

# Inaugural J D Power tractor study underlines quality

*Quality of components and comfort emerged at the top on the inaugural study on tractors conducted by J D Power.*

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In an inaugural study conducted by J D Power Asia Pacific in India, called the 2015 India Tractor Product Performance Index (PPI) study, and the 2015 India Tractor Customer Service Index (CSI) Study, the need for quality build, emerged at the top along with comfort and ergonomics. "The 3 study clearly stood out from the list of expectations of tractor buyers and operators," said Dr Gordon Shields, Director, J D Power. "Our study found out that the quality of tractors has improved, but more improvement is needed. Comfort and ergonomics are becoming important." While cabs could be a welcome addition, tractor buyers and operators are paying more attention to NVH char-

acteristics, citing the precedents set by the studies conducted in July and November 2014, and released in February 2015.

Examining the satisfaction with tractor performance amongst owners of 12-24 months old tractors, the 2 studies took into account operator profiles like owner-operator and rental-operator apart from the manufacturer spread, consisting of national players as well as the international players. Measuring overall product performance satisfaction in 2 indices – machine performance, quality and reliability on a 1,000 point scale, the results were reported across 4 HP segments. Among the various tractor brands in the under 31 HP category, it was Mahindra Swaraj which came at the top.

In the 31 to 40 HP category, it was Eicher. In the 41 to 50 HP category, it was John Deere, and above 50 HP, it was Mahindra that accrued 856 points. There were 7 tractor brands (like Mahindra, Eicher, Tafe, New Holland, John Deere and others) looked at according to Dr Shields, and even issues like the agricultural and consumer use of the tractors are considered. While the studies tapped regional trends in Bihar, West Bengal and Odisha who are ahead in rentals, Dr Shields explained that users found elements like tyres to be of critical impor-

tance. "Overloading is an issue, and apart from the diesel tank size, tractor buyers (operators) looked at issues like engine overheating and hydraulics failure," said Dr Shields.

It is not surprising, given the issues that mattered to the farmers, the study measured the problems owners experienced with their tractors across 88 areas. The average in the inaugural study was 203 problems per 100 tractors. The sample size was 4789 tractors across 14 states. Nearly three-fourths (74%) of all problems reported were in the categories of engine and transmission, driving and operation, electrical, hydraulics and couplings. The most frequently cited problem areas included excessive or uneven tyre wear, hard to operate hydraulic systems, engine overheating and wiring problems in the electrical circuit. The nature of the issues also seemed to highlight the fact that the relation between the dealer and the buyer plays an important role in deciding which tractor to buy, or in deciding if a certain tractor brand was indeed superior than the other. Dr Shields commented that the relation between the dealers and buyers is important when it comes to buying a tractor and owning it. "When the need to avail a service arises, OEMs should spend time to train tractor buyers to use the right kind of attachments, refrain from overloading, and also about crop yield," added Dr Shields. **ACI**



**Dr Gordon Shields,**  
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