



Volvo Trucks India Fuel Watch turns five

Story by : Rajesh Rajgor

The event supports the company's contention that drivers can contribute as much as 30 percent towards improving a truck's fuel economy.

Volvo Trucks India Fuel Watch is designed to underscore the role played by drivers in maximising fuel-economy for trucks operating in demanding off-road conditions. R Satyanarayana from BGR Mining & Infra Pvt. Ltd. emerged the winner, while J Sampath Raju from SV Engineering Constructions was the 1st runner-up, and Sudharshan Dhal from Montecarlo Ltd. was the 2nd runner-up. The championship was held at Singareni Collieries' coal mining site in Managuru, near Kothagudem, Telangana

on June 11-12, 2014. The 24 drivers, selected through 12 local competitions and rigorous evaluation, drove two FMX trucks across a round trip distance of 3.3 kms. Each driver made four such trips, two each in loaded and unladen conditions. Before drivers embarked on a trip, trip meters were set to zero and the data was downloaded through Volvo's 'Dynafleet' trip manager software to ensure consistency. Each driver was accompanied by a driver trainer in the cabin. As it emerged, despite ambient



▲ Satyanarayana from BGR Mining & Infra Pvt. Ltd. emerged the winner

conditions and training being identical, drivers came up with vastly divergent fuel-efficiency figures. If simple averages of fuel economy figures for laden and unladen trucks across all four trips are to be compared, the difference between the fuel-

bill,' says AS Ramarao, Sr. VP Sales, Marketing & Aftermarket. He lays out a case study to underscore the tremendous benefits accruing from even a 10 percent improvement in fuel- efficiency. 'Assuming that 50 tippers work in a mine with a lead distance of 3 km per trip. They make 5 trips per hour working for 20 hours a day. If fuel economy is taken to be 1 kmpl, the diesel consumption per truck will be around 300 litres per day - or 15,000 litres per day for the entire fleet. A 10 percent fuel saving would mean 1,500 litres less fuel consumed per day. In other words, savings of Rs. 3 crore per annum for the fleet!' As telling as these fuel-economy numbers are, they are not the only parameters to be considered in arriving at the winner. Other aspects like engine and gearbox utilisation, driving attitude and safety were also taken into account. Winners of the event will qualify and perform at the Asian edition of the event in a bid to qualify for the final championship in Sweden.

which has so far trained over 50,000 drivers is definitely a major asset for Volvo's efforts to boost the productivity of drivers. To further improve Total Cost of Ownership (TCO), VECV supports customers operating in remote areas with on-site maintenance. 'We bring on site maintenance at the customer's base, to affect preventive, ongoing and emergency maintenance activity through the product life cycle,' states Ramarao.

It is interesting to note that VECV has been pushing the envelope with initiatives of this nature despite a bad year for the CV industry. The ban on iron ore mining and cancellation of coal block allocations has impacted the sales of Volvo's trucks. 'Sales of Volvo Trucks have declined from 1,100 units in 2011 to 700 in 2013,' says Vinod Aggarwal, CEO, VECV. However, he expects a rise in sales this year as industrial production is expected to increase. Moreover, 'We are looking forward to a resumption of mining activity and opening up of coal blocks,' he adds. VECV's plant in Bangalore has a capacity to assemble 2,000 trucks per annum. ■■■

Result Summary Difference

FMX Trucks	Lowest Km/L	Highest Km/L	Difference
FMX (Unloaded) (R1)	1.45	1.88	30%
FMX (Loaded) (R1)	0.84	1.00	19%
FMX (Unloaded) (R2)	1.52	1.82	16%
FMX (Loaded) (R1)	1.20	1.41	18%

Above results have been obtained under test conditions of Fuel Watch 2014 and will vary from site to site

economy performance of the best driver vis-a-vis the worst is 18 percent. More specifically, during round 1, the worst performing driver for the laden FMX registered fuel-economy of 0.84 kmpl – 19 percent lower than the 1 kmpl registered by the best. Correspondingly, the fuel economy score for the worst driver of unladen trucks during the round was 1.45, while it was 1.88 kmpl for the best, implying a variation of 30 percent. 'In excess of 50 percent of operating expenses comes from fuel. A good driver can shave off as much as 30 percent of this

(L-R) AS Ramarao, Sr VP Sales, Marketing & Aftermarket., Philippe Divry, SVP, AB Volvo & VECV board and Vinod Aggarwal, CEO, VECV.

■ **Impetus to trucking**

The Volvo Driver Training Centre,

