

D2E

» DOWN TO EARTH MAGAZINE

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IN THIS ISSUE

- » SPECIAL FORESTRY FEATURE
- » HAMERSLEY IRON CHOOSES KOMATSU
- » E-BUSINESS AWARDS
- » AUSTIMBER 2004
- » COLOURING COMP WINNERS

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Ian Olivieri
 Managing Director
 Komatsu Australia Pty Ltd

KOMATSU COMMENTS

May I take this opportunity to wish you all a happy and prosperous new year. Looking back, 2003 was another successful year for Komatsu Australia.

Highlights for the year include our increased participation in the Iron Ore industry in Western Australia, which includes an order from Hamersley Iron worth in excess of \$100 million and the Mount Gibson Iron order which consists of four HD785-5 dump trucks, two WA500-3 wheel loaders and a D375A-5 dozer (both stories on page 5).

Across Australia and New Zealand Komatsu has maintained a keen focus on the forestry industry and in New Zealand we have been the

Partek distributor for the past two years.

Partek Forest was purchased by Komatsu Ltd late in 2003, creating an opportunity to build great synergy between our company's for the benefit of the long list of global customers, who have built their businesses around the premium machinery brands of Komatsu, Timbco, and Valmet.

In this issue of *Down To Earth* we are pleased to present a special forestry feature which highlights an innovative new line of purpose-built forestry excavators with modifications supplied ex-factory, achieving savings in build time and modification costs.

In addition we have released

another four new Dash 7 excavator models aimed at the heavy end construction and quarrying markets, as well as the new range of MRx Dash 2 zero-swing mini excavators.

Komatsu is committed to providing the best product support service to its customers and to ensure we provide replacement parts on time, during 2003 we negotiated a partnership with TNT Logistics to further upgrade our service levels.

All of us at Komatsu Australia would like to thank you for your continued loyalty through 2003 and we look forward to your long association with our company.

CONTENTS

Komatsu News	Mark Mamo - A Komatsu Australia veteran	22	Special Forestry Feature
CCF raises \$23,876 for Beacon kids 4	Customer News		See Komatsu equipment in action at AusTimber 2004 6
New Newcastle facilities 4	Hamersley choose Komatsu 5		Tasmanian operator loves Komatsu 6
Komatsu & Partek team up 10	Mt Gibson takes Komatsu fleet 5		"High/Wide" PC270-7F provides great stability 7
Successful Japan training trip 10	WA800-3 cuts quarry fuel costs 11		"Best excavator ever" 7
Safety interlock for IR drill rigs developed 12	Atom adds another Komatsu 11		Hardworking forestry dozers 8
Komatsu achieves major safety milestones in Queensland 13	Queensland drill contractor buys third ECM-600 rig 12		PC228USF forestry harvester exceeds expectations 8
Komatsu E-Business a no.1 deal 13	Operator "can't fault" new grader 14		Komatsu hones forest focus 9
Successful quarry conference 14	"Komatsu really looks after us" 16		
Komatsu heavy weight performers 15	Service is excellent 16		Regulars
Partnership with TNT Logistics 19	TEN owner operator franchise is a world first 17		Komatsu Comments 3
Council helps Beacon 19	20-year relationship with Komatsu 18		Hall of Fame - 8 years of hammer work and hardly touched! 17
Unique features on new zero-swing minis 21	MRX minis shine for Diamond Communications 20		Kids Corner 23
New Komatsu excavator product manager 22	Six new MRX-2s to NZ equipment hire startup 20		
Shingo Hori. Direct link to Komatsu Ltd 22			

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Front Cover

Les Walkden Enterprises operates over 20 Komatsu machines - such as the WA470-5 with Komatsu log grapple attachment as shown on the cover.



CCF RAISES \$23,876 FOR BEACON KIDS

Komatsu Australia had a very successful involvement in the Civil Contractors Federation's 2003 national conference, held in Perth in November – including a luncheon and auction which raised \$23,876 for the Beacon Foundation.

Komatsu Australia is a major sponsor of Beacon, which develops programs to combat youth unemployment throughout Australia.

The auction was held during the conference's Friday luncheon event, and was

preceded by a thought-provoking performance by Sandi Rapson and Laura Purcell (Laura's performance written by Rob Scotney) of Tasmania's **is theatre**.

CCF's 2002 conference at Hamilton Island raised \$17,150 towards **is theatre's** pilot program to take on six up-and-coming Tasmanian artists to develop a professional career in acting.

Currently **is theatre** is researching the effectiveness of performance as a tool to

engage corporate sector interest in the issue of youth unemployment.

The 2003 auction, had a huge array of items, including sporting memorabilia, jewellery, a personally autographed edition of Bryce Courtney's Matthew Flinders' Cat, a signed Pro Hart print of the famous Komatsu excavator and many others rounded up by CCF WA members and raised \$23,876.

Komatsu Australia would like to acknowledge CCF WA's huge contribution to making this



is theatre's Sandi Rapson performs for CCF luncheon.



The Pro Hart signed print of the famous PC200-7 excavator raised \$5000 at the CCF auction.

auction such a great success.

