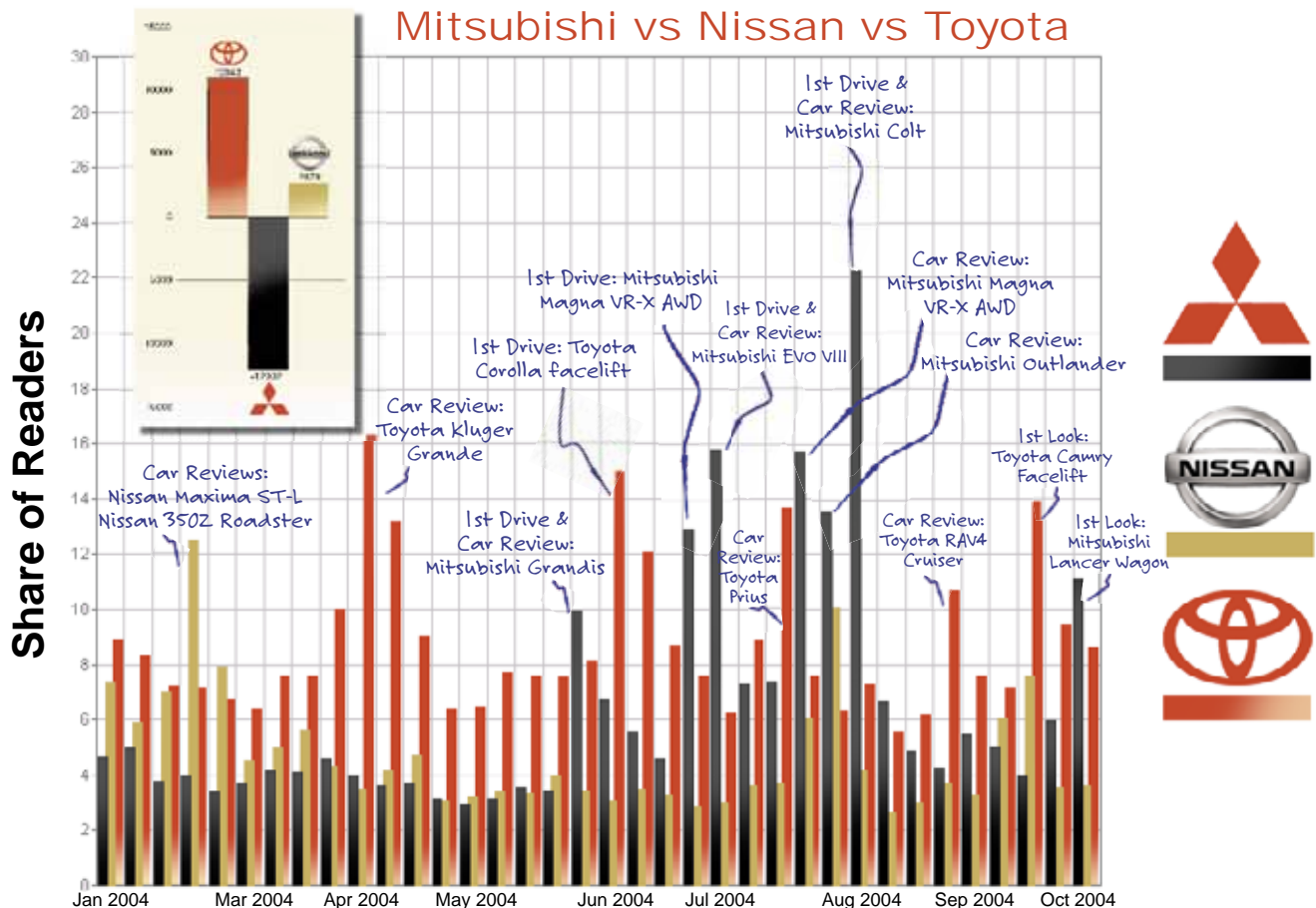
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Hope for Mitsubishi as interest lifts

GoAuto Trends: Jan 2004 to Oct 2004 - Mitsubishi vs Nissan vs Toyota



Looks like Toyota and Nissan have taken Mitsubishi sales in the year to August when compared to last year (inset). But reader interest for Mitsubishi is on the increase (above).

THE year 2004 is one that Mitsubishi Motors Australia would rather put behind it, with the resurrection of questions over its future in the wake of DaimlerChrysler's shafting of MMC on more funding.

