



### Character Reference for Umut KIR

2<sup>nd</sup> May 2016-05-02

We met Umut in December 2015 on a self driving motor challenge finishing stage 1 in Istanbul, Driving our fabulous **Ford Ranger** from Australia to Turkey through Timor most of Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Laos, China, Mongolia, Russia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan Kyrgyzstan, Azerbaijan, Georgia then Turkey finishing up in Istanbul.

The weather started getting quite cold and a decision was made (with our travelling mates Alan & Lynn Taylor) to leave our cars in Istanbul and fly home for the remainder of the Australian summer. We booked return flights from Istanbul to Sydney returning to Istanbul on 27<sup>th</sup> May 2016.

Now, we had a dilemma, what to do with our cars, one Toyota Land Cruiser and a Ford Ranger. We commenced looking for parking stations all over Istanbul to no avail, All too low in height. Alan came up with an idea we try the car dealers Toyota & Ford.

We looked up Toyota first and were lucky enough to find the Toyota head quarters were very close to the hotel we were staying at. We drove up to the boom gates at Toyota head quarters and were met by some very friendly security staff (a great sign as security was an important issue for us). The security personal quickly allowed us in and directed us to park in the car park area adjacent to the security office at the boom gates. They gave us tea in a lovely warm heated room with them.

The head security chap made a call to Umut KIR. It was less than 10 mins and Umut came and greeted us with a hand shakes and big smile. Umut quickly became interested in our driving challenge from Australia. We explained we needed a secure place to leave our cars for up to 5 months. Umut spoke to (I

assume his superiors) and came back to us and offered to look after our cars for the duration of our return trip to Australia and back.

Umut was an absolute gentleman and a delight to deal with, his sense of humour was fantastic, his English was superb. He put our cars under cover and made us feel so secure, in particular with me owning a Ford. He took great delight with Alan using humorous remarks about my Ford. I took this in my stride and we all had a great laugh.

I feel we have now made another great friend in Turkey with Umut. I want to thank Umut and Toyota for the service and hospitality they have shown us.

I would like to take this opportunity to invite Umut to Australia and shown him some of our hospitality any time in the future once we have finished this journey.

Thank you Umut for all you have done for us.

Regards

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