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New Power

Fossil-free boating



They're quiet, smooth and environmentally friendly. We sample the Torqeedo range of electric outboards.

By Chris Beattie

Melbourne-based marine engine specialist Power Equipment conducted a press event recently to launch its new range of German-made Torqeedo electric outboard motors. Founded in 2005, according to Power Equipment, Torqeedo has quickly built a reputation for innovation and technological expertise in the emerging area of electric outboards.

Power Equipment is the Australian importer and distributor for a number of brands. From its state-of-the-art and clinically clean facility in the Melbourne suburb of Lynbrook, the company handles a number of well-known brands, including Yanmar diesel engines, Mase generators and Gori propellers.

The launch began at Power Equipment's Lynbrook facility, where we were briefed on the four Torqeedo ranges that the company will be importing. We were told that the company has invested half a million dollars in its new electric venture and has worked closely with Torqeedo to ensure it has the right options for the Australian and NZ markets.

"For the last 25 years, we have been passionate about delivering the very best brands, and Torqeedo fits seamlessly into our stable of the highest-quality marine products," said Jason Hodder, Power Equipment's Torqeedo Product Manager.

"Torqeedo is a pioneering German brand at the global forefront of marine motor technology. It's known for its innovation, convenience and eco-friendliness – we're excited to be bringing them to local rivers, bays and oceans."

With the imminent ban on carburetted two-strokes due to be implemented in 2017, the electric option suddenly becomes viable.

Apart from the obvious benefits to the environment, electric power also means that there are no risks associated with storing volatile fuels onboard.

"This is an important shift in where the future of boat propulsion is heading. What Tesla has done for cars in making electric accessible and acceptable, we believe Torqeedo will create similar waves on the water," said Hodder.

Engines will include the Ultralight (1hp equivalent), ideal for canoes and kayaks; Travel (1.5hp and 3hp equivalent), suited to dinghies and tenders; Cruise (5hp, 8hp and 20hp equivalent), for power and sail craft; and Deep Blue (40hp and



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80hp equivalent), intended for powerboats and commercial operators.

The Ultralight range is mostly intended for kayaks, with pricing starting at \$2500.

The Travel range is suitable for tenders and sail craft and produces power equivalent to

Above: Futuristic looks and quiet, almost soundless operation are a Torqeedo hallmark.



conventional 3 to 4hp outboards, while costing around \$5100. The Travel 503 will suit vessels up to 750kg, while the 1003 can propel craft up to 1.5 tonnes. Two shaft lengths are available and, with a weight of 9kg less battery, they are claimed to be easy to handle and transport.

A 50W solar charger, travel bag and other accessories are also available.

The Cruise range is intended to compete with 5 to 9.9hp outboards and is suitable for small tinnies, tenders and sail and power craft up to 10 tonnes.

There are 11 motor options in the range, to cover a variety of tiller and remote throttle configurations, plus a variety of shaft lengths. Prices range from \$5610 to \$12,000.

The Deep Blue range is aimed at the 40 to 80hp market and is suitable for larger powerboats and commercial applications.

Standard equipment on all Torqueedos includes an onboard computer, with an inbuilt range monitor to inform users of range and battery status. There's also a Torq Trac app that overlays range information with a

map of the current location that can be linked to smartphones to tell users how far they can travel at a given speed based on current battery power.

All motors are claimed to be extremely energy efficient and quiet, using powerful lithium batteries which are solar-rechargeable and require minimal maintenance. They are also compliant with the international IP67 standard for submersion protection.

Other claimed features include efficient propeller design for good speed and thrust, heavy-duty construction and corrosion protection.

Conventional recharge times begin at around seven hours for the smaller models.


The on-water evaluations were conducted at Sandringham Yacht Club, where we had access to a number of small tinnies, RIBs and kayaks.

From my own experience I'd have to say I was impressed with the Travel and Cruise range of engines. They certainly felt light and easy to steer via the tillers, while power delivery was strong and instant. Throttle response was also good, considering we were dealing with relatively low-power models.

At first, it was actually a little weird to be travelling along at a handful of knots with no noise other than the breeze to intrude as we whirred our way around the protected waters of the marina.

Visually, the engines have a compact and futuristic look and appear robust and solid as far as mounts and hardware are concerned.

Whether tooling around a marina, puttering along on a windless day, or ferrying supplies to your cruiser in the Whitsundays, it seems there is now a Torqeedo to service your needs.

With a dealer network in development, you can find out more by going to: PowerEquipment.com.au. 



Top, above and right: There are Torqueedos to suit almost every form of outboard water transport.