

# the bulletin

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Dear Customers

With the potential for construction in South Africa looking its strongest in several years, and above-average rainfall in our sugar cane growing regions, we are anticipating a pleasing uptick in the local demand for capital equipment. Particularly positive is the expected and much-needed investment into roads and water infrastructure.

This was evident at NAMPO in May, where a record attendance and an upbeat atmosphere tempered the chilly weather. It was a privilege to connect with so many customers, dealers and partners and to showcase some of the exciting developments in our product range. Interestingly, our JCB Backhoe Loaders accounted for half of our sales enquiries, and a large portion of those were specifically for our new JCB 3CX Pro model, which was on display for the first time.

Other highlights included the unveiling of our new 200hp Bell Haulage Tractor, purpose-built for more powerful and efficient agriculture and timber haulage, and the Bell Motor Grader, which marks a new chapter in our manufacturing journey as a Mining & Construction OEM as we evolve to become more than a 'global ADT specialist'.

We are thrilled to be officially launching the Bell Grader in KwaZulu-Natal in June and Gauteng in July, and we believe it will be a game-changer for customers seeking enhanced grading capabilities and superior local support. We look forward to our customers experiencing our machines during live demonstrations and seeing first-hand what makes the Bell Motor Grader a cut above the rest.

We're driven to deliver machines and services that add real value to our customers. I am passionate about superior customer service and building lasting relationships – it has always been one of our key differentiators. Apart from our human interaction, where we aim to operate with a sense of urgency and communicate clearly and proactively, we are growing the support services we provide throughout the lifecycle of our machines.

Our BETA Parts range has been expanded to include three- and four-cylinder engine kits for Tri-Wheelers to provide customers with cost effective and convenient solutions while our Online Parts portal gives users access to parts manuals and ordering options at the click of a button – making maintenance and repairs simpler than ever.

As we look ahead, we remain grounded in our commitment to innovation, quality, and customer service. Thank you for your continued trust in Bell Equipment – we look forward to growing together.

Ashley Bell  
Group Chief Executive

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**COVER PICTURE:**  
Road and infrastructure maintenance is a top priority for the **Ngquza Hill Local Municipality**, which has boosted its yellow fleet with two Excavators and a Bell Articulated Hauler.  
Read the full story on **PAGE 30**.

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# Fleet expansion helps Masakhane's quarry meet production demands

**A born entrepreneur is normally someone who will look for profitable opportunities from a young age, as has been the case with Ayanda Notshweleka who by age sixteen was seeking out people with new houses in his Eastern Cape village and then offering to dig and build them pit latrines.**

Ayanda had attended St John's College in Mthatha for his high school education and his fascination with the building industry stems from there. "While I was at high school, there was electrification in our village for the first time and I moved on from digging pit latrines to buying a generator and an angle-grinder to install wiring into walls of houses," he says.

"Almost subconsciously identifying these types of opportunities became second nature to me, which would stand me in good stead later in my working career."

After matriculating Ayanda studied Quantity Surveying at the Mangosuthu University of Technology in Durban and then further studied Property Development at the University of Cape Town.

He worked for WBHO Construction and later for Ugu District Municipality, which covers the area from Scottburgh to Port Edward on the KwaZulu-Natal South Coast. In 2003, Ayanda registered his business, the Masakhane Group, and consulted to businesses and government entities, including local municipalities.

"By then I had grown confident enough to diversify into the construction industry and the fuel retailing business, although we had humble beginnings with the latter as I sold fuel out of 25-litre cans after noticing that there were no service stations locally and many more cars on the road," he recalls. "I now operate two service stations in this area known as the Winnie Madikizela Mandela Local Municipality."

Ayanda got involved in different leadership positions in his life from early stages including his role as SRC treasurer at Mangosuthu University of Technology, Exco member of Master Builders Association KwaZulu-Natal (MBA-KZN), Chairman of the Wild Coast Business Chamber, and other various positions in different organisations.

But it would be the construction industry that would show the Masakhane Group the way forward, especially after it completed many building projects for the Department of Human Settlements in both the eastern part of the Eastern Cape and the KwaZulu-Natal South Coast. These included schools funded by leading mining companies, office blocks for municipalities, a disaster management centre, communal swimming pools, access roads, and sports fields.

"When doing construction for which we used a lot of concrete, I noticed that the aggregate stone, an essential ingredient in concrete, had to come from a long way off," Ayanda says. "I then identified the need for a local source, such as a quarry, but while there were sites available, it wasn't all plain sailing due to lots of red tape in applying for mining permits."

Ayanda first applied for mining permits in 2015, which were only valid for 24 months and then had to be renewed every year until the fifth year. With this relatively short timeline of supplying rock, it was too short a time, and therefore too risky for financial institutions to risk financing mining and processing equipment. But through a sharp learning curve, a solution was found.







"I learnt that should we be awarded a mining right, as opposed to a mining permit, that would be valid for 30 years. And, having a large tract of communal land covering 32 hectares leased from the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform, we were suddenly in business."

Ayanda bought a mixture of new and used loading, crushing, screening and haulage equipment and started supplying G5 material to a local roads project. The equipment included a used Bell B40D Articulated Dump Truck (ADT) and a used Finlay 683 Double Deck Screen.

"We supplied the stone to a rehabilitation project on the R61, which ran towards the town of Nkantolo, where the late Oliver R Tambo was born," Ayanda explains. "This opened opportunities for other local suppliers as well, as such projects were previously seen as the exclusive domain of contractors from distant parts of the country."

"It was around this time, too, that I first met Bruce Ndlela, Director of Business and Public Sector Development for Bell Equipment, and I asked him to prove to me how good Bell Equipment's product quality was. To his credit, Bruce took up the challenge and with an ever-increasing demand for our products, which now also included concrete blocks and bricks for building houses, Bruce and I stayed in contact for when we'd next need equipment to process dolerite rock into building material."

By 2024, construction and rehabilitation of various major roads through the Eastern Cape was in full swing, along with housing and retail projects, and demand for material from the Masakhane Group's quarry and brickyard was rising sharply. Ayanda took the decision to upgrade his whole crushing train to streamline the business for higher production.

"I reversed the normal way of buying equipment and first sought out a financial institution to back us before finding a supplier who could supply the equipment. Once the finance was in place, I again spoke to Bruce Ndlela who introduced me to Fundile Ntsinde, the Bell Equipment Sales Representative for our area, and we discussed what equipment would be best for our purposes."

Their choice fell on a Kobelco SK380XDL-10 Excavator that would load mined rock into a Finlay J1175 Jaw Crusher that would in turn feed a Finlay C1540 Cone Crusher.

If finer material was needed, a Finlay 694+ Incline Screen would be used, and all material produced would be loaded using a JCB 455ZX Wheeled Loader loading into two Bell B18E ADTs for the haul to the stockpiles.

"I felt comfortable putting all our eggs into one basket, so to speak, by choosing one supplier for the entire fleet that we needed as I'm a strong supporter of local enterprise as Bell Equipment is," he says. "Just as Bell Equipment employs thousands of people, we too believe we play a part in upliftment by training 10 young women from our area who weren't able to finish school. They now form part of the 54-strong workforce that runs this plant at the quarry."

This impressive fleet was delivered in October 2024 and started producing aggregate stone immediately. Major roads and construction projects benefitting from the close proximity of the Masakhane Group's quarry include the N2 Wild Coast Toll Road project, the gigantic Msikaba bridge with its tall towers and a section of the N2 highway between that bridge and the other large bridge called Mtentu. A contractor handles the drilling and blasting at the quarry.



**(From left): Jody Smith (Bell Equipment Product Support Representative), Ayanda Notshweleka (Managing Director and owner Masakhane Group), and Fundile Ntsinde (Bell Equipment Sales Representative).**

"We've been impressed with how the whole Finlay crushing and screening train performs with the ancillary machines loading and hauling, adding value. When there is demand for 19mm, 14mm and crusher dust, we deploy the Finlay 694+ Screen at the end of the crushing train and easily manage to produce between 1 200 and 1 500 tons per day, but when we're producing only the coarser G5 material that is so sought after as fill material, we only use the two Finlay crushers and produce upward of 2 500 tons per day."

"All these products sourced from Bell Equipment have made a difference, not only to our production, but also

to our image, as this is our second mobile crushing train, which our existing clients and potential new clients all see as proof that we're serious about our sustained existence. Our long-term aim is to eventually set up a permanent crushing circuit, which will mean that our two mobile units will be available to work remotely wherever contracts demand that.

"With Bell Equipment's wide footprint across South Africa, it's reassuring to know that wherever our equipment may be working, Bell will be close at hand to support us."



# CSV Construction celebrates 30th anniversary with new Bell and Kobelco machines

Civil engineering companies are dependent on yellow machine fleets but wait for triggers in the form of sustainable contracts that justify the acquisition of new equipment. These are the thoughts of a managing director of one of the big five civil construction companies operating predominantly in the Western Cape.



**Bell Sales Representative, Fiona Johnson, with MD of CSV Construction, Alex von Klopmann.**

Established in 1994 by John Cullum, Johan Scriven, and Alex von Klopmann, CSV Construction started operating from small premises in Ceres. The three partners had derived their company's name from the first letters of their surnames.

Celebrating 30 years in business, CSV Construction has grown to be one of the largest diversified civil engineering companies in the Western Cape, which is a tribute to the tenacity of its founders and the continued quality of the company's work.

