

hire

JOURNAL OF THE HIRE INDUSTRY
Vol. 7 No. 6 April/May 1975

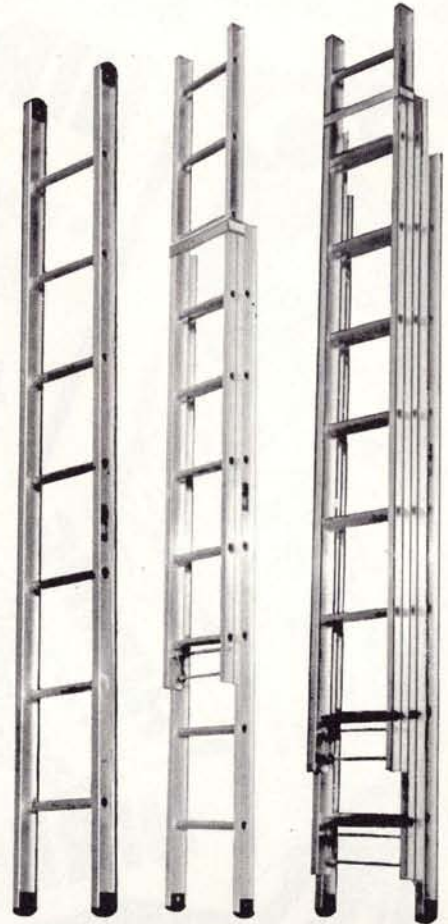
See page 7.

"The Great Yellow Pages War"

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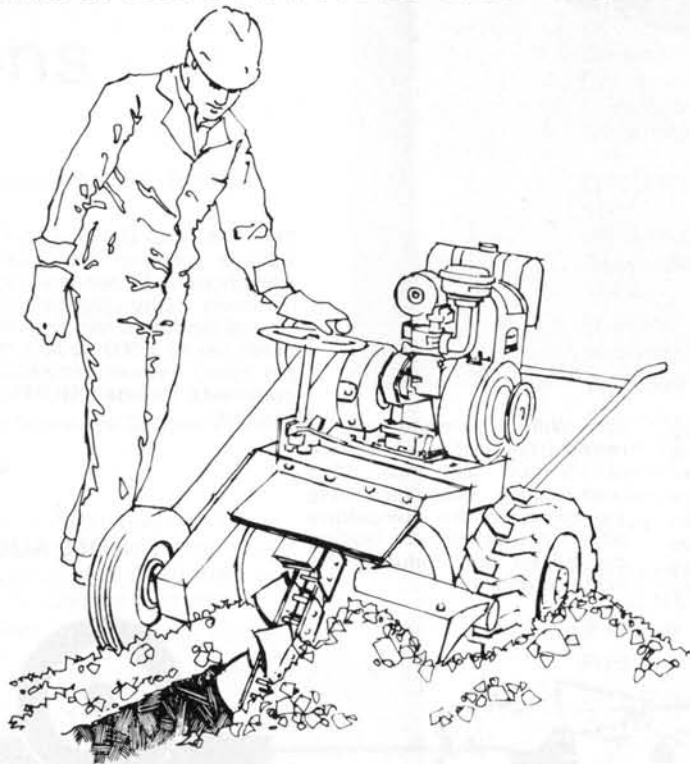
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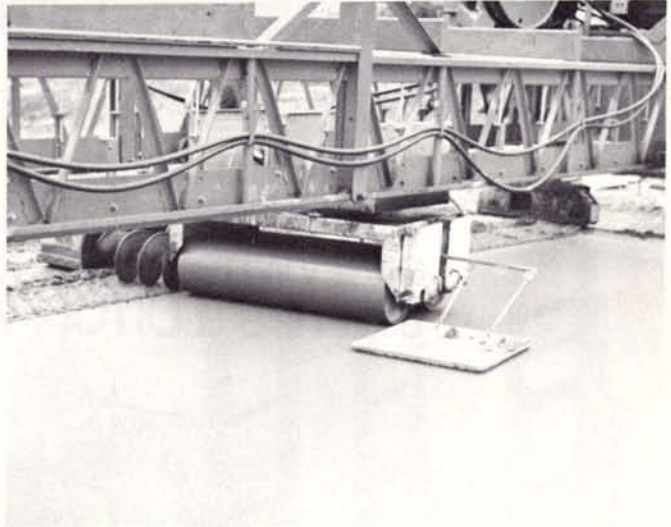
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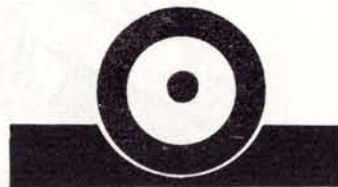
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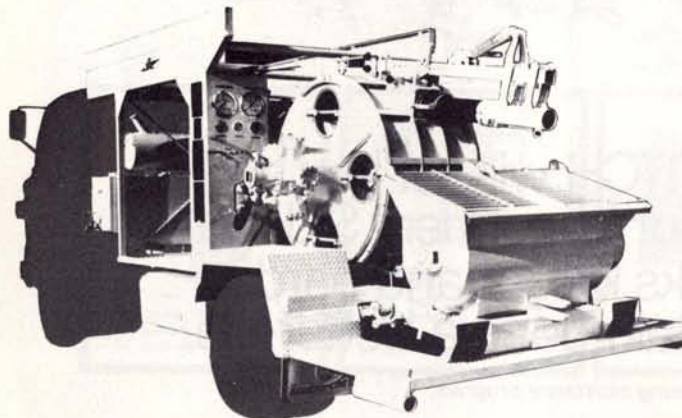
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HIRE official journal of the Australian hire industry and hire associations

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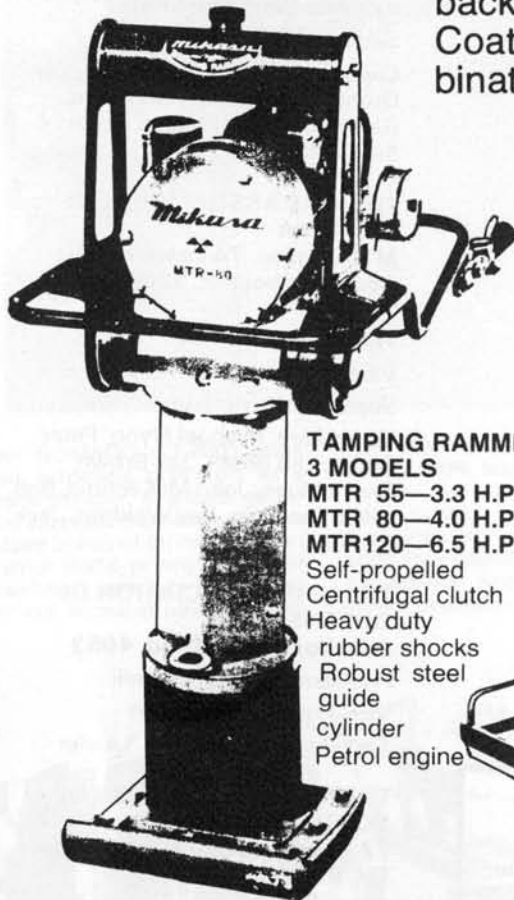
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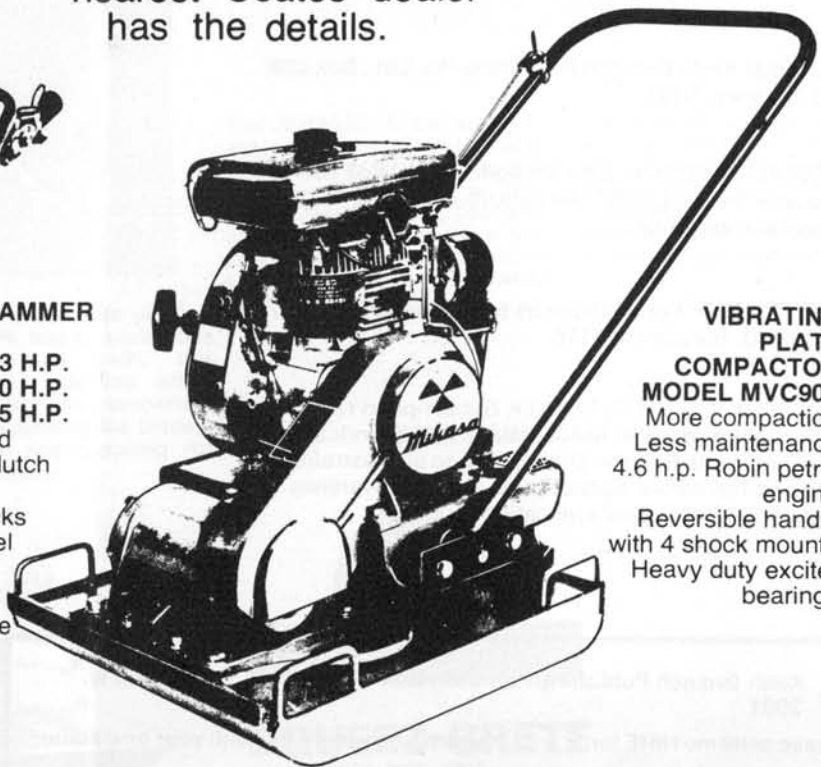
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president's message

"ASSOCIATION"

Combine for common purpose; organised body of persons; fellowship; intimacy of ideas; art of association (in all senses). The foregoing are just some definitions of "Association".



