



# BANDIT 990XP – 12” CHIPPER

As Fleet and Service Manager of Australian Urban Tree Services ([www.uts.com.au](http://www.uts.com.au)), one of my roles is to oversee the performance and maintenance of the trucks and chippers in our fleet. AUTS has been servicing the Sydney basin since 1992 and originated from a family business which began in 1961. We undertake all types of tree work including power line clearance works for Energy Authorities and various contract work and projects for Councils and large corporate clients. We also run a busy residential division, operating from the Sydney Harbour Bridge to Palm Beach. When Bandit asked us to Road Test their new Model 990XP 12 inch (30cm) capacity drum chipper – I jumped at the chance. We own Bandit’s larger Model 1590XP but use a different brand for our smaller chippers behind our smaller trucks. The Bandit 990XP is a possible alternative to the smaller chippers we now use.

First impressions are that this machine is nicely compact and very solidly built. The newly designed discharge chute looks great and should help with chip throwing. The chipper has a rugged 100mm x 50mm RHS steel chassis, big 16” wheels and tyres, and a good solid axle with leaf springs instead of the torsion beam arrangement that can cause problems on our rough roads. Bandit tells us they use two-pack DuPont Imron paint, and it shows. The chipper has an excellent gloss finish and looks great behind our truck. The chipper weighs in at 2,400kg and our driver reported that it does not bounce the back of the truck at all. It is the perfect size for the smaller

3.5 ton Canter Tipper we use on tight access jobs, but I’m sure it will sit okay behind our bigger trucks too. The discharge chute swivels easily from side to side and is height adjustable so we can set it up correctly for the different trucks in our fleet.

The Bandit 990XP has many good standard features including lift and crush for the top feed roller and the infeed Auto Feed system. Important safety features include good high sides on the infeed table to help keep the operators away from the infeed rollers, and to help prevent those nasty whacks on the legs that chipper operators suffer from time to time. Big ‘Emergency Stop’ switches are fitted near the tail lights on both sides of the infeed hopper within easy reach of the operators – nice. The lift and crush controls are on both sides of the infeed hopper and I like the strong infeed control bar – it does not flex when used and has a proper hydraulic valve to control the direction of the feed rollers instead of the little electric switches I’ve seen used on other machines. I would like to have seen rake and broom holders on this machine; the Bandit guys tell us that these are easy to fit if a customer requests. Bandit has their standard “pusher paddle” on the machine to help feed short lengths – a nice safety feature. All service points and grease nipples look to be easily accessible. The chipper drum is supported by two huge double row pillow block bearings – they should last for years with proper greasing. Access to the blades is easier than what we are used to; Bandit have a large hinged door with a padlock and a safety interlock switch on it so that the engine will

shut down if someone tries to open the door when the engine is running. Blade changes are easy and quick; the four reversible knives can be swapped out in minutes.

The Control Panel for the 85hp Perkins Turbo diesel has gauges for oil pressure, water temperature, volts and a digital tachometer. The engine has the Murphy protection system, which is a must. We liked the “old school” cable operated throttle as it’s less likely to fail than the new push button throttles that are showing up on some engines. This engine is fitted with an adjustable over centre clutch which we prefer as it gives the operator more control when engaging the chipper drum head. I would have liked to have seen the control panel on the other side of the machine away from the traffic. Bandit tells us that this is an easy swap over if the machine owner requests it.

So the Bandit 990XP looks like a well built unit with good standard features; but how does it perform? Well I am happy to report that it comfortably exceeded our expectations. This machine has two wide horizontal feed rollers which feed the material in very well. Our operators actually thought the infeed speed was a bit too fast; I think that in time they will get used to it, and in any case Bandit say that the next batch of machines out of the Factory will be fitted with an adjustable infeed speed control valve. This chipper is “A1” when it comes to feeding performance and has a ton of infeed pulling power. The lift and crush for the

top roller helps feed difficult forked timbers and is brilliant for easily and safely feeding short logs. The operators can hydraulically lift the top roller and throw short logs under the roller to prevent the possibility of them reaching into the infeed hopper.

We tested the chipper right up to its 12 inch (30cm) capacity and it did it all without problems. The 85hp diesel was smooth, reasonably quiet and had good power for this sized chipper. One of the big things we noticed is how hard this chipper throws the chips. As you can see in the photos, Bandit has a newly designed discharge chute that has a much longer and smoother angled transition out of the drum housing and up into the discharge chute. This helps keep the chips moving fast and I have to report that this thing smashes the chips onto the headboard of the truck. There are no chips dribbling out the end of the discharge – everything blasts into the truck and there is little mess to clean up at the back of the truck – very impressive. Noise levels were acceptable (it’s a chipper), and the mandatory operator PPE will overcome that issue.

Overall, Bandit’s Model 990XP chipper is a great performer and looks to be built to take a beating. Our crew was kept very busy keeping up with it and it’s ideal for general tree work and utility power line clearance work. If you are in the market for an excellent 12” capacity chipper contact Bandit for your own Road Test demo – you won’t be disappointed. **AA**



CRITERIA	COMMENTS	STAR RATING
Design and Construction	Great, but engine controls better on kerbside	★★★★
Access to controls and service points	Excellent, needs kerbside controls	★★★★★
Engine Power	Plenty - did it all no problems	★★★★★
Standard features	Packed, but I wanted rake and broom holders	★★★★★
Noise levels	Same as other chippers	★★★★
Chip throwing	Throws hard, doesn’t hesitate	★★★★★
Chipping Feature	Exceptional for this size machine	★★★★★

SPECIFICATION	
Model	990XP
Capacity	12”
Engine Brand	Perkins turbo, 85hp
Chipper Type	Drum
Infeed Throat Opening Size	17” wide x 13” high (432 x 330mm)
Feed Rate	140 ft/min (43m/min)
Feed Roller Description	Two horizontal rollers
Hydraulic Lift and Crush	Standard
Auto Feed Plus Feed Control	Standard
Chipper Weight	2,400 kg
Drum Diameter	24” (600mm) 5 year warranty
No. Reversible Blades	4
Chipper Bearing	2 7/16” (62mm) double row
Tow Hitch Type	Pintle ring
Height Adjustable Discharge Chute	Hand crank standard
Discharge Chute Swivel	Manual standard
Fuel Tank Capacity	93 litres
Hydraulic Tank Capacity	45 litres
Chipper Chassis Description	100 x 50mm RHS steel
Suspension Type	Single leaf spring axle
Axle Capacity	3,170kg oversized
Brakes	Electric
Tyres	245/75R16
Tail Lights	LED standard
Chipper Length	4.1m
Chipper Width	1.75m