Alex von Klopmann, his fellow directors and management team attribute the company's success to their focus on training. In addition to upskilling their own people, they go a step further by assisting promising Grade 11 and 12 learners at selected schools. They founded the CSV Academy in 2015 and Human Resources Officer, Charmaine Duke, leads the initiative.

In 2024, the Academy partnered with Kayamandi Secondary in Stellenbosch, Zandvliet High in Macassar, and Hottentots Holland High in Somerset West. Twenty-four students received specialised math and science

tutoring during afternoon and evening classes and after matriculating they will pass through a training facility where they will be considered for bursaries or trade training. "This we believe will allow us to leave a lasting legacy as a company and make a real difference," says Alex.

This commitment to nurturing future talent reflects CSV Construction's own journey. From humble beginnings where each partner worked with a bakkie and five labourers, CSV Construction now employs over 700 people.

"Since the world economic downturn in 2008/2009 and the recovery since then, we've shown rapid growth and our portfolio of successfully completed projects grows every year. We're proud to say that as a company we've evolved from a construction company to one that is known for executing specialised civil engineering projects, and we are always challenging ourselves."

CSV Construction's impressive portfolio includes retail outlets, office parks, warehousing, wine cellars, township developments and student accommodation.



"It's exciting and challenging to now work in renewable energy and provide structures for solar and wind turbine complexes," Alex adds. "We're also seen as the 'go-to-company' when it comes to large-scale water management and all its related challenges along with micro-tunnelling, for which we've imported specialised tunnel-boring machines from Europe."

Despite an influx of work in the company's order book, Alex and his fellow directors are conservative when it comes to investing in new earthmoving equipment. "Yes, we have enjoyed the ramp-up in construction activity in recent years, but it's still vitally important to manage the peaks and troughs of the business cycle by applying cash flow gearing and not overcapitilising on equipment purchases," he cautions. "We firmly believe in analysing the triggers that indicate when the time is right to invest in equipment as those have proved accurate indicators over the years."

One such trigger was a contract to upgrade the passage and direction of the Sir Lowry's Pass River. This seemingly gentle flowing stream that runs across a potential flood plain in Gordon's Bay can turn into a raging torrent when enough water enters it from the heights of the Hottentot Hollands mountain range that the famous Sir Lowry's Pass transcends.

"With our company and its engineers recognised as specialists in working with water, our task is to reshape the river, reinforce its banks, and incorporate many

changes to make the flow of the river more user-friendly for the proposed housing which is said to be developed on both the eastern and western sides," Alex explains.

The extensive upgrades include berm construction, grade levelling, and rectification of the Sir Lowry's Pass River's alignment between the N2 in the north and False Bay (Indian Ocean). This will create land for development and drastically reduce the flooding risk.

The upgrade further includes the construction of bridges, erosion control measures like riprap, gabions, berms, and small concrete structures, the creation of non-motorised transport facility pathways, service provision, landscaping and the demolition of various walls and structures.

"When we analysed what we'd need in terms of loading and haulage equipment for this challenging project, we realised that two additional 30-ton articulated dump trucks (ADTs) and one large excavator would fit the bill," Alex says. "With the project due to run for at least 40 months, it justified the purchases as we generally finance our yellow metal equipment over 36 months."

CSV has a long and solid relationship with Bell Equipment and their Bell Sales Representative, Fiona Johnson, had sent CSV a list of equipment that was considered essential to this project with Bell B30E ADTs heading the list.

CSV took delivery of two Bell B30E ADTs in April 2024. One is deployed on the river site and the other at a quarry from where the rock fill and aggregate material is supplied some 15km away. Although these are not seen as production machines, as one would have in mining, CSV is pleased with their average fuel consumption, which is monitored.

As the Sir Lowry Pass River project progressed, the need for a large, powerful tool for massive excavations came to the fore and CSV ordered a new Kobelco SK520XD-10 Excavator and added a Kobelco SK380XD-10 Excavator for a pipeline project in Montagu Gardens. Both machines were delivered in September 2024.

Although CSV Construction has long relied on the solid performance and reliability of Bell ADTs across various sizes, they are new to the Kobelco brand. However, Alex notes that they have been highly impressed by the overall performance, powerful breakout force, and fuel efficiency of their two Kobelco Excavators.

"Interestingly, the Kobelco SK380XD-10 Excavator is being used where 1,2m diameter pipes are laid in a 5,5km long tunnel that has been created with a tunnel boring machine in the middle of a busy Cape Town suburb," he adds.

While under warranty, and especially Kobelco Excavators' extended warranties, all servicing will be done by Bell Equipment Cape Town technicians. CSV Construction employs a plant manager, a workshop manager, seven mechanics, who all assist the machine operators and ADT drivers to keep their pre-shift checks up to date and do preventative maintenance.

These regimes have evolved over time as CSV Construction's own fleet of vehicles and machines numbers more than 100. "Much as we believe in building long and lasting relationships with our clients, so we believe in building long and lasting relationships with our suppliers and Bell Equipment has for a long time been part of our business," Alex says smiling.



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# BELL

## Bell B30E 4x4 ADTs deliver significant advantages for Afrimat

Quarry owners and aggregate suppliers to the construction and road-building industries will tell you that producing these products at the lowest cost per tonne is non-negotiable.



**Fleet Manager at Afrimat Lyttleton Dolomite, Jon Gunter.**

The production cost is influenced by several factors such as the cost of load and haul equipment, fuel, personnel, maintenance, and the added fact that most quarries only operate in the daytime. When taking this into account, a haulage vehicle that can shorten cycle times, burn less fuel, and reduce wear on haul roads – all of which ultimately lead to increased production and bottom-line profit – sure sounds good.

Afrimat is a JSE-listed mid-tier mining and materials company known for consistently delivering exceptional results. The Afrimat Group comprises Construction Materials consisting of aggregates, concrete-based products, cement and fly-ash; Industrial Minerals consisting of limestone, dolomite and industrial sand, and Bulk Commodities, consisting of iron ore and anthracite.

The Services segment consists of external logistical and mining services and the Future Materials and Metals division consists of phosphate, vermiculite and rare earths.

The group's mining and quarrying activities are carefully planned and monitored using a substantial fleet of yellow machinery to achieve sustained and profitable production. Adriaan Lategan is Afrimat's Physical Asset Management Lead for Mobile Equipment and an innovative thinker.

"During our 2023 budgetary planning, we knew we had to budget for a number of replacement haulage vehicles in the 30-ton class, which is the size of the articulated dump trucks (ADTs) we use a great deal in our quarrying operations," he says. "We have a well-established relationship with Bell Equipment and the company's proven Bell B30D and various sizes of E-series ADTs."





"We were, however, aware that Bell Equipment was supplying a B30E 4x4 ADT to the European market and this haul truck, with its two axles, intrigued us for a number of reasons," Adriaan adds. "We were fortunate to have use of one of these machines, that was destined for Europe, for a day or two in 2020 and it gave us several pointers that would later prove it would be the correct machine for many of our quarries in the future."

Adriaan mentions that due to the Bell B30E 4x4 having only two axles, its turning circle is much tighter than that of a six-wheeled machine. There is also less scuffing on the road, which augers well for longer tyre life and less wear on the haul roads.

"The operation at our Lyttleton quarry, located next to the Waterkloof Air Force Base, features a very long, but deep and narrow orebody, with many sharp turns on the haul roads. This caused considerable scuffing of the rear axles, particularly on the centre axle of our traditional six-wheeled Bell ADTs.

Scuffing induces a lot of strain through the drivetrains, which we noticed when analysing their differential and final drive oils," he says.

In July 2023, Adriaan and his team ordered eight Bell B30E 4x4 ADTs with the assistance of Bell Equipment's Sales Representative, Sascha Caixeiro, all of which were delivered by the end of 2023. Four of the new Bell B30E 4x4 ADTs have been swapped with incumbent Bell B30E ADTs and moved to other operations. One was placed at Afrimat's Marble Hall Mine in Limpopo and the remaining three were delivered to an Afrimat quarry in Durbanville in the Western Cape where the loaded hauling also includes tight turns.

"Bell Equipment is currently the only OEM producing trucks that are Level 9-ready, meaning the vehicles can accept the installation of PDS (proximity detection systems) anti-collision systems without modifications, which is something the Department of Mineral Resources (DMR) is increasingly strict on," Adriaan adds.

"We gain further reassurance from buying the equipment with 36-month/6 000-hour warranties on the wet drivetrains."

"Since their arrival at the Afrimat Lyttleton Dolomite Quarry, these Bell B30E 4x4 ADTs have made an immediate impact on our production, especially in terms of shortening cycle times, although they carry the same loads as the 6x6 model ADTs, which is on average 28 tons," says Jon Gunter, Afrimat's Fleet Manager at the quarry. "Having a slightly shorter body length that is offset against the wider body of the bin, and no centre axle, these Bell B30E 4x4 ADTs are definitely negotiating the sharp turns in our quarry much better than their 6x6 three-axled predecessors and have comfortably shaved off one minute on a ten-minute cycle."

"One other important fact we noticed from the get-go was that the B30E 4x4 ADTs were also lighter on fuel which has a direct effect on a lower production cost per ton of any material they move," he adds. "Added benefits would be less scuffing on our haul

roads and the trucks' tyres promising longer tyre life, even though the four tyres cost the same as a set of six on the Bell B30E 6x6 ADTs."

At the time of writing, Afrimat's four Bell B30E 4x4 ADTs working at Lyttleton Dolomite had clocked between 600 and 700 hours each which would see them totalling around 1 800 hours a year. "We deploy Bell Equipment's Fleetmatic® telematics, which gives us valuable production and technical feedback but even more valuable is the attention to detail and care we receive from Bell Equipment's Product Support Representative, Willy Winter," Jon says.