Mr. Ern Turner, new National President, Hire Association of Australia

editorial

HAIL HIS MAJESTY!

Although he doesn't wear ermine and a crown in his new role as President of the Hire Association of Australia, Mr. Ern Turner, the new National President, is the kind of person who could wear them comfortably with dignity.

He has served his profession for many years with honorable distinction, devotion and humanity.

When others have lost their heads he has always held his own. With quiet, comfortable dispassionate logic he has always managed to clearly identify the problems of the industry, and set about forming a consensus view. For these qualities, HIRE pays him the fullest tribute.

But, with many problems ahead, more than quiet compassion will be needed. The first quality this journal will expect to see in Mr. Turner is the courageous conviction to speak his mind when there is the need.

There is enough waffling done at Association meetings already without the President bogging himself down in the same morass.

This magazine also expects the President to have the courage to bang a few heads together occasionally. The Hire Industry

In order that an organised body of persons may combine for the common purpose of fellowship and intimacy of ideas with the purpose of being successful, another ingredient must be added; that necessary ingredient is participation.

Time and dedication of elected officers have started our State and National Associations rolling.

Add your weight and resolve that this year you will be a participator and join in with suggestions and ideas in your Association. Let 1975 be our year to really come alive!

Together with about thirty of our members at this year's American Rental Association Convention in Las Vegas, I received a fresh charge of impetus and ideas. For the latest ideas and best buys, come and see the exhibitors who will be displaying at our convention in Adelaide.

The organisers and myself look forward to seeing you in September.

today is made up of a huge cross-section of people: happy amateurs, professional hard-hats, small-minded cynics, and an occasional self-sacrificing idealist. If the President had to wait until they all reached agreement on an issue he would have to wait until the Second Coming.

So we don't expect wonders. We don't even expect the right decisions all the time. But we do expect action.

What kind of action?

Actions that will build the industry, make it better educated, and make it more profitable. Surely these are the main yardsticks that must be used. Any item that falls outside these main categories should be seriously questioned.

The growth rate of the hire industry overall is so dynamic that, apart from building slumps, the natural growth rate should be a minimum of 25%. This takes a \$100 million industry in 1975 to a \$1,000 million industry by 1986.

So, Mr. President, your strong leadership will be imperative. And, just to surprise you, we feel the job should receive some proper payment. Professionals deserve it.



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H7-5-19A

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Firing from the right, with increased Yellow Page rates, and extra books, the Postmaster General's Department, via Directories of Australia and Edward H. O'Brien Pty. Ltd.

Firing from the left, with cutbacks in bookings, and a move towards restricting further proliferation of Yellow Pages headings, the hire industry of Australia.



THE GREAT



WAR



Early this year, following the announcements that the metropolitan Yellow Pages books for Sydney and Melbourne were to be split into a number of sections, several hire contractors began to calculate their advertising budgets. To their dismay, they found that rates had risen about 30% in one year alone for the Yellow Pages.

And so began the Great Yellow Pages War. The battle is still being fought on several fronts, but the only clear winner appears to be the Postmaster-General's Department.

According to reliable Government sources, the purpose of splitting the major metropolitan "Buying Guides" into four sections in Sydney and three in Melbourne was to save huge amounts on paper costs, which have also risen astronomically in recent years.

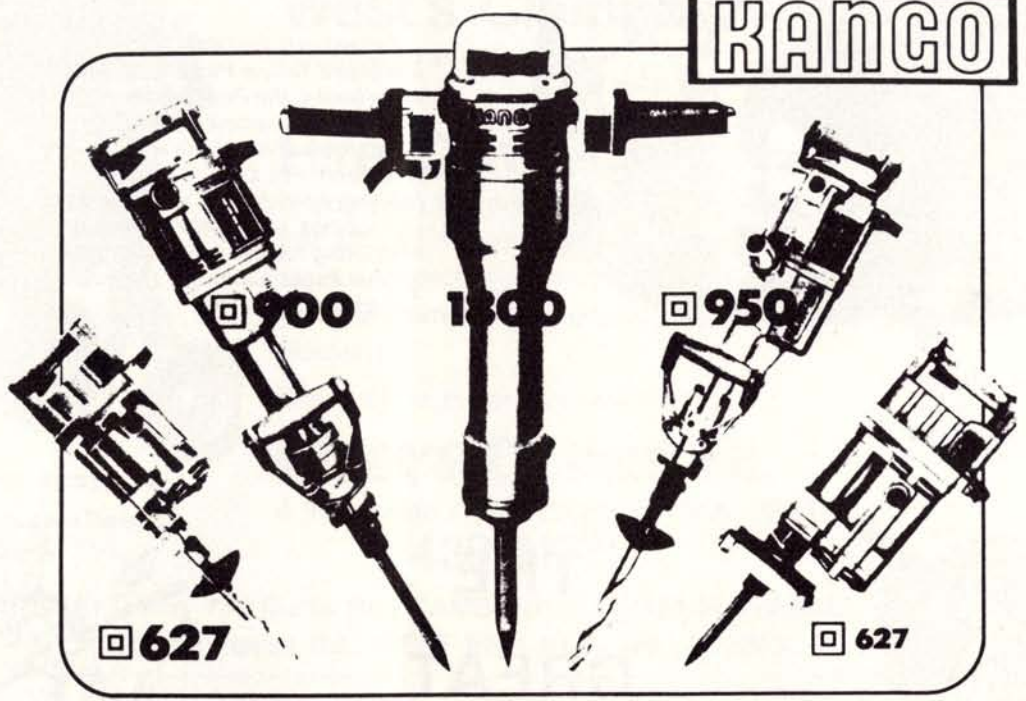
By seeing that the average household receives a much smaller Yellow Pages guide (instead of the entire four) the usage of paper by the PMG is minimal. This trend is not uniquely Australian. Larger cities in the United States such as Los Angeles and Chicago have already split their books.

Unfortunately the change in book arrangements co-incided with the stiff increases in rates. Press, radio and television rates have not risen as steeply during the past year, and

many hire contractors have felt they should consider a change of media.

Others accept the news philosophically, and a number who have been incensed by the charges have stimulated sub-committees of the Hire Associations to have special emergency meetings. In New South Wales, following discussions at other venues, a special meeting was held at the Auburn Lidcombe Businessmen's Club, at Silverwater Road, Silverwater. Members who attended the meeting had already been told how the new quarter page rate for the four Sydney metropolitan books would now exceed \$1,800. According to one private industry newsletter one party hirer said he would have to pay \$14,000 if he wished to maintain the impact of his Yellow Pages advertising.

KANGO



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H7-5-11A

The Great Yellow Pages War (cont.)

Despite the strict ramifications of the Trade Practices legislation relating to restraint of trade or competition, some hire contractors have suggested the industry members should withdraw all display Yellow Pages Advertising (by common consent) from all sections other than "Hire Contractors", and perhaps run bold type entries under other headings.

Opponents to this suggestion pointed out that persons who would not agree to such a suggestion would gain a tactical advantage. Besides which, they indicated that non-association members who were not party to any overall plan, would gain prime advertising spots in specialist classifications within the Yellow Pages.

Prior to discussions on Yellow Page prices and book alterations many hire contractors had been unhappy about the apparent late delivery of Yellow Page volumes in many metropolitan areas.

