

# KAVS Equipment expands its Bell ADT fleet

**Bell Equipment's investment in a new Customer Service Centre in Kitwe, Zambia and the company's legendary committed technical back up of its products has swayed a Zambian contract miner to enlarge his fleet of Bell Articulated Dump Trucks.**

Ashwin Sharma arrived in Kitwe, Zambia in 1969; later he started retail businesses in furniture and electronics. Ventures into property development followed and by 2006, he was involved in transport as well. His transport fleet consists of long-haul rigs that traverse the Zambian Copperbelt as well as rigid tipper trucks and the combined fleet now numbers some 50 units.

"Entering the contract mining field seemed to flow from my father's knowledge of the transport industry," says Ashwin's son Hamish, a mechanical engineer who entered the family business after completing his studies in the United Kingdom in 2011. "We made our intentions clear to our mining clients that we were committed to contract mining when early in 2014 we enlarged our fleet of mining equipment by acquiring two new Bell B40 Articulated Dump Trucks (ADTs) and nine pre-owned models of the same size."

Despite the pre-owned Bell B40D ADTs having done between 14 000 and 17 000 hours of service when bought, they helped the Sharmas and their company, KAVS Equipment Ltd, establish itself as a sustainable mining contracting company. Two of these machines have subsequently passed the 21 000 hour mark and are still in service daily.

"At our biggest copper mining operation south of Kitwe, we work two 12-hour shifts for seven days a week and our tasks include load and haul, screen to size, haul to the processing plant and maintaining haul roads," Hamish says. "We use a 48-ton excavator to load our ADTs in-pit and try and maintain ramps at around 8 degrees to ensure steady cycles and frugal fuel consumption. We have seen firsthand that maintaining haul roads adds to tyre life and decreases fuel consumption."

Despite full loads of material measuring between 2,5 and 2,7 specific gravity, fuel consumption of 21 to 22 litres of diesel an hour has impressed the Sharmas.

KAVS Equipment's fleet of ADTs currently hauls waste to a nearby dump and ore to an on-site mobile screener. From the screen, the sized material is then trucked using rigid tipper trucks to the main processing plant.

"We've been impressed by the level of the technical support we enjoy from Bell Equipment and the company's commitment it has shown, especially now with its huge investment in establishing its new state-of-the-art Customer Service Centre in Kitwe, has convinced us that when we renew our fleet of haul trucks, it will be with Bell B40D ADTs, Hamish adds. "Bell Equipment's technical support is by far the best in the Zambian Copperbelt."

KAVS Equipment Ltd first bought a Bell manufactured machine when in 2008 it acquired a new Bell 315SJ 4x4 Tractor Loader Backhoe. Although the machine has on occasion been hired out to amongst others, a piling company, it is mostly used in-house and especially for road maintenance and has given its owners some 3 500 hours of trouble-free service.

*From left: Matthew Milligan (KAVS Equipment Ltd Administration Manager for the mining site), Kyle Brown (Bell Equipment Sales Representative), Hamish Sharma (Operations Manager: KAVS Equipment Ltd) and Terry Gillham (Bell Equipment Director: Sales & Marketing).*