"Willy calls on us regularly as a matter of routine and is never more than a phone call away. His advice and technical knowledge are only matched by the care he has lavished on our Bell machines, especially the new Bell B30E 4x4 ADTs." Adriaan has the last word when he says: "Bell Equipment's 4x4 technology across all its ADT sizes has been a revolution for us for all the reasons mentioned and then some."



# Stefanutti Stocks employs Bell B30E fleet on massive tailings dam project

The inside grassed area of an athletics track is roughly one hectare in size. Nine hundred such areas stitched together would give you the approximate surface area of what will be the largest plastic-lined tailings depository in the world, which a South African construction company is building with mostly homegrown haulage vehicles.

A tailings depository, known in the vernacular as a mine dump, is an active dam where the materials left over from the processing of mined ore are stored. These materials can contain ground rock, unrecoverable and uneconomic metals, chemicals, organic matter and effluent from the process used to extract the desired products from the ore.

With strict new environmental regulations in place, a new facility such as this has to be lined with a plastic material to stop seepage of the effluent into the groundwater and to date, this will make it the largest lined depository of its kind in the world. This facility, for the tailings of a gold mining company, is being built by Stefanutti Stocks and is situated near Fochville on Gauteng's western border with the North West Province.

Nigel Ramiah, Stefanutti Stocks' Group Plant Director, tells us more about this mammoth project. "To fully grasp the enormity of this project, one needs to look at the numbers, which in themselves are daunting," he says when we meet on the site of the project which bears the remains of the last maize crop. "We need to dig down into the earth to create a box-cut and from this we'll move 10 million cubic metres of soil that will be broken up into 6,5 million cubic metres of fill material, 1,5 million cubic metres of cut material with 2 million cubic metres of topsoil that will first be stripped off and stockpiled for later use."

"To do this, we'll need at least 65 articulated dump trucks (ADTs) and, as we don't own that many ourselves, we'll be hiring in a substantial number. What we do have though is a new fleet of Bell B30E ADTs that we started compiling in late 2023 while tasked with a project on a platinum mine in Limpopo. The initial six Bell B30E ADTs have now grown to number 24 with eight machines delivered during July 2024 and another 10 in August 2024," he says.

"We chose the Bell B30E ADT as it's a proven and reliable ADT designed and built for South African conditions. Bell Equipment's large footprint ensures we can rely on the company's technical back-up wherever we work across Southern Africa."

We wanted to know why his company did not consider larger ADTs such as the Bell B40E or B50E models to which Nigel replied that Stefanutti Stocks is essentially a construction company. To buy such larger ADTs would see the company move into the mining space, which would not be ideal as the new fleet of Bell B30E ADTs will still be utilised for future construction projects beyond the three-year contract period of the present tailings dam project.

"When deciding on an ADT model, we contacted Chris Botha, Bell Equipment's experienced sales representative who has been our solid link to the company for many years now. We believe in standardising on one model, in this case the Bell B30E ADT, which makes the maintenance of such a fleet that much simpler in terms of ordering parts and having our own maintenance staff being familiar with the brand and model," he adds.







**(From left): Nigel Ramiah (Stefanutti Stocks Group Plant Director), Hannes Scheepers (Stefanutti Stocks Production Manager), Craig Bowles (Stefanutti Stocks Contracts Director), Chris Botha (Bell Equipment Sales Representative), and Rulof Nortjé (Stefanutti Stocks Construction Manager).**

"We've been very pleased with the performance of our Bell B30E ADTs as the even torque distribution across the three axles delivers enough power under big loads and this further extends tyre life as there is little or no scuffing on the centre axle's tyres."

"We're also confident that when the spring and summer rains arrive, our Bell ADTs will perform well in the wet thanks to their all-wheel drive traction."

Current operations see the project teams working six days a week and haul distances for the Bell B30E ADTs vary between 700m and 3km, depending on what material is being moved. The Bell ADTs are loaded by 36-ton excavators and each ADT will carry between five and six loads per hour, which translates into 1 000m³ or 1 600 tonnes per shift. The soil conditions are generally soft with some ferrocrete, but no blasting is required for the excavations.

The tailings depository has been designed with earthen walls which will be 100m wide at the base with an initial height of 10m. As deposits continue over time, the walls are raised by mining contractors responsible for the tailings management.

The Bell B30E ADTs have been bought with extended warranties covering the wet drivetrain and hydraulics

to 6 000 hours or 36 months, which also includes a Bell Care Package for the same period. During the warranty period, all servicing and repairs are done by personnel from Bell Equipment's largest branch at Jet Park in Boksburg.

"We're running on wet rates meaning we supply the diesel ourselves, so the Bell B30E ADTs' fuel consumption is important to us," Nigel continues. "The average fuel consumption that we're able to get from Bell Equipment's Fleetm@tic® telematics shows 12,9 litres per hour and coupled to general mechanical availabilities of 91% across the fleet, we're confident that our choice of ADT for this and other projects has been correct."

Stefanutti Stocks is very aware of its social responsibilities as it adheres to localised job creation by sourcing the bulk of its ADT drivers and machine operators from communities close to the project site. Training is also given which upskills the community for when the project ends.

Products from Bell Equipment enjoy a major presence on the site with a wide range of ADT models spanning 18-ton, 25-ton and 30-ton dotting the landscape in addition to Bell B2306D and B2806D Articulated Haulers and an assortment of Bell Water Tankers.

# New Bell 2006AF Haulage Tractor delivers more power, more payload

**Bell Equipment Forestry & Agriculture has introduced the higher-powered Series V Haulage Tractor, the 2006AF – a robust 200hp (149kW) workhorse – in response to market demand for a more powerful machine capable of hauling a larger payload.**

The Series V leans heavily on Bell Equipment's tried and tested haulage tractor heritage, with its unique characteristics that make it a better tool for haulage than a typical agricultural ploughing tractor. The fabricated steel chassis, heavy duty rear axle and hitch positioning ahead of the axle centre line, for improved load transfer, steering and traction when trailers are fully loaded have all been retained along with key safety features, such as the ROPS/FOPS certified cab and pneumatic trailer braking.

The current range consists of the smaller 140hp (104kW) Bell 1406A and 1406AF models as well as the 173hp (129kW) Bell 1736A and 1736AF, where 'A' and 'AF' denote 2WD and 4WD configurations respectively.

According to Bell Equipment Product Manager, Emile van Wyk, the 4WD Bell 2006AF boasts a 15% power increase over the 173hp (129kW) units. "We've built the 2006AF on the trusted and proven Series V platform, so it maintains all that our customers have become accustomed to in our Haulage Tractors. Plus, more power means the engine doesn't work as hard to haul its load, which carries numerous operational benefits," he explains.

Driven by the 6,8l John Deere engine, it provides 785Nm of torque through the Allison automatic transmission, enabling it to comfortably haul on-road at speeds of up to 40km/h. And, like the other models, the engine achieves Tier 3 emissions certification without the need for a complex exhaust gas recirculation (EGR) system.

According to Emile, the 2006AF has rear disc brakes for more efficient braking and handles undulating terrain with ease thanks to the automatic 4x4 feature that detects wheelspin and engages 4x4 until grip is restored and disengages again.

"One of our prototypes has clocked over 5 000 hours hauling 40t loads of timber for a Namibian biomass customer. It travels for distances up to 65km at a time and has been reported to be the best machine on site."





# Mukona Group customises Bell Tracked Carrier for geotechnical testing

Originally designed for the oil and gas industry in the United States of America, the Bell Tracked Carrier has since generated interest from Australia and the African drilling industry due to its ability to access remote, difficult to reach areas, and minimise environmental damage with its low ground pressure.

One such African company benefiting from the versatility of the Bell Tracked Carrier is the Mukona Group, an accredited Level 1 South African owned engineering company based in Midrand, Gauteng. The Group's geotechnical and geo-environmental division, Mukona In-Situ Testing, has customised a Bell TC7A Tracked Carrier to accommodate their Cone Penetration Testing (CPTu) equipment to enable them to test on remote mine sites.

Established in 2017, the Mukona Group has two additional divisions allowing them to provide a complementary and holistic offering to clients. Mukona Consulting Engineers offers civil, structural and geotechnical consulting services to consulting engineers, contractors, private companies and clients within the public sector. Mukona Geotechnics provides specialised geotechnical construction services including site investigations, piling and lateral support to industrial customers, state owned companies (SOC) including the mining sector.

Mukona In-Situ Testing, established in partnership with UK-based In Situ Site Investigation, specialises in cone penetration testing (CPTu) techniques, electronic vane shear testing (eVST), seismic testing, Marchetti dilatometer, MOSTAP sampling, installation of vibrating wire piezometers, inclinometers, and pressuremeter testing to determine and characterise the in-situ properties of the soil. CPTu is used most frequently on mines to check the in-situ properties for stability analysis and design of geotechnical structures.

As part of its comprehensive geotechnical services, Mukona In-Situ Testing has various rigs, which vary from small, medium and heavy rigs capable of pushing up to 22 tons and carries out cone penetration testing, seismic Marchetti dilatometer testing (SDMT), Menard pressuremeter testing, and MOSTAP soil sampling.



**Bell Tracked Carriers feature a unique balanced six-roller undercarriage with compound walking beams that provide an evenly spread footprint with optimal ground pressure contact and less track-point loading.**

Solly Phalanndwa, a Professional Engineer and Managing Director of the Mukona Group, says: "We are committed to providing our clients with accurate and reliable data by combining the use of high quality, cutting-edge technologies and equipment with highly skilled and trained field staff. Quick response times and quality reporting ensures we meet our clients' unique project requirements."