In March, following discussion of late delivery and other problems, Mr. Lou Whitefield of Abalon Hire successfully moved at the committee meeting of the NSW party hire division that: "Those who represent us at the Hire Association of New South Wales be requested to recommend to the Executive that all members of the hiring sections of N.S.W. be called together at the earliest time and that the PMG and a representative of Edward H. O'Brien be invited to attend. Inform them that the hirers of N.S.W. are deeply concerned at the rising costs of advertising in the Yellow Pages and very concerned at the proposed subdivisions of the Yellow Pages in the years to come". The motion was seconded by Mr. Harry Ford and carried unanimously.

Following reference to the executive body, at which plant hirers also gave their views, the Silverwater meeting was held. Federal and New South Wales association secretary, Mr. Rolf Schufft, later announced that he had been directed to send out a letter to all NSW members.

He told HIRE: "The letter says that we shall advertise under various Yellow Page headings as an association, and shall refer readers

to the Hire Contractors section". Mr. Schufft said the Silverwater meeting had been attended by 29 companies and had submitted several proposals to the executive committee of the NSW association.

It was recommended that the association advertise in the next Yellow Pages Buying Guide on behalf of members, using association funds. The classifications under which advertisements should be lodged were: Air Compressors, Scaffolding, Welders, Pumps, Ladders, Tarpaulins, Marquees, Tents and Catering. It would be strongly recommended that in view of the advertisements placed by the association that member companies cease to run display advertising under the categories mentioned. This would allow members to increase if they wished other forms of advertising.

Mr Schufft said advertisements placed would make mention of the Hire Association of Australia logotype. It would be recommended that the logo be included in all members' Yellow Page advertising in the Hire Contractors section. The co-operation of members and their full backing would be sought by the association because of the financial benefits available. If the scheme was successful members would next year pay for the special Yellow Pages advertising themselves.

Meanwhile, in Melbourne, the Federal President, Mr. Ern Turner, advised members of the Victorian Association at their quarterly dinner meeting that it was important for members to make the association advertisement in the Yellow Pages useful. This could be done by spreading the use of the Hire Association logo. Mr Turner said the new logo would be progressively introduced over "the next couple of years".

It will be now a six months' wait for most industry members to see what notice individual organisations will take of the recommendations from the association. No doubt there will be many companies who will not wish to take the risk of cutting Yellow Pages insertions in case their competitors do not do the same.

YOUR NEXT ISSUE

Do not miss . . .

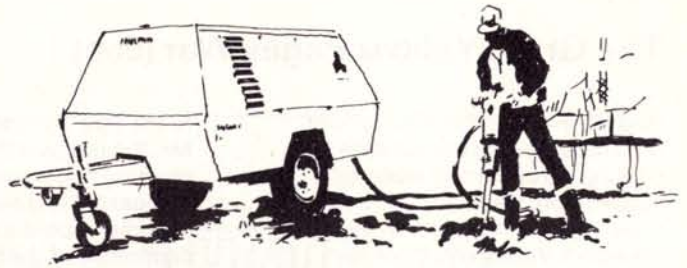
Do not miss your next issue of HIRE, because it will contain a number of absorbing in-depth studies of the hire industry in which people with many years of experience given the benefit of their advice.

Among articles you cannot afford to miss if you wish to be better informed are:—

- **The Brains behind the Broons Boys**
- **Construction Hire — when will the springboard bounce back?**
- **Transport Charges — what the surveys show.**

IF YOU WANT all members of your team or business to be as well educated as you, then see that they get their own regular copy of HIRE. By giving them a professional tool to use and study, you will receive more professional benefits. The cost? Only \$6 a year per subscription. Surely this is a good investment. Just two man-hours a year saved by one idea from the journal will recover the cost.

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221 Plain Street, East Perth, W.A. 6000. Phone 25 2099.
127 Invermay Road, Launceston, Tas. 7250. Phone 31 7866.

THE MAKING OF HISTORY . . .

Exactly 15 years ago

Exactly 15 years ago, on April 11, 1960, six men sat round a table in a Swanston Street building in the heart of Melbourne and created hire history.

Out of that famous meeting evolved the Hire Association of Victoria which was the forerunner to other State associations and eventually the Hire Association of Australia. The names of those who have contributed towards the building of the industry via the association have sometimes passed from the scene, but many people who were instrumental in the foundation years are still contributing actively today.

HIRE wishes to record some of the history of the association movement in this journal as a tribute to those who have worked so hard in a voluntary capacity over the past 15 years. It also invites information on history before 1960. HIRE wishes to discover the oldest hire organisation still operative in Australia. Please send any details or old photographs of premises or people to The Editor, PO Box 10, North Melbourne, 3051.

The famous 1960 meeting was attended by representatives from Air Plant Hire, Builders Equipment, Burnson Plant Hire, Hire Equipment, Hire Machinery and Machinery Trading. Mr L. Norman Ley was elected Acting Chairman. An apology was received from Wreckair Pty. Ltd.

The "objects" of the association when formed were (1) Hiring rates (2) Standards of maintenance and equipment (3) Facilities for service (4) Cartage rates (5) Credit information. At a meeting 17 days later fees were set at fifteen pounds fifteen shillings, plus an entrance fee of five pounds five shillings. On May 25 that first year Mr Peter Burne was appointed chairman. As the years have passed here are some of the events that have occurred, and the people who have been involved:-

1963 — Mr. M. Agg appointed Victorian chairman.

1965 — Mr L. Johns appointed Victorian chairman. Reference made to possible State Government action in Victoria on restrictive trade practices, also a pending change to decimal currency. The industry became concerned about Stamp Duty liabilities.

1966 — The Victorian chairman submitted a series of resolutions regarding restrictive trade practices. Mr. Stan Jessup reported on action through Mr. Eric Risstrom of the Taxpayers Association on methods of assessing Stamp Duty charges.



Gerry Nolan, N.S.W. Hire Association President, is helping to make today's history.

1967 — Mr Don McConnell appointed Victorian chairman. Recommended that regular meetings be held bi-monthly, with committee meetings on the alternative months.

1968 — The New South Wales Hire Association, formed earlier, wrote to the Victorian association making inquiries about membership and scope of the association.

1969 — Four months after he successfully organised a surplus equipment auction in which eleven members participated, Mr. Ray Kelsey was appointed chairman of the Victorian association.

1970 — The NSW Hire Association held a Hirers Convention in Sydney. Shortly afterwards the executive committee of the Victorian association recommended that membership be broadened and that the association's operations should be on similar lines to those of the Hire Association of New South Wales. It was thought this step could lead to further expansion and the possibilities of a national body.

1971 — 24 American members of the ARA came to Australia and were entertained at the home of Mr. Jim Ellis. Then followed the convention at Terrigal, New South Wales and first discussions on formation of a national body.

1972 — State association representatives met in Sydney and agreed upon the formation of a national association.

1973 — A committee was formed and Mr. Neville Kennard of Sydney was in February elected foundation President of the Hire Association of Australia. Mr. Ern Turner elected Vice President. The joining States were New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland. Melbourne Convention in October attended by more than 200 delegates from all States.

1974 — South Australia, which had for some years had a hire association meeting irregularly, re-established on a regular basis with Mr. Moss Keller as president, and Mr. Graham Bowes as secretary. Sydney convention the most successful ever.

1975 — Mr. Ern Turner appointed national President, and Mr. Moss Keller of Adelaide Vice-President. Convention being held in Adelaide with visitors expected from America.



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DO NOT MISS THE ADELAIDE CONVENTION, SEPTEMBER 24-27

American expert may visit us soon

One of the world's leading hire experts may visit Australia in September to coincide with the annual Hire Association of Australia convention in Adelaide. He is Mr. Ray Burns, president of the American Rental Association. Australian officials are now waiting to hear if Mr. Burns is able to accept an invitation which has been issued to him to come. If he finds that he is unable to make it because of business commitments, a strong contingent of American delegates is still expected to attend.

Mr Burns, who has had 17 years of experience in the hire business and working for the American association, is the owner/operator of Gem State Rentals, Idaho Falls and Pocatello, Idaho. Australian delegates to the ARA convention in Las Vegas earlier this year all met Mr. Burns, who was their host at various functions. He brought a sense of humour to the proceedings by handing out imitation "Idaho potatoes" for the Australian delegates to wear on their lapels. And in return, Australian delegates gave away "kangaroos".

Mr Burns was elected director of Region Eight in the American association in 1969, and had served two years of his three year term when he was asked to run for another office, that of National Second Vice President. After a year in that office he became a First Vice President of the Association during 1973 and 1974.



1975 American Rental Association President Ray Burns, owner/operator of Gem State Rentals, Idaho Falls and Pocatello, Idaho.

