

DOWN TO EARTH

ISSUE 49



HANSON'S BASS POINT QUARRY

CRAWLER SKIDSTEER RELEASE

TRIPLE EIGHT TEAM TOUR NORTH QUEENSLAND

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PRESIDENTS VIEW



Bill Pike
President
Komatsu Australia Pty Ltd

Welcome to the third edition of Down to Earth for 2008.

During the first 6 months of Komatsu's financial year KAL had worked very hard to secure strong market share results. So far we have been pleased with the efforts of our sales team in both mining and construction market segments.

We continue our struggle to secure stock for this important market and thanks to the support of our customer base, we are able to demonstrate our strength through a very solid order book. Many customers are now enjoying good product availability due to a more open and transparent information sharing environment. Komatsu Australia is able to secure strong factory support as a direct result of this process.

In the coming months we see an escalation in orders from the mining sector whilst in the construction sector the demand will likely plateau. Our regional branch network is already in ramp up mode and looking forward to the challenge ahead.

Meanwhile our service branches are also gearing up for an increase in workload to meet strong customer demand. Once again good planning on both sides will ensure a successful outcome, so to avoid disappointment if you have any pending service needs please contact your nearest Komatsu branch to arrange the necessary work.

Earlier in the month of September Komatsu held a Safety Awareness Program in Western Australia which was well supported by our WA customers. A similar program will be

held in the eastern states later this year and we would encourage your participation in this most important initiative.

As part of our drive for continual growth in product support Komatsu is launching its 'Customer First' program. More details on this exciting program will be published shortly.

Our focus is directed to increasing customer satisfaction via a range of focused customer programs. Recent market research conducted by KAL has assisted in the development of this program. I'm sure you will be impressed with the results.

Our on-going commitment is to assist you in developing a successful business. Thanks you for your on-going support. ■

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Front Cover
Hanson's Bass Point Quarry – featured on page 4 and 5.

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HANSON'S BASS POINT QUARRY HAS DREAM RUN WITH KOMATSU WA500 LOADERS

Hanson Construction Materials Bass Point quarry, located just south of Wollongong, has had a long and highly successful relationship with Komatsu, in particular its WA500 series of loaders – with its latest WA500-6 loaders described by Hanson's maintenance team leader as a "dream to work on".

Situated in a stunning location on the NSW coast just south of Wollongong, Hanson's Bass Point quarry is a unique operation supplying high-quality basalt material by sea right into the heart of Sydney.

About 30% of the quarry's output is shipped from its loading jetty into the company's own ship, the Claudia, which then delivers the material to its concrete

plant in Blackwattle Bay – adjacent to the Fish Markets, from where concrete and aggregate is supplied to building and construction projects throughout the metropolitan region, according to quarry supervisor Wayne Kelly.

Equipment used at the quarry includes a fleet of three Komatsu WA500 sales loaders – including a WA500-6 delivered in late March – a 12 month-old Komatsu HD465-7 dump truck and a Komatsu HD325-5 dump truck.

The Bass Point quarry, which has been in operation for 40 years, supplies 1.5 million tonnes a year of product, primarily to the Sydney market. Its primary product is high quality basalt for concrete, roadbase and other applications, said Wayne.

The quarry produces up to 6000 tonnes a day of basalt, ranging from dust up to 20mm aggregate, gabion spalls from 75 to 100mm and large boulders (up to 200 tonnes) for a forthcoming marina project adjacent to Bass Point.

Up to 3500 tonnes of material, which can be various mixed blends of 20mm, 20 blend, 10mm, 7mm and so on, is loaded on to the Claudia for each trip, with up to three trips a week.

Material goes from the stockpiles via a gravity feed system and conveyors along a 500m long jetty to the Claudia.

"From our secondary crushing plant, material goes into the stockpiles; under those stockpiles is a tunnel, which is gravity fed through clamshells, which the operator out on the jetty controls,

depending on how much tonnage is required out on the jetty," said Wayne.

"That comes through that tunnel, onto the transfer point, on to the ship tunnel conveyor and straight out onto the jetty.

"Depending on the weather, and we are constrained in rough conditions, wind and so on, the ship then goes straight to Blackwattle Bay, just under the Anzac Bridge in Sydney," he said.

The quarry is in production from 2 pm until 6 am, five days a week, with maintenance from 6 am until 2 pm – and being so close to the ocean, it is a constant battle against rust and corrosion. Sales take place Monday to Friday, and from 6 am until noon on Saturdays.

"...if you wanted 10 sales loaders tomorrow, I'd go out and buy 10 WA500s."



According to Wayne, the quarry has had a long and successful relationship with Komatsu – particularly in its use of WA500 loaders as sales loaders.

“I will let our maintenance team leader Dave Baird talk about the Komatsu loaders, but what I particularly like about them is how the operators really appreciate them and so are taking a lot of ownership.

“That’s really good from the management side of things because, if an operator takes over ownership of a machine, he looks after it and it’s going to last us for a lot longer,” he said.

Maintenance team leader Dave Baird, who has been on the site “since the day it opened”, said the first Komatsu WA500-1 loader arrived in

the early 1990s.

“When they brought in the Dash 1, me being a fan of another brand through and through, I went through a phase of thinking, ‘oh yeah, we’ll see how this goes, we’ll see how that goes,’” he said.

“However, I have always been open to what’s going on and – 34,000 hours later on a WA500-1, with no transmission replacement, no engine replacement, no pump replacement, just normal service, though we did replace plenty of air compressors on it – I realised it was the greatest machine that was ever made.

“To me, the WA500s are like the old Holdens, they just keep on going on and on.

“I’ve had plenty of people throughout the industry ask me about them and, as a sales loader, if you wanted 10 sales loaders tomorrow, I’d go out and buy 10 WA500s.

“With the HD465, for me, it’s too early to comment; after 12 months, it’s had no repairs, no failures – so time will tell. But the loaders, I cannot speak highly enough about,” Dave said.

“And the latest WA500-6 is an operator’s dream – plus, believe it or not, someone in Komatsu actually thought about the man who’s got to service it, because all the filters and everything are all in one spot.

“They are just such a great machine to work on now as far as the servicing goes. There are very limited breakdowns.

