



SCANIA

PRESS info

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Melbourne, Australia

Paul Taylor wins Scania Young Australian Bus Driver Competition 2012.

Scania Australia hosted the inaugural Young Australian Bus Driver of the Year National Finals at Flemington Racecourse on Saturday 17 November.

Paul Taylor, a driver with Peninsula Bus Lines (a division of Ventura Bus Lines in Melbourne), has won the inaugural Scania Young Australian Bus Driver competition.

Paul 28, who has been driving buses for just under 3 years, held off Alden Brown from Mee's Bus Lines (VIC) and Ryan Williams from Hillsbus in NSW.

"I'm in shock, I can't believe it," he said after the result was announced.

"The competition was great. I felt I did well on the on-road driving, but I hit a few cones in the manoeuvring. I was nervous before each of the tests," he admitted.

"One of the most interesting things I learned on the competition was how much fuel is used driving a bus and how the driver can impact on the fuel use," he said.

"I switched to driving a bus after being a flooring sales manager. My father has been a bus driver with Grenda's for almost 20 years and suggested I give it a go. I love the job. Currently I am driving a school and charter bus in the Mornington Peninsula.

"I didn't tell my boss I was entering, but he was very pleased to hear that I had won.

"I am getting married next year so my wife to be has already worked out what we'll be doing with the prize money," Paul said.

"It ended up being a very tight competition," says Ron Szulc, Scania Brand and Communications Manager. "The top three were very close at the finish."

Ron Brien, a former President of the Bus Association and Life Member, who has operated buses throughout his career, acted as the event's chief judge, ensuring the integrity of completion. He said he was very impressed with the drivers' level of knowledge, as tested by the road rules examination.

Twelve young bus drivers competed in the National Final for the \$10,000 prize by demonstrating their on-road driving ability, as well as their skill in manoeuvring a bus through an obstacle course that included a slalom, lining up for a bus stop, plus stopping in front of a bulls' eye; all tests that reflect some of the daily challenges faced by bus drivers.

The judges set tough but manageable manoeuvring challenges, yet none of the drivers emerged with a clean sheet.

"We were looking for a driver with the ability to perform as an ambassador for their peers, demonstrate supreme professionalism and safety awareness and help improve the public perception of all bus drivers," said Julian Gurney, National Manager – Retail for Scania Australia Bus and Coach.

While Paul Taylor walked off with the main prize of \$10,000, runner-up Alden Brown secured a fully-funded trip for two to the opening round of the 2013 season of the V8 Supercars Championship, with Ryan Williams earning a BP fuel voucher for \$500 for his third place finish.

"One of our key aims with the Scania Young Australian Bus Driver competition is to bolster community understanding that bus drivers are professional, skilled, courteous and safe," said Roger McCarthy, Scania Australia Managing Director.

"It is also aimed at attracting young drivers to the profession. Our industry needs more people like the 12 finalists we have with us today, who quite clearly demonstrate that they are motivated, self-confident and intelligent employees.

"Scania is very focussed on driver safety and driver comfort, and as a by-product of this, greater passenger safety and comfort.

"The driver is absolutely the most important factor in both the safe and efficient operation of any bus or coach. Vehicles and infrastructure are obviously of major significance, but fuel-efficient and safe driving is primarily a matter of human behaviour.

"Maintaining a sharp focus on fuel economy is increasingly relevant for bus operators. Many are now taking a close interest in the weekly fuel performance of their vehicles and drivers. As a result, more drivers understand the impact of fuel cost on their employers' profitability," Mr McCarthy said.

A key element of the YABD challenge is to highlight the importance of driver skill in achieving reduced fuel consumption, thereby lowering operating costs and reducing environmental impact.

"A skilled driver can save substantial amounts of money for a bus operator," he said.

The Scania Young Australian Bus Driver of the Year 2012 finalists were:

- Ryan Williams, NSW, Hillsbus, NSW
- Alana Mountfield, NSW, State Transit Authority (STA) in NSW
- Jola Ramsay, NSW, Sid Fogg's, Newcastle
- Janine Vadala, QLD, Brisbane Transport
- Mitchell Bruce, QLD, Wide Bay Transit
- Jason Williams, QLD, Rothery's Coaches, Rockhampton

- Michael Cooke, SA, Light City Buses, a division of Transfield Services.
- Peter Jones, TA, Metro Tasmania
- Alden Brown, VIC, Mee's Bus Lines
- Paul Taylor, VIC, Peninsula Bus Lines/Ventura Bus Lines
- Rudy Fidao, VIC, Ventura Bus Lines/National Bus Company
- Robert Tranter, VIC, Victorian Touring Coaches and Kingston's Tours

Castrol and Continental Tyres sponsored the Scania Young Australian Bus Driver National Finals. The event was supported by the Bus Industry Council, which also supplied the Chief Judge Ron Brien.

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Scania is one of the world's leading manufacturers of trucks and buses for heavy transport applications, and of industrial and marine engines. Service-related products account for a growing proportion of the company's operations, assuring Scania customers of cost-effective transport solutions and maximum uptime. Scania also offers financial services. Employing some 35,500 people, the company operates in about 100 countries. Research and development activities are concentrated in Sweden, while production takes place in Europe and South America, with facilities for global interchange of both components and complete vehicles. In 2010, net sales totalled SEK 78 billion and net income amounted to SEK 9.1 billion.