

OEM flexibility and speedy response seal new contract for Burma

Business relationships are a lot like interpersonal relationships where mutual trust ensures growth leading to win-win situations for all. This is what a leading player in the South African plant hire market has found with the original equipment manufacturer (OEM) that supplies the greater majority of its yellow fleet.

Plant hire companies are by their very nature dependent on the quality of design and build in the products their trusted OEMs supply, often at short notice. Such was the case recently when Cape Town-based Burma Plant Hire extended their mining services in the Mpumalanga coal belt.

"We have operated in mining for almost 10 years now, so we are no strangers to the industry, working in

various applications such as opencast mining, rehabilitation and load and haul contracts across various locations including Mpumalanga and the Northern Cape," says Theuns Burger, Managing Director of Burma Plant Hire. "Since becoming part of the Raubex Group of Companies and focusing on the mining industry, we have realigned our reliance on construction and are now heavily biased towards mining."

Theuns explains that recent success is due to the company's sheer flexibility and speed to respond to customer needs. "We had to have equipment available in a hurry and for this we thank our trusted OEM-partners at Bell Equipment who could supply the necessary equipment and support at short notice. This successful turn of events led directly to our new clients acknowledging us as serious players in this competitive market."

Burma Plant Hire's most recent contract is an exciting one as the company is tasked with load and haul duties on a totally green-fields opencast coal mine east of Middelburg in Mpumalanga. Once the assessment for the right loading and haulage tools had been completed, Burma Plant Hire approached Bell Equipment Sales Representative, Clifton Roberts, in Cape Town for an impressive range of yellow machines.

Between December 2018 and March 2019, Burma Plant Hire took delivery of 11 Bell B60E Articulated Dump Trucks, seven Kobelco SK850LC-8 Excavators and 15 Bell B45E Articulated Dump Trucks (ADTs) – a total complement of 33 pieces of equipment, most of which were established within the first two months.

"We're firmly of the opinion that the 85-ton Kobelco SK850LC-8 Excavator with its 5,1 cubic metre

bucket is the ideal loading tool for both the Bell B60E and Bell B45E ADTs and quick loading makes for faster cycle times and subsequent improved production," Theuns explains.

"The request for using 60-ton ADTs had been made by our clients which meant that choosing Bell Equipment's by now proven B60E machines was a no-brainer," Theuns adds. "We also felt that adding the Bell 45E ADTs into the mix would give us more versatility when tasks varied. Both the Bell B60E and B45E ADTs have shown that they work well when fully laden in slippery underfoot conditions and they were severely tested during a wet February 2019."

The topsoil and overburden are hauled to stockpiles within the mine's boundaries from where it will be easily accessible for later rehabilitation. Given proper mine

planning and the proximity of these stockpiles, haul distances should never exceed 3km in one direction.

Whilst this contract is operated on a dry rate, Burma Plant Hire's decision to buy Bell and Kobelco equipment is driven largely by fuel efficiency, which in this instance the customer benefits from directly.

Theuns acknowledges that any piece of earthmoving equipment is only as good as its maintenance allows it to be and for this reason the company has appointed Bell Equipment to base dedicated Bell-trained specialists permanently on the mine. "We've committed to meeting our production targets, but we know that diligent maintenance and working safely ensures this," he says. "Having Bell Equipment backing us technically especially beyond the warranty period, gives us much confidence to maintain that commitment and



the company has already proved its value during site start-up when technical experts were on site to ensure maximum uptime on equipment from the outset."

The successful conclusion of this transaction is summed up by John Collins, Bell Equipment's General

Manager: Cape Region and Namibia when he says: "This whole deal was truly an exceptional team effort and unified alignment to the vision of our great client and partners in the Burma team, by all our Cape region staff and Bell head office management with great aftermarket support from our

Central region operation. I believe this may be one of the largest such deals ever in the history of Bell Equipment Sales South Africa and we have every confidence that this is the start of greater things for our valued client, Burma Plant Hire."



MD of Bell Equipment Sales South Africa, Duncan Mashika, handed over a memento to the MD of Burma Plant Hire, Theuns Burger, at a function in Middelburg to mark the delivery of 11 B60E and 15 B45E ADTs as well as 7 Kobelco SK850LC Excavators to the company.