Planning of the Adelaide convention is now almost finished, and National Secretary, Mr. Rolf Schufft, released latest details to HIRE on behalf of the convention chairman, Mr. Moss Keller, of Adelaide. Next issue of HIRE will have full convention details from Mr. Keller, but preliminary plans are as follows:-

SUPPLIERS: These organisations are now being invited to exhibit, and any hire industry members are asked to suggest to their own suppliers that they support the industry with a sales or presentation booth. Suggestions for new possible exhibitors should go to Mr. Keller C/- of the Hire Association of S.A., 12 Pirie Street, Adelaide.

EXHIBIT VENUE: This will be the Wayville Exhibition Grounds, off Goodwood Road, and just next to Adelaide's South Parklands. The venue is about 1½ miles from the Hotel Australia where the business sessions are planned. Organisers have decided that the display booths should be open for two days.

SCHEDULE: Wednesday, September 24 — A yard tour will leave at 11.30 a.m. Lunch will be followed by a cocktail party in the

evening at the Hotel Australia. The official opening ceremony will be held in the evening.

SCHEDULE: Thursday, September 25 — Business sessions will start at 10.30 a.m. and will be followed by a tour of the famous Barossa Valley. The Barossa is famous for its white wines particularly, and is the "capital" of Australia's winemaking areas, where names like Seppelt were established three generations ago. The Barossa trip will end at 5.30 p.m. The association have organised several top restaurants to show delegates some genuine South Australian cuisine. It may be that delegates will be split into several groups.

SCHEDULE: Friday, September 26 — Business sessions will commence at 9.00 a.m. and end at 12.15 p.m. Delegates will then visit the exhibition centre at lunch at the Wayville Showgrounds. Lunch will be followed by a buffet dinner at night.

SCHEDULE: Saturday, September 27 — Business sessions from 9.00 a.m. to 12.15 p.m. After lunch visitors will once again be able to visit the trade exhibition. In the evening the official closing dinner will be held.

THE PORTRAIT OF A PRESIDENT

The business that turned over \$24 in it's first week and became one of the best in Australia

Ern Turner, the new National President, was two years old when he was introduced to the catering business. His grandmother, Mrs Clara Wright, his mother, Mrs. Al a Turner, and her sister, Mrs. Clara Wright, went into the catering business in 1924. And this was the family's first step into catering, which eventually led to hire.

Mr Turner has made the name Noseda Hire Service Pty. Ltd. of Melbourne into a respected byword in the party hire business, and in this issue he tells HIRE of the exciting and hard-working years that have passed.

"The outstanding thing in the catering business was that I was 16 years old before I took charge of my first ball," he says. "It was at the Hawthorn Town Hall and there would have been about 800 people. It was a sit-down supper and a re-set. By that I mean that you could only serve 400 at a time. It all worked out all right, but it was one of the most nervous nights I can remember.

"The catering business was a good one, and my father's firm called Turners progressed so well that he was soon under Vice-Regal patronage at Government House. It became so big that we were catering for an average of five balls a night and 25 to 35 weddings every Saturday.

"But it was difficult. As a young chap I didn't have any social life. I was working every night and every Saturday and the only time I could do my courting was when Bet (Mr. Turner's wife) came out on the job.

"Bet came in as my father's secretary, and that was how I met her. I am proud to say that she has always given me fantastic support in the business over the years. She gave me encouragement when I went into my own hire business. In

the first week it had a total turnover of twelve pounds. I was forced to still do catering myself under the name of Noseda and I hated doing it. In those days we would go along on jobs, and take the baby (daughter June) with us.

social life. When I went into the hire business I was therefore aware that I wanted more time with my family and I wanted to push the profession of hire. I feel that I have been able to do both.

"But I also had to develop a



Ern Turner at his happiest — surrounded this month by his Victorian Association committee friends who had the greatest of

pleasure in congratulating him upon his elevation to National President.

"The toughest years would have been the first six years when I had used up all avenues of credits and I had 13 different hire purchase agreements running at the same time. The toughest time was writing out the cheques.

"My advice to young people if they wish to go into business today is that you must be prepared to take a calculated gamble. If you do not have the fortitude to accept risk, then you are going to find it an awfully long hard battle. You have to frame your own ideas and back your own judgement.

"In catering I found that one of the drawbacks is that you have no

business. When I studied the market in party hire I asked myself what I could do that other firms could not. So I put in floral crockery, fine glassware and electroplated cutlery. Then I changed wrappings from newspaper to white paper and aimed for quality presentation, because that was all I had to offer that was different.

"As a result of taking this attitude right from the start, I always have a great feeling of personal pride in my stock. I am not ashamed of anything that I hire out and our customers have always been appreciative of the cleanliness and quality of our goods.

"I first started working within the Hire Association because I wanted to see uniformity in various things brought about. But other people also helped me to find time to help play my part within the association. These included my daughter June and my son-in-law David who took on the day-to-day running of the business. That allowed me the time to help try and improve the industry. After all, there is one thing that Rotary teaches you — this is that it is the duty of a person when he can to improve this vocation. The Hire Association is the perfect vehicle to do this within, and I personally enjoy doing it.

"I find that when people are normally invited to join the association they ask 'What's in it for me?'. There are many advantages.

"By forming divisions within the association each section of the industry is able to carry out its own development, workshop discussions and meetings in its own particular detail with a minimum of delay. In this way you meet on a friendly basis with the people in direct competition with you and this establishes stable business ethics, a comparison of business methods and rates of hire, a basis of credit checking and participation in workshop meetings on trade products and methods of maintenance, etc.

"On the legal aspect, we have been faced with both State and Federal Acts which have effected our industry in many ways. As an organised body we have been able to voice a more positive opinion that individual companies or persons would have done. In one particular instance we were able to have amendments made to sections of proposed legislation. The annual convention is the general front window or complete showcase of hire in every aspect.

"While I am in office as President I would like to see the association become so beneficial that all members of the industry would want to participate. I am not criticising the past, because everybody has to lay down a foundation somehow, and now we have to follow through on the devotion shown by previous office-bearers.



ERN TURNER poses here with members of the Nosedá family: his son-in-law David Evans (left), his wife Bet (centre), and his daughter Judy (right).

"The hire industry has a wonderful future. The younger generation have accepted the cold logic that ownership is no longer important. They only wish to utilise equipment at the time it is needed and that is the answer to modern economics. There is nothing ahead of the hire industry but constant and increasing growth."

Mr Turner is active in many interests. He was charter President of the catering division of the Hire Association of Australia, and later became Victorian Association Vice-President and President. When the National Association was formed he was elected Vice-President, a post he held for two years before becoming National President.

He represented that National Association at the recent American Rental Association Convention in Las Vegas. Mr. Turner is also past President of the Rotary Club of Malvern, current President of the Yacht Association of International Thunderbirds, and is holder of a "Thanks Badge" from the Girl Guides Association. In his spare time he enjoys sailing and photography.

"I took up ocean sport purely by accident", he admits. "My teenage daughters developed a not too unnatural interest in members of the opposite sex at the yacht club. My daughters are June, Robin and Lesley, and just recently Lesley gave me the good news that I had become a grandfather. To prevent embarrassment I joined the yacht club which necessitated buying my children a yacht and learning how to sail myself so that I could teach them. And then I got the bug."

NEW MEMBERS IN VICTORIA

Seven new recent members of the Hire Association of Victoria are: Pabs Furniture Rentals Pty. Ltd., Rent-A-Land Rover, Terang Hire Service, Mooroopna Hire Service, Smith's Hire Service of Horsham, T.W. Cromellin and A.W. Hire Centre Pty. Ltd.

CODE OF ETHICS NOW DISTRIBUTED

Members of the Hire Association of Australia have now received copies of the HA Code of Ethics printed on attractive white parchment paper.

The code can be displayed to members of the public by being attached to windows or walls of premises. The code promises to: Pledge honesty and reliability in all transactions; to maintain the highest standard of equipment available for hire and the efficiency of the industry; to encourage the friendly exchange between members of the knowledge of practical and technical subjects; and to foster co-operation with manufacturers and suppliers.

