

Earth calling US buyers

A BRISBANE-based off-road motorhome builder is targeting exports to the US.

EarthCruiser Overland Vehicles (EOV) boss Lance Gillies is in the US testing the market for their Mitsubishi Canter 4x4-based vehicle. Gillies says they were originally invited to the US for the Indianapolis launch of the new 2011 Fuso 4x4 which they will consider as the future base for their recreational vehicles.

The new Fuso will arrive in Australia in September. Mr Gillies says the Fuso has "many more creature comforts with the new three-litre engine and semi-auto".

"It will be a great platform. There is much the long-time Fuso FG buyer will recognise," he says.

Mr Gillies will not speculate on prices for a Fuso-based EarthCruiser because US prices are yet to be finalised.

Mr Gillies launched his EarthCruiser in the US in Portland, Oregon, last month at an RV show.

"The scale is something we are just not used to in Australia," he says.

"My favourite was the fifth-wheelers and caravans with fire places - yes fire places.

"There was nothing like EarthCruiser there.

"The interest (in EarthCruiser) was real and very positive. Our manufacturing facility in Caboolture is going to get busier.

"We do not have a firm sale for an EarthCruiser yet. That was to be expected. But the clients are genuine and we are confident.

"Last week the USA inquires were double what we get in Australia and the rest of the world put together.

"Its scary and exciting at the same time."

Mr Gillies will head to Arizona this month for a trade show focusing on world overland travellers.

"We are looking forward to that one," he says.

EOV specialise in building vehicles capable of long-range sustainable world travel over almost any terrain and have tested their products on expeditions across many kilometres and continents.

Mr Gillies says they have attracted customers from around Australia and the world.

"We have also met up (in the US) with one of our customers who left Australia last year and has now driven



at a glance

EarthCruiser

SHORT-WHEELBASE: \$195,000

MID-WHEELBASE: \$230,000

UTE: \$75,000

DUAL-CAB UTE: \$89,000

VISIT: www.earthcruiser.com.au

GOOD TO GO: EarthCruiser was launched at an RV show in the US last month.

halfway around the world in his EarthCruiser," he says.

EOV products are not classed as a modified truck but are registered as an

EarthCruiser brand, recognised as fully legal in, and insurable in, all states of Australia.

Mark Hinchliffe