“That early machine, like I said, had an air compressor problem – but 34,000 hours and you don’t do an engine or a tranny, what can you say?

“It speaks for itself,” he said.

“I hope we get the same amount of life out of the trucks. Like I said, they are only new in the place as far as ours go, but so far so good.

“The latest loader out, the WA500-6, it’s that far advanced now, it’s absolutely a dream to work on. The Dash 3 models, they were good, but there’s improvement again with the Dash 6,” said Dave. ■



DALBY COUNCIL QUARRY GOES FOR KOMATSU AFTER DETAILED TENDER PROCESS

Queensland's Dalby Regional Council – located about 200km west of Brisbane – has recently taken delivery of a Komatsu WA480-6 loader and HM300-2 articulated dump truck for its Jimbour Quarry.

The council selected these latest machines following a tender process taking into account price, service and support, fitness for purpose and operator acceptance.

These latest additions join two existing Komatsu machines at the

quarry, a PC300-7 excavator delivered in mid-2003 and a WA470-5 loader delivered in December 2000.

Dalby Regional Council was formed as a result of the recent Queensland council amalgamations, and combines six former councils: Dalby town and the shires of Chinchilla, Murilla, Tara, Wambo and division two of Taroom Shire (Wandoan area).

It is among the top 20 largest councils in Queensland, covering an area of 38,039 square kilometres, servicing a population of 30,018, operating a

\$120 million budget and employing a 600-strong workforce.

The council's Jimbour Quarry, which was previously run by Wambo Shire Council, has been operational for well over 50 years, according to Graham Cook, Dalby RC's acting director of engineering.

"It's a basalt hard rock quarry, producing material for road sealing and aggregate for concrete and road base material for use by ourselves and others within the region."

Before the amalgamation, much of the material from the quarry was sold to the surrounding local councils which are now part of Dalby, "so in essence, a lot of our clientele who were previously external are now in-house," he said.

"We still sell to local contractors and the Department of Main Roads, but the majority of our sales now will be internal due to the amalgamations."

At the quarry, raw rock is blasted out of the face, which the PC300-7 then loads into a rock dumper, said Graham.

"Overall, we've been happy with Komatsu, the machines it's supplied and the support we've received."



In addition, the excavator will mix the rock with an imported loam material to make up roadbase to the required specifications.

Since being delivered, the quarry's WA470-5 has been its main sales loader, but when the need for a larger loader became apparent, it opted for the just-delivered WA480-6 loader.

"In addition to sales loading duties, the WA480 is also used for feeding the pugmill in the pre-coating plant, and for stockpile work – with the 470 basically a backup loader now, doing

the lesser duties," he said.

The quarry's HM300-2 ADT has been purchased as a sales dump truck, taking material from the hopper bins to stockpiles.

"We are currently modifying these hoppers to be able to feed the dump truck, so we haven't actually used it as yet," said Graham.

"We went for an articulated truck in this application because of the way our plant is set up and the configuration of the bins. This kind of

truck just suits our operation."

Graham said the quarry opted for the Komatsu machines after going through a detailed tender process, covering issues such as price, reliability, spare parts backup and operator preference.

"The price and fitness for purpose set the Komatsu machines apart from anyone else," he said.

"Overall, we've been happy with Komatsu, the machines it's supplied and the support we've received.

"We have had problems from time to time, but they have been sorted out, so longer term, we are happy with them.

"We keep going along and dealing with Komatsu on the basis that, when you have issues, you sort them out as we have with other manufacturers," said Graham. ■



KVX G.E.T. PROVES ITSELF IN TOUGH SUNSHINE COAST QUARRIES FACE OPERATION

Sunshine Coast Quarries, based near Kenilworth 50km west of Noosa, Queensland, has converted all buckets on the site to the Komatsu KVX ground engaging tool system after an outstandingly successful trial on its Komatsu PC600LC-7 60 tonne face excavator in 2004.

Today the company uses Komatsu KVX G.E.T. exclusively on all its loader and excavator buckets –including excavators used for face loading, stripping and feeding mobile crushers, and loaders used for sales operations. It's also using KVX wear bar for protection on all its fixed plant.

Since it began operating in 1999, when Sunshine Coast Quarries produced 200,000 tonnes of aggregates, it has grown to be a large-scale operation that will produce two million tonnes of product for 2008, and employs 25 staff.

Managed by Tom Boss, who has run and helped grow the business since 1999, the company today is a leading supplier of materials to the construction, concrete, and road construction industries, as well as other major projects throughout the Sunshine Coast.

Komatsu Australia is a major supplier of mobile heavy equipment to Sunshine Coast Quarries, with the current fleet at the Moy Pocket Quarry including a PC850-6, a PC600LC-7, two PC450-7s and a PC300-7 excavator, two HD465-7s and an HD325-6 dump truck, two WA500-6s, four WA480-5Hs and a WA480-6 loader.

Tom first became aware of Komatsu KXV G.E.T. in 2004, as the company was looking at one of its first major pieces of Komatsu plant.

"We were in negotiations with

Komatsu about purchasing a PC600LC-7 and Darren Fraser, Komatsu's local CSSR, introduced us to the KVX product," he said.

"Our then-current face excavator was frequently breaking adaptors and losing teeth, we were constantly hard-facing and we were faced with endless costs in maintaining a cast system in a hard abrasive application.

"We gave KVX a go on the PC600LC-7 as a trial to see for ourselves the benefits that were being claimed.

"After running the system in the hardest application in the quarry – on the face – I soon became convinced the Komatsu KVX G.E.T. system was the way forward in our hard abrasive conditions," he said.

"It wasn't long before we could see all the other advantages of KVX: positive retention, no welding maintenance,

slim profile systems and a lot longer life than cast systems.

"Basically we overcame all of the previous problems that we were encountering with the old system on our previous face excavator," said Tom.

Since that first trial, Sunshine Coast Quarries converted all of its buckets on the site to KVX and is now also purchasing KVX wear bar to use as protection throughout their fixed plant.

Komatsu Australia supports the quarry operation from its Sunshine Coast branch on the Bruce Highway at Forest Glen, covering all aspects of parts, service and customer support.