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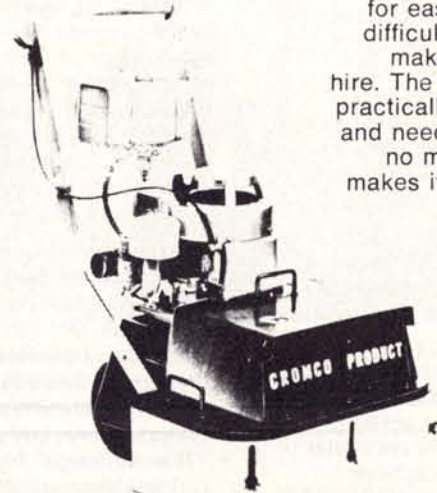
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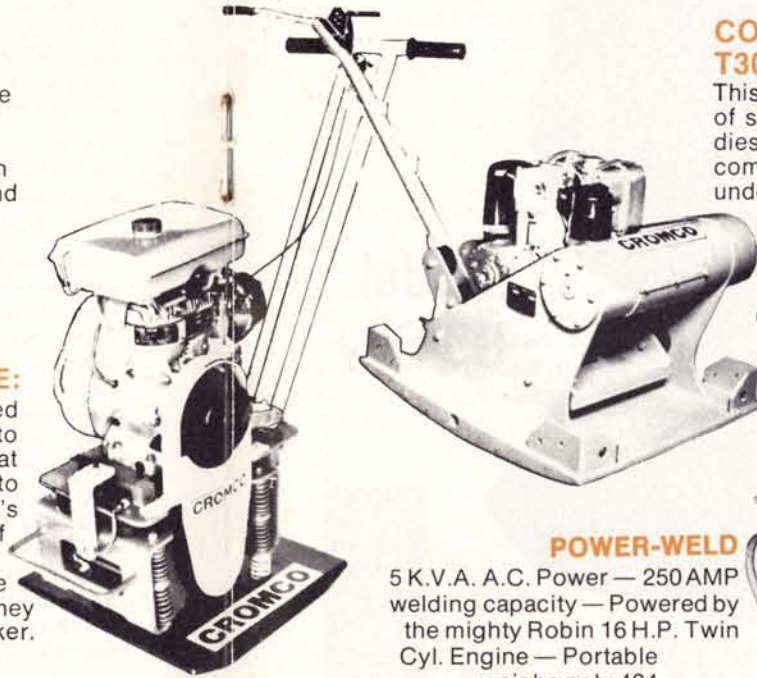
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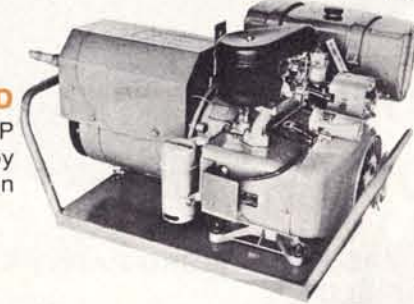
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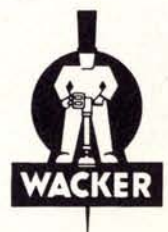
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NSW GOVERNMENT TO INVESTIGATE WORDING OF HIRE CONTRACTS

A New South Wales Government Committee is to investigate the wording of hire and rental contracts to see if some companies have over-stepped the mark in curtailing private rights of freedom.

Announcement of the move came from an executive member of the recently created State Privacy Committee, Mr. W. Orme. The Committee was only set up in early May this year. Mr. Orme said the rights of hire purchase and rental firms to enter private homes to repossess articles would be a major concern of the committee in its

future investigations.

The Committee of which Mr. Orme is a member has 13 members. It has its own staff and has the independent powers of both an ombudsman and a royal commission. It is expected that if the Hire Association of Australia or any of its members wish to give evidence they will be granted this right.

Mr. Orme said the committee was attempting to evolve comprehensive policy guidelines as quickly as possible. Mr. Orme's

statement followed a claim by the State Opposition's spokesman on consumer affairs, Mr. S. Einfeld, that a television rental contract being used by a Sydney company gave the company the right to break into people's homes to repossess television sets. He said this clause was an outrageous invasion of privacy. The contract also indemnified the company against prosecution for damage to the hirer's property in repossessing a television set, he said. Mr. Einfeld called on the Government to take immediate action to protect consumers. Mr. Orme invited Mr. Einfeld to give evidence to the committee.

Many members of the hire industry have been concerned at the lack of powers available to them to recover goods which have been "converted". Some States have laws relating to "larceny as a baillie", but police are often loath to become involved when they realise the goods taken are subject to a hire contract.



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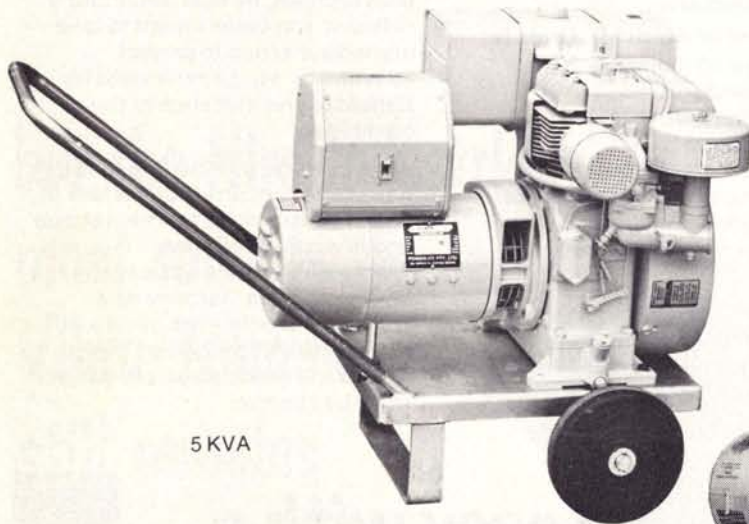
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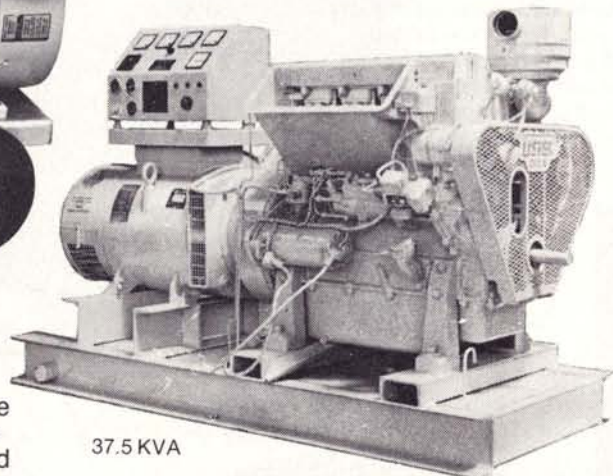
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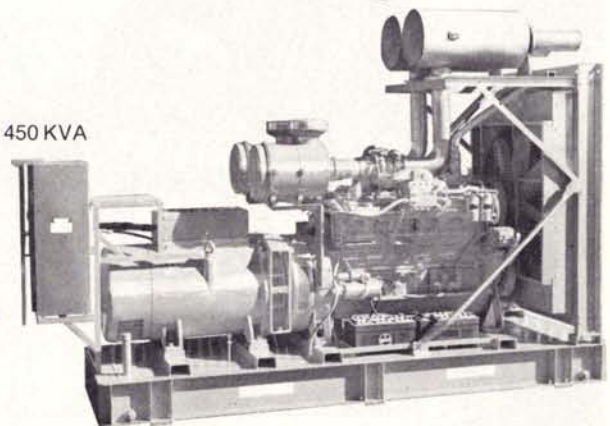
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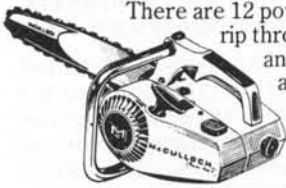
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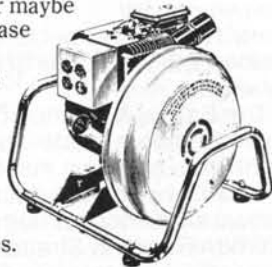
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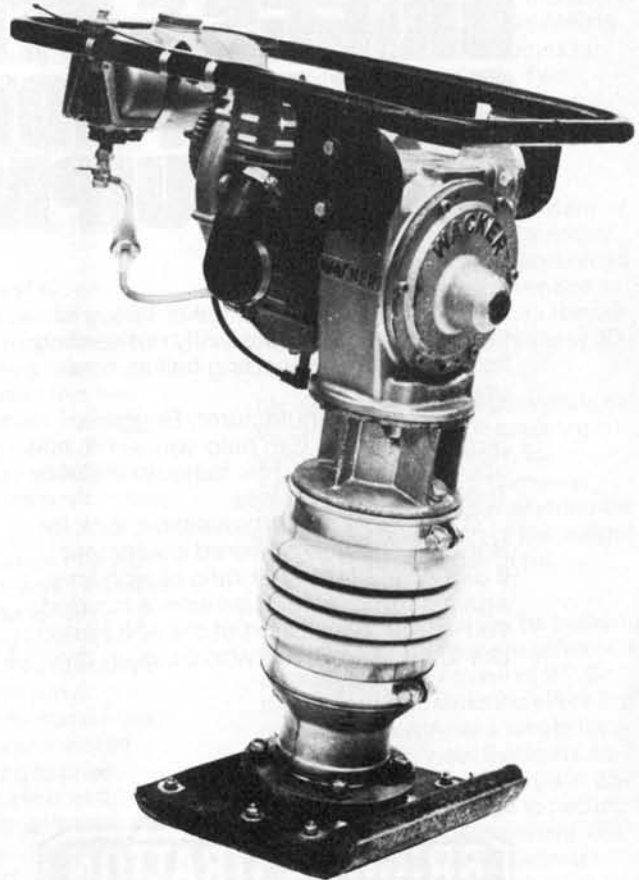
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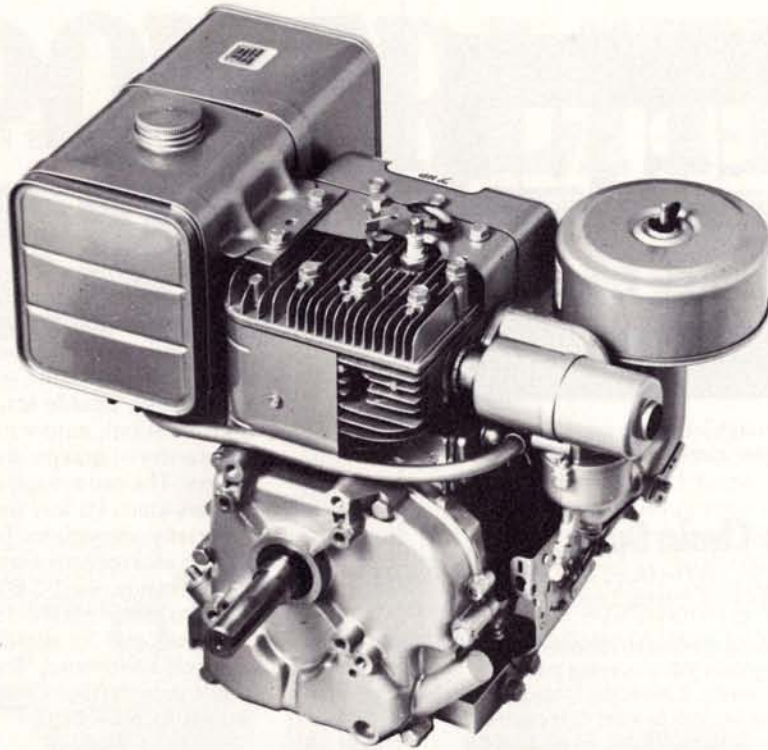
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HOW TO COMPARE BUSINESS RESULTS