In addition to the Beacon fundraiser, Komatsu Australia's involvement in the CCF conference included sponsorship of the registration and the Friday luncheon itself which had a Rugby World Cup theme – with all Komatsu staff wearing Australian Rugby shirts.

In addition to the **is theatre** performance, the entertainment included WA comedian Peter Dee, who had the crowd of more than 150 in stitches.

NEW NEWCASTLE FACILITIES

Komatsu Australia has substantially upgraded its Newcastle presence with the recent opening of new purpose-built branch facilities.

Built at a cost of \$3 million on

the site of the old Newcastle Speedway at 25 Tomago Road, Tomago, the new premises offer 24-hour, seven-day parts and service availability.

They also include a new

machine display and demonstration area, allowing customers in the Newcastle region to view and evaluate machines "in the iron", said Jeremy Brett, Komatsu

Australia's business unit manager for Newcastle.

"This is a major development for us in the Newcastle region," he said.

HAMERSLEY CHOOSES KOMATSU



Above: 830E & WA1200-3 hard at work at Hamersley Iron WA.

Komatsu Australia is in the process of delivering a major order of mining equipment to Hamersley Iron mining sites in north Western Australia.

The order, worth in excess of \$100 million, includes thirteen 730E dump trucks, two 830E dump trucks, a WA1200-3 wheel loader, two HD785-5 water trucks, five GD825A-3 graders and four WD900-3 wheel dozers.

Important elements in Komatsu Australia's winning the order included its commitment to e-business, which provides the ability to allow Hamersley Iron to directly order parts and components on-line through Komatsu's B2B connectivity system, and Komatsu Australia's product and technical support capabilities.

Delivery started in December 2002, and the final machines will be delivered early in 2004.

The broad terms of the order were set under the globally

negotiated Heavy Mining Equipment (HME) deal between Komatsu America and Hamersley's parent Rio Tinto.

In addition to setting a basis for pricing negotiations, this deal includes parts-by-the-hour rates, cost caps and performance guarantees.

The equipment is being delivered to five Hamersley sites in the north-west iron ore mines: Yandicoogina (Yandi), Mt Tom Price, Paraburdoo, Channar and Marandoo.

Reasons for this substantial order are primarily to meet mine expansion requirements, due to increased demand for iron ore in China. However, the order also includes some budgeted replacement machines.

According to Murray Rance, Komatsu Australia's western region general manager, a key factor in Komatsu picking up such a large order from Hamersley was its performance

in delivering equipment to Rio Tinto subsidiary Robe River's West Angelas site in late 2001 and early 2002.

This order included five 730E dump trucks, one D375A-3 dozers, one WD900-3 wheel dozers, two GD825A-3 graders, one HD785-5 water cart, an HD465-5 service truck and a WA250PT-3 toolcarrier.

Two Ingersoll-Rand DML-HP drill rigs were subsequently delivered to the site as well. A D475A-5 dozer was delivered to West Angelas in November 2003.

Another factor was the performance of the first WA1200-3 loader at Yandi.

"Yandi took the first WA1200-3 late last year, and they've been very happy with it," said Rance. "It's certainly exceeded expectations, and they've ordered a second machine."

A third WA1200-3 is also on its way to the north-western iron ore mines, with delivery due to Robe River's Pannawonica mine in late February 2004. This follows the delivery of eight 730Es to the mine in early 2003.

"By the end of this current delivery process, we will have more than 100 pieces of Komatsu equipment working in iron ore mines in the region, compared with a previous total of about 30 items," said Rance.

"As a result of this, we have

now established a technical support facility in the Pilbara to ensure our products are adequately supported.

"Our technical and product support people have done a terrific job of getting close to this customer, and convincing them that we had the infrastructure and support processes in place to take Hamersley Iron through this huge expansion phase," he said.

"In addition to the quality and proven performance of our products, plus our product support capabilities, Komatsu Australia's commitment to e-business and supporting our customers in their business improvement projects had a significant impact on Rio's decision-making process with these orders," Rance said.

"Customers like Rio Tinto have spent millions on systems and process improvement; they greatly appreciate business partners like Komatsu who are able to assist them in using these tools better.

"How a supplier does business with its customers is becoming more important all the time."

Murray said Komatsu Australia and Rio Tinto are now working at full speed to achieve B2B connectivity in record time.

MT GIBSON TAKES KOMATSU FLEET

Komatsu Australia has supplied a fleet of dump trucks, loaders and a dozer to Mount Gibson Iron's new Talling Peak Hematite Project, 130 km east of Geraldton, in north Western Australia.

The fleet consists of four HD785-5 dump trucks, two

WA500-3 wheel loaders and a D375A-5 dozer.

Ore will be loaded by hydraulic excavators into the HD785-5 trucks, which will take it to the on-site crushing and screening plant.

The crushed and screened

material will then be hauled 60 km to Mullewa on 135 tonne capacity quad road trains to a rail load out facility, from where it will be railed 107 km to the port of Geraldton.

The two WA500-3 loaders will load the trains from the rail load out stockpile.

