

Gcina Sonke Engineers adds Finlay and Bomag machines to its fleet

The understanding and appreciation an original equipment manufacturer and supplier has for the business that it is in, is often the catalyst for customers purchasing its equipment and in doing so, creates a growing working relationship.

A case in point would be Gcina Sonke Engineers in Mthatha in the Eastern Cape. Having started the company in 2000 its founder Jones Frimpong, a qualified civil engineer, first worked in consulting before creating a business in precast concrete products producing pit latrines, toilets, kerb stones, gullies and palisades. Jones by this stage had extensive experience of project management and civil construction especially of infrastructure services such as roads, sewerage and water reticulation.

Jones was later joined by Nellie Mbalo, an architect. Mbalo has wide experience of public and private architectural projects and project management and she boasts an impressive portfolio of projects across the African continent.

Gcina Sonke Engineers currently employs 51 people who include machine operators, truck drivers, administration and maintenance staff. When working for any of the many small municipalities in the Eastern Cape the company draws manual labour from the area where it is contracted so uplifting local communities by job creation.

Since first embarking on acquiring its own fleet of yellow machines, the company can now tackle most construction projects as it owns its own tipper trucks, tractor loader backhoes, forklift, concrete mixer, compactor and grader.

According to Job Chidziwa, Gcina Sonke's Accountant, the company recently saw a need for a mobile crusher on a road construction contract. "We had, in early July 2015, attended the Finlay Open Day held at Bell Equipment's Jet Park premises and at Glen Douglas and were very impressed with what we saw," he

says. "We were fortunate enough that through Luc Hannan, Bell Equipment's Sales Representative in East London, we were able to hire a Finlay J-1160 Jaw Crusher from Bell Equipment and when we saw what this machine could do, we had no hesitation in buying a similar machine."

Job is quick to point out that they felt that Bell Equipment's understanding of their business model gave them the confidence to buy this particular model as the right tool for the job at hand, given the area where they would work now and in the future. Gcina Sonke is also confident that even though plant hire is not their core business, the Finlay J-1160 Jaw Crusher would do well in that role when they do not require it.

The company also recently took delivery of a Bomag BW D-40 Single-Drum Smooth Roller. When asked why they chose Bell Equipment for this machine, Job is adamant when he says: "Pricing was an important factor but above all Bell Equipment, as the OEM of choice, instilled confidence in us as they were flexible in their terms which points to an appreciation of our business. They, as distributors of the full Bomag and Finlay range, have knowledgeable sales and maintenance staff and having a branch in Mthatha to add to their broad national footprint, told us in no uncertain manner that we were making the right choice here."

Job was further impressed with the fact that Bell Equipment's Sales Representative, Luc Hannan, is well in touch with the market and is knowledgeable about future projects and plant hire opportunities.

"We are seriously considering entering into a service agreement with Bell Equipment for the maintenance of our equipment bought from them as we believe that is the best way forward, should we need them in an emergency at any time," he adds. "We've built a reputation for bringing projects in on budget and on time and as we'd like to continue in this manner, we believe in owning new and well maintained equipment such as the Bomag and Finlay machines we have recently bought from Bell Equipment."

Gcina Sonke Engineers is a company on the way up but believes that its future growth is also dependent on growing others. To this end, the company is funding four young university students with full scholarships for their engineering studies, which it believes will ensure it has active and bright minds to take the company ever forward.



Job Chidziwa with Sharon Kumordor and Christian Ofosuhene of Gcina Sonke Engineers in front of the company's J-1160 Jaw Crusher.