US comparison expert
Dean Coddington

Would you like to know how you compared with your competitors last year for return on investment, percentage spent on advertising, operating profit to sales, or perhaps direct labour to sales?

Organisations in the hire industry are to be asked shortly if they would like to take part in a confidential Australian survey which would provide the answers to these questions and many more.

Both the Victorian and New South Wales branches of the Hire Association have already made preliminary inquiries on such a survey, and the format for comparison has been prepared in detail for submission to industry members.

First step in the campaign to obtain participation by hire organisations occurred early in May in Victoria when members listened to a presentation and saw a film prepared by the Commonwealth Department of Manufacturing Industry. The film was presented by Mr. Trevor Glover, project officer for Interfirm Comparison, a section of the Department of Manufacturing Industry.

Mr. Glover told HIRE that no member of the hire fraternity should be afraid to participate in the survey because it provided complete confidentiality on figures. He said the Government's processing centre did not know the identity of companies taking part, because this information would be held by the Hire Association. On the other hand, the Hire Association would not know any of the figures supplied by respondents, because this information would go direct to Interfirm Comparison. The only information that all members would get back would be a series of percentages, plus their own percentages so that they could

compare their record with the industry average.

Mr Glover said the Interfirm Comparison department had been set up by the then Liberal Government in Australia seven years ago. Interfirm comparison was widely used in Europe and America. About 30 industries were currently taking part in various studies. About 1,000 firms were involved.

"By studying the results, both small and large firms can look at their costs in relation to various ratios, and the weaknesses are soon pointed out. They may not be weaknesses to you, but they may be weaknesses when compared to other sections of the industry," Mr. Glover said.

Mr. Glover expects that Interfirm Comparison will pass to private industry within the next five years because of a ruling by the Labour Government.

When questioned by HIRE on whether there had been any cases in the past of participants for their own reasons supplying fake figures, Mr. Glover said this had never been experienced. He said the cost to the association, if it conducted the survey on behalf of members would be minimal — only about \$150.00.

Federal Hire Association President, Mr. Ern Turner, who was a member of the sub-committee which studied the proposed terms of comparison for the hire industry in Australia, said that to run a business without information such as Interfirm Comparison would supply was like trying to drive without headlights. He urged industry members to give serious thought to participating in such a unique survey, which would be the first of its kind in the hire industry.

He said such surveys were now commonplace in the American rental industry and had proved to be extremely beneficial to all participants.

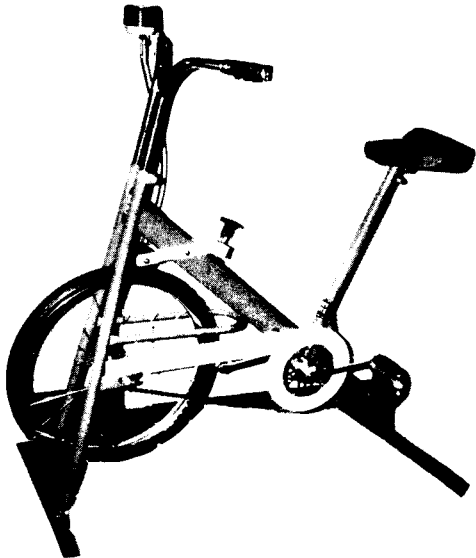
Mr. Glover said Australian industry had been quick to accept Interfirm Comparison as a technique to improve efficiency and increase profits. Such comparisons had been unknown in Australia before 1966, but by June 30, 1974, there were more than 1500 participating in 60 industries.

In America there were at least 40 interfirm comparison centres providing information for members. One of these firms, Robert Morris Associates, conducts studies for more than 23,000 firms. Two experts in analysing figures in America on the hire industry are Dean Coddington of Bickert, Browne Coddington and Associates, and Laurence Mancini of Lawrence Leiter and Company. These two men recently presented their findings at the convention at Las Vegas of the American Rental Association, attended by about 30 Australians.

Mr. Glover said managers could not be efficient without measuring yardsticks. "A manager, for example, may have a complex system of budgets, but whether he exceeds or falls short of the budget is not a final indicator of his efficiency," he said.

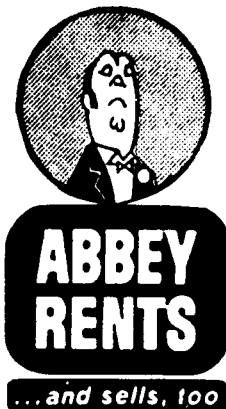
"Suppose, for instance, he budgets to attain a 6% increase in sales and actually achieves a rise of 9%. On the surface this looks excellent but not if the industry as a whole has achieved a 12% rise. Similarly, he may budget his labour costs at 35% on revenue but manage to reduce it to 32%. This may be excellent, but not if the rest of the industry is achieving a figure of 30%.

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“beating your sales budget is no sign of efficiency”

“The manager lacks a suitable yardstick to measure his overall efficiency or the efficiency of particular sections of his operation. Without an adequate measure of efficiency problem areas remain hidden and the potential to earn more profit is lost. The technique of interfirm comparison seeks to provide this practical yardstick by permitting the manager (without disclosing confidential information to his competitors) to compare his performance with those actually being achieved by other companies in his industry. By comparing his results with those of competitors he is able to readily isolate those areas in which he is inefficient or where further improvement can be made. Isolation of the firm’s strengths or weaknesses enables management to concentrate its efforts on those aspects requiring special attention.