Mining has already started at Talling Peak, with the first export shipment scheduled to leave Geraldton at the end of January.

SEE KOMATSU EQUIPMENT IN ACTION AT AUSTIMBER 2004!



Craig Hahnel

If you're involved in the forestry industry in any way, don't forget to come along to AusTimber 2004 at Albury, NSW from March 29 to April 3.

Komatsu Australia will have a big presence there, with a number of machines participating in the demonstration area. Additionally, KAL will be featuring some very special 'New Release' products designed for forestry by Komatsu Working Gear.

Equipment being demonstrated will include a PC228USF fitted with processor, a PC270-7 fitted with a processor, a PC270-7

feller/buncher and a Valmet 890 forwarder.

In addition to our presence at AusTimber itself, Komatsu Australia will be strongly involved in the show's conference program.

We will be hosting the Australian-themed barbecue evening on the opening night of the conference (March 29) and we are a major sponsor of the

gala dinner and Australian forest industry awards on April 1.

Also at the conference, Komatsu Australia's forestry equipment consultant Craig Hahnel will be presenting a paper on the implications of modifying construction equipment for forestry applications.



TASMANIAN SUCCESS STORY



Left: John Alps, Komatsu Tasmania, state manager & Les Walkden.

Les Walkden is an unpretentious and dynamic man, who has been in business for the past 28 years as sole director of Les Walkden Enterprises Pty Ltd.

Walkden Enterprises operates across the north, northwest and south of Tasmania as well as in Geelong Victoria.

The company is diversifying

into innovative transport modes for the harvesting and cartage of hardwood and softwood, plus transport of forest residue mulch, poppy mulch, fresh vegetables, potato by-products and coal and boiler fuels.

Walkden Enterprises harvests 150,000 tonnes per annum of hardwood and carts 250,000 tonnes per annum. It also harvests 60,000 tonnes of softwood and carts 250,000 tonnes per annum – all up half a million tonnes a year.

All harvesting is done by cable logging and, apart from a another brand skidder, all equipment used is supplied by Komatsu Australia.

Les owns over 20 Komatsu machines. His line-up includes a PC300-7, two PC220-7 and PC400-6 excavators, along with WA120-3, WA300-1 and WA320-3 wheel loaders, two WA470-5s, WA380-5s and WA380-1s, plus two D75-5 dozers.

"I purchased my first Komatsu

back in 1984 – a PC200-1 excavator; the testament to how good these machines are,

is that I'm still buying Komatsu's today!" said Les.



PC220-7 excavator at the Walkden premises in Launceston, TAS.

"HIGH/WIDE" PC270-7F PROVIDES GREAT STABILITY

A Tasmanian logging contractor finding exceptional stability with his new PC270-7F "high/wide" forestry excavator – one of the first sold in Australia.

Mike Woods, of Eastern Tiers Logging, recently bought a PC270-7F "high/wide" forestry excavator fitted with a Don Howe log grab. His latest machine joins four other Komatsu excavators, a PC200-6, PC220-6, PC300-6 and PC300-7.

The PC270-7F has a "high/wide" track frame, featuring an almost-flat underframe profile with 727mm ground clearance and a wider track gauge.

This not only provides better stump clearance but improved stability and easier manoeuvring of the machine on the forest floor.

All Mike's machines are permanently fitted with log grabs except for the PC200-6,

which alternates between grab and bucket for carrying out civil works.

Mike's company works in the Eastern Tiers region of Tasmania's east coast, between Triabunna and Bicheno, harvesting eucalypt hardwood under contract to Gunns Pty Ltd.

He is a confirmed Komatsu customer due to the quality of equipment and product support he describes as "second to none".

His latest PC270-7 "high/wide", delivered in early November 2003, was specifically bought to bark and pre-bunch logs after falling, ready for the skidder.

"My operator has been amazed at the stability of the new excavator and the very smooth way it operates," said Mike. "In these rugged forest conditions, the stability of the high/wide set up is a big plus.



Eastern Tier's new high wide PC270-7F.

"He also came off the PC200-6, so he's finding the new cab environment a lot friendlier and easier to work in."

Mike described Komatsu's support as "unbelievable".

"They are second none; I have no hesitation in saying that," he said.

"They really won me back in 1996, when I first got started. My bucket ram broke the rod in

the cylinder so it was unusable. I rang them at 8 am, and by 2 pm that afternoon I was going again.

"All the Komatsu guys are great to deal with: John Alps, Doug Fulton and Richard Lock here in Tasmania, and product manager Craig Hahnel. They are always available to help me out, or give some advice or assistance," said Mike.

"BEST EXCAVATOR EVER...."

Northern NSW logging contractor Haulers and Fallers has recently taken delivery of a Komatsu PC270-7 excavator for processing, handling, stacking and loading of logs for transport to timber mills in the region.

According to Laurie, performance of the new machine is better than his two remaining PC300-5 machines, and far superior to another brand excavator in the fleet.

"It's a very stable machine, which is a big improvement over our non-Komatsu machine; all our operators have been very impressed with it," he said.