Solly explains that Mukona In-Situ Testing has a 6x6 truck fitted with CPT equipment but finds its accessibility is limited. "We bought the Bell Tracked Carrier because of its easy access on mines. It appealed to us that the Tracked Carrier can navigate through swampy areas, go up almost every slope, and traverse deep sands."

This accessibility is largely due to the Tracked Carrier's unique balanced six-roller undercarriage with compound walking beams that provide an evenly spread footprint with optimal ground pressure contact and less track-point loading. The use of rubber tracks further supports the design by distributing the Tracked Carrier's weight over a larger area, reducing ground pressure and providing excellent traction in tough terrain. Rubber tracks also minimise vibration and noise for improved operator comfort and lower fatigue while their durability translates to reduced maintenance costs over time.

To make the Bell TC7A fit for purpose, Mukona customised their machine themselves by removing the bin and fitting their own CPT equipment. In addition, a seven-ton plate was fitted to increase the machine's weight for optimal pushing capacity during testing. Outriggers were installed to the front and back of the machine to lift and level the machine for testing, centralising the weight.

Solly said the machine arrived on a mine site in Zimbabwe on 8 December and will work there until May 2025.

INTERESTING FEATURES OF BELL TRACKED CARRIERS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Bell Tracked Carriers are made from high-grade steel and utilise quality components, including the Cummins B6.7 Stage V engine, without exhaust gas recirculation (EGR).</li><li>• Rexroth hydraulics provide optimised fuel consumption and performance while the hydrostatic transmission allows for economical use of engine power, eliminating the need for a clutch and gear controls.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• An inclinometer accurately measures the pitch and roll of the vehicle. These inclinometer values are then used in software logic to assist with machine control.</li></ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Tracked Carriers feature a purpose-built ROPS and FOPS certified cab with excellent visibility and easy access that is packed with intelligent technology and operator-friendly features.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• All service items are conveniently located at ground level in a single service hatch on the left-hand side of the machine, reducing downtime. The Bell Tracked Carrier also has rubbers in the bogie pivots for reduced greasing requirements and improved wear.</li><li>• The Tracked Carriers are fitted with standard reverse cameras and have an automatic turbo spin down feature, which allows the engine to cool down properly after extended periods of high-load operation to protect the turbocharger from damage.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Bell Fleetm@tic® telematics software is offered as standard to monitor performance and provides machine hours, hours operated in a shift, average fuel consumption, fault codes, and a time bar report.</li></ul>



# Goobs Forestry loads up on Bell and Kobelco for timber loading contract

**When Simphiwe Magubane got his application and motivation in at the last minute for an internship that would include tertiary education at a forestry college little could he know how his concerted effort would change his life for the better.**

Simphiwe hails from a small village called eMakhwabe which lies between Vryheid and Paulpietersburg in Northern KwaZulu-Natal. When he matriculated at the Mantshinga Combined School in Paulpietersburg in 2007, there was no money for him to continue his education and he worked for a while as an intern with a large timber, pulp, and paper company, the same company that would later sponsor his tertiary education in forestry.

"I was fortunate enough to gain a bursary to study forestry at Saasveld and having worked in the field for almost a year before getting there, I had a far better understanding of many forestry methods and operations prior to studying," he says. "When I qualified after three years of study, I embarked on working back the time with my sponsoring company, which added to my experience."

This saw Simphiwe start as a forester-in-training and with hard and diligent work, he was soon promoted to forester and a permanent appointment.

"I literally started at the bottom of the tree-growing value chain with seed to seedlings in the tree nursery and learnt a lot about silviculture practices which is basically planting, maintenance, and protecting of your compartments for about nine years depending on your location and targeted product," he says.

"After four years, I was moved into harvesting as a harvesting forester and then promoted to harvesting manager in 2017. While I so enjoyed all aspects of the learning experience, it was during this stint in harvesting that the idea of being self-employed in some branch of the value chain started taking shape in my mind."

In April 2021, Simphiwe registered his own company with a derivative of his surname Magubane into Goobs Forestry (Pty) Ltd.

"I am grateful for the mentoring that I received from Hendrik Steenekamp, who is an established and well-respected contractor in the Piet Retief area, when he invited me to work with him on an extraction contract for a timber-growing company," Simphiwe adds. "I learnt a lot about the business side of contracting from Hendrik."

Then a contract was advertised to load rail trucks at a railway siding in Paulpietersburg from where the timber is railed to a large pulp and paper mill in Richards Bay.

Simphiwe tendered successfully and with a solid five-year contract in hand he could approach financial institutions for financing to buy timber handling equipment.

A business consulting agent assisted Simphiwe by using selected business tools, training, interventions, and coaching to improve his business position and ultimately maintain a leading edge in the forestry industry. "They really want you to succeed and offer financial assistance and advice all along the way, which is really commendable and greatly appreciated," he says.

"It was about then that I met Daniel van Huyssteen, Bell Equipment's experienced sales representative, and himself a qualified forester. His advice has been so valuable. We started with 22 people and three rented Bell Loggers and, in time, I obtained finance to buy the equipment that Daniel had suggested – a new Kobelco SK220XD-10 Excavator fitted with a Bell 800 Timber Grab and a used Bell 225F Logger with low hours."

As the Kobelco Excavator would be running mainly on concrete, rubber pads from a third-party supplier were fitted to the metal tracks to save both the tracks and the concrete from damage. The machines were delivered in November 2022 and put straight to work on the rail siding on the outskirts of Paulpietersburg.







**Simphiwe Magubane, owner of Goobs Forestry (Pty) Ltd, showing the rubber pads on the tracks of the Kobelco SK220XD-10 Excavator.**

"The contract had initially called for the use of two excavators, but as the rail service wasn't consistent up to that point, and the volumes we were loading were not at full capacity, I held back on acquiring a second Kobelco SK220XD-10 Excavator until the rail service and volumes were more settled," Simphiwe explains. "Towards the end of September 2023 this was the case, and I ordered another Kobelco SK220XD-10 Excavator from Bell Equipment."

Simphiwe explains how the three lines of rail trucks work. One line contains 19 trucks, another 18, and the third line has eight trucks. The two Kobelco Excavators load the longer lines of trucks and the Bell Logger the short line of eight trucks.

"As much as we admire the agility of the Bell Logger, the Kobelco SK220XD-10 Excavators with the larger Bell 800 Timber Grabs really perform well in this application and outload the smaller Logger with much less operator fatigue."

The Kobelcos easily load around 75 tons of timber an hour while the Bell Logger, which is smaller, gets to 37 tons, which is still good considering its size. Also, these will differ greatly depending where you are on the value chain."

"The use of the Kobelco Excavators has really made a difference to this loading operation with a huge saving on fuel consumption, which sees neither we nor our clients complaining," Simphiwe says. "The use of the Kobelco Excavators ensures productivity and meeting our client's key performance indicators."

Simphiwe is also full of praise for the service he has received from the Bell Equipment branch in Piet Retief where the Mechanic, Stefan, and the Parts Specialist, Qiniso, really make his life easier with solid maintenance and having the correct parts and service kits without fail.

# Age is just a number for AJVW Diamante's legendary Bell fleet

**When Dries van Wyk first started alluvial diamond mining with a younger partner, a passing bird flying overhead made a 'deposit' on his head while he was repairing a truck's transmission outside and his assistant told him it was a sure sign of good fortune coming his way. This proved to be true that very same day.**

Dries was born and raised in Kuruman in the Northern Cape Province. His father, Lambert, ran a water-drilling business and Dries recalls how he spent many school holidays living in a caravan while accompanying his father who drilled for water for a widespread farming community. After finishing his schooling at a technical high school, Dries qualified as a panel beater before joining a manganese mining company, first near Hotazel and then at Postmasburg, working as a diesel mechanic underground with water pumps and air compressors his speciality.

"Those were exciting times on the rugby scene as I played rugby with Springbok legends like Piet Visagie and Manneijes Roux for the Amasol Club at Postmasburg," Dries says. "It was also around that time that Griqualand-West, with these giants of the game in the side, won the Currie Cup in 1970."

But Dries had an inner drive to be self-employed and he left the mines and started a repair workshop in Barkley-West, maintaining and repairing earthmoving equipment.



**(From left): Eric van der Merwe (Bell Sales Representative, Bell Kimberley), Daantjie van Wyk (Dries' younger son), Andru van Wyk (Dries' grandson), Dries van Wyk, and Leonard van Wyk (Dries' older son) all standing in front of the 1992 model Bell B30C ADT that has clocked over 52 000 hours.**



One of his first clients was his father-in-law, who ran an earthmoving business, and Dries soon got to know many of the local alluvial diamond miners in the area whose equipment he repaired. As a sideline, he restored older earthmoving equipment for resale, and little could he know how well this growing skill would serve him in the future.

"Being exposed to so many of the alluvial diamond miners in the area started rubbing off on me. So, when a young acquaintance suggested we form a partnership to do some small-scale alluvial diamond mining, I agreed but still carried on running the workshop as well," Dries says.

"It was during a period at Longlands, an area close to Sydney-on-Vaal, which as the name suggests is close to the Vaal River, that I had the experience with the bird and later that same day, having mined an unlikely section of hard calcrete, we found a 40-carat diamond that was very profitable for us."

