

Bell Care Packages keep AMC's B40E fleet in top condition



A positive experience with a smaller branch of a well-known original earthmoving and haulage equipment supplier convinced a leading contractor in crushing and screening to buy many more of that brand's larger Articulated Dump Trucks (ADTs).

African Mining & Crushing (AMC) was founded in 2009 by Warwick and Matthew Hughes and is headquartered in Bloemfontein, South Africa. "Our core business is drilling and blasting, crushing and screening, and loading and hauling of run-of-mine (ROM) material and aggregates," says Chrisjan Roodt, AMC's Procurement Manager. "We also design, manufacture and install infrastructure on mines and quarries."

"The bulk of the minerals we process are iron ore, manganese, coal, gold and kimberlite on the ROM side while on aggregates, we have experience with road and concrete stone, ballast and Rip-Rap."

"A while ago, we bought two older Bell B20D ADTs that we wanted to

use as vehicles for training purposes in our quarry near Bloemfontein as we put a premium on the proper training of our drivers and machine operators," Chrisjan continues.

"The ADTs had done between 14 000 to 15 000 hours each and we set about rebuilding them in our own workshops as we were confident that they'd still be delivering productive hours even as training vehicles, in years to come."

Chrisjan goes on to explain that they were pleasantly surprised by the service that they received from Bell Equipment's Bloemfontein branch. Even for these older model ADTs, replacement parts were readily available and were far more reasonably priced than what they had expected to pay for

original OEM parts.

"We have been involved in a crushing, screening, and materials handling role on a major opencast manganese mine in the Northern Cape for some years now. In 2022 we received more contract work from the mine to assist with overburden removal on a cut-back project which would expand their mining pit and another contract where we would remove topsoil to enlarge an existing waste dump," Chrisjan adds. "For these purposes, we realised immediately that we'd need more new haulage vehicles and approached, amongst other sales representatives, Wikus Kleynhans of Bell Equipment, for a quotation on six new Bell B40E ADTs."

"We've long considered Bell ADTs to be the market-leading ADT in





AMC Operations Director, Zane Murray with AMC Procurement Manager, Chrisjan Roodt, and AMC Maintenance Manager, Piet Bester.

Africa having been designed and built locally and with the correct number of Bell B40E ADTs available and a B-BBEE* score that favoured us and us supporting local content, we placed an order for six B40E ADTs and took delivery in July 2022."

Following soon on these contracts was more work and AMC again turned to Bell Equipment for four more new Bell B40E ADTs which were delivered in December 2022.

On the site clearing topsoil for the expansion of the waste dump, the Bell ADTs are loaded using a 100-ton excavator and haul topsoil to a topsoil dump over some 2km in one direction, for 24 hours a day. At the crushing plant, other Bell B40E ADTs in the fleet haul crushed manganese, with specific gravities (SG) of between 1,8 and 2,2 due to varying loose bulk densities, over shorter distances to export stockpiles from where the manganese is fed into a rail loadout facility.

The new Bell B40E ADTs have been returning average fuel consumption of 14,2 litres an hour and this pleases their owners and clients alike. "We must commend the high levels of service we receive from Bernard Niemand and his team at Bell Equipment in Kuruman,"

Chrisjan says. "Their response times are great and attention to detail, especially on software updates, has been exceptional and we get the feeling that we're really being taken care of."

"We're acutely aware that underfoot conditions play a big part in both fuel consumption and tyre life and for this reason and as far as we're able to, we grade some of the haul roads that we mostly use. We also know that with Bell Equipment's even distribution of torque across all three axles of a Bell ADT tyre life is improved."

AMC's 10 new Bell B40E ADTs have all been bought with Bell Care Packages to 10 000 hours during which time Bell mechanics will do all servicing, preventative maintenance, and repair. Chrisjan notes that calculated in the long run over 10 000 hours, the cost of servicing each machine on this basis is very reasonable with the added guarantee of having mechanics from the supplier doing properly supervised work and using original replacement parts and service kits.

While AMC does not have a fixed policy on machine replacement, Chrisjan mentions that the current fleet of Bell B40E ADTs will almost

be a test case for the company: "We run some of our other equipment to 20 000 hours and plan to do that with the Bell B40E ADTs as well, a target we're confident of reaching given the solid design and build of the Bell B40E ADTs and especially with the level of extended care we're receiving under the Care Package.

"We'd like to standardise on one make of ADT and we're willing to walk the long road with a supplier such as Bell Equipment and its sales representative, a process which we believe will be good for both parties and especially for us in terms of the service we receive and buying replacement parts and service kits, which by the way we consider Bell Equipment to price very reasonably."



* Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment