

bulletin

CASE STUDY NO.22
AUGUST 2002

Since beginning in 1968, with just four employees, Kembla Truck Body Repairs (KTBR) have been building more than state-of-the-art truck bodies: they've also been building a fine reputation.

Top class design, workmanship, durability and back-up service are the prime reasons the company numbers among its clients names like Brambles, BHP, the RTA – and councils from Port Kembla to Sydney, and as far west as Mudgee.

In all, KTBR has manufactured bodies for over four and a half thousand vehicles, including trucks, articulated vehicles, dog trailers and both semi-rigid and rigid tippers.

Truly, a South Coast success story.

But, as the company itself says, a major reason behind that success is a long-term association with yet another South Coast company: Bisalloy.

Bisplate, success breeds success

Now, of course, KTBR specialises in building truck bodies, not the trucks themselves.

However, the company does have its own prime mover: Managing Director, Aldo Mori.

Aldo Mori: *"If you ever want an example of how one company's superior product can have a transforming effect on another business, consider what happened with us when we started using Bisplate back in the early 80's. Within two years, the amount of maintenance we had to do on our truck bodies dropped amazingly. Before we used Bisplate, our mild steel bodies would sustain considerable damage within 24 months – not surprising given the pounding from the sort of payloads they carry – scrap metal, demolition material, reinforced concrete and so on. But after changing to Bisplate, our business changed for the better too. In fact, so dramatic has been the change over the years, maintenance has dropped from being forty per cent of our business, to just ten per cent."*



Since using Bisplate, quite a number of KTBR's truck bodies literally outlast their prime movers and get reinstalled on new vehicles. "Maybe the best testimony is that, in twenty years, we have never had to replace a truck side made from Bisplate", says Managing Director, Aldo Mori.

Bisplate, a change for the better

What convinced you to change from mild steel to Bisalloy in the first place?

"Performance. All you have to do is to compare the mechanical properties of Bis360 with Grade 250 or Grade 350 mild steel (see table below) and the reason becomes obvious. The benefit of that strength and hardness is far more robust truck bodies with greater resistance to denting – in turn resulting in less "hang up" when carrying "sticky" loads. Overall, our truck bodies now last up to 100 per cent longer. Instead of four or five years usage with mild steel, customers can expect ten years – and more. In fact, it's not uncommon for bodies to come in for maintenance after ten years showing only minimal wear, and needing only minor attention, before being put to work again. Quite a number literally outlast their prime movers and get reinstalled on new vehicles. Maybe the best testimony is that, in twenty years, we have never had to replace a truck side made from Bisplate."

Properties	Grade 250 Mild Steel	Grade 350 Mild Steel	Bis 360
Yield Stress	250 MPa	350 MPa	1190 MPa
Ultimate Tensile Strength	410 MPa	490 MPa	1260 MPa
Hardness	120 HBN (Typical)	150 HBN (Typical)	400 HBN (Typical)



Bisplate's strength and hardness gives far greater resistance to denting than mild steel – in turn resulting in less "hang up" when carrying "sticky" loads.

Any other reasons why you've continued to use Bisplate?

"Absolutely. Bisplate has other strengths that work for us directly, too. The strength and flatness of the plate means no side ribs are required in our body designs – so they look better. Even more importantly, the amount of framework needed is greatly reduced, saving a huge amount of dead weight. Compared with mild steel, each body is up to 50 percent lighter, allowing for far greater payloads to be carried. These extra benefits pay off for us, as well as our customers."

But what about the extra cost over mild steel?

"Yes, we do pay more initially for Bisplate. But our direct experience – and that of our customers – is that the extra is usually recovered within two years due to the lack of maintenance required. And, given the prolonged overall life our customers get from the bodies – a lot more than two years – Bisplate returns on the initial investment big time. As always, quality shows."

So, it's a case of "you get what you pay for."

"Definitely. But it's not just the product's performance we've appreciated over the years. Time and time again, Bisalloy's reliability as a supplier has made a difference. In twenty years of working together, the company's consistent on-time delivery has in turn given us the ability to plan and meet orders on-time for our customers."

"All in all, it's not overstating it, to say that Bisplate has given us our good name."

As Australia's only manufacturer of quenched and tempered steel, based on the South Coast, too, Bisalloy is proud to be playing a part in helping another of the Illawarra's true success stories.



Bisalloy Steels Pty Ltd

ABN 27 001 641 292

Resolution Drive (PO Box 1246)
Unanderra Delivery Centre
NSW 2526 Australia

Telephone: +61 2 4272 0444

Facsimile: +61 2 4272 0456

Web Site: www.bisalloy.com.au