Soon after this, Dries closed his mechanical workshop and concentrated his efforts on alluvial diamond mining. In time, and mining further west towards areas better known for iron-ore deposits, Dries left the partnership and moved back east to areas that he was familiar with.

By now, Dries had been joined in the business by his two sons, Leonard and Daantjie, and currently the family mine a concession bordering the Vaal River that is owned by another company where they pay royalties for mining.

"We've been through some lean times but have also had some extraordinary luck as the incident with the bird shows," Dries continues. "One night I had a dream, although it may have been a vision as well, but I dreamt that we were to find a tree that had a hole next to it with the tree's roots hanging into the hole, which we duly did the following day."

Dries says when digging in the hole next to the tree, they found a perfect 44-carat blue-white diamond that netted them R2,2 million and they used that money to buy good used earthmoving equipment in the form of a wheeled loader and a Bell HD1880 Excavator.

"We had previously bought two Bell B30A Articulated Dump Trucks (ADTs) on the used market, and they had served us so well – and still do, to this day – that when another Bell-branded machine like the Bell HD1880 Excavator was on offer from a client indebted to us, we were pleased to be able to buy it," Dries explains.





"This Bell HD1880 Excavator is still in use today and, as a result of its efficient hydraulic cylinders that help produce sustained productivity, we in time bought another similarly weighted Bell HD2045 Excavator, which is also still in daily use."

The Van Wyk family diamond mining business, AJVW Diamante, bought its first new Bell B30C model ADT in 1992 and this machine, too, is still running despite having worked over 52 000 hours. Dries says proudly that this ADT still boasts its original transmission, pumps and differentials although its engine was replaced some 20 000 hours ago.

In 2004, they again bought new Bell ADTs in the form of two Bell B35D ADTs with a third similar model used ADT added later. An older B25A ADT has been converted into a water truck.

"We believe that Bell Equipment design and build their ADTs especially well, but the machines' longevity is also down to our preventative maintenance regimes that are non-negotiable," Dries says. "As an example, we service all our equipment once a month and replace all the filters while monitoring the condition of the oil with those changes being done when necessary."

"Should we be too busy to maintain our equipment properly, we make use of a contractor mechanic, Martin Naude, who used to work for Bell Equipment before venturing out on his own, and he is one of the best mechanics I have ever come across."

When visiting the family's mining area, reports showed that the two newer Bell B35D ADTs had notched up 23 199 and 19 566 hours respectively and were moving big loads of the red earth overburden that covers the diamond-bearing gravels.

"Our main challenge here is the stripping ratio which varies between 4:1 and as much as 7:1 before we get to expose the gravel, which can be red and also yellow as we get closer to the old river runs," Dries explains. "We mine through a lot of the older diggings that were done by our ancestors decades ago when their accuracies on extracting and recoveries weren't as good as now."

Dries says that another reason for taking such special care of their entire yellow fleet, which pays dividends in terms of longevity and sustained production, is that they don't have a fixed policy on machine replacement. This is largely brought about by the uncertainty of where they may find workable ground in the future due to strict regulations with the granting of mining concessions.

"What I can tell you though is that our range of machines from Bell Equipment, as old as the fleet may seem, forms the backbone of our mining operations and should we ever need to buy another dump truck, we'll buy a Bell machine."





# Ngquza Hill Municipality turns to Bell to boost its fleet

**The Ngquza Hill Local Municipality in the Eastern Cape has invested in its yellow machine fleet, adding two excavators and a Bell Articulated Tractor over an eighteen-month period. This follows a decision by the municipality's council that the maintenance of roads and other infrastructure should take place in-house and, as far as possible, without the use of contractors.**

The municipality lies in one of the most picturesque parts of the Eastern Cape where deep valleys separate towering hills with traditional homesteads dotting the countryside. The municipality serves both Flagstaff and Lusikisiki, the latter which lies further south. There are 32 voter wards across the two towns in which some 333 000 people live, according to the most recent census.

The Ngquza Hill Local Municipality's Technical Manager, Asanda Hlehliso, is a qualified civil engineer

with postgraduate qualifications, and in an ideal position to explain the municipality's many duties.

"We as the technical department oversee the maintenance and repair of much of the infrastructure in both Flagstaff and Lusikisiki, which includes public spaces, parks, sports fields, cemeteries, solid waste dump sites and a massive 981km of gravel roads. The latter are vitally important as they grant our citizens access to their homes, schools and places of business, relaxation and worship," she says.

"When the council decided that we were to do the maintenance ourselves, we realised that we'd need to add to our yellow equipment fleet to do this effectively."

Asanda, in her capacity as department head, put together a technical committee consisting of herself and colleagues Pathuo Nqezo, the Senior Roads Foreman, and Gugu Ndwabu, the Roads Foreman, to do a needs analysis of what equipment was most urgently needed. They decided they most needed an excavator.

Fortunately, the Ngquza Hill Local Municipality could leverage an RT57 agreement with Bell Equipment and, through the supplier's Public Sector Sales Representative, Fundile Ntsinde, they gained valuable insight into what excavator model would work well for them.

"Working with our supply chain division, we put forward criteria such as price, availability, technical backup and previous experience – all conditions

which Bell Equipment met easily. Although we initially thought to buy a 20-ton excavator, Fundile recommended that we rather consider a 30-ton machine that could handle heavier work given the vast number of roads we have to maintain as well as water and drainage infrastructure that was under pressure with the recent heavy rainfall."

Their choice ultimately fell on a JCB JS305 Excavator, which was delivered on 26 October 2023, and they are not disappointed. "We're happy that we trusted Fundile's advice as we're extremely satisfied with the JCB JS305 Excavator's performance," said Asanda.

She mentions that another consideration in their forward planning was to obtain as much yellow machine equipment as is possible from one supplier to smooth the way forward for the mechanic position that has recently been filled. "We believe that we'll reduce potential downtime on machine servicing and repair if we must only deal with one supplier and it should make the keeping of essential consumable spares and service kits easier.



**Ngquza Hill Local Municipality Roads Foreman, Gugu Ndwabu (left), with Bell Equipment Sales Representative, Fundile Ntsinde.**



"In this case we'd be well satisfied if that supplier could be Bell Equipment in keeping with the older Bell 770G Grader and Bell 315SL Backhoe Loader that we already have. We're also confident that with Bell Equipment having a well-stocked depot in nearby Mthatha, our machines' maintenance will be prioritised."

Roads Foreman, Gugu Ndwabu adds: "Our operator took to the JCB JS305 Excavator easily and reports that the controls are smooth and responsive. We've been excavating road-fill material that it loads into tipper trucks and despite this relatively heavy and constant work, the machine's miserly fuel burn has surprised us as we're averaging around 19,6 litres an hour."

The municipality followed up with a Kobelco SK220XD-10 Excavator at the end of May 2024 and a Bell 2304E Articulated Tractor in February 2025. The Kobelco Excavator was delivered to the Lusikisiki landfill site for refuse removal, waste disposal, and excavating of the site while the Bell Articulated Tractor is used in the Flagstaff area for crushing and compacting soil on gravel roads.

"These are challenging yet exciting times for us in the Technical Department and we're certainly setting out to not disappoint our principals and the citizens of our towns in terms of our commitment to service delivery," Asanda concludes.



# Solvocore invests in JCB 3CX Plus and Kobelco SK55SRX-6

**When felling a large tree, one traditionally weakens it on one side to control its fall – but would you believe the same principle applies when demolishing a concrete silo? If you're in any doubt, just speak to the specialist concrete-focused company, Solvocore, where owners Wayne and Annecke van der Westhuizen will explain exactly how it's done.**

Wayne and Annecke are both graduate civil engineers who, while working in the civil engineering and construction industry, spotted a gap in the market that they thought they could fill. "We founded Solvocore in 2013 as a solutions-driven company, with the name pointing to a solution to any client's concrete-based challenges. Initially our focus was on core drilling into existing concrete structures to modify them, but over time we've expanded our offering to now offer a host of related services as well," says Annecke.

Wayne is busy completing a master's degree in concrete repair and this theoretical knowledge will have a practical implication and benefit for Solvocore's steadily growing client base, as the company's offering now includes core drilling, concrete cutting, concrete scanning and diagnostics

and demolition work. Much of this work is concentrated around modifying existing concrete structures and maintaining them and is done in the mining industry and on industrial plants.

"We operate from our head office near Krugersdorp and in October 2023 we opened an office in Cape Town as well," Annecke adds. "We're prepared to work anywhere in Africa and have already done work for clients in Mozambique, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Zambia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Malawi."

Solvocore has shown steady growth since its inception as reflected in the expansion of its payroll, which includes some 80 people comprising civil engineers, supervisors, a strong administration component, and experienced artisans and machine operators.







**(From left): Patrick Sibanda (Solvocore Site Foreman), Annecke van der Westhuizen (Solvocore Director), Chris Botha (Bell Equipment Sales Representative), Chrystal de Wilt (Solvocore Marketing Manager), and Sammy Banda (Solvocore's JCB Backhoe Loader Operator).**

"Working in a civil engineering environment you'd be correct to think we'd have to use some mechanical help at times, but we got to the point where unreliable hired plant got the better of us. We decided to explore the feasibility of our own yellow machines, although we were, and still are, conservative in our commitment to such large capital outlays.

"Our initial thinking was to buy a backhoe loader as these are extremely versatile machines that can load, level, dig, backfill, and lift – tasks we regularly face on projects – but we needed some advice on the best equipment to buy," says Annecke.

A friend of the Van der Westhuizen's, who owns a company working in mining and civil construction, suggested they contact Bell Equipment's Sales Representative, Chris Botha, based at Bell Jet Park.