This was reflected in interest in the company by readers of GoAuto Online in the first half of the year. Story requests in that period were about as flat as sales with requests for Mitsubishi new model stories and car reviews across the 13 sites

which host GoAuto Online barely registering four per cent.

But interest in the company's cars revived after the late May announcement that local production would continue and interest surged to 22 per cent in one week on the back of the publication of the first drive and car review of the new Colt.

Timely model launches since July mean that story requests for Mitsubishi by GoAuto Online readers have been more than a match for Nissan

and have overtaken Toyota interest in some weeks.

In fact, a run of new models including Grandis, Magna VR-X AWD, Lancer EVO VIII and Outlander has driven a surge of reader interest in the Adelaide-based car-maker.

The graph suggests that, as far as people researching new cars are concerned, Mitsubishi remains firmly on the agenda.

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Are you killing your dealers with kindness?

Car companies are expecting their dealers to deliver more and more customer benefits at a time when the business fundamentals of the average Australian dealership are in trouble and under attack.

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GoAuto Professional's John Mellor has developed a Boardroom Briefing for car companies which outlines short-term, medium-term and longer term strategies to improve the competitiveness of their retail networks in order to secure high-standard representation in a changing world.



For your Boardroom Briefing contact John Mellor at the GoAuto Newsroom
Ph: (03) 9598 6477 Mobile: 0425 701 006 Email: jmellor@mellor.net





Modern makeover

By TIM BRITTEN

NOT quite as dramatic as the change from MQ to GQ Patrol in 1988, but a visible makeover nonetheless, the 2005 version of Nissan's heavy-duty four-wheel drive will hopefully narrow the sales gap to the class-leading Toyota LandCruiser.

Nissan might be doing well with the Patrol this year, with a year-to-date improvement of close to 20 per cent on 2003 sales, but it still lags behind the LandCruiser, which currently outsells it at a ratio of almost 1.5 to one – even if the Toyota hasn't improved (like Nissan) on its 2003 performance.

The focus for the new-look Patrol is essentially refinement. Buyer surveys showed people thought the Patrol, which suited them very well in terms of utilitarian aspects, could be a little more modern, with a bit more luxury.

So although very little has been done mechanically, buyers will hopefully be attracted to the aggressive new Nissan 4WD family look, as well as the much more stylish and comfortable interior.

Although the claim is that only one body panel remains unchanged for 2005 – the roof – the only major external change is the fitment of bold over-fenders to give the Patrol a broader, more muscular look.

This is emphasised by a new, bluff-looking grille resplendent in chrome and



Patrol's stylish new interior.

employing the themes we'll see on both the next generation Pathfinder and the all-new, Honda MDX-challenging Murano that will arrive here together in late 2005. The bonnet and front and rear bumpers are new, while at the back there are larger tail-lights as well as a new licence plate surround.

But although the Patrol's new exterior is easy to spot, the biggest change is in the interior, where an all-new dash sweeps across the vehicle in a couple of graceful curves that almost bring to mind the new BMW 5 Series. There's a new presentation for the instruments, soft-touch vinyl on upper and lower dash areas and a new, higher centre console.

The seats have been redesigned for improved comfort and the options list runs to a couple of fold-out tables for back-seat passengers, as well as (standard on the top of the range Ti) satellite navigation with a Lexus RX330-style rearview camera. Patrol buyers will also benefit from improvements to sound-deadening that make the vehicle quieter on the road.

Mechanical changes are limited to the turbo-diesel ZD30 3.0-litre four-cylinder engine – the most popular choice in Patrols – which gets a 3.4 per cent improvement in power (up from 116 to 118kW) and a 7.3 per cent improvement in torque (from 354 to 380nM). The latter especially will be welcome.

FULL REPORT, PRICING, DRIVE IMPRESSIONS: [CLICK HERE](#)

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NEWS: Jaguar revival built around alloy style

THE revival of Ford-owned luxury brand Jaguar will be built around a dramatic modernisation of design and an expansion of aluminium body construction through the range.

So says Ford group's global product development boss, Richard Parry-Jones.

Speaking to Australian media at the Paris auto salon late last month, Mr Parry-Jones made it clear that the round of cost-cutting and restructuring just announced for Jaguar went only part way to solving the company's long-term issues.

Understandably, considering his role, he says it is new cars that will reinvigorate the famous British marque, including the much discussed F-Type roadster.