Komatsu KVX G.E.T. systems are available from Komatsu Australia's national network, backed by the company's national Customer Support team. ■



Pictured: PC600LC, the first excavator converted to KVX system.

AWARD-WINNING CONTRACTOR HAS LONG ASSOCIATION WITH KOMATSU

Harding's Earthmoving, a family-owned and run civil construction company based in Uki on the NSW North Coast – and which has been using Komatsu equipment since it was formed in 1981 – has received a number of awards over the years recognising the high quality and standards of its work.

The company's most recent award is the Gold Coast Airport BEX Tweed Business Excellence Award in the Manufacturing & Construction category, which it won out of a field of over 40 nominations.

Other awards include a "Pride in Workmanship Award" from Tweed Shire Council and the local Rotary Club for the high standard of its various works, and it was recognised by the NSW Department of Main Roads for the completion of a very challenging paving project between Uki and Kyogle.

Working out of Uki, Harding's Earthmoving operates as far south as Ballina, up to Tugun on the NSW/Queensland border, and west to Kyogle and Tenterfield, carrying out contracting, civil works, land clearing and contour ploughing for the NSW Forestry Department.

Its clients include farmers, local landowners, property developers

and state and local government organisations and even hippies from communes in the region.

Very much a family-run business, Barry Harding and his son Darryl run the civil construction operations, while Barry's brother Trevor runs the Uki sawmill operation and another brother Paul looks after the rock-crushing side of the business. As well, Barry's wife Diane has worked in the office in administration since the business's inception.

Its fleet of 102 pieces of machinery includes a large number of Komatsu machines, including excavators, mobile crushers, loaders, dozers, graders and a forklift. Included in the fleet are

- Two D65EX-15 dozers
- 11 excavators – a PC45, a PC60-7, two PC200-6s, a PC220-5, four PC220-6s, a PC220-7 and a PC300-7
- Four loaders, a WA250PZ-6, a WA350-1, a WA420-3 and a WA480-6H;
- Three crushers, a BR350JG-1 and two BR380JG-1s
- Two graders, a GD525A-1 and a GD530A-2
- A Komatsu FD25DT-11 forklift.

The company's rock crushing business, called Terragon Mobile Crushing, uses the BR350 and two BR380 crushers, along with the WA250, WA350, WA400 and WA480 loaders plus the PC200-6, PC220-6, PC300-7 excavators.

Harding's has its own quarry at Uki, trading as Uki Quarry, where it produces roadbase, drainage aggregates of various sizes down to dust, as well as a blue metal and quartz quarry in nearby Murwillumbah, from where it crushes various sizes of aggregate for concrete, bitumen and drainage aggregate, down to crusher dust.

In addition, one of the D65EX-15 dozers is used to push off overburden, and push gravel and materials up. Additional equipment at the quarry includes a screener, cone crushers and secondary crushers.

"We are constantly moving our crushers between our two quarries as well as local council ones," he said.

"We also crush concrete which is recycled for councils and others, such as Wide Bay Recycling."

Terragon Mobile Crushing carries out a lot of crushing for Tweed Shire Council, as well as for other councils and businesses in the NSW North

Coast and southern Queensland.

Harding's Earthmoving started purchasing Komatsu machinery 27 years ago with a D65E-6 dozer on August 5, 1981.

"We bought our first Komatsu machine from our local sales rep 27 years ago and since then for the past 18 years from Ron Moodie, who is a real people person," said Darryl. "We've had a close friendship with him the whole time, and he's a good, reliable gentlemen to deal with.

"We've kept dealing with Komatsu due to the efforts of Ron, plus we find the performance and fuel efficiency of the Komatsu equipment is very good, the reliability is excellent, and our operators prefer driving Komatsu products.

"In terms of service and support from Komatsu, we have had our moments, but generally it is very good," he said.

The company really prides itself on carrying out earthworks to a very high standard, said Darryl.

"Our forte is road construction and we have all the equipment, staff and expertise to cut a road in, shape and gravel it with material we have crushed ourselves, right through to bitumen sealing – thus creating the finished product ourselves in a very short time frame. ■



KOMATSU FINANCE IS SMOOTH AND HASSLE FREE

Brad Young, owner of BJ Young Earthmoving, based in Paraburdoo, Western Australia, has learnt that he can trust Komatsu equipment – and the service and support that comes with it – while working in the remote Pilbara and Kimberley regions.

Brad – who’s had 34 years’ experience in earth moving and civil works and is a long time Komatsu customer (Down to Earth readers may remember we featured Brad and his wife Julie in a couple of editions back in 2003) – is currently working on Mt Newman airport carrying out grading and excavation for a new terminal building, apron expansion, and expanded carpark.

Brad’s most recent purchase is an HM300-2 articulated dump truck with a fire suppression system in March 2007, financed through Komatsu Australia Corporate Finance (KACF) – a process he described as “smooth and hassle-free; they understood our business and what our requirements are.”

His HM300-2 is used for working remote mine sites in the Eastern Ranges where it’s necessary to do long hauls along steep grades.

“Since we’ve had it, the performance of our HM300-2 has been excellent; it’s very comfortable and handles well in the mining environment, as well as being extremely stable and easy to operate.

“It’s very reliable, and hasn’t needed any unscheduled maintenance,” he said.

In 2004, Brad purchased a GD655-3 grader, a PC300-7 excavator with rock breaker attachment, and a WA380-5 wheel loader. Since then, he’s been very pleased with their performance.

“Our GD655-3 Grader has been very good and very reliable, the PC300-7 with its rock breaker is frequently used when doing internal works and civil works, while our WA380-5 wheel loader serves us well is a good all-round machine,” he said.

At the beginning of 2005, Brad purchased what he considers his

most versatile piece of equipment: a Komatsu WA250PT-5 toolcarrier loader with a range of attachments including two buckets, forks and a jib.

“I’m really happy with the WA250PT-5 loader; it’s a very good machine and the hydrostatic operation is wonderful – it’s smooth and user friendly, it always provides a very gentle change in motion when moving from forward to reverse, without any jerky movements,” he said.

“It not only performs noticeably better than we expected, but it’s also been excellent on fuel economy, typically using between 13 and 14 litres per hour.