"We immediately felt we were in good hands as Chris reassured us with his immense product knowledge. We steered clear of used equipment and, with the research we had done, we were keen to buy a JCB 3CX Global Backhoe Loader due its many features and ROPS-FOPS certified cab, which is a non-negotiable safety requirement when working on mines," she adds.

Chris Botha, however, had better news when he told Wayne and Annecke about the new model JCB 3CX Plus Backhoe Loader, which was laden with up-to-date features and a ROPS-FOPS cab, and was due for

imminent arrival in the country. A further incentive was the financial one that JCB has with ABSA Bank, making it almost too good to refuse.

"Chris also sweetened the deal, so to speak, by including a 6-in-1 bucket that would enhance the machine's operation even more, but then an interesting thing happened," Annecke says smiling. "While in Bell Equipment's yard where the various machines are parked on display, another machine caught our eye and made our pulses race. There was the perfect solution to problems we had encountered in the past when doing demolitions in tight spaces – a Kobelco SK55SRX-6 Mini Excavator – and we placed an order for one with Chris on the spot and also added a JCB HM033 hydraulic hammer."

Solvocore took delivery of their Kobelco SK55SRX-6 Mini Excavator before their intended JCB 3CX Plus Backhoe Loader arrived. This compact demolition tool, which has no tail-swing to contend with in narrow spaces, was put to work almost immediately on the demolition of a furnace at a metals smelter.

"We were equally excited about the delivery of our JCB 3CX Plus Backhoe Loader as we saw so much potential for its use. While we don't necessarily advertise such a service, we recently had a case where we had to lay 350mm thick concrete slabs on which a 200-ton crane would be standing and the Backhoe Loader would have been ideal to do the excavations for these slabs," says Annecke.



In another situation, Solvocore was asked to lay almost 4 000m<sup>2</sup> of concrete for a warehousing project in Germiston and Annecke believes their new JCB Backhoe Loader would have been invaluable in doing that excavation.

The first real application of their new JCB 3CX Plus Backhoe Loader has been on the site of their new corporate office and warehouse complex that is nearing completion on the outskirts of Krugersdorp. Once its tasks there are complete, they intend to move the machine to a mine near Rustenburg.

"We've been contracted to do extensive concrete-based infrastructure improvements on this mine and, with the JCB 3CX Plus being ready to work in such a place given minor safety-related add-ons are done, we'd be able to rent the machine to other contractors too as we'll have our own operator looking after the machine," Annecke explains.

"Regarding the machine's fuel consumption, we're not particularly concerned as it's not a production machine and fuel consumption is more often than not influenced by the type of work that is being done.

"Ours is a niche market and the acquisition of these first two machines opens the way for more such specialised equipment in the future where we'll possibly look to equip the Cape Town office with similar machines. Having a trusted company like Bell Equipment with its wide footprint supporting the machines also reassures us and we'll certainly be getting advice from Chris Botha in future," she says.

And, with a twinkle in her eye, anticipating the question we're dying to ask, Annecke says: "It's easy to make a concrete silo fall over and this is according to our own Anton van der Westhuizen, a fellow civil engineer and the mastermind behind planning and executing such projects. You weaken one side, not with a chainsaw but with a diamond saw, and once the support goes, it falls over."



# Volmoed Quarry ups productivity with Kobelco SK380XDLC-10 Excavator

**A new, larger Kobelco Excavator is delivering major cost and time savings for Volmoed Quarry in the Western Cape – with a clear impact on the bottom line. The Van der Berg family, owners of Van der Berg Vervoer, have been active in transport, plant hire and earthmoving since 1974.**

Founded by Hans van der Berg, the company welcomed his son Danie in 1985, and later his brother Hugo. In 2012, Danie and Hugo seized an opportunity to expand into quarrying and acquired the Volmoed Quarry to support the growing road construction sector.

Today, the third generation is actively involved: Donovan van der Berg heads up operations at Volmoed Quarry, while his brother Dániel oversees Van der Berg Transport, which includes logistics, sales and ready-mix concrete, alongside Uncle Hugo. Danie and Hugo remain involved at an executive level.

“There's been steady demand for our aggregate, stone, and sand products,” says Donovan. “We aim to free up around 60 000 tons every four months from blasting dolomitic rock. Our core products include aggregates from G1 to G7, roadstone from 5mm to 26mm, slurry, and filling dust – essentially, everything that can be sold.”

After blasting, the material is first broken down with a hydraulic hammer mounted on an excavator. It's then loaded by a second excavator into a fleet of Bell B25D and E-series ADTs for hauling to the run-of-mine tip and primary crusher.

Volmoed Quarry initially used a Kobelco SK350LC-10 for in-pit loading from 2020. When an older 24-ton excavator with a hydraulic hammer was sold, the hammer was moved to the SK350LC-10, which was already factory-fitted with the required piping – and performed flawlessly.





The JCB JS360 Excavator previously handling loading duties was sold off at 7 000 hours. "Our machine replacement policy is based on productivity," explains Donovan. "Once downtime begins to impact output, we prefer to sell the machine early to retain value."

With the JCB nearing replacement in 2023, Bell Equipment Sales Representative, Fiona Johnson, recommended the Kobelco SK380XDL-10, featuring a powerful 2,1m³ bucket. Volmoed Quarry took her advice and added the machine to their fleet.

Both Kobelco Excavators are equipped with Lincoln automatic lubrication systems, essential for the extreme heat and dusty conditions typical of Oudtshoorn. This has resulted in outstanding mechanical availability for both machines.

"The SK380XDL-10 is a game changer," Donovan says. "Its superior breakout force and larger bucket allow it to load a 25-ton ADT in just four buckets, compared to five with our previous machine. This significantly reduces cycle times."

The fuel efficiency has also impressed: the SK380XDL-10 burns just 16,5 litres per hour, while the SK350LC-10 consumes 16 litres per hour – a strong performance given the demanding hammer work.

"Running these two Kobelcos together has had a noticeable effect on our overall production," Donovan adds. "We're seeing improvements in cycle times and fuel efficiency across our load-and-haul operations." When asked about their strong relationship with Bell Equipment, Donovan emphasises loyalty and support:

"One of the most valuable lessons from my father is that loyalty goes both ways. Fiona and the team at Bell Equipment George consistently provide outstanding service – from sales to parts and aftersales care. That's why we keep choosing Bell."



(From left): Kobie Stalmeester (Volmoed Quarry Production Manager), Fiona Johnson (Bell Equipment Sales Representative), Donovan van der Berg (Volmoed Quarry General Manager) and John Collins (former Bell Equipment Regional General Manager: Coastal).



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## Kobelco SK220XD-10 solves ZD Stander's double handling challenge

When a Knysna-based contract timber harvester found that using a truck-mounted crane to load cut-to-length timber from one truck to another for transport to a sawmill was resulting in time-consuming double handling, he turned to Bell Equipment for a solution.

The company, ZD Stander Transport, has roots going back to the 1800s according to Riaan Stander, son of its founder, the late Zacharias Daniel Stander. "Our family's forebears were linked to the woodcutters referred to in Dalene Matthee's well-known novel 'Circles in a Forest' ('Kringe in 'n Bos')", Riaan says. "They had apparently felled trees and transported the timber by ox wagon to supply the former GEO Parkes sawmill in the Knysna area."

Riaan's father, ZD Stander, started his own transport company in 1989, transporting timber for a large sawmill near Knysna, and this service soon grew to include pine timber coming from the Gouna, Buffelsnek, and Goudveld areas around Knysna. By 1991, ZD Stander Transport started sourcing timber from private farm plantations where trees were felled with chainsaws, extracted using tractors, and stacked manually.

"I joined the business in 1993 after finishing school and started as a truck driver while learning about mechanical things as a sideline, which resulted in me later building timber trailers with cranes mounted on them," Riaan says. "Our business was growing steadily but stacking the timber by hand was slow and backbreaking until we bought our first new Bell 120A Logger in 1996."

Riaan's son, Zach, named after his grandfather, has also just joined the business.

Riaan recalls that his late dad was so concerned that they wouldn't be able to obtain financing for the Bell 120A Logger, which in 1996 cost R170 000, that he wanted to return the machine to Bell Equipment, but fortunately they were able to get the machine financed.



(From left): Bell Equipment Sales Representative, Tom Swartz, and Riaan Stander, owner of ZD Transport, with his son, Zach.



"That machine is still in daily use, although it has been rebuilt and sports a new engine," Riaan explains. "Our fleet of Bell Loggers now numbers 13 machines and spans model numbers across the 120, 220 and 225A ranges."

While the nimble Bell Loggers were working well when sorting and stacking timber on loading zones and roadside depots, it was the loading of the cut timber onto trucks for the longer hauls to the mills that was time-consuming due to the double handling caused by first loading it onto a truck that had a mounted crane and then using that same crane to then load the long-haul truck.

"We were pretty desperate for a quicker loading tool as this double handling was negatively affecting the volumes we were tasked with moving," Riaan adds.

"We had, in 2018, tried using a used excavator fitted with a grapple but the machine didn't last."

Riaan goes on to say that Tom Swartz, Bell Equipment's Sales Representative based in Gqeberha, formerly Port Elizabeth, had been calling on them since 2019. Once they had concluded their own research across the wider excavator market, where they had read and heard positive reports about Kobelco Excavators, they turned to Tom for assistance.

"We were comfortable speaking to Tom and Bell Equipment as we've enjoyed great service from the company with repairs, servicing and parts availability for our Bell Loggers emanating from both the Bell Equipment branches in Gqeberha and George," Riaan says.