"The hydraulics are very smooth and powerful; there's no

jerkiness or anything – you just touch the levers and she responds instantly.

"Operator comfort is also excellent. Our operators have remarked on how quiet the machine is, the air conditioning keeps it very cool, and the tinted windows keep out the glare," said Laurie.

"Visibility to all parts of the work area is also excellent.

"This is probably the best excavator we've ever operated, and its performance and capabilities are ideal for our application.

"The fact that it performs as well as our other 30 tonne machines makes it real value for money."

Haulers and Fallers' PC270-7, fitted with log grapple and beak, is being used on a five-year contract with NSW State Forests, processing 35,000 cu m of timber a year.

The contract, which has been underway for 12 months, involves felling the timber, taking it to the ramp, processing and stacking it, and



PC270-7 fitted with log grapple & break.

then transporting it to various mills in the northern NSW region.

Work carried out by the PC270-7, which is based at the ramp, includes stripping the bark, processing, sorting and stacking the logs, then loading them onto trucks.

"It's responsible for a very important and critical job on the ramp," said Laurie.

"We bought this machine because of the excellent performance of our PC300-5s, trading one of the PC300s on it.

"We've been so pleased with its performance, we may well trade our non-Komatsu machine and buy another PC270-7," he said.

HARDWORKING FORESTRY DOZERS

NSW forestry contractor Jason Lehmann, of JL's Dozer Hire, has recently bought his third Komatsu dozer, a near-new D155AX-5 to help ease the load on his other machines.

An idea of their workload can be gained from the fact that his two Komatsu D135A-2 dozers are typically working 12-hour

days, with one of them working 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Jason recently rebuilt the engine on one of these machines, and within three and a half months had notched up another 1500 hours on it.

"I was hoping the new machine might ease the load on my other

dozers, but I'm finding demand is increasing all the time," said Jason.

Most of his work is for NSW State Forests, working in pine plantations around Tumut and Tumberumba, and as far afield as Oberon and Bathurst.

His machines are used to work on steep slopes and over stumps and tree slash, carrying out line ripping on contours for new plantings, as well as stacking debris after harvesting.

"I really like the Komatsu dozers," said Jason. "I find them to be operator friendly and an advantage over other makes, because they are lower set and therefore more stable when working steep slope areas and dealing with trees.

"I also have no complaints about their performance, and I'm certainly getting the expected hours of operation before having to go to rebuilds."

Jason's latest machine, the D155AX-5, has logged about 250 hours since he took delivery of it in October.

"I'm very pleased with it with the D155. It manoeuvres easily and quickly, has excellent visibility and gives a really nice ride with the shock-absorbing cabin."

Since purchasing the D155AX-5, it's been used for gravel winning in a local quarry, but is scheduled to shortly start on forestry work.



The new D155AX-5 working hard for Jason Lehmann.

PC228USF FORESTRY HARVESTER EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS

A Komatsu PC228USF high/wide forestry excavator has proven a much better performer than its owner expected when he purchased it.

The machine, fitted with a Waratah 621 head, is owned by WA-based timber contractor Pine Hauliers, and was purchased when another machine was burnt out.

"We weren't really in the market for a short-tailswing, high/wide configuration," said company owner Greg Coverley.

"The machine we lost was a conventional set up, and that's what we were looking for to replace it. However, Craig Hahnel at Komatsu Australia persuaded me that the PC228USF would meet our needs – and I've been very pleasantly surprised.

"It's a very very stable machine – definitely as stable as a conventional excavator," said Greg. "And the extra ground clearance is a big advantage, because a lot of the terrain we're working in is old farmland, with plenty of old stumps all over the place.

"The short tailswing is also a bonus; it gives us a lot more room to work in confined spaces.

"My operator really likes it; we've found it a lot more stable than we expected. Overall, the machine's been great; we've really been impressed with it."

Greg took delivery of the machine in about May 2003, and as of early January it had around 1000 hours on it. It's primarily been used harvesting blue gum and some pine.

Pine Hauliers works in the southwest of Western Australia, around the town of Donnybrook, harvesting, processing, handling and hauling timber.

Its fleet includes 11 excavator harvesters (including four Komatsus, two PC200-6s and a PC220-6, plus the PC228USF), 12 forwarders, four skidders, a Skyline cable yarder, 14 trucks, along with a "few bits and pieces".



The Waratah 621 head on Komatsu's PC228USF excavator.

KOMATSU HONES FOREST FOCUS

A new line of excavators, purpose-built to meet the unique needs of performance and safety in the forestry industry, will be released at AusTimber 2004 by Komatsu Australia.

The main focus of these new excavators has been to provide safer and more reliable equipment for forestry applications, said Craig Hahnel, Komatsu Australia's forestry industry consultant.

Key features include:

- ▶ ROPS forestry cabins
- ▶ Track skis and forestry double-bar shoes
- ▶ Improved "plug-in" connections for all the most popular processors on the Australian market
- ▶ "High/wide" track frames.
- ▶ Purpose-built forestry booms for processors.

"One of the big problems experienced in Australia and New Zealand has been the long delays caused by having to complete a large number of modifications for forestry application in local engineering shops," said Craig.