“With the WA250PT-5, we can easily free dig through the tough dirt we have here in the Pilbara region, where smaller loaders fail.

“It really does everything we need to do with a loader – anything from small jobs up to loading road trains and general earth work. And because of its versatility, it’s probably our most frequently used machine.”

Brad’s WA250PT-5 was fitted with a Komatsu self-greasing system.

“All the other Komatsu equipment we operate has been retrofitted with Donaldson cab pressurisation systems which use extra fans for blowing cool, clean air into the cab and allow the same filter type to be used on each piece of equipment,” he said.

“Over the years we’ve developed a good working relationship with Komatsu’s sales and service personnel; they’re always friendly and we’ve been able to resolve any issues quickly and easily, with any spare parts we need always arriving within 24 hours.

“We know and trust each other, and Komatsu has always looked after us and our needs.

“Right now I’ve got my eye on a new PC450LC-8 excavator which I’d like to get within the next couple of months,” said Brad. ■



Pictured: Brad Young, Rick Russell and Yogie on site with the WA250PT-6 wheel loader.

ROCK WALL SPECIALIST GOES FOR KOMATSU MINI EXCAVATOR EASE OF USE AND “FEEL”

Sydney-based Chetcuti Plant Hire has standardised on Komatsu mini excavators – due to ease of use and better operator “feel” – for its rock wall and retaining wall business.

The company recently took delivery of a PC78UU-6 with tilt bucket, grabs, and offset boom attachments, joining an existing PC40MR-2 purchased in July 2006.

Chetcuti Plant Hire, based in Werombi, southwestern Sydney, specialises in the construction of rock walls and retaining walls in housing developments in the greater metropolitan area.

To excavate the footing for rock walls, Chetcuti Plant Hire operates equipment which is highly manoeuvrable in tight places – including its Komatsu mini excavators plus skidsteers and attachments, said company owner Elton Chetcuti.

The overall performance of both the Komatsu PC40MR and the Komatsu PC78UU has been good, said Elton, who has been in business for himself for 12 years.

“I have over 20 years’ experience working with excavators made by various manufacturers, and I’ve been using Komatsu excavators for about five years now.

“Komatsu makes a comfortable machine to operate and the equipment is very easy to use,” he said.

“I bought Komatsu because I really like the control layout and feel of them. Komatsu excavators seem to be easier to use and nicer to operate with a better overall operational ‘feel’ than the other excavators on the market.”

Since taking delivery of his new PC78UU in August, Elton has been impressed with the power and fuel efficiency of the new machine.

“In spite of the extra power, the Komatsu PC78UU uses less fuel than I expected and it’s actually more economical than I thought it would be,” he said. ■

Pictured: PC78UU is not only comfortable it also uses less fuel.



TWEED CONTRACTOR HAS BOUGHT KOMATSU “SINCE DAY 1”

Tweed Coast contractor Ian Tagget has been buying Komatsu equipment ever since he started business back in 1984. “I’ve bought Komatsu since day 1,” he says.

Ian’s company, Ian Tagget Earthmoving, carries out general contracting and plant hire works throughout the Tweed Coast region of northern NSW.

His Komatsu fleet includes a D85-15 and a D65-15 dozer, a PC300-7, four PC220s –two PC220-7s and two PC220-8s, which are his most recent purchases – a PC138-2 short-tail excavator, a GD555A-2 grader and a BR380JG-1 mobile crusher.

Before starting his own business in 1984, Ian worked for a local contractor when he decided to purchase his first machine – a Komatsu D65-7 dozer.

Within 12 months he’d also purchased a new D65E-8, and was also the first Australian owner of the new D65-EX dozer – which was featured on the cover of the Komatsu sales brochures for these machines.

Since then, he has purchased a further seven new Komatsu dozers – as well as moving into excavators in 1989.

Ian was one of the first Australian buyers of the then-new Dash 5 excavators, when he attended the release of the range at Yatala in Queensland in 1989.

The PC200-5 was the first excavator he owned and he has continued to purchase different Komatsu models, giving him a wide range of equipment with which to service his clients.

Ian has maintained a good name in the Tweed Coast area due to his

quality of work and reliability, due to him upgrading his fleet on a regular basis and minimising his down time.

“I keep buying Komatsu because I get a pretty good run out of them,” he said.

“The equipment is very good, and because I always buy new I get good reliability and performance.”

The business is a family-run affair with Ian and his two sons doing the outside work, and his wife Rhonda and their two daughters running the office.

“By keeping it all family, it allows us to ensure a better relationship with our clients,” said Ian.

The business carries out a wide range of work, from small backyard jobs to major subdivisions and highway projects for major contractors such as Abigroup.

Ian Tagget Earthmoving also keeps a number of machines on a stand-by basis for Tweed Shire Council, available for emergency or urgent works.

Another part of the company’s business is the quarry it leases, and from which it supplies the local area with gravel.

Ian also grows cane “as a hobby” but one which he has turned into a good financial return for his efforts.

“Over the years we’ve cemented a relationship with Komatsu that has benefited both of us.

“I feel now that with the opening of the new Komatsu Branch at Chinderah, the support we get from them will only get better, and should further benefit both companies,” he said. ■



SERVICE AND SUPPORT PROMPTS SWITCH TO KOMATSU FOR RAIL CONTRACTOR

Rail maintenance contractor M & J Kuipers has a fleet of four Komatsu PC40MR-2 excavators, fitted with "High Rail" systems and specialist attachments for carrying out maintenance for Australian Rail Track Corporation.

Company owner Michael Kuipers said he decided to standardise on Komatsu excavators back in 2004 due to the high levels of service, support and parts backup he needed, due to working largely in regional NSW.

All four excavators fitted with High Rail systems, allowing them to travel and work on the rail lines, as well as using their crawler tracks for more conventional works when required.

All are in identical configurations, fitted with sleeper grabs, tamping heads and slasher/mulcher attachments – as well as buckets – with hydraulic quick hitches.

Michael – who has specialised in rail maintenance work for the past 13 years – bought his first PC40MR-2 in 2004, with the most recent one about 18 months ago.

