

Solid relationship keeps Andru Mining coming back for more blue Bells

In today's structured corporate world, it is rare for a customer to engage with a design engineer of any product, let alone make suggestions as to how that product may be improved. This is exactly what keeps a major South African mining contractor brand-loyal to a market-leading manufacturer of articulated dump trucks (ADTs).

Andru Mining is known to be a leading player in the competitive business of contract mining in South Africa. The company was founded in the late 1970s by Terry Troughton, a civil engineer. The company is currently in the hands of a dynamic foursome consisting of Branden Bowen, the Managing Director; Joe Naicker, Plant Director; Anthony Wardlaw, Operations Director and the lone rose amongst the thorns, Shonel Reddy, who is the Financial Director.

"We work exclusively in opencast mining and our fleet of earthmoving equipment is

well-known by its distinctive blue colour," says Branden Bowen. "We offer our services in opencast coal mining, bulk material handling services as well as in hard-rock mining such as platinum, gold, chrome, manganese, silica and fluorspar."

"You will appreciate that working in mining contracting that



The Andru Mining directors (from left): Anthony Wardlaw (Operations Director), Shonel Reddy (Financial Director), Branden Bowen (Managing Director) and Joe Naicker (Plant Director).

demands production on a 24/7 basis, means we rely on high utilisation and sustained mechanical availabilities of any equipment that we buy, and for this reason we run equipment to its first life only," Branden adds. "Experience has taught us to do accurate condition monitoring and peg a piece of equipment that has the potential of suffering a major component failure, so as to deal with it before such failure."

Branden further explains that Andru Mining has built a

reputation for selling used equipment that has been well-maintained and, as each machine comes with a full service history, the equipment generally sells itself. Any Andru Mining equipment that is destined for South Africa is first repainted to its original yellow livery but that which leaves the country is left blue.

"We run a huge fleet of around 125 ADTs in the 30- and 40-ton ranges and they all come from one manufacturer, namely Bell Equipment," Branden says. "The reason for this is simple, as apart from very competitive pricing, we enjoy a unique relationship with Bell."

"The latter fact is the real reason why we have such a long and successful relationship with Bell Equipment



which translates into why we keep on buying their outstanding ADTs."

"It's through this understanding of our needs that Bell designed and built a dedicated coal bin that we have used on many of our B40s with huge success," he explains. "We recently took delivery of the first ADTs for an order of five Bell B30E and 16 Bell B40E ADTs and while these have all been ordered with standard bins, we will be taking delivery of eight specialised coal bins for the B40E ADTs during the second half of 2022. The dedicated coal bins make a massive difference in our offering to our clients in terms of sustained production."

With coal having a much lower specific gravity than the overburden that covers it, the coal bin allows the Bell B40E to easily fulfil its design capacity of carrying between 36 and 39 tons of raw coal.

Four of Andru Mining's new Bell B30E ADTs have been deployed to a fluorspar mine northeast of Pretoria where they haul both the fluorspar-bearing rock and overburden between 1 and 4,5km in one direction.

Four Bell B40E ADTs are being used to successfully mine platinum on a major opencast deposit near Rustenburg. The mining process for the elusive platinum is especially tough on machines due to its dense and abrasive nature with the overburden showing specific gravities of 2,8 and the platinum ore, of 3,2 upwards.

"In both the applications mentioned, our Bell B30E and B40E ADTs are still new and will run a while still until we pin down accurate fuel consumption figures," Branden says. "In both cases our clients provide the fuel, but we do have a fuel cap and the good news is that our new Bell ADTs have in both cases, remained below the fuel cap limits."

"Our experience in this challenging and competitive field of opencast contract mining has taught us that the Bell B30E and B40E ADTs are best suited for the types of contracts that we as a company enjoy," he adds. "Our winning formula is that we carefully choose the types of contracts that suit our equipment, and our Bell ADTs across the board have not let us down yet."