"Tom, with his excellent product knowledge, was quick to confirm our already positive thoughts on the merits of the Kobelco SK220XD-10 Excavator and recommended that we fit the durable Bell MT600TB Timber Grab and the Bell Forestry Conversion Kit, which we did when deciding on the machine."

Riaan and his team took delivery of the Kobelco SK220XD-10 Excavator with its Bell MT600TB Timber Grab and safety-ensuring Bell Forestry Conversion Kit, which includes a bullet-proof windscreen, in April 2024. The machine's presence made an almost immediate impact on speeding up the loading of long-haul trucks and so shortening turnaround times.

"We're very pleased with the quicker loading and subsequent turnaround times the Kobelco Excavator has brought about," Riaan says. "An average load of timber on a truck comes in at 33 cubic metres and this used to take us three hours.

"We've drastically cut down that time to between 30 and 45 minutes, which is a huge improvement on the time management of our fleet of trucks considering the haul to George is over 100km away."

Riaan is full of praise for the efficiency of the Kobelco SK220XD-10 as a loading tool.

"With its excellent hydraulic flows, this machine doesn't seem to labour at all. With its current use it only works around five hours a day, so we haven't yet accurately monitored its fuel consumption, but with what we've seen thus far, it seems to be very economical.

"Because so much of our felling and extraction happens in difficult terrain with challenging topography where only shovel yarders and large skidders work efficiently, it's like a breath of fresh air to find that the loading of the timber product, which is sent on the longest leg of our responsibility, is happening smoothly, efficiently and, above all, safely.

And for this we can thank a Kobelco SK220XD-10 Excavator supplied by Bell Equipment."





# Kobelco Excavator is the answer to Mkhondo's dump problem

The town of Mkhondo, formerly known as Piet Retief, lies in a wonderfully wooded area of the Mpumalanga Province. However, by early 2023 it faced a problem: its solid waste dump site was fast becoming unmanageable unless drastic control measures were urgently found.

It was thought that a large part of such control measures involved buying expensive earthmoving equipment.

"We were really concerned about this problem and even more so when it was suggested that what we needed to fix the solid waste site was a large bulldozer, which is a really expensive machine," says Zoe Mbatha, Senior Manager Assets and Logistics for the Mkhondo Local Municipality. "Our concern stemmed from seeing waste being blown onto the N2 national road and into villages surrounding the town, as this seemed like a municipality that didn't care, where in fact we do care a great deal."

The Mkhondo Local Municipality encompasses the nearby towns of Amsterdam and Driefontein and is home to over 255 000 people, according to the most recent census. The Municipality also forms part of the greater Gert Sibande District Municipality, which is headquartered in Ermelo.

Like most municipalities, Mkhondo Municipality's responsibilities relate to maintaining gravel and tarred roads, public spaces, sports fields, cemeteries, and solid waste dump sites as well as the supply of potable water and water reticulation services.

Many of the amenities mentioned come under the direct control of the Environmental Department within the Municipality and here we find Vusi Dube, the Senior Manager: Environmental Management.

"When we realised we needed to take urgent action with the management of the solid waste dump site, we conducted a needs analysis. Our first thought was that a bulldozer would be the correct solution as it would be heavy enough to compact the waste and have the blade for bringing in layers of soil that could also be compacted on top of the layers of waste," he explains.

"However, when consulting with our colleagues in other departments, the thought was that an excavator would serve a wider purpose for the other departments like water, electricity, and infrastructure and a supplier for an excavator was sought."







**Vusi Dube (left) Senior Manager: Environmental Management Mkhondo Local Municipality, with Zoe Mbatha (centre) Senior Manager: Assets & Logistics Mkhondo Local Municipality, and Fortune Matsobane (right) former Bell Equipment Sales Representative (now Bell eThekweni Manager).**

Fortunately, help was at hand in the form of an RT57 supplier contract that the Mkhondo Local Municipality could leverage with Bell Equipment. The Municipality had in the past bought two Bell Graders and a Backhoe Loader and was familiar with the company, as Bell Equipment has a branch in Mkhondo (Piet Retief) that had regularly serviced the machines.

"We were also familiar with Fortune Matsobane, Bell Equipment's knowledgeable Public Sector Sales Representative who calls on us regularly," Vusi adds. Fortune has since been appointed as Bell eThekweni Team Leader. "Fortune suggested we consider a Kobelco SK300LC-10 Excavator which would easily rake up the waste material, be heavy enough to compact it, and be able to spread soil over the compacted layers.

"Bell Equipment came in at a very competitive price. The fact that the company has a branch with a mechanic and a full complement of replacement parts and service kits in our town also scored heavily in its favour."

The decision was taken that a Kobelco SK300LC-10 Excavator would be the best multipurpose tool and the machine was subsequently ordered and delivered in October 2023.

"We fortunately had a trained operator in Sibusiso McDonald but we're planning on training at least three or four more operators on the Kobelco Excavator should Sibusiso be ill or not available," Vusi explains. "Needless to say, the new Kobelco Excavator's first deployment was at the solid waste dump site and here it has really shown its capabilities."

According to Vusi, Sibusiso reports that the Kobelco SK300LC-10 Excavator's controls are smooth and instantly responsive making it easy to operate and cutting down on operator fatigue. The engine noise is minimal while the hydraulic flows are excellent, as reflected in the fuel consumption figures of around 7,8 litres an hour, which has been a pleasant surprise for everyone concerned.

"This Kobelco SK300LC-10 Excavator was an excellent choice and from my experience I can tell you that within the short five months that we've had the machine, we've managed to extend the life of our solid waste dump site by at least three years," Vusi enthuses.

The last word though belongs to Zoe as she says: "We can now be proud of our municipal dump site again as we've contained the waste with the Kobelco Excavator. This really is a working example of good service delivery in action."

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# Bell Skogger is game changer for Harding timber contractor

When Wes Redinger started doing contract timber harvesting for one of the largest timber growers in South Africa, he did it with manual labour. His young company, called Whisky Valley, had three chainsaw operators who did the felling while manual extraction and loading the three-metre timber lengths onto tractor-trailer combinations by hand was the order of the day. It was, however, not sustainable.

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"We had started felling our own Eucalyptus on our farm using one and later two chainsaws and we thought we could master another skillset to add to our income," Wes tells us. "Working with real production targets though, we saw almost immediately that we'd need to mechanise, and do that quickly to offer our clients a sustained service."

Wes and his wife, Kira, live on a farm in the Harding district of Southern KwaZulu-Natal and, having both grown up there, the couple has become passionate about growing timber. Kira's father, Jon McKenzie, is a well-known farmer and former NCT 'Farmer of the Year' recipient in the area and Wes keenly acknowledges and values the continuous mentoring he receives from his father-in-law.

"Our timber-growing clients had started growing gum around eight years ago. Their thinnings regime would see the first thinnings at six years, again at 12 to 13 years, with harvesting at 18 to 20 years. We had a lot to consider when harvesting for them, such as getting the wet and slippery felled timber out of the compartment before it dried out too much, especially when it was peeled timber – meaning the bark has been taken off. This timber is meant for export to the Far East."

Wes explains that the impact of machines on the soil was also an important environmental factor as the timber growing companies adhere to strict environmental guidelines under the Forestry Stewardship Council (FSC). Given the steep terrain around the Weza area, where the harvesting was

taking place, Wes realised they needed a special machine with enough power to extract timber quickly and efficiently while having a low ground impact and the ability to stack and load as well.

"I initially thought to attach a rotating timber grab to a telehandler and replace the standard tyres with high-flotation tyres to lower the ground impact. This idea stuck in my head until I found something unique on the internet – the Bell Skogger. By this time our harvesting contract had solidified, and we were under pressure to perform."

Wes knew Keith Milne, Bell Equipment's Sales Representative working out of Pietermaritzburg, and a call to Keith confirmed that the Bell Skogger was indeed all it promised to be.

"As this was a new concept, and something certainly never seen in our area, there was a bit of skepticism all round, which is quite natural, but I was convinced this was the right tool for our application," Wes says. "My own father, Dieter, who has a wealth of knowledge regarding mechanics and can often see elements in the design and build of a machine, accompanied me on a trip to the Bell factory at Richards Bay. After he had inspected the Skogger up close, he gave it a big thumbs-up in terms of its solid design, build and all-round safety features. With his 'out of the box' thinking, he approaches mechanical challenges differently to what a farmer may do and to have the privilege of some of that knowledge injected into my agricultural systems can only spell positive things."



**Bell Equipment Sales Representative, Keith Milne (left), with Wes Redinger from Whisky Valley in Harding.**

Wes and Jon discussed the pros and cons of the Bell Skogger in their application at length and placed the order for the machine in July 2023, which was subsequently delivered the following month. A challenge then was to find an operator young enough to grasp the new technology. In the end, Wes settled on Mbusane Nkomo, who had operated a timber forwarder before and was used to joystick controls.

"Whenever Mbusane is on lunch, I'm happy to hop into the Skogger and operate it. I absolutely love the feel of its power and agile manoeuvrability, especially under a load," Wes adds, smiling broadly.

We asked Wes whether the Skogger has made a difference to their harvesting and extraction operations and performance: As soon as the operator, Mbusane, felt more at home in the Skogger and started operating it instinctively, the change in our performance was most noticeable. We now have seven chainsaw gangs that fell, debark and de-branch the timber and present it for full mechanised extraction.