"We went for Komatsu because of their service throughout NSW," he said. "As about 90% of our work is in country NSW, we needed good backup.

"We've found they're a good reliable bit of gear, and there's an abundance of parts available anywhere, anytime.

"Komatsu Australia's NSW utility sales manager Matt Watton looks after us, and he's been really good to us," said Michael.

As an indication of the spread of the company's work, at the time of writing (in early September), the four machines were at work in Country NSW.

They are set up to do all types of rail maintenance as well as some construction, said Michael.

"The kinds of work we carry out include bridge works, drainage, electrical works – basically anything we may be required to do alongside and on the rail track. These machines are able to handle all that no problem.

"We use the tamping heads to fix any issues where the rail or sleeper is loose, tamping down the sleepers and ensuring there's no voids in the rail ballast underneath them, and ensuring there's a tight join between the sleeper and the rail itself.

"The sleeper grab attachments are used to put the sleepers in place on the track bed, while we use the slasher/mulcher heads for vegetation management alongside the railway lines, especially in cuttings," he said. ■

Pictured: The PC40MR-2 excavator fitted with high-rail systems to carry out maintenance work in NSW.



EAST COAST PLANT HIRE COMPANY SETS STANDARD WITH KOMATSU EXCAVATORS

A major player in the east coast plant hire business, Maas Group, has set the standard by turning wholly to Komatsu excavators as a result of their performance, productivity, fuel efficiency and back up service.

The company has a fleet of 23 Komatsu excavators, ranging from 4.5 tonnes to 45 tonnes.

The latest machine added to the company's excavator fleet is a PC300-8 excavator fitted with tilt hitch and Trimble GPS, and which is currently working on the Coopernook to Herrons Creek Pacific Highway Upgrade on the NSW mid-north coast.

Maas Group was formed by Wes Maas in early 2002 when he was just 22 years old. Based centrally in Dubbo, it has the ability to easily cover all of NSW and Southern Queensland and is planning to open a branch in Brisbane to take advantage of the forthcoming massive infrastructure projects being built there.

Its customers range from the major contractors including, Thiess, Abigroup, Leighton, John Holland, United Group and others, through to mining companies, local government and smaller civil contractors.

"Today our main focus is plant hire," said Wes. "We have completed quite a few large civil projects in the past, but we have now decided to concentrate on building a solid wet and dry hire plant hire company."

In addition to its Komatsu excavators, the company's equipment fleet includes dozers, graders, articulated dump trucks, water carts, rollers and low loaders for heavy haulage work.

"We've had Komatsu excavators from the start, but it's only the past 18 months to two years that we have hooked right in and changed over wholly to Komatsu excavators," said Wes.

"We have phased out our older excavators and upgraded to Komatsu, because we have found them to be reliable machines that have a good

reception in the plant hire market.

"They are good on fuel and the back up service has been sound."

Maas Group uses a range of attachments including hammers and grabs, and nearly all its excavators are fitted with tilt hitches.

"We find our machines are a lot more versatile with tilt hitches as they can be used for a lot of different applications; especially with the added component of GPS, they are perfect for trimming retention basins and that sort of thing."

The company's latest PC300-8 is its first Komatsu Dash 8 excavator, and Wes is finding it offers a lot of advantages over the previous Dash 7 version.

"The Dash 8 has a lot more functions, such as the rear CCTV camera and the Komtrax machine tracking system.

"Komtrax allows us to track the progress of the machine on a jobsite, along with its fuel consumption and

service requirements," he said. "We also find it is slightly better on fuel.

"The most important thing for us is we find that the operators seem to be happy in them; the comfort and ease of operation helps ensure we are able to gain quality operators and retain our current staff.

"Overall the response has been positive".

Wes said he decided to standardise on Komatsu excavators for a number of reasons.

"We started building a pretty good relationship with Komatsu, its sales staff and field service guys and so far it's going really well.

"We wanted to have a uniform, recognised fleet and we think Komatsu can give us that, without too many problems.

"And down the track we know we will get good resale as well," he said. ■



Pictured: Evan Schmalz and Rod Gogall

HM300-2 DUMP TRUCKS HAVE NO TROUBLE HANDLING CHALLENGING APPLICATION

Divall's Earthmoving & Bulk Haulage, a Goulburn-based construction contractor and quarry operation, has been finding its recently purchased Komatsu HM300-2 articulated dump trucks are ideal in challenging haulage applications.

The company is using the trucks in Veolia's landfill site, on the old Woodlawn Mine near Goulburn – and repository for the bulk of Sydney's garbage – to cart cover material which is used to cap off each cell of landfill as it's placed.

The trucks are also used in Divall's own quarrying operations, as well as on hire or contract to other clients with quarries and gravel pits.

As outlined in Edition 47 of Down to Earth earlier this year, Divall's was established in 1991 by Andy and Michael Divall operating from a company-owned and operated quarry at Carrick Hill, Goulburn.

The company has since grown to the stage where it employs over 90 local people and is a major contributor to the local economy.

In addition to its crushing and quarrying operations, Divall's areas of operations include general earthworks and earthmoving, roadworks, bulk haulage, demolition, subdivisions and hourly hire.

At the Veolia site, the two HM300-2s are loaded with clay capping material by Divall's PC200-7 excavator, which they then cart down to the landfill dumping area, where the material is dumped and spread by the company's PC200-8 excavator.

"We've been on this project for about three years, and we replaced two other trucks we were using with the two Komatsu ones," said Andy Divall.

"We very much prefer the Komatsu ADTs, in particular, the braking system, which is very efficient.

"We had a lot of trouble with the previous trucks, which used a retarder system for much of the braking. That meant we had ongoing transmission problems, as this system overloaded the drivetrains with the trucks constantly going downhill fully loaded," he said.

"In comparison, the Komatsu trucks have a wet disk braking system – the only 30 tonne ADTs with such a system – which takes all the load off the transmission and puts it at the wheels.

"They really are ideal for this sort of application – and which would be typical of many quarries as well where you have a crusher at the bottom of a pit – where you're doing a lot of carting downhill."

In addition to eliminating drivetrain problems, Andy said the backup and service from Komatsu Australia was first-class, with excellent parts availability – "not that we've needed any parts so far with the trucks.

