

# MLA NATIONAL MANAGERS' CONFERENCE 2019

With the 2018-19 financial year closed, the month of July saw MLA Head Office host the 2019 National Managers' Conference. The three-day conference brought branch managers to Sydney to plan for continued success in the new financial year.

Managing Director Ken Rathgen welcomed everyone to the conference and Operations Director Matt Saunders outlined the conference goals. "MLA has a lot of strategically important opportunities to develop in the coming year and specific actions and programs to drive sustainable improvement that will be implemented with the branch managers leading their teams," he said.

The conference allowed MLA Management to review past performances, budgets and strategies. Hearing about business conditions around the country, with insights from the coalface. The team identified key strategies for delivering the best service possible to current and new customers, and push MLA forward as Australia's number one forklifts supplier.

The 2019 Conference reinforced a strong team focus on driving MLA's year-on-year success. With clear values and vision, MLA expects to maintain the quality of service for which we are renowned nationwide.



Left to right: Sushil Prasad (National Contracts & Engineering Manager), Steve Kent (National Sales Manager), Travis Mickel (SA Branch Manager), Jason Barker (WA Branch Manager), Matt Saunders (Operations Director), Girma Dabi (Finance Director), Robert Faehring (National Service Manager), Ken Rathgen (Managing Director), Tim Ingles (QLD Branch Manager), Mike Griffiths (VIC Branch Manager), Garry Wheeler (HUNTER MLA Branch Manager), Nasser Rahiman (National Parts & Distribution Manager), Gary Hodge (NFM Forklifts – National Manager)

## Can improving safety in your workplace also improve efficiencies?

Business is constantly seeking to improve workplace safety and efficiency. There is sometimes concern that adding safety elements will crimp efficiency. MLA can show how safety and efficiency go hand in hand.

Take Torresan Estate, a McLaren Vale winery, bottling and warehousing business with brand new bottling lines in South Australia. When it was looking for replacement forklifts, it needed a bespoke solution. Any new forklift needed to use minimal aisle space because of a tight warehouse environment. Another requirement was the capacity for advanced manoeuvrability due to surroundings with sensitive production equipment.

In other words, the job required a part-ballerina/part-sumo wrestler solution.

MLA Holdings had the answer – the reliable Mitsubishi FGE25N.

The Mitsubishi FGE25N's "V shape" counterweight allows it to squeeze into tight areas with ease. For Torresan Estate, this meant it could redeploy some aisle space for



**Mitsubishi v shape counterweight**

more warehouse storage. And in addition, the business got fuel savings from the forklift's eco-mode.

That's not all. MLA fitted Hydraulic Tyne Positioning to the Torresan Estate units and modified the load back rests to improve safety and stability when moving product from production to the warehouse.

So perfect was the Mitsubishi FGE25N for Torresan Estate in providing improved safety features and improved efficiency, it recently upgraded its fleet of six units with MLA.

## It all started with a flat battery

Australian specialty wholesale bakery Wild Breads Pty Ltd first contacted MLA back in 2013, seeking to trade in an old pantograph reach truck with a dead battery.

MLA Queensland's Neil Waters quoted a new Reach Truck RB14N from the Mitsubishi European factory with full freezer protection. And to help Wild Breads Pty Ltd through, MLA technicians kept the old reach truck running with a new battery until the special-order Mitsubishi was available.

This was a great solution for our customer.

For the next three years, MLA replaced old forklifts at Wild Breads Pty Ltd with new Mitsubishi Forklifts. And when the artisan baker built a new factory in 2015, MLA set up a 66-month rental contract for five new Mitsubishi's.

These units included two more reach trucks with freezer protection, two three-wheel FB18TCBs and a new pallet end rider, the PWR30.

In 2016, the relationship between Wild Breads Pty Ltd and MLA deepened with the addition of push-pull,

**Mitsubishi RBF Reach Truck at Wild Breads**



bin tipper and hydraulic attachments to boost the safety and efficiency of an existing Mitsubishi FB18TCB. And more recently we replaced the last of Wild Breads' old pantograph reach trucks with a new Mitsubishi RBF14CA.

Who would have thought? This blossoming on-going relationship between Wild Breads and MLA all started with a flat battery.



## Acquisitions Fuel MLA's Expansion



**Kris Gilmore (Area Sales Manager - Hunter MLA) successfully delivering a new Mitsubishi**

MLA Holdings Pty Ltd is continuously growing.

Following the purchase of Classic Forklifts now "Classic MLA" in 2018, MLA acquired Hunter Liftrucks, now known as "Hunter MLA".

Established more than 35 years ago, Hunter Liftrucks had built a reputation as one of the Hunter Valley's most reputable forklift companies.

It has been a smooth transition for both current and new Hunter MLA staff under the stewardship of Branch Manager Garry Wheeler and the team at MLA Holdings.

Hunter MLA is successfully delivering forklifts and servicing forklifts throughout the Central Coast, Newcastle and Hunter region.

Its forklift solutions include all Sales, Service, Hire, Parts and Fleet Management services for all sectors, including mining, government, transport, construction and more. Our customers have peace of mind because Hunter MLA has one of the largest casual hire fleets in the region, offering a complete range of material handling equipment, and a squad of ten mobile forklift technicians capable of servicing any brand of forklift.

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All that is going on in the world of MLA

# MLA's Breaking News

## Ken's Korner

Wow! Another financial year over already, and another successful one for MLA as we continue our long run of profitable years and continued growth.

The standout growth feature of 2018-19 was our purchase of Hunter Forklifts in Newcastle.

This company was started and built by an old friend of mine, Ray Inglis. Ray and I worked together at Brambles more than 40 years ago, so the purchase of this excellent forklift business went very smoothly. I'm pleased to say that all the existing staff seem to be happily settling in at Hunter MLA, headed by Manager Garry Wheeler.

Another 2018 purchase, Gold Coast-based Classic Forklifts, has also been bedded down successfully and is well integrated as our local offshoot, Classic MLA.

So, after operating for 39 years we now have seven operating branches around Australia. Each one operates out of modern, purpose-built premises owned by MLA. Combined, they are run by the best 150 people in our industry.

Yes, it is over 39 years now for MLA so early next year we will be celebrating our 40th anniversary. We plan a big celebration and a big year, so stay tuned.

During the first week of August we held our annual Manager's Conference, bringing together MLA Branch Managers from all states. It was a very successful meeting, with all who attended excited about our plans for 2019-20. It should be a great year.

Ken Rathgen.



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