

Outside the box transport

For more than 42 years, **Membrey's Transport and Crane Hire** have specialised in carting unusual and over dimensional loads, often tackling the jobs that other transport companies shy from.



Membrey's Transport specialise in carting anything usual - long, wide, high or heavy. They even transport all the giraffes, elephants and large animals for the Melbourne Zoo, and other prominent zoos around Australia.

When Current Managing Director, Craig Membrey, took over from his father in 1989; he was determined to grow the company. And grow it he did, from just five pieces of equipment 18 years ago to in excess of 100 pieces today, amongst them 38 specialised trailers.

The range includes flat tops, drop decks, extendible drop decks, floats and steerable jinkers, side loading containers in 20 and 40 foot, crane trucks and a range of cranes that can lift anywhere from 1 tonne to 300 tonne. Membrey's also provides a variety of lifting equipment, cranes and forklifts.

"We specialise in carting anything usual - so if it is long, wide, high or heavy then we can find the right transport solution," explains Craig Membrey.

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Also included in their list of unusual jobs is a recent ad for Toyota and the AFL, recreating Alex Jesaulenko's immortal 1970 grand final mark, which saw Membrey's provide the cranes for this creative lift scene.

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"It is definitely enjoyable for our drivers to have something a little unusual to transport. Rather than driving the same thing day in day out, we are constantly challenged by the best way to transport something that is oddly shaped or extra heavy."

Membrey's call on trailers from Jackson Transport Bodies, Krueger, Drake, Lusty EMS and Fruehauf for their unusual

builds. "We don't go with just one trailer builder, instead we go with the best person for the job," Craig added. Membrey's latest purchase is an Australian first: a 44 metre extendible trailer. Getting a trailer of this length has been

a goal of Craig's for some time and after having difficulty finding an Australian builder willing to design the trailer, he decided to go overseas. "Nobody would build anything like it in Australia. I travel overseas a lot for different truck shows and decided to get Nootenboom, in Holland, to build the trailer for me instead." The extendible will arrive in Australia within the next few weeks and while

Craig doesn't have a specific contract it will fulfil, he does believe it will offer his fleet flexibility to cart a range of long machinery.

On top of purchasing trailers from a range of builders, Membrey's also run an in-house engineering department. "This allows us to modify our trailers to suit any particular projects we have to work on. We definitely want to grow this work in the future, as it is getting harder and harder to get specialty equipment built in Australia. In most cases it is a two year wait to get anything new. So aside from starting up your own engineering department, or going overseas, the only thing you can do is accept the lead times and wait like everyone else," explains Craig. When it comes to their equipment, Membrey's employ a 'best fit for the job' approach. "We have both disc brakes and drum brakes in our fleet and we also have some trailers featuring ABS. While

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the disc brakes do work well, we don't really get a payback on the price that we pay. This is because we don't do too many high kilometres, so we don't feel all the advantages of discs," he said.

The crane division is a large part of the Membrey business, which has grown steadily since the company purchased their first crane truck in 1984. The fleet includes six mini cranes, which can travel through a standard doorway and lift up to 2.5 tonnes. Other mini cranes can lift up to 5 tonne and are available for hire or with an operator.

Also included in the fleet are three versatile Franna cranes, with an articulated crane for tight location lifts of up to 20

tonne, or a slewing crane at 50 to 130 tonnes.

Membrey's crane team includes dogman/riggers, qualified electrical spotters and traffic management personnel to ensure each lift is completed safely and professionally. Membrey's use the cranes for a variety of jobs, such as helping to do repairs on the Puffing Billy train track in Victoria, helping out in road accidents and lifting practically anything and everything the customer requires.

According to Craig, the future is looking strong for Membrey's. "We aim to just keep growing. I believe that if you are passionate, take risks and run your business right then you can't go wrong." **TBB**

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