"And from the point of view of driver comfort, they are a beautiful truck to sit in and drive," he said. "Our operators certainly prefer them."

Andy also praised the low body height and tailgate system on the Komatsu ADTs.

"The tailgates are certainly a good feature; we'd been used to open bodies, and the tailgates save a lot of

spillage," he said.

"And because they've got nice low body heights, they are easy to load with smaller machines, while still giving plenty of capacity."

In common with most items of Komatsu construction equipment now sold in Australia, the HM300-2s come as standard with the Komtrax remote monitoring system – and Andy has found it useful, not only for monitoring machine performance and condition, but also for improving operator techniques.

"Recently, we had a couple of Komtrax reports come to us on the email that the trucks had been operating on a sideslope, and we had a word to the operators.

"Once they know that we are now instantly aware of this sort of thing ... well, I don't think we've seen another of these since," he said. ■

"...Komtrax reports come to us on the email that the trucks had been operating on a sideslope, and we had a word to the operators."



KOMTRAX



Model: PC130LC-8 Type: B Serial No.: 20827

Machine Location

LAT	LONG
833 58 14.123	8150 58 41.3
Work Time	QTY Time
07/11/2007 01:38:00	07/11/2007 01:07:00

SMR

SMR Value	Date
5.4 H	07/11/2007

Working Status

Working Status	Date
08:00	07/11/2007

Fuel

Water Temp	Date
7200	07/11/2007

Map showing locations: BLACKTOWN, CHIDLOW, CHIRREYS, WARRAGONG, CLMERSPOOK, CAMPBELL TOWN, HURST, SAUTERONG.



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KOMATSU CRAWLER TRACK SKIDSTEERS GIVE INCREASED VERSATILITY AND HIGHER CAPACITY

Komatsu Australia has released two crawler track skidsteer loaders, the 3.82 tonne CK25-1 and the 4.33 tonne CK35-1, providing increased versatility and higher capacity compared with conventional and competitive skidsteers.

The two new machines provide significant productivity and versatility advantages compared with conventional rubber-tyre skidsteers, particularly in soft underfoot conditions.

“These new crawler skidsteers combine the compactness and versatility of our rubber-tyre skidsteers with the exceptional weight distribution and traction of crawler tracks,” said Carl Grundy, Komatsu Australia’s National Sales Manager Utility.

The CK25-1 has a rated operating capacity of 1030 kg and is powered by a Komatsu 4D98E-2NFE diesel rated at 51.8 kW, while the CK35-1 has a capacity of 1470 kg, and is powered by the same Komatsu engine, rated at 62 kW.

In addition, they feature a unique Komatsu vertical-lift design that

keeps the bucket reach constant during the lift cycle, allowing higher tipping loads than for conventional machines.

This also makes them well suited for pallet-loading operations, as fork attachments stay parallel to the ground throughout the lift cycle.

“While these two new machines share significant parts commonality with our rubber-tyred skidsteers, the crawler undercarriage section has been designed from the ground up.

“It’s not simply an adaptation of our rubber-tyre drivetrain, so there are no compromises – ensuring maximum durability, reliability and productivity,” said Carl.

“In addition, they use purpose-designed Komatsu components throughout, including the same proven Komatsu closed circuit load sensing hydraulic system (CLSS) that is used on our excavators and other equipment, including skidsteers.

“This further ensures optimum performance and reliability, because all components have been designed to work together as an integrated whole,” he said.

Carl said the CLSS ensured precision and smoothness in all movements, as well as combining power and speed to respond to any need.

“Komatsu’s combination of joysticks and proportional control pedal ensure perfect control of all functions – allowing operators to use any kind of attachment for maximum versatility.

“As with other Komatsu skidsteers, we’ve also paid a lot of attention to operator comfort and safety,” he said.

Both machines have the option of a large ROPS or FOPS operator cabin, either open or fully enclosed with air conditioning.

“The cabin features a wide entrance and plenty of room, providing the operator with a level of comfort that is much higher than average for this class of machine – while ergonomic controls and excellent 360° visibility make the job much easier and safer in any conditions,” said Carl.

“Our Komatsu-patented LCD panel is mounted on the safety bar, allowing the operator to constantly monitor all main functions of the machine, including fuel level, water temperature, air filter, engine oil pressure and more.” ■

Other features of the two units include:

- Low ground pressure (only 0.32 kg/sq cm for the larger CK35-1)
- High drawbar pull
- Large ROPS and FOPS operator cabin, available open or fully enclosed with air conditioning
- Low profile engine bonnet for excellent rear visibility
- Two speed travel
- Servo controls
- Komatsu universal quick coupler.

Brief specs include:

CK25-1:

- operating weight, 3820 kg;
- operating capacity, 1030 kg;
- engine, Komatsu 4D98E-2NFE diesel rated at 51.8 kW;
- standard bucket capacity, 0.4 cu m;
- maximum travel speed, 12km/h;
- standard track width, 320mm;
- ground pressure, 0.37 kg/sq cm.

CK35-1:

- operating weight, 4330 kg;
- operating capacity, 1470 kg;
- engine, Komatsu 4D98E-2NFE diesel rated at 62 kW;
- standard bucket capacity, 0.45 cu m;
- maximum travel speed, 12km/h;
- standard track width, 450mm;
- ground pressure, 0.32 kg/sq cm.



KEEPING TABS ON KOMATSU'S KOMTRAX SYSTEM



Komatsu Australia has recently appointed Karl Pettengell as its National Komtrax Administrator, responsible for the day-to-day supervision and management of the growing numbers of machines operating under the Komtrax remote machine monitoring system throughout Australia, New Zealand and New Caledonia.

Included in this role is maintaining the database of all machines, ensuring they are all connected and accurately reporting their operational and positional data, as well as keeping the

local Komatsu service teams involved in the monitoring of machines in their regions.

Karl is well qualified for this role. Although he's only been with Komatsu Australia since early July, he had 22 years as an air traffic controller with Britain's Royal Air Force – the last nine years in Search and Rescue.

"In that job, we were constantly utilising satellite technology with locator beacons, both marine and aviation, and that's certainly given me a good understanding of how the Komtrax technology works," he said.