"It has further taken away two tractor-trailer units and eight manual labourers who can be deployed in meaningful roles elsewhere. But most importantly, it has secured consistent volume, which is the main thing in contract harvesting. That is how one's production is best measured."

Wes and his clients are especially pleased with the Skogger's low ground impact and all-wheel drive traction. Its performance is not hampered by wet weather and where larger machines are invariably stopped by rain, the Skogger soldiers on as there is hardly any soil disturbance.

"We mentioned the Skogger's manoeuvrability earlier on and this is particularly evident due to its articulation that allows the machine to move through 3x3 planting spaces and not damage any trees on its way through. And then to cap it all, it does all this while only using between seven and eight litres of diesel an hour, which has a real and positive impact on our bottom line.

"I should add that timber harvesting is but one aspect of our farming operation. While it offers a fun learning curve and helps to spread the risk, it is teaching us new skills all the time, and as we learn more about what the Skogger can do," Wes says, smiling.

"It's also made a lot of people in this area incredibly curious. We're forever passing acquaintances and strangers on our way to the harvesting area who have come to look at how our Skogger performs in this challenging environment, which is good for growing timber but tough on man and machine."





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## Inraplant breaks new ground in plant hire industry with bold approach

**In the challenging and fiercely competitive plant hire market, one emerging player is quickly making its mark with a disruptive approach that sees the acquisition of new machinery and equipment not as a liability, but an advantage.**

This company is Inraplant, a dynamic plant hire business that prides itself on delivering modern equipment to clients in civil engineering and construction, purchased from best-in-class suppliers, and maintained through regular servicing or replacement.

According to Managing Director, Noël Marx, who has a civil engineering background, Inraplant was established on the simple premise of making construction more efficient and boosting profitability by offering state-of-the-art, reliable, high-quality equipment. The aim is to generate mutual benefits for clients, thereby increasing demand for its services and supporting its growth and reinvestment in equipment in a virtuous circle.

Since its launch in September 2023, the company has already enjoyed remarkable success, which Noël attributes to Inraplant's philosophy and its team of highly experienced personnel.

"With over a decade spent in civil construction, I saw firsthand how often hired equipment would break down due to poor maintenance or age, causing huge frustration and unnecessary delays – especially when construction schedules were under pressure," he says. "So, we knew that we could challenge the industry through understanding that we would only be profitable if our clients were profitable, which means safeguarding downstream value chains through purchasing new equipment."



(From left): Inraplant General Manager, Clive van Zyl, Bell Equipment Sales Representative, Kobus van Niekerk, and Inraplant Managing Director, Noël Marx.



### Fast fleet expansion

As a result of this philosophy, Infraplant has experienced rapid growth, fuelling its impressive fleet expansion to encompass a range of equipment. This includes backhoe loaders, water bowzers, rollers, graders, telehandlers, 10-cubic metre tipper trucks, and excavators.

The latter, which fall within the 20 to 22-ton class of machinery preferred by clients, have been particularly noteworthy acquisitions, chosen through meticulous selection processes.

"We set strict criteria to ensure that we purchased the best machines in terms of our own operational requirements and quality standards, as well as client needs and expectations. We then researched the market thoroughly, analysing metrics such as the size and mass of available excavators, fuel consumption, the availability of extended warranties for wet drivetrains and hydraulics, and whether distributors offered a wide national footprint to ensure that the machine would be properly serviced, no matter where it was," explains Noël.

The only machine that matched or bettered these criteria was the Kobelco SK220XD-10 Excavator from Bell Equipment, which has found enormous popularity among Infraplant's clients.

As a result, despite taking delivery of several of the Excavators in September last year, Infraplant purchased another batch of the machines in February, underscoring the Excavators' impact.

"As a powerful 22-ton machine, the Kobelco Excavator is ideally suited to our industry, and we've seen a surging demand for them over the past few months. These Excavators are incredibly versatile, and are used for a wide variety of tasks, from trenching and backfilling on water and sewer reticulation lines, to stormwater run-offs and waterways, foundations for buildings and V-drains, excavating borrow pits, and loading building, fill, and waste material.

"We also buy our Kobelco Excavators with standard GP and narrower rock or trenching buckets. Plus, as a bonus, the machines' hydraulic piping enables us to fit hydraulic hammers as well. The use of hammers on these machines has proven especially popular with clients in the Northern Cape to break through tough calcrete and other rock-like material."

Infraplant has also taken up the offer of extended warranties of up to 36 months and/or 5 000 hours on the wet drivetrains and hydraulics on its Kobelco SK220XD-10 Excavators, offering clients greater peace of mind.







#### Bell partnership

Noël adds that as witnessed by the success of its Excavators, Infraplant's close working relationship with Bell Equipment has proven enormously beneficial to its own operations, and its clients.

"Our interactions with Bell Equipment have been further enhanced by the deep knowledge and experience of their sales representatives, and particularly Kobus van Niekerk. Drawing on his many years in the field, he has been able to provide unique insights into the various models of excavators on offer, as well as their other related equipment.

"Additionally, Bell Equipment boasts excellent service and extensive coverage, with service centres and depots spread across South Africa and our neighbouring countries. This means that Infraplant clients can rest assured that our equipment receives professional attention from qualified staff using original parts, service kits, and quality lubricants."

Today, this partnership means that some 70% of Infraplant's fleet has been sourced from Bell Equipment. This includes its JCB 3DX Plus Backhoe Loaders, which are in great demand on building sites, as well as its JCB 116D Smooth Drum Rollers with padfoot options, demonstrating its commitment to quality and efficiency.

Infraplant has further adopted advanced telematics systems, including Kobelco's KOMEXS and JCB's LiveLink, alongside third-party tracking devices to monitor machine performance and optimise operational workflows.

As Infraplant continues to gain traction, its commitment to new and quality machines, and its partnership with Bell Equipment have ultimately positioned it as a name to watch within the plant hire industry.

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# Ayabulela Amaxesibe strengthens its fleet with JCB and Kobelco

**Picture this: you're at the gym, bench-pressing more than your body weight or enduring the pain of forearm curls, all while fielding questions about how many backhoe loaders you own or the excavators you plan to purchase.**

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This is nothing out of the ordinary for Vuyisile Tupa, a gym enthusiast and former mathematics teacher, who now plies his trade in plant hire in the town of Mthatha in the Eastern Cape.

Vuyisile tells us that he studied teaching at the Arthur Tsengwiwe College of Education and then started his teaching career at junior secondary school level in Mthatha, teaching mathematics for over 20 years. He resigned from teaching in 2016 to embark on his entrepreneurial career. Using his retirement funds, he bought a 10-cubic metre tipper truck and a JCB 3DX Backhoe Loader from Anthony Enslin, who was with the former JCB distributor at the time. He enthusiastically tells us that he paid in full for both in cash.

Vuyisile was introduced to the plant hire industry at the gym and developed a strong interest. After many sessions at gym, with people who were already established in the plant hire industry, he then committed and started his own company in 2017 trading under the name Ayabulela Amaxesibe Trading, which mainly operates in Mthatha and its nearing areas within a 200km radius.

He initially focused on SMMEs that secured municipal tenders but lacked their own equipment, leasing it to them from his business. Over time, he expanded his operations and started bidding for tenders independently while maintaining his leasing business to ensure a steady income stream, since tendering is a seasonal enterprise.





Vuyisile has subsequently increased his fleet of machines to three tipper trucks and four JCB Backhoe Loaders with three JCB 3CX machines added to the original 3DX model. "I was pleased to learn that Bell Equipment had become the South African distributor for JCB equipment and that Anthony Enslin, whom I have known for a long time and whom I trust, was also now with Bell Equipment," Vuyisile says. "After the COVID pandemic Bell Equipment still kept its branch open in Mthatha while other companies had remained closed, and that I saw as a major advantage."

He is also hugely appreciative of Sidney Halu in Bell Equipment's parts department in Mthatha. "Sidney has worked with JCB parts for a very long time and because he's proactive, he knows what we require in terms of consumable spares and service kits, and he sees to it that those items are always in stock."

Vuyisile is always on the lookout for ways to expand his business. "Some communities around Mthatha were protesting about poor service delivery, especially regarding water supply. When I heard that the national Department of Water and Sanitation was planning to intervene, I thought it might be a good time to invest in an excavator," he explains. "Once again, I sought advice from my gym buddy, who suggested I consult Anthony Enslin about which make and model of excavator would be best suited to my needs."

"Anthony recommended the Kobelco SK220XDL-10 Excavator with the longer carriage for added stability, and I was pleased to follow his advice," he says. "With financing secured, we received the Kobelco Excavator in mid-March 2024, and it is now working on the site of a new hospital in Elliotdale, south of Mthatha."

As Ayabulela Amaxesibe Trading's equipment is hired out on dry rates, Vuyisile has not accurately monitored the Kobelco Excavator's fuel consumption but, by all reports, it's been performing well. The machine was bought with a market-leading warranty of 36 months and/or 5 000 hours on the wet drivetrain and hydraulics. Vuyisile said that the operator of the Kobelco Excavator had experience of working on similar machines and found the Kobelco's controls responsive and the conversion easy.

"I'm keen to pay off this first Kobelco Excavator quickly as there are more developments in the offing in Mthatha with the Walter Sisulu University planning on building student housing," Vuyisile says. "I can see that more similar sized Kobelco Excavators are going to be multiplying my fleet, and I'm also keenly awaiting Bell Equipment's Graders to hit the market."



**Vuyisile Tupa of Ayabulela Amaxesibe Trading with Bell Equipment Sales Representative, Anthony Enslin.**





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