For full report, go to www.professional.goauto.com.au

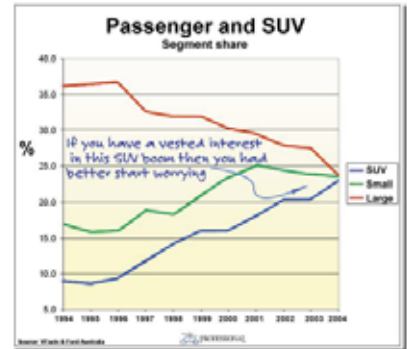
4WD shock: AAMI survey warns of strong negative attitudes

ONE of Australia's leading car insurance groups, AAMI, has revealed that almost half of Australian drivers think 4WDs do not belong in the city and 70 per cent thought that they were dangerous to other road users.

The insurer's survey of 1880 drivers reveals there is a very strong depth of feeling against what is the fastest growing vehicle segment in the Australian market.



GoAuto Professional has been warning industry players that this community back-lash cannot be ignored.



Full survey details, go to www.professional.goauto.com.au

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Hyundai Tiburon

HYUNDAI'S underrated Tiburon coupe has come under the scalpel with minor styling tweaks and the introduction of electronic stability control.

The remodelled headlights, bumpers and grille closely reflect those of the CCS Convertible Coupe concept from last year's Frankfurt motor show, although that car's folding roof mechanism won't make it until the next generation Tiburon touches down sometime in 2007.

Redesigned tail-lights, alloy wheels and small trim alterations inside complete the changes.

Australian customers will be able to buy the Tiburon update from early next year, ahead of a Sydney motor show unveiling this week.

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VW Touareg W12 Sport

VOLKSWAGEN has the BMW X5 4.8iS in its sights with the new Touareg W12 Sport. The super-swift SUV develops 331kW and 600Nm of torque from a 6.0-litre W12 engine engaged to a six-speed automatic. It also tips the scales at 2480-plus kilograms. Based on both manufacturers' figures, the W12 Sport hits 100km/h in 5.9 seconds on the way to its (restricted) 250km/h V-max, pipping its BMW nemesis by 0.2 seconds and 4km/h.



Opel Astra coupe

HOLDEN affiliate Opel has unveiled the production version of AH Astra three-door. Dubbed GTC (Gran Turismo Compact) and featuring far swoopier styling, the Astra three-door is 40mm longer, 32mm lower in height and stands 15mm closer to the ground compared to the five-door hatch. Reflecting the GTC's sporty coupe-styling theme, the two also share no body panels from the windscreen back, while all occupants sit 20mm lower.

Opel also unveiled a GTC prototype with a panorama windshield, a part-glass roof that extends the windscreen up to the B-pillar for a convertible-like experience. Due out in Europe in the second quarter of next year, both GTC models should make it locally by early 2006.

UP CLOSE on PERSONNEL

CORDES KICKS OFF

THE new boss of Mercedes-Benz cars

worldwide, Eckhard Cordes, took up his post last Friday and instantly sparked a fresh round of speculation as to who would replace Jurgen Schrempp as chief executive of DaimlerChrysler.

Chrysler boss Dieter Zetsche has been considered a front-runner for some time,

however auto pundits now believe Mr Cordes, 53, is best positioned to replace Mr Schrempp, who is expected to step down in 2008.

Mr Cordes, who replaced Jurgen Hubbert, will first need to lift profitability and improve vehicle quality at Mercedes – and has shown that he's got what it takes, having turned around DaimlerChrysler's commercial vehicle business over the past four years.

□ In other DaimlerChrysler news, the company has handed the group's corporate development chief Rudiger Grube full



**Eckhard
Cordes**

responsibility for all DCX business activities in China. Roman Fischer, the former Mercedes-Benz chief in Australia and now the CEO and president of DaimlerChrysler China, will remain in his present position in the new organisational structure, reporting directly to Dr Grube.

MINI MAN ON MOVE

THE national manager for Mini at BMW Group Australia, Shawn Ticehurst, has been appointed head of partnership marketing within the Mini international brand management team in Munich, effective January 2005.

Mr Ticehurst will oversee the team responsible for developing a sponsorship strategy for Mini, product placement, Mini Clubsport, John Cooper Works marketing, licensing co-operations and projects such as Mini XXL (the six-wheel, six-seat Mini limousine). BMW Group Australia is currently in the



**Shawn
Ticehurst**

recruitment process for Mr Ticehurst's replacement.

VW GOES FOR DOCTOR

GEORG Flandorfer has been appointed to the Volkswagen brand board of management, responsible for sales and marketing. Dr Flandorfer takes over the position previously held by Detlef Wittig, who has become chairman of the board of management of Skoda Auto in the Czech Republic.

