

# Alfieri Holdings 'supports local' with a dozen Bell ADTs

**A new junior mining company with a well-established pedigree in coal trading and transport, has turned to Bell Equipment's homegrown brand of haulage vehicles for its own coal mine, so completing the value chain.**

Back in 2002, Branden Moodley started a transport company with one truck. While he may have been short of trucks, he certainly wasn't short of energy and ambition and the drive to build a recognised transport company.

"I started our company Fast Track Express, or FTX as it's commonly known, on a small scale but now we constantly have a fleet of 70 side-tipping interlinked trucks on the roads across South Africa,

hauling coal to major users like Eskom and Sasol," Branden says. "We operate out of big depots in Germiston, Middelburg and Ermelo."

"Getting to know the ins and outs of the coal transport market led us to start trading in coal in 2014 and, as the years flew by, the idea of completing the value chain by having our own coal source started growing ever stronger," he adds.

By 2019, Branden and a business partner, Zabilon Inama, had bought into a new coal resource under the name of Ikoti Coal situated near to the town of Breyten in Mpumalanga. This new mine had a mining license held by various shareholders and Moodley and Inama managed to gradually buy up the whole shareholding, a process which caused some delay in production, but which finally kicked off in May 2021.

The Ikoti coal mine is owned by Alfieri Holdings (Pty) Ltd of which Moodley and Inama are the directors.

"Having run a transport company for many years we were confident that we were well versed in things mechanical and hired in a fleet of loading and haulage equipment to get the opencast mining going," Branden explains. "We soon realised that to be taken seriously in the coal mining industry, by meeting the production targets and volumes our high-end clients demanded and

deserved, we would need our own new equipment that could within reason guarantee maximum and sustained uptime."

The two business partners started researching the market for options on mining equipment and spoke to other operators and contractors. "One name kept popping up and that was Bell Equipment with emphasis on the company's legendary Articulated Dump Trucks (ADTs) that are designed and built in South Africa," Branden says. "Influenced by the general consensus in the market that Bell ADTs were the haulage machines of choice, we made contact with Bell Equipment in Jet Park and met the company's Bruce Ndlela who is Director: Business and Public Sector Development who along with Sales Representative, Enock Mabasa, were very persuasive as they immediately showed us that they understood our business and the challenges we face."





"It would be fair to say that Bell Equipment was not merely interested in a sale but rather that we obtain the correct equipment for the job at hand which, all things considered, would ensure that we run a sustainable coal mining operation with benefits all round," Zabilon Inama adds. "We gladly acknowledge this and thank Bell Equipment for taking us seriously."

With a solid financing facility through Bell Finance in place, Alfieri Holdings ordered a fleet of 12 new Bell B45E ADTs of which eight were delivered in a staggered fashion during the second half of 2021 and the balance arriving in early 2022. The Bell ADTs have been bought with comprehensive extended warranties to 10 000 hours and Bell technicians from the Bell Equipment Customer Service Centre in Middelburg take care of servicing and general maintenance. Alfieri Holdings is looking at securing a full service package for its fleet of Bell B45E ADTs.

The Bell B45E ADTs are used to haul topsoil and blasted waste material to stockpiles from where this material will be used again when ongoing rehabilitation starts. Two 95-ton excavators load the Bell B45E fleet.

The Bell trucks have also impressed Ikoti Coal's Mine Manager, Dirk Coetzee. "With a stripping ratio of 4:3, we've exposed the coal seams quite quickly and although the ramps in and out of the pit are fairly steep, sometimes at between 9 and 10 degrees, the Bell B45E ADTs perform superbly

under full loads even during the wet summer we experienced," he says. "Despite these tricky underfoot conditions, the Bell B45E ADTs are burning fuel at just under 28 litres an hour which fits our mining plan."

The mined coal is hauled 2,2km to the run-of-mine tip where it is crushed and screened using mobile equipment before being loaded onto FTX trucks for onward delivery to customers.

"We also enjoy using Bell Equipment's Fleetm@tic® monitoring system and are looking forward to deploying the full package soon so that we can keep track of how the Bell ADTs and our operators are performing," Dirk says. "In this way we believe we'll be able to get the maximum life out of our Bell B45E ADTs which form the backbone of our mining operation."

"Knowing that Bell Equipment is only a phone call away is a big plus for us and the support we've received from Aubrey Potgieter and his team at Bell Middelburg has been phenomenal," he adds.

"Our first box-cut has so far yielded over 100 000 tons of coal and when we start a second similar operation on the eastern side of the property, we're bound to need more ADTs and we have no doubt that we'll be consulting Bell Equipment in this matter," Branden concludes.



**Below, from left to right: Dirk Coetzee (Ikoti Coal Mine Manager), Mzwakhe Mbatha (Department of Trade, Industry and Competition: Automotive & Truck Industry), Enock Mabaso (Bell Equipment Sales Representative), Lehlohonolb Molloyi (MEMSA), Aubrey Potgieter (Bell Equipment Middelburg Branch Manager), Bruce Ndlela (Bell Equipment Director of Business and Public Sector Development), Branden Moodley (Director: Alfieri Holdings Pty Ltd.), Gary Bell (Bell Equipment Group Chairman), Zabilon Inama (Director: Alfieri Holdings Pty Ltd.), Advocate TS Mokoena (DMRE) and Coen Bezuidenhout (Mining Engineer: Ikoti Coal Mine).**

