

# Second Finlay 683 Screen doubles production for sand mining operation

The Western Cape Province, and more specifically the Cape Winelands, is seeing a lot of development in the construction market right now as more people want to live in these well-run municipalities.



Suppliers of building materials, especially sand, bemoan the fact that there is very little clean sand left in sand deposits. This has prompted a well-established sand and aggregate supplier in Wellington to make a plan involving market-leading technology.

Dirk Lochner started his transport company under his own name in 1968 with just one six-cubic metre tipper truck. He undertook sub-contract transport assignments for the then Cape Provincial Administration. When Dirk's son, Francois, finished school in 1995, he joined his father in the business and drove a second similar truck.

"During that same year we started selling building sand and stone aggregates, which caused our business to show steady growth until we established a Closed Corporation in 2006," Francois recalls. "My wife, Marinda, had joined the business in 2003 as the head of the financial section and we're lucky she's there to keep an eye on the numbers."

Dirk Lochner Transport currently mines its own sand from two mines situated at Perdeberg to the west of

Wellington and these operations commenced in 2015 with only one mine. Once processed into various sand products such as plaster, building, and concrete sand along with a coarser waste product, a now much larger fleet of tipper trucks distributes the various sand products as far afield as Stellenbosch, Franschhoek, Paarl, Wolseley, and Tulbagh.

"We had originally started with one sand mine in 2015 and realised from the outset that we'd have to screen the raw sand product to rid it of oversized particles and other impurities," Francois says. "We researched the market thoroughly and feel we were fortunate to learn that Bell Equipment was the South African distributor of Finlay crushing and screening equipment, which is where we first met Fiona Johnson, Bell Equipment's knowledgeable sales representative who still calls on us."

With Fiona's guidance, Dirk Lochner Transport became the proud owner of a Finlay 683 Incline Screen in 2015, which has subsequently given its owners 8 000 productive hours and many thousands of cubic metres of saleable product.





**Bell Equipment Sales Representative, Fiona Johnson (left) with Francois Lochner, owner of Dirk Lochner Transport, and his wife, Marinda.**

"The Finlay 683 Screen contributes much value to our business and the fact that it's mobile and relatively easily moved on a standard low bed trailer makes its use so versatile," Francois explains. "Our primary product, namely building sand, is delivered by the main belt with fine gravel to one side and nothing is wasted as even the coarse, oversized product that is deposited by a third belt at right angles, is much sought-after in our area for road construction and rehabilitation."

Francois goes on to tell us that at the sand mine, the sand is exposed once the topsoil has been removed and stockpiled for later rehabilitation of the mined area according to strict environmental laws his company must follow in keeping with stipulations of environmental impact assessments. "We find the correct sand layers at around one metre below the surface. We extract the sand using a 20-ton excavator, which loads our trucks for a short haul to where the sand is screened using the Finlay 683 Screen with a wheel loader feeding the screen's eight-cubic metre hopper," he says. "We had recently obtained a permit for a second sand mine and thought it prudent to buy yet another Finlay 683 Screen to double up on our production."

This new Finlay 683 Screen was delivered at the end of May 2023 and has since clocked some 750 hours. Average fuel burn of around 12 to 13 litres an hour fits the business plan nicely.

"As our two sand mines are relatively close together, we've placed the two Finlay 683 Screens next to each other at a central site to have one large production area that is fed from the two different sources, and in doing so streamline our production," he adds. "We aim to produce at least 500 cubic metres of saleable product in a day shift and on good days we've easily pushed this figure to 700 cubic metres."

"These Finlay 683 Screens are so ideally suited to what we need to do, and our older machine has only stood once in the eight years we've had it, while we waited for a part to be delivered, which goes to show that with the correct and diligent maintenance, these Finlay Screens don't often break down."

"This also proves the value of having mechanics from Bell Equipment handling the major services and repair with original branded parts as it brings about the longevity of the equipment which sustains production and a solid return on one's investment."