In 2003 Dr Flandorfer, 57, was appointed general representative of Volkswagen AG with responsibility for the sales activities of all group brands in Germany. Before this, he had spent more than six years as a member of the board of management of Audi AG, with responsibility for marketing and sales. Dr Flandorfer reports directly to the chairman of the board of management of Volkswagen AG, Dr Bernd Pischetsrieder.



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GoAuto latest road test



Mercedes-Benz E320 Elegance

THE Mercedes-Benz E-class has ruled the roost among mid-size luxury cars virtually from its first appearance in the mid-1980s. The latest version moves on. As a refinement of a car already rated to be among the most refined on the market, it gives others a target to aim for, while providing owners with an experience unequalled just about anywhere. It's a showcase for plenty of new technology, including things like brake-by-wire, tail-light bulbs that last the life of the car, seats that adjust automatically to suit the mood of the moment and air-conditioning that allows everyone inside to have their own, individual micro climates. Many of these things are optional of course, but even without ticking the extras box, you will still be paying a lot more for your E-class than a similarly specified competitor. Once again, the badge comes at a price.

ROAD TEST: [CLICK HERE](#)



SMART PRICING

THE Smart Forfour five-door hatch, the largest vehicle to emerge from the Mercedes-owned micro-car brand, will be thrown into the heart of the cut-throat small-car segment when it goes on sale from \$23,900 later this month.

Starting well below the anticipated \$30,000 mark, the Forfour will be available in two "Pulse" models variants – an entry level 70kW 1.3-litre and an 80kW 1.5-litre version, the latter starting from \$25,900.

Standard equipment will include air-conditioning, CD stereo, remote central locking, alarm, stability control, four airbags, ABS brakes (with EBD and brake assist) and 15-inch alloy wheels.

The five-door hatch is the third Smart model to make it to these shores, following the Fortwo Coupe/Cabrio and the roadster.

Pricing has also been revised for the rest of the range, with the Coupe now starting from \$19,900, the Cabrio \$22,900 and the roadster \$34,900.

NEW KIT FOR COOPER S

MINI has announced it will introduce an updated 155kW (210hp) John Cooper Works tuning kit for its Cooper S later this year, which is claimed to propel the car to 100km/h in 6.6 seconds.

In-gear flexibility is also claimed to have improved (80-120km/h is 5.4sec), due largely to revised ratios

LAUNCH PAD

OCTOBER:

- Audi A6 sedan redesign
- BMW 118i hatch
- Ford BAII Falcon range update
- FPV F6 Typhoon sedan
- FPV GT range facelift
- Holden Astra hatch redesign
- HSV Z-Series range facelift
- Jaguar S-Type sedan facelift
- Kia Sportage SUV redesign
- Mini Cooper cabriolet
- Nissan Patrol SUV facelift
- Peugeot 407 sedan redesign
- Proton Gen.2 hatch redesign
- Renault Sport Megane hatch
- Smart ForFour five-door hatch

New model diary: [CLICK HERE](#)

on the standard six-speed manual gearbox. Kit pricing will remain around the current \$9600 mark.

RX330 UPGRADE

LEXUS Australia has upgraded its RX330 all-terrain wagon, adding adaptive cornering headlights (on both low and high beam) to the vehicle and revising specification to include 18-inch alloy wheels (up from 17-inch).

A new generation sat-nav system and a Bluetooth hands-free mobile phone system with steering-mounted controls are also now part of the Sports Luxury grade.

The RX330 Sport continues to retail from \$73,200, with the Luxury Sport model starting from \$82,100.

SANTA COMES EARLY

NOT content to let its all-new Tucson all-terrain wagon hog the limelight, Hyundai Motor Co Australia has introduced a wide-ranging upgrade to the Santa Fe.

Alterations to the larger SUV include revisions to non-sheetmetal areas such as the grille, bumpers, plastic side cladding and lights.

There's also a host of feature additions including a sunroof, side airbags, centre-rear three-point seatbelt, auto climate control for the air-conditioning system, a trip computer, digital compass readout, rear cupholders and leather trim on the steering wheel and gearshift.

There is now just one model available, priced from \$33,990.

CHARGER UNMASKED

DODGE has released the first official sketch (below) of its forthcoming Charger sedan, which is due for release in the US next year and is a strong candidate to come to Australia as part of the brand's return here from 2006 onwards.

The Charger will be unveiled in the metal at the Detroit auto show in January and be produced in Brampton, Ontario. But there is still no confirmation as to whether it will be built in right-hand drive.



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