By supplying our units ex-factory with some of the more important modifications already completed, we'll be able to deliver dramatic cost and time savings.

ROPS forestry cabins

Komatsu's ROPS forestry cabins are believed to be a first from an excavator manufacturer. They have been designed, tested and manufactured to comply with SAE J1040 ROPS protective structures for forestry applications.

This is identical to the standard currently used by purpose-built forestry equipment manufacturers, such as Valmet (Timbco).

(NOTE: This ROPS forestry standard is specific to the forestry industry, and is NOT applicable for excavators in construction, quarrying and mining applications.)

"Our new production cabins feature 13mm polycarbonate in all windows, excellent all-round visibility, a forward slanting front window, six work lights, emergency rear window exist and a guarded sky light for upward vision," said Craig.

They are now available for the PC300-7 and PC270-7, and will shortly be available for the PC220-7 and PC200-7 excavators, plus the PC228US-3 short-tail machine.

Track skis and double-bar shoes

Track skis are standard on these new Komatsu forestry excavators.

"They are vital in forestry application, ensuring superior undercarriage life in severe conditions where the machine is constantly working and tracking across obstacles such as rocks, limbs and tree stumps," said Craig.

These excavators also have the option of factory-fitted purpose-built forestry shoes, ensuring superior plate life (compared with standard triple bar), improved traction and better mud-cleaning ability.

"Plug & Process" manifold

Komatsu Australia has also developed a new manifold to ensure the best possible connection between Komatsu's closed-centre HydraMind hydraulics and the processor head.

"This new manifold will maximise the performance from the Komatsu hydraulics while ensuring greatly reduced losses through relief valve actuation and the generation of heat and noise," said Craig.

This manifold has been designed to suit (and has been approved by) all the most popular brands of processors available on the Australian market, including Timbco, Waratah, Rosin, Logmax and AFM.

"High/wide" track frames

"High/wide" track frames have been available as a factory option on Komatsu forestry excavators sold in Australia and New Zealand for about the past 18 months. They are now available for PC228, PC270-7 & PC300 machines.

"High/wide" track frames ensure better ground clearance and have an almost flat under-frame profile, along with improved stability (including greatly increased over side lift capacity) and better manoeuvring due to the wider spaced final drives.

"In addition, we now offer the option of a 'high/wide' configuration for our PC300-7 which includes PC400-7 final drives, undercarriage – including track chains, bottom rollers, carrier rollers and track plates – and an even stronger X-frame.

Factory booms for processors

"The other major feature of our specialist forestry units is Komatsu factory-built forestry



Komatsu's new forestry excavators feature a specially built ROPS forestry cabin.

booms and arms for processor attachments, again resulting in faster delivery times, and reduced costs," said Craig.

"These purpose-built booms and arms provide perfectly matched working envelopes to match Komatsu excavators," he said.

They will be available for the PC228USF-3, PC220-7, PC270-7 and PC300-7.

Further information: Craig Hahnel, Komatsu Australia, ph 1800 853 311, fax (02) 9795 8244, e-mail forestry@komatsu.com.au.



Track skis are standard on Komatsu's purpose-built forestry excavators, factory-fitted forestry shoes are available as an option.

KOMATSU AND PARTEK TEAM UP

In November 2003, Komatsu Ltd agreed to acquire 100% share of KONE Corporation's subsidiary, Partek Forest AB and Partek Forest Holdings LLC (collectively known as "Partek Forest").

The acquisition was finalised at the end of 2003.

Partek Forest, known as Komatsu Forest from January 1, 2004, is one of the world's leading companies for purpose-built forestry equipment, producing and selling a wide range of equipment including harvesters, forwarders and feller bunchers.

Partek Forest's line of products include the Swedish-built Valmet range of rubber-tyred harvesters and forwarders, and the US-built Timbco range of crawler-mounted hydro-bunchers and rubber-tyred clam-bunk skidders and forwarders, plus a range of US and Australian built processing heads.

These products will continue to be sold under the Valmet and Timbco brands.

According to Jim Playsted, Komatsu Australia's general manager, sales and marketing, the Partek Forest acquisition

will bring good synergy to Komatsu and Partek operations in Australia and New Zealand.

"Komatsu is already a significant player in the forestry business, with our expanding range of specialist forestry excavators and Partek have been the industry leader in their products for more than 10 years.

"In New Zealand, Komatsu has been the Partek distributor for the past two years. As a result of that, we have already established a very close relationship with the Partek people in Australasia.

"We have worked closely with managing director Mike Jones and sales and marketing manager Brenton Yon, achieving some early success in New Zealand," said Jim.

"In Australia, we have yet to determine the organisational structure which will result from this acquisition.

"In acquiring Partek Forest, Komatsu has taken on a wide range of forestry equipment with a presence in all major markets around the world."

SUCCESSFUL JAPAN TRAINING TRIP

In late 2003, two Komatsu Australia technical staff – Sydney-based technical trainer Jason Alfeo and Brisbane-based field service mechanic Randall Collett – visited Japan to attend Ingersoll-Rand factory training on the new ECM660-III drill rig and to visit Komatsu technical centres. This is Jason's report.

