

Bell development rings in German manufacture

The expansion of Bell Equipment's Eisenach-Kindel factory in Germany is on track for completion in the third quarter and the company eagerly anticipates the subsequent commissioning of a new manufacturing facility to complement its existing assembly plant in Germany and manufacturing plant in South Africa.

According to Bell Equipment Chief Executive, Leon Goosen, the extension is "a significant capital investment" and completing the project in just over a year will be a tremendous achievement, demonstrating the company's commitment to grow as a global

manufacturer. He added that the investment is in direct response to the widespread acceptance and growth in demand of the Bell range of Articulated Dump Trucks.

The expansion follows the completion of a new European

Logistics Centre and Bell Germany headquarters in Alsfeld, Germany in 2017 that has successfully achieved the objectives of improving logistics and customer support. Building on this, the factory expansion project will allow more fabrication to be done closer

to the market which will enhance flexibility and enable Bell to respond more efficiently to customer requirements.

"The expansion got underway last June and will add 12 000m², tripling the existing factory floorspace," said Leon. "Strategically we opted for a modular design that will enable us to further expand the manufacturing facility over time to keep pace with global growth."

"Until now we have only carried out assembly activities at our German factory, but with this expansion we will be leveraging our more than 65 years of manufacturing know-how and implementing full fabrication capacity. This includes investing in

raw material storage and state-of-the-art metal cutting, forming as well as welding automation technology to ensure consistent quality.

The middle of May saw the installation of production equipment followed by the commissioning of this equipment. Initially the facility will be used to manufacture ADT bins to support the existing assembly facility as well as the final stage manufacturing of bonnets for ADTs. Additional space that has been planned for future expansion will be utilised in the interim to improve logistics by providing additional warehousing and material staging for production.

The Thuringer region, in which the Eisenach-Kindel factory is located, is rich in skilled resources that will be required to staff the expansion and Bell also benefitted from an investment grant from Thüringer Aufbaubank in respect of this expansion.

Since the initial opening of the German facility in 2003, Bell has cooperated closely with the regional development agency, LEG Thuringia, and at the groundbreaking ceremony for the expansion in June 2018, the State Secretary of the Ministry of Economy underlined the importance of Bell Equipment's continued commitment for the regional economy.