"Komtrax is enormously powerful technology for both our customers and our service capabilities".

"On our service side, it's allowing us to be far more pro-active in supporting our customers".

"Not only can we get a good idea as to how a machine's performing – and alert owners by email or SMS immediately if there's a potential problem – but we are able to ensure we have parts available as machine

hours build up, or we can remind owners that their machine is due for a service," said Karl.

"And as machines move from one region to another, we're able to keep tabs on it, and ensure that our support teams in other regions are properly equipped to provide the required levels of service, parts and support."

Another powerful capability of Komtrax is in machine security.

A concept known as "geofencing" allows a machine owner to notify Komatsu that a machine should not be operated outside a certain area. If it is, the next time it is shut down, it won't be able to be restarted.

This capability also extends to making a machine inoperable outside certain hours – so for example, at night, vandals or joy riders can't make off with a machine.

"Owners can also monitor unauthorised use of a machine; for example if an employee's using it to do some extra work that he shouldn't be – or in the case of a plant hire

machine, ensuring it's not being used for additional hours," Karl said.

"My role is to assist owners with setting up these capabilities, so they have total control over what a machine is doing, and when.

"And if a machine is ever stolen, the on-board GPS will eventually let us know where it is – plus we are able to disable it so it can't be operated without our authorisation."

Karl said that owners are finding ever-more uses for the Komtrax technology in monitoring and looking after their equipment.

"It also helps identify operator abuse, or poor practices; for example, operating an excavator on full power mode when it's only doing light work, or if the machine's being overloaded, or even if it's being operated unsafely.

"For all our subscribers, we send out monthly summary reports on each Komtrax machine – and 90% of the information in those reports is available for viewing online at any time. ■

PAUL CHENERY, NSW MAJOR ACCOUNTS MANAGER



Paul Chenery, who is Komatsu Australia's NSW Major Accounts Manager, Construction & Utility, is responsible for providing sales support to the company's major account customers – covering the construction, quarrying and recycling industries throughout the state.

A long-term Komatsu employee, Paul took on this role in November 2007, after eight and half years as the company's NSW Used Equipment Manager.

His joining the company as NSW Used Equipment Manager in July 1999 was actually a return to Komatsu; he'd been with its Victorian branch for nine years between 1984 and 1993 – when he left to spend six years with a major competitor based in Victoria.

Originally from New Zealand, Paul started in the industry as an apprentice diesel mechanic with International Harvester (which later was taken over by Dresser, which in turn was taken over by Komatsu during the late 1980s and early 1990s) in 1975, before leaving for

Western Australia in 1979.

In his current role, Paul is responsible for account development and maintaining relationships with Komatsu's major clients in the construction, quarrying and recycling sectors.

"My job is to focus on offering customer solutions to these major accounts at a corporate level, while relying on local account managers to provide the local sales support in regional and country areas," said Paul.

"After many years in used equipment market, where the business was highly price sensitive – often down to the last \$5 – it's a great pleasure to be working with our major accounts, who are extremely professional to deal with, and are more focused on features and benefits which relate

to whole-of-life operating costs, not just the up-front purchase price.

"This side of the business depends entirely on developing and building relationships. At the end of day it's all about your reputation, integrity and honesty.

"The customer has to trust you and your integrity and if you have no integrity – or the customer doesn't believe you have – you have nothing," Paul said. ■



KOMATSU'S "ICONIC" 40-YEAR CELEBRATION FOR NZ QUARRY CONFERENCE



One of the highlights of this year's Institute of Quarrying (NZ)/ Aggregate and Quarry Association (NZ) conference, held in early July in Auckland was a smorgasbord of music and musical theatre put on by Komatsu NZ at the Auckland Town Hall over the past 40 years – conceived as a tribute to the organisation's 40th annual conference.

Komatsu is a major supporter of the IOQ and the AQA, which includes sponsorship of the IOQ annual conference luncheon.

The conference, which was held from July 9-11 at the Hyatt Hotel, attracted key people in the quarry industry from

around New Zealand, as well as a number from Australia.

At this year's conference, the IOQ (NZ) also hosted the International Institute of Quarrying presidents' meeting – only the third occasion that it has been held here.

This annual conference is the highlight of the New Zealand quarrying and extractive industry's year and provided an outstanding opportunity for those attending to get together, socialise, network and learn something new from a range of speakers.

It attracted over 300 delegates from all levels of the New Zealand quarrying, extractive and associated industries, as well as supplier representatives.

For the conference luncheon, Komatsu NZ opted for a "music through the ages" theme, reflecting the 40th IOQ conference, presenting 40 years of the music and musicals that had been staged at the Auckland Town Hall over that time.

For the grand finale, where all the performers came on stage again, Komatsu NZ sales manager Steve Haines made his triumphant theatrical debut as the Phantom, playing the pipe organ at the top of the stage (complete with smoke and dramatic lighting) –

before descending to the front of the stage at the end, revealing himself and thanking everybody for attending.

The show was extremely well received with some highly enthusiastic comments from the audience afterwards.

Rob Kinney, Lime Operations Manager from Ravensdown said he and his wife were totally engrossed in the show.

"My wife and I thoroughly enjoyed it. We were sitting at a table with many of our quarry managers and it wasn't until one of them spoke to me that I realised they were still there.

"Looking around the room it was interesting to see so many tough quarry men singing along to The Beatles and Abba. It was a really great way to spend an afternoon," he said.

Steve "Phantom" Haines said that, as a major sponsor and supporter of the IOQ and AQA, the company sees its involvement in the annual conference one of the key activities for Komatsu NZ every year.

"It gives the industry an opportunity to meet and discuss issues that are key to the development, growth and improved running and management of their businesses," he said.

"It also gives suppliers such

as Komatsu an opportunity to demonstrate their commitment to the industry through the sponsorship and running of functions such as the Komatsu luncheon.

"Every year we are faced with the challenge of 'how to do it differently', and this year I believe that we exceeded everyone's expectations with a fantastic show featuring entertainment from some of NZ's iconic singers and songwriters and our smorgasbord of music and musical theatre from the past 40 years," said Steve.