Our first stop was the IR factory at Yokohama, where our training covered an introduction to the ECM660-III and highlighted differences between this and the Mark II machine.

The training was of a high standard, and was a huge benefit for Komatsu Australia in developing a relationship with the factory staff.

A further great benefit was the exchange of information back to the factory from Randall who, based on his vast experience and knowledge on these machines, was able to relay information on common problems we are having in Australia and how he has gone



Study Group in Yokohama plant.

about fixing these in the field.

We then visited the Osaka plant, where we joined a tour conducted by Craig Hahnel for 18 Australian customers.

We saw D65EX-15 and D85EX-15 dozers and PC200-7 excavators being built, with the

plant producing 40 machines a day for the world market. It was impressive to see the degree of automation being used.

We also had a presentation on the new PC400-7.

The following day, we had a meeting with senior training

and technical personnel on training in Japan and Australia.

This was a great opportunity to share ideas and developments from both countries, including moves towards developing international standards for training worldwide.

WA800-3 CUTS QUARRY FUEL COSTS

A Komatsu WA800-3 wheel loader has slashed fuel costs at Pioneer's Lysterfield Quarry, at Rowville in south-eastern Melbourne since going into service in March this year.

The WA800-3 has logged an average hourly fuel consumption rate of 71 litres per hour, compared with over 100 litres per hour for the machine that preceded it. At the same time, it is proving to be a faster and more productive loader than its predecessor.

Fitted with an 11.3 cu m Jaws rock bucket and Hensley GET, the WA800-3 is loading shot granite diorite directly from the face into 50 tonne capacity rear dump trucks.

Its production rate in this highly abrasive material is about 2500 to 3000 tonnes per day, or around 300 tonnes per hour, according to Joe Morse,



WA800-3 at Lysterfield Quarry in Rowville, Victoria.

supervisor at the quarry.

"It's filling up the trucks in two and a half to three passes, feeding seven to eight loads an hour," said Joe.

"Since we've had the Komatsu loader at the quarry, we've been very pleased with how it's gone.

"Its performance has been excellent; it's a lot quicker, more efficient and a whole lot cheaper on fuel," he said.

"We've also had no mechanical problems at all.

"Our operators have also been very happy with the loader; it's very comfortable and easy for

them to operate," Joe said.

Pioneer's Lysterfield Quarry supplies roadbase, aggregates and crushed rock to south-eastern Melbourne and the wider metropolitan area.

It has an annual throughput of around 900,000 tonnes per year.

ATOM ADDS ANOTHER KOMATSU

One of the biggest owners of Komatsu equipment in the Wellington region of New Zealand has added a Komatsu PC200-7 excavator to compliment the existing range of Komatsu equipment.

Alex Mathieson of Atom Hire has been associated with Komatsu products for 23 years, but was becoming very dissatisfied with the product support.

"However, with the establishment of the Komatsu New Zealand operation two years ago, the product is finally getting the support it deserves," said Alex.

"I've noticed a major turnaround in the service and support side of the new operation, and there's a huge amount of effort going into it.

That's been noted throughout the industry, and they will reap the rewards of this down the track, I imagine," he said.

Atom Hire was started by Alex about 10 years ago, and specialises in plant hire, contract quarrying and landfill throughout the Wellington and Wairarapa regions.

In addition to the new PC200-7, its fleet of Komatsu equipment includes two PC200-6s, a PC400-6 and a PC450SE-6 excavator, a WA380-3, WA400-3, WA470-3 and WA470-5 wheel loader, two HD205s and an HA270 articulated dump truck.

The company runs its own quarry at Plimmerton on the coast north of Wellington, plus a "one-stop-shop" contract service to quarry owners,



Atom Hire's PC450SE-6 loading a HD205.

including drill-and-blast, extraction, screening and crushing.

It also has the contract to operate Wellington City Council's Ngauranga Gorge quarry operation.

Despite issues in the past with

product support, Alex stuck with Komatsu products due to their quality and reliability.

"I've always found the equipment itself to be very good," he said. "It's given us the best run, the best punch per pound."

QUEENSLAND DRILL CONTRACTOR BUYS THIRD ECM-660 RIG

Queensland-based drilling contractor Sequel Drill and Blast has continued buying Ingersoll-Rand ECM-660 drill rigs – recently purchasing a third rig after excellent performances from its first two units.

As reported in the July 2002 edition of Down to Earth, Sequel Drill and Blast purchased a second ECM-660 rig following greatly improved production rates and extended consumables life from its first ECM-660.

In August 2003, the company bought its third ECM-660 – this,

time a Mark II unit.

“We’ve got plenty of work on right now and we needed a third rig,” said owner Steve Payne.

“We’ve been very happy with the performance of the first two machines, which is why we’ve continued buying this model.

“The ECM-660 has also been extremely well received by our customers, quarry and civil construction companies throughout Queensland and northern NSW.”

Steve’s on-going experience with the ECM-660 is that they

are continuing to deliver extended consumables life, of up to four or five times that of other percussive type hydraulic drill rigs.

