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LDV at the vanguard of value

The West Australian (Saturday edition), Perth

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Well-equipped Deliver9 targets the heavier end of the market

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China's giant SAIC motor group has released its latest LDV light commercial offering through local distributor Ateco.

Aiming at the heavier end of the van market and pushing into the cab-chassis arena, the Deliver9 wraps a wide, high and long cargo area into an attractive Euro-like shell with some impressive driveline specs.

The new van adds to the LDV G10 and V80 vans to cover three distinct operator needs: the G10 is the one-tonne city hack in either petrol or diesel form, the V80 is bigger with 2.5-litre VM Motori turbo-diesel power,

while the new Deliver9 has an in-house SAIC 2.0-litre turbo-diesel with more power and torque than the larger engine in the V80.

LDV is targeting the segment-leading Mercedes-Benz Sprinter.

As far as specs go, it lines up pretty well: the Deliver9's long-wheelbase mid-roof has an extra half cubic metre of load space but 269kg less payload than the high-roof,

medium-wheelbase Merc. Underneath, it has 5kW more power and a significant 45Nm of extra torque.

But its biggest attention-getter is the price.

The equivalent Deliver9 with a six-speed manual box has a recommended retail price of \$42,095 (\$2500 extra for the auto), compared to \$68,017 for the German contender.

Right now the drive-away price starts at \$39,990 for the manual — what could you do with the spare \$25,922?

Ateco has priced the entire range similarly and provided the product holds up to Australian use and conditions, the argument is pretty persuasive.

A three-year/160,000km warranty backs up the claims and capped-price servicing limits servicing costs to \$1895



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for the first three years or 95,000km, whichever comes first.

The range of versions doesn't match its competitor's vast array of sizes and options but LDV is looking at the highest-volume sectors rather than a complete market spread.

There are two wheelbases, two roof heights, 11 and 14-seat buses and a cab chassis in either manual or auto.

There's a swag of safety features as well: front, side and curtain airbags, autonomous emergency braking, stability control, lane-departure warning, and adaptive cruise control is standard on the autos.

Most of these features are now expected by ANCAP as the minimum requirement for a five-star rating on cars, and most of the van-type commercials are now up to speed on these technologies.

Reverse-parking sensors, Apple CarPlay and Bluetooth are also included.

You'll need to spend an extra \$1500 to get blind spot alert and lane change assist, plus keyless entry and 236-degree-opening rear doors but that still leaves enough spare cash for the jetski.

Although LDV's roots are in the UK, the business has been in SAIC's hands since 2010 and most of the British heritage components have been passed over.

But my drives of LDV products thus far have revealed an engineering team tightly focused on driving ease and comfort.

So far, the only recalls on LDVs have been a vanity mirror replacement on the vans in 2013 and a non-compliant vehicle label in 2015.

Full test drive coming soon.

As far as specs go, it lines up pretty well . . .



Clean lines and box shape optimise load space. Pictures: David Meredith



A pallet-sized load area is a plus.