In addition to its sponsorship of the conference luncheon, Komatsu NZ had a working display, including a BR380JG-1 mobile crusher, WA480-6 wheel loader and PC200LC-8 excavator at Winstone Aggregates' Puketutu Island Quarry just south of Auckland.

Komatsu Australia and New Zealand team members in attendance include Phil Pritchard, Komatsu NZ's Regional General Manager; Steve Haines, Sales Manager; Charles Wheeldon, Komatsu Australia's Business Manager – Quarries; Colin Chamberlain, Komatsu Australia's Marketing Manager, and Komatsu NZ's entire sales team. ■

SUPERCAR DRIVERS TOUR NORTH QUEENSLAND KOMATSU MINE SITES

A team from Komatsu Australia recently accompanied V8 Supercar superstars Craig Lowndes, Jamie Whincup and Steven Richards on a tour of mining centres in North Queensland – hosting the TeamVodafone and Ford Performance Racing Team for a week in August, when the drivers were on a six-week racing break during the Olympics.



The tour took in Blackwater, Emerald, Clermont, Moranbah, Mackay and Townsville, starting on August 11 in Emerald with a private dinner with the entourage from Komatsu, TeamVodafone and Castrol.

From Komatsu's point of view, the purpose of the roadtrip was to take the drivers, cars and associated activities to the upper Bowen Basin and give something back to some of the company's loyal customers.

Public events at Komatsu branches in Emerald, Mackay and Townsville were scheduled and proved very popular with staff, customers and the general public.

Visits were also included to selected high schools, promoting V8 Supercars Australia's "V8 Supersafe" initiative, has developed an education-focused program highlighting the importance of safe driving practices, reasoned risk taking and positive choices, targeting Year 10, 11 and 12 students throughout Australia.

This safety focus mirrors Komatsu Australia's on-going emphasis on safety for its employees, customers and contractors, as outlined in the company's recently announced "Komatsu Way" program.

V8 Supercars also promoted its 'Carbon Footprint Offset' program

which sees approximately 20,000 trees planted per year and has been running for the past two years. In 2009 this environmental program will also include a change in fuel and oils used in the V8's. For example, the use of E85 (85% ethanol fuel) in the cars, which again has the same synergies with such Komatsu products as its low-emission, low fuel consumption engines and its new hybrid excavator.

Other visits during the tour included Ford dealerships, Vodafone stores and public areas in Blackwater, Clermont, Moranbah and Townsville.

Highlights for Craig Lowndes and Jamie Whincup included visits to Rio Tinto Clermont Coal (where they were co-drivers in the new Komatsu 930E-4SE 290 tonne trucks) and Macarthur Coal Moorvale, where they saw the new PC5500-6 excavator at work first hand.

TeamVodafone took along its transporter, including a Pit Stop Challenge Car, race car simulators and a range of posters and merchandise which were well received by the locals, particularly with the V8 Supercars

coming to North Queensland for the Townsville 400 in July 10-12 next year.

Evenings were taken up with closed functions where invited guests from Komatsu, Castrol and Vodafone mingled with the drivers and were entertained by interviews – where Craig, Jamie and Steven had the crowd hanging on every word.

The drivers also happily signed shirts, serviettes, stubby coolers – in fact, just about anything!

TeamVodafone, Komatsu and Castrol all received excellent media coverage with a full page-colour spread in the Townsville Bulletin, other regional newspapers, live radio interviews and television coverage.

Komatsu Australia would like to thank all those who made the event such a great success. ■





Pictured left: Brian Smith, Wodonga TAFE's Acting Chief Executive with John Tannahill, Komatsu Major Accounts Manager - Government at the WA250PZ-6 delivery.

WODONGA TAFE USES LATEST KOMATSU TECHNOLOGY TO TEACH OPERATORS OF THE FUTURE

Komatsu Australia has recently delivered a new WA250PZ-6 wheel loader to Wodonga TAFE's National Industrial Skills Centre – providing trainee operators with access to the latest state-of-the-art loader technology.

The loader – which replaced an eight-year-old machine – is used for training operators, as well as for assessing those applying for operator's licences, according to John Van Den Borne, the

centre's business facilitator.

"Since we purchased the previous machine, there have been significant improvements to technology, and this piece of equipment was needed to teach students looking to go into the civil construction industry as well as the mining sectors," he said.

John Tannahill, Komatsu Australia's Major Accounts Manager-Government said it was a logical decision for the

centre to opt for the latest Komatsu wheel loader technology.

"Because of our market leadership, there are more Komatsu loaders in the field than any other brand, and it makes sense for Wodonga TAFE to offer training on a Komatsu machine," he said.

This is the second piece of Komatsu equipment supplied to the centre in the past few years. Two years ago,

the company supplied a PC200-7

Brian Smith, Wodonga TAFE's acting chief executive said it was great to have equipment that featured the latest technology, and helped the organisation keep up to date with where the industry was heading.

"We always try in our institute to make sure that we have the latest equipment, and that's reflected in all the vehicles we have here," he said. ■

CUSTOMER SURVEY

Thank you to all our customers who responded to the recent Down to Earth customer survey. We are currently still recording the data. Once the information is compiled we will draw the winners and publish their names in the next Down to Earth (Issue 50).

Thank you again for participating and if you would like see previous editions of Down to Earth publications, simply go to our website www.komatsu.com.au click on 'Komatsu World' then 'Newsroom' where you will find the 'Down to Earth' magazine link.



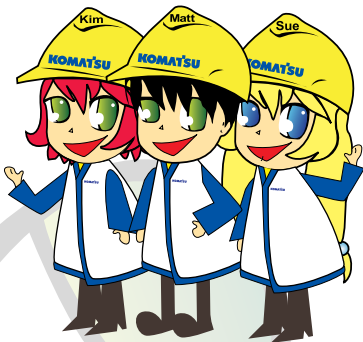
Spot The Difference!

Hi Komatsu Kids!

Can you spot the differences between the two CK25-1 skidsteers?

There are 10 differences made to the second picture of the CK25-1 tracked skidsteer loader. Can you spot all 10? Some are easy peasy, but others are a little on the tricky side!

Good luck!
Kim, Matt and Sue!



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