Even industry leaders need interfirm comparison and the Australian experience has been that the largest and most efficient companies are often the most enthusiastic proponents of the technique. Experience has shown that no one company is best at everything and although a company may be an industry leader its performance will vary over the range of its operations from highly efficient in some aspects to comparatively inefficient in others.

“Similarly when a company is successful it is often thought that it is uniformly efficient in all its operations. One of the observations from interfirm comparisons over a range of industries is that a number of companies achieving the same overall measure of success have wide variations in efficiency of

individual departments and of the activities within those department.

“These variations are highlighted in interfirm comparisons and management is provided with an effective method for detecting areas where improvement is possible. Technological progress and other factors effect a continual change in the conditions under which operations are conducted, and management has the responsibility of ensuring that their enterprise is efficient and competitive.

“The ratios compared are always those which participants consider to be the key ratios for their particular industry. Consequently, there will be a wide divergence between the ratios in use in different industries, since each will have its own problems and peculiarities of cost structure. The object is to tailor the comparison to the needs of the industry.

“The comparison is dynamic, and its ratio structure will change as it is refined and extended. The Australian experience is that the number of ratios will increase to meet the participant’s desire for additional information.

There are two basic groups of ratios: financial and technical. Financial ratios generally make uses of information taken from the Balance Sheet and Profit and Loss Account (See typical table on an interfirm comparison report, reproduced on Page 27.) Accordingly, these are mostly concerned with costs, profit margins, and asset levels.

Technical ratios tend to utilise basic operating data of the participants,

and might cover such items as output per manhour, or machine throughput per hour. In addition supplementary ratios may be provided where it is desired to investigate a particular area in depth. (See unusual areas that may be investigated as per table reproduced on Page 29.)

Mr. Glover said choice of ratios was virtually limitless, being dictated principally by usefulness to participants. Secrecy had to be assured by the very stringent security system used in conducting comparison. The usual method was for the relative trade association to compile a list of participants, each of whom was given a code number.

Blank questionnaires were forwarded by the chosen processing centre to the association, which in turn sent them to the individual participants. Thereafter the questionnaires were identified only by the code number, and on completion they were returned direct to the processing centre by the participant.

After processing the results were forwarded in individual security sealed envelopes, identified only by code numbers, to the association, which then placed them in envelopes addressed to individual participants. Because results were expressed in terms of ratios it would be impossible for anyone to work out the figures for any other particular firm by studying any of the results. However, it would be possible for managers to calculate the degree of their possible savings by improving various ratios perhaps to industry average or higher.

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ILLUSTRATION OF AN INTERFIRM COMPARISON REPORT

Items Compared	Expressed as	Your Firm's result was	The industry achieved the following			Your result varied from the middle firm by	Dollar value of variation	If adverse see ratio No.
			Best 25% of firms	Middle firm	Worst 25% of firms			
<u>GENERAL</u>								
1. $\frac{\text{Operating Profit}}{\text{Assets Employed}}$	%	12.2	21.8	16.1	12.5	3.9	* 21081	2
2. $\frac{\text{Operating Profit}}{\text{Sales}}$	%	6.6	11.8	9.9	8.2	3.3	* 33000	4
3. $\frac{\text{Sales}}{\text{Assets Employed}}$	Times	1.85	1.85	1.62	1.49	0.23	12432	
<u>COSTS</u>								
4. $\frac{\text{Production Costs}}{\text{Sales}}$	%	85.5	76.5	81.1	85.3	4.4	* 44000	8,9
5. $\frac{\text{Marketing Costs}}{\text{Sales}}$	%	3.1	3.5	5.7	8.2	2.6	26000	
6. $\frac{\text{Administration Costs}}{\text{Sales}}$	%	3.8	3.6	4.6	6.0	0.8	8000	
<u>PRODUCTION COSTS</u>								
7. $\frac{\text{Direct Materials}}{\text{Sales}}$	%	48.1	45.8	48.3	50.4	0.2	2000	
8. $\frac{\text{Direct Labour}}{\text{Sales}}$	%	26.3	20.2	22.9	25.7	3.4	* 34000	
9. $\frac{\text{Production Overheads}}{\text{Sales}}$	%	11.1	9.8	10.7	13.1	0.4	* 4000	
<u>DIRECT LABOUR COSTS</u>								
14. $\frac{\text{Spinning Labour}}{\text{Sales}}$	%	13.5	9.1	10.1	11.9	3.4	* 34000	
15. $\frac{\text{Weaving Labour}}{\text{Sales}}$	%	12.8	11.8	13.0	13.9	0.2	2000	

Variations which may be unfavourable are asterisked *

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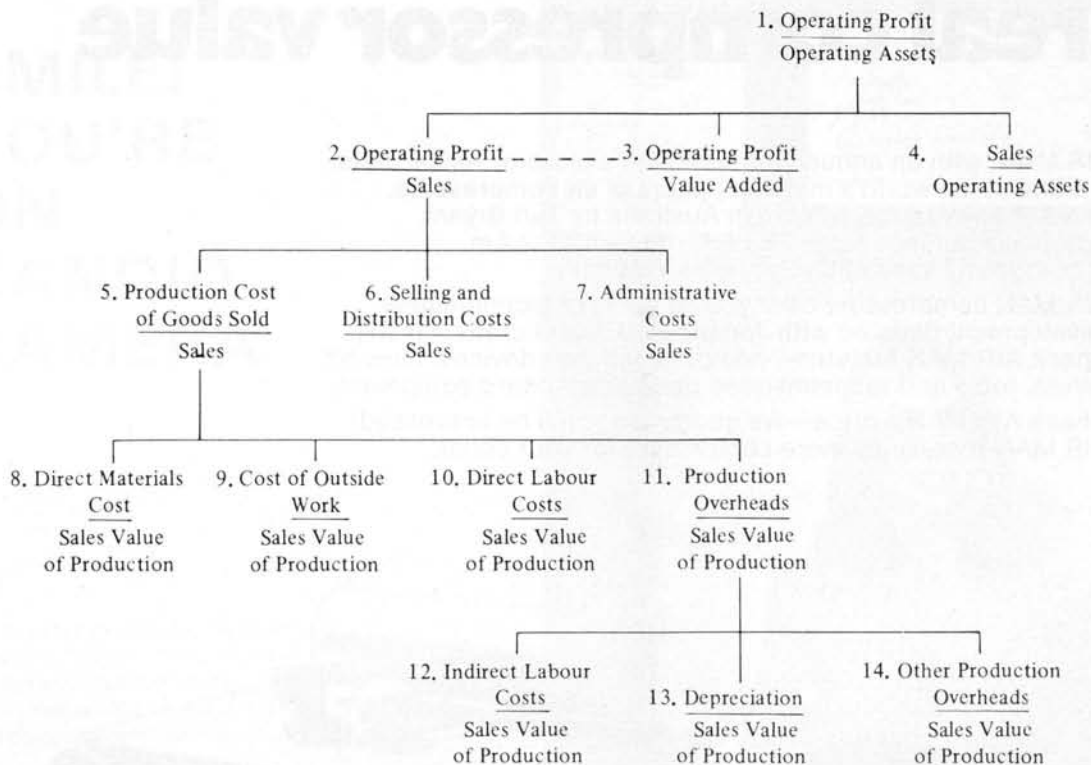
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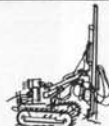


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For further information contact your local Tutt Bryant Sales and Service centre in: Sydney, Newcastle, Melbourne, Brisbane, Rockhampton, Cairns, Townsville, Hobart, Devonport, Adelaide, Darwin, Perth, Port Moresby.

PKB87517



SMILE! YOU'RE ON CANDID CAMERA

The photograph (right) shows how you can take the picture of a customer, together with a record of their cheque and driver's licence, just by pressing a button.



The photograph (right) shows how you can take the picture of a customer, together with a record of their cheque and driver's licence, just by pressing a button.

Photographic security systems to help reduce loss by conversion of equipment are now being installed in greater numbers by Australian hire operators. One of the latest converts to the system is Ron Williams of Melbourne.

He has just installed a Micro-Check camera manufactured by American Protection Industries of 1505 South Alameda Street, Los Angeles, California, 90021. Cost of each film taken is a low three cents.

Ron said he had decided to purchase one of the machines after seeing it in action at Las Vegas earlier this year. It is recommended that the camera be positioned so that it is on a counter approximately 42" from the floor. When pictures are taken the face of the camera should be 36 to 40 inches from the customer.

Ron told HIRE that the camera cost him \$508 landed in Australia.

