

# Kobelco SK220XD-10 has most frugal fuel in Henra's excavator fleet

After receiving a call from André Rall in Upington regarding the fuel consumption of the new Kobelco Excavator on site, Gerrie Matthee was puzzled. There had to be a mistake. The figure he received from André couldn't be correct as it was far lower than the average his company's five other similarly weighted excavators returned. It was 38% lower.



**Bell Sales Representative, Fiona Johnson, with General Manager of Henra, Gerrie Matthee.**

Gerrie Matthee is the General Manager of Henra, a multidisciplinary civil construction company based at Hartenbosch in the Southern Cape. The company was founded by the late Hennie Rall in 1990 and has since evolved into three divisions, namely Henra Plant Hire, Henra Civil Contractors and Entsha Henra. Hennie's son, André Rall, joined the company in 2018 and is one of the directors.

"Our core business is civil contracting, be it for roads, township development or the installation of services for water or sewerage and other infrastructure," Gerrie says. "We've worked all over South Africa and in Lesotho."

Being in civil construction, Henra's divisions rely on Henra Plant Hire for the yellow equipment they may need. This is the division that acquires, owns and

maintains it. Henra Plant Hire has built up a fair-sized fleet comprising excavators, wheeled loaders, backhoe loaders (TLBs), articulated dump trucks (ADTs), graders, rollers, rigid tipper trucks, low bed transporters and a range of milling machines, recyclers and pavers, the latter for road construction.

"We currently operate a fleet of eight Bell ADTs across the B18, B20 and B25 ranges, the bulk of which were bought on the used market. One Bell B18D was bought from Bell Equipment with Fiona Johnson handling the sale," Gerrie continues. "Fiona has since supplied us with a Bomag BW211-40 Roller in 2019 and a Bell 315SL Work Pro TLB in 2020. These machines have stood us in good stead, performing the multitudes of tasks they were designed for."



**Operator of the Kobelco SK220XD-10 Excavator, Jackson Gcuku.**

According to Gerrie, Henra Plant Hire has no fixed policy on machine replacement. With the current situation in the construction industry recovering slowly post-COVID, it will look at new acquisitions should the awarding of significant projects warrant it.

Such was the case late in 2021 when the company decided to trade in an older JCB JS360 Excavator that had given them excellent service on several significant projects. These projects included a solar farm near Pofadder, a 30km pipeline project between the Camphers Dam and the Vaal River, and a major water supply pipeline for Sedibeng Water in the Northern Cape.

"Our JCB JS360 Excavator was then the biggest in our fleet and had done 6 400 hours of really hard digging through the calcrete of the Northern Cape," Gerrie explains. "Bell Equipment saw value in this machine and offered us a good trade-in and an extremely competitive price on a new Kobelco SK220XD-10 Excavator."

"The new Kobelco SK220XD-10 machine probably spent an hour in our yard before being shipped off to Upington, where it is used to install new 600mm and 800mm sewer lines for the Dawid Kruiper Municipality. This project is expected to take 13 months to complete."

The new Kobelco SK220XD-10 Excavator was acquired with an extended warranty spanning 36 months or 5 000 hours and was financed on a short term with Henra's own facilities.

"We have five other 20-ton excavators in our fleet. We monitor fuel burn closely as it's a major expense on any contract," Gerrie adds. "We also know that soil conditions in the Northern Cape can be

challenging, wearing heavily on cutting tools and fuel consumption as machines work harder there."

"That is why, when the average fuel burn on our existing 20-ton excavator fleet stands at 16,44 litres an hour and this new Kobelco SK220XD-10 machine comes in at 10,1 litres, it makes you sit up and take notice. That is a massive saving of around 38% on diesel alone."

Jackson Gcuku operates the Kobelco SK220XD-10 Excavator on the site of the sewer pipeline in Upington. He says the following about the machine: "I've been an excavator operator since 1994. This machine is smooth and easy to operate with lots of power. The engine sounds like it's only idling. The cab is comfortable with lots of room. I can easily see all around me, which is important from a safety point of view as we often work close to people."

Gerrie believes that the quality of any piece of earthmoving equipment's is defined by the technical support a customer can rely on from its supplier and regards Bell Equipment as in the top range on this front. "Our relationship with Bell Equipment starts with the company's Sales Representative, Fiona Johnson, who is much more than that as she visits us not only to sell her products but also to enquire about our well-being personally," he says. "That's how you grow a business relationship through personal and sincere contact, and all follows naturally after that."

"Bell Equipment's excellent response times, parts holdings and general caring attitude will always bring us back for more. We're happy that the company is now also the distributor of JCB equipment. We have quite a few machines of that brand in Excavators and Backhoe Loaders."