


TOYOTA

DRIVER'S WORLD

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What's new and what's news »

HYBRIDS FOR HIRE

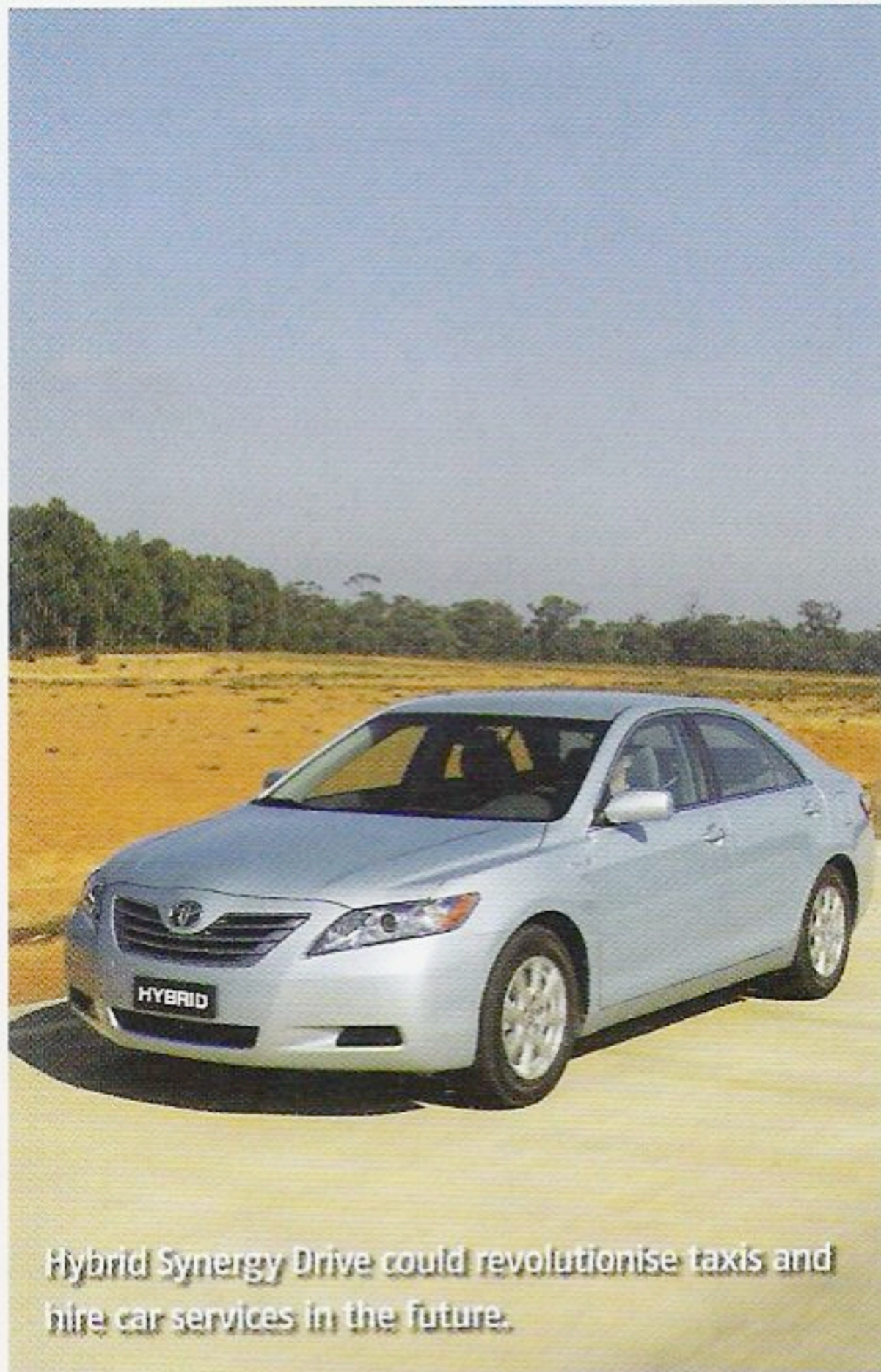
Taxi, hire car and limousine services have started turning to alternative fuel vehicles to combat ever-rising petrol prices, reflecting the increasing awareness of the environmental impact of cars, particularly in cities. From the outset, Toyota's Prius – with the 10,000th car being sold in Australia last month – has become a vehicle of choice for these operators.

Elimousine is the trading name for EcoTaxi, a Sydney-based company that has been running a fleet of Lexus hybrid limousines since April 2007. Managing Director Russell Howarth says he was looking to revolutionise the taxi industry by introducing fleets of Toyota Prius to service the Sydney CBD and eastern suburbs.

Mr Howarth has indicated that he is willing to provide subsidies to taxi drivers willing to switch from traditional LPG-fuelled vehicles to petrol-

electric hybrids, and has flagged the upcoming launch of the hybrid Camry as a catalyst for a movement towards the industry adopting more petrol-electric vehicles.

To maximise their environmental friendliness, Elimousine even washes its cars with waterless carwashes, and there are plans to expand the scope of the business to include other hybrid-related activities.



Hybrid Synergy Drive could revolutionise taxis and hire car services in the future.