There was no duty on the camera, but there was 27% sales tax. Films were supplied in cassettes containing 500 negatives a cassette. A total of 2,000 negatives cost \$169. Ron said there had been no complaints of any kind since installation of the camera. A customer who was a police officer had had his photograph taken and thought that the idea was a very good one.

The camera was the perfect answer to people such as the professional who had recently gone from company to company trying to obtain caravans for conversion. Ron said that Kennards Hire in Sydney had now reported that their camera was being readily accepted. Victorian plant hirer Brian Elms of Builders Aids said he had recently watched operations of a camera in Sydney and had seen no person object to having their photograph taken.

Brian said: "I was told that in the previous two months two people reached the camera and then bolted, so they are obviously the customers you don't want in the

first place". Mr. Elms said Kennards had had a television backwash when their camera had first been installed, but this was only because the way the subject had been treated on a news programme.

"Since then they have had nothing except benefit. They move the camera from branch to branch. After the camera becomes established at a branch, then the return rate soon establishes at 100%", Mr. Elms added.

In an effort to reduce conversions the Victorian association contacted the State Government to see if consideration would be given to producing drivers licences with photographs of the drivers. A letter has now been received from the Chief Secretary's Office in reply. The letter says that the suggestion had been subject to detailed investigations. Cabinet had recently considered the matter, but it was not possible to proceed with the idea because of the heavy costs involved and because of the possibility of public criticism.

A NEW IDEA FOR PLANT HIRERS

LET SOMEONE ELSE HOLD YOUR INVENTORY SPARES

YOUR

Australian plant and equipment hirers are now being provided with a means of cutting down the inventory, and thus their expense costs, by having an outside organisation hold their spares.

The new cost-saving technique is being sponsored by Tork Systems Co. Pty. Ltd. of Sydney. The company is a subsidiary of K.G. Hodson Pty. Ltd., who for many years has serviced the heavy duty auto-electrical industry.

Tork Systems believes that with shrinking profit margins in the plant hire business today, plant hire managers owe it to their companies to cut costs in whatever way possible, including inventory.

A Tork spokesman said: "Tork was born out of our recognition for a highly specialised and prompt service in the supply of manufactured heavy duty auto electrical exchange unit systems at a competitive price. Such a service is of great assistance to transport operators, earth-moving contractors, industrial companies, hire operators, or fleet operators, even Government departments.

"Today the businessman is faced with two enemies — firstly, the high cost of replacement parts, and secondly, lost operating time on machines, which can be extremely expensive." The spokesman said losses in the hire business could result in loss of income from machines when they could be bringing in full revenue potential.

"When we move in to assist a company we first inspect the equipment that is being used. Our highly experienced technicians will undertake a detailed examination and technical assessment of the plant. We next prepare a stock and price analysis, from which you can make a comparison costing. A copy of this analysis, including part

numbers and specifications of all equipment types operated by your company is then committed to our records.

"In the event of a systems failure a simple phone call to us will within minutes locate the necessary replacement part. Either before, or upon delivery of the unsatisfactory unit, a completely remanufactured and tested unit will be supplied from stock, at a price guaranteed to be considerably less than the standard price of a new replacement system.

"Of course, as with any responsible executive, you'll naturally wish to be assured that the replacement unit is totally reliable. There is our 90 Day complete warranty, but to further assure you, let us take you through the remanufacturing procedure, undergone by your exchange system. Upon receipt of the unit in-store, it is immediately passed onto the first stage of remanufacture.

"It is carefully stripped of all component parts. Each component is then thoroughly cleaned and prepared for inspection. Next, each component is meticulously inspected, then tested on sophisticated electronic equipment to ensure that it is operating at its maximum designed level of efficiency. That's our workshop quality control.

"If it does not meet these exacting standards it is replaced by a new component from our extensive stock. You will appreciate that after 17 years experience in this business we have developed a high degree of knowledge of parts requirements. These are constantly subjected to detailed analysis and stock levels are adjusted accordingly.

"Our parts section contains parts to suit almost every manufactured system. Whether it's Autolite, Bosch, C.A.V., Delco-Remy, Denso, Lansing Bagnell, Leece-Nevill, Lucas, Mitsubishi, Motorola, Nippon Preslite or derivations of these, we generally stock it. Our principal company K.G. Hodson, is an accredited service agent for many of these manufacturers.

"The required new parts having been obtained we next turn our attention to those components which do not require replacement. These are expertly reconditioned to return them to as-new condition, but not before they meet our workshop quality control standards.

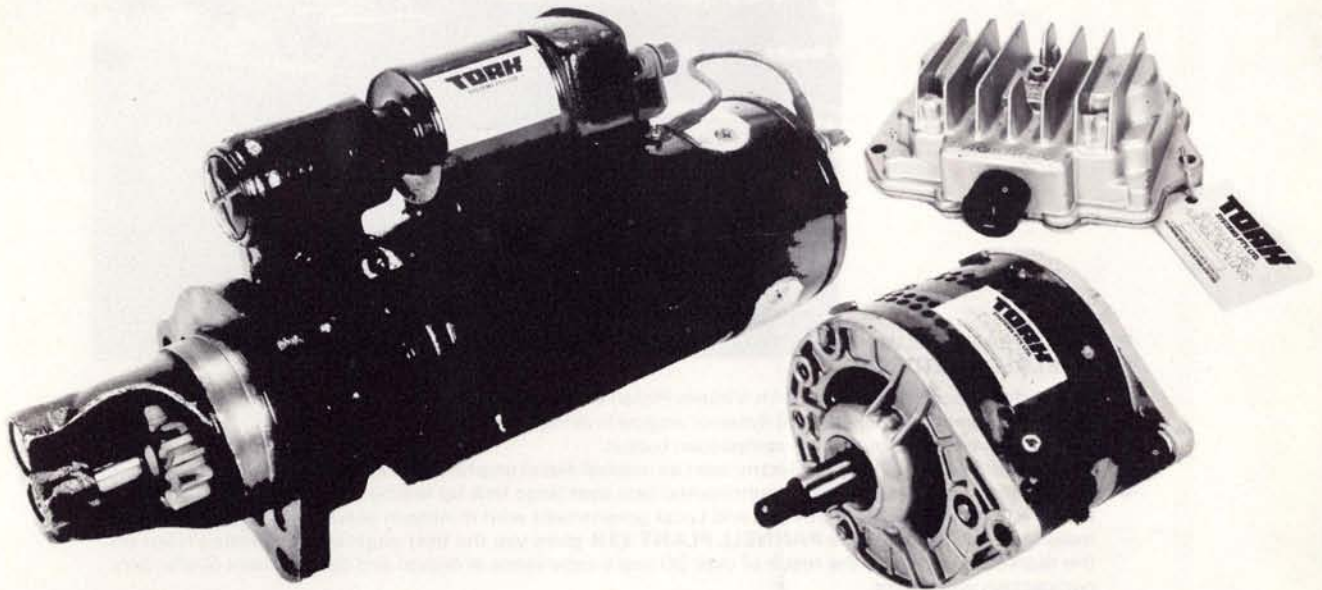
"All components are then carefully re-assembled strictly according to the manufacturer's specifications, and also meeting our quality control standards. Particular attention is devoted to maintaining exact tolerance and torque measurements.

The complete remanufactured system is then subjected to a factory-devised schedule of tests on a range of heavy duty electronic machines similar to those used by the manufacturer. If the unit does not meet the required standard, it is completely re-processed until satisfactory performance is achieved.

"Finally, the system is given our stamp of approval, sealed in an airtight container, indexed, catalogued and committed to our systems stock section. Scientific stock control procedures ensure that the unit can be located within minutes of your needing it.

"Stock inventories are regularly compared with client equipment lists to ensure that replacement systems for all plant are stocked at all times."

CUT OPERATING COSTS



In an age of inflation naturally you will be concerned with rapidly escalating operating costs. Particularly maintenance costs. We specialise in helping you to reduce these.

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Tork Systems provide a comprehensive exchange service in the remanufacture and supply of heavy duty auto-electrical systems. Whatever your equipment type we guarantee considerable savings on the standard price of new replacement parts. And we give you a complete 90 day warranty on all systems.

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equipment this allows us to stock replacement systems for all equipment at all times. Within minutes of a systems failure we can supply you with a replacement — freighted to any destination by the fastest possible means. Land, sea or air.

Erase Stock Costs.

And because we handle the volume of your business we become an integral part of your organisation thus relieving you of the high costs of replacement stock and specialist personnel.

Cut your operating costs. Contact us now.

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