“We are continuing to find that the IR ECM drill rigs are much more reliable and productive than anything else on the market, which is why we have now standardised on them,” said Steve.

“Operators are very impressed with the ease of operation of the automated system and with the vision and general layout of the cab, compared with previous models. The

pressurised cab also eliminates any excess noise, providing increased operator comfort.

Sequel’s ECM-660 rigs have been seeing service throughout Queensland, working for such clients as Boral, Orica Quarry Services, Readymix, UEE Explosives, Brisbane city council and various civil contractors throughout the state.

STOP PRESS: Just as we unveil to press Sequel purchased its fourth ECM-660.

SAFETY INTERLOCK FOR IR DRILL RIGS DEVELOPED



Ingersoll-Rand in Australia has developed a safety interlock system for IR drill rigs, designed to minimise the risk of operator injury or fatality during drilling operations.

The safety interlock system automatically stops rotation of the drill rods and bit about 10 seconds after the operator gets out of the seat.

It was developed by Ingersoll-Rand Australia following a number of accidents –

including some fatalities – in Australia and New Zealand, when operators’ clothes were caught up in a rapidly rotating drill steel.

A recent coroner’s report following a fatality in Victoria recommended the fitting of a cut off device to stop the rods rotating if the operator exited the cab.

As a result of this, many drill owners in Australia and New Zealand are now requesting the

fitting of such devices in their drill rigs.

Safety interlock systems are now being retrofitted to IR drills used in Australia and New Zealand, and will be provided as standard with all new drills.

A significant number of IR drill rigs in use are in the process of being fitted with safety interlocks.

“While the use of these safety systems has not been made mandatory by WorkCover authorities, there is widespread demand from drill owners for the interlock to be fitted,” said Grant Field, IR Drill Solutions’, Asia Pacific engineering, service and support manager.

The safety interlock system for IR drill rigs was developed by Grant and has been approved by IR in the USA, and also by IR’s Japan manufacturing facilities.

It is activated if the operator gets out of the seat for more

than 10 seconds; the 10-second delay allows for operators to stand up in the cab to check the drill rod positioning, or if they need to have a look around.

A reset button starts the rods rotating once the operator is ready to start drilling again.

According to Grant, an important element of the interlock is the built-in “failsafe”.

“If the wires are cut, the interlock automatically activates and shuts down the rod rotation. In addition, we’ve made it almost impossible to bypass the interlock,” he said.

The cost of fitting the safety interlock depends on whether it is for one of the older mechanical style drills, or the latest models, such as IR’s ECM-660 and ECM-720, for which the cost is considerably less because there is no need to fit control valves.



IR Safety interlock system is now standard on all IR drills

KOMATSU ACHIEVES MAJOR SAFETY MILESTONES IN QUEENSLAND

Komatsu Australia's Queensland regional branches reached some major safety milestones in 2003, with five locations achieving greater than 500 days LTI-free.

As of October 2003, the following LTI-free days were achieved (with previous bests in brackets):

- ▶ Brisbane, 673 days (previous best, 131 days)
- ▶ Mt Isa Branch, 534 days (1110 days)
- ▶ Gladstone, 634 days (750 days)
- ▶ Townsville, 618 days (259 days)

- ▶ Century Mine, 803 days (629 days)
- ▶ Ensham/Yongala, 2458 days (1786 days)
- ▶ Ernest Henry, 913 days (516 days).

"All these locations have recorded exceptional safety performances in Queensland and all staff who work at these Komatsu Australia facilities can take a bow," said Roger Millar, Queensland region general manager.

"So far, there has been only one lost time injury in Qld during 2003, with over 800,000 man-hours worked," he said.



Mark Sproull, OH&SE manager, Queensland region.

Komatsu Australia's Queensland region has concentrated heavily on proactive safety management over the past 18 months, with the first priority being eradicating hazards and risk. Additional activities such as training and education, familiarisation to



Roger Miller, general manager, Queensland region.

tasks and changing behaviours have also been a major focus.

"This good performance has been part of a major cultural and behavioural shift within the region; the employees and leadership teams are to be congratulated for their efforts and focus," said Roger.

KOMATSU E-BUSINESS A NO.1 DEAL



Left: Geraldine McBride, managing director SAP Australia/NZ, Malcolm Barnes, Rainer Schendel, Deloitte Consulting and Len Augustine, director of marketing SAP Australia/NZ.

One of the foundations of Komatsu Australia's Mission Statement is to be Number 1 in the industry for Information Technology. The company recognises that effective technology will help it deliver improved service and value to customers to become a better business partner.

During 2003 Komatsu Australia not only launched its innovative e-Business service with great customer success, it also

received strong industry recognition for its efforts in this field.

In August of last year Komatsu received Customer Relationship Management of the Year award from SAP Australia for its e-Business initiative. SAP is the world's largest and most successful supplier of business application software, and their products and services are used by many of our largest customers.

This award recognised Komatsu's innovative approach to using technology to support customers. Whereas most CRM's focus on internal requirements, Komatsu's e-business initiative was built to make it easier for all customers to do business with Komatsu - by streamlining processes and reducing their costs.

In receiving the award on behalf of Komatsu, Malcolm Barnes, chief information officer, stated that "CRM's shouldn't be about cross selling, up selling, call centres or analysis, they should be about customers and making it easier to do business. Get that right and the rest will follow."

In December 2003 Malcolm Barnes was also asked to accept another award - This time it was the Chief Information Officer of the Year at the Australian Information Technology & Telecommunication Awards night. This award recognised

the unique business based approach Malcolm takes to technology and the positive results achieved within Komatsu over the last few years. The award is voted on and confirmed by members of Australia's Information Technology industry.

These two awards independently demonstrate that Komatsu's commitment to using technology in the customers interests under Malcolm's stewardship are recognised by customers and industry as a successful approach to doing business.



Malcolm Barnes.

OPERATOR "CAN'T FAULT" NEW GRADER



NSW sales rep Peter Calder with Shane Thomason, operator of Ganderton's GD555-3 grader.

The operator of the first new series Komatsu GXX grader sold in Australia says he "can't fault" the machine after operating it for six months and notching up nearly 600 hours.

"There is nothing I can point to in this grader that I can knock about it," said Shane Thomason, the operator of NSW South Coast contractor Ganderton Civil's GD555-3 grader.

Ganderton Civil, based at Nowra, south of Wollongong, has a long family history in the

civil construction industry, with owner Ian Ganderton's great grandfather working on the Nowra Bridge in 1900.

Ian started the company in 1989, but before that a family company had been in the business for about 30 years.

The company carries out subdivisions, roadworks, industrial developments and general civil construction works throughout the Shoalhaven region. It also operates a sandstone quarry at Tomerong, supplying paving materials to

the local region, councils and the RTA, as well as rock boulders for retaining walls.

Operator Shane Thomason has been with the company for 11 years, operating graders for all that time. He switched to the GD555-3 in July 2003, having operated another make purchased new in 1996.

He said the best thing about the Komatsu grader was its transmission set up and the power to the blade that it delivered.

"I never use the direct drive mode; I only ever have it in the automatic powershift transmission mode," he said. "I prefer the powershift mode; it definitely makes it easier to operate.

"There's a lot of things to worry about when you are operating a grader, and this powershift mode means there's one less thing you have to think about.

"It's especially good in final trim work, because you don't get those jolts between gear changes that can result in a slightly uneven finish," said

Shane.

"The automatic gearbox with torque converter and powershift transmission means you can just knock things over.

"I never find myself skidding the tyres, which is a risk factor in a lot of subdivision developments. With a grader, if you can eliminate wheel slip, you eliminate a lot of other problems such as tyre wear, drive chain wear and tear."

Shane also praised the grader's visibility and comfort.

"Visibility out of the cab is great really. You get a good view of the work area out the front, with much better visibility.

"This is because the frame is higher, giving a much better view of what's underneath it, plus the blade has a lot more lift," he said.

Ganderton Civil is a significant owner of Komatsu equipment.

Its fleet includes six Komatsu excavators (two PC220-6s, a PC220-7, one PC300-5, two PC300-6s) and a WA400-3 in the Tomerong quarry.

SUCCESSFUL QUARRY CONFERENCE

The Institute of Quarrying Australia's 2003, held in Canberra in October, was once again a big success.

With the theme of "The Challenges", the conference looked at the challenges facing professionals in the quarry sector.

Komatsu Australia was again a major sponsor, sponsoring the satchels and the main conference dinner.

The dinner had an Italian theme, with a highlight being the "Three Waiters" who entertained around 400 delegates, partners and guests

with their renditions of famous opera arias.

Welcoming guests to the dinner was Jim Playsted, Komatsu Australia's general manager, sales and marketing.

A highlight of the evening was the presentation of the Ingersoll-Rand Award to the top student graduating with an Advanced Certificate of Extractive Industries. The award was split between two graduates: Roger Moona of Readymix Penrith Lakes, NSW, and Rob Brett of Readymix Petrie, Queensland.



Left: Jim Playsted introduces Goskel Guner Komatsu Germany's general manager wheel loaders to Quarry dinner. Both are dressed in Italian Rugby jerseys to compliment the Italian theme.

KOMATSU HEAVY WEIGHT PERFORMERS

Komatsu Australia has released the latest in its new Dash 7 range with the launch of four machines aimed at the heavy construction, quarrying and smaller end of the mining markets.

The four new machines are the PC400-7 (41.4 tonnes), PC450LC-7 (44.0 tonnes), PC600LC-7SE (57.6 tonnes) and PC800SE-7 (75.6 tonnes).

According to Julian Reynolds, Komatsu Australia's newly appointed product manager for hydraulic excavators, these machines represent a major advance from their market leading predecessors, the Dash 6 series.

"The design criteria for these machines was focussed heavily on safety, class leading performance, operator comfort, reliability and durability," said Julian.

"As a result of this focus, the new PC400/450 machines in particular provide unrivalled performance in their class.

"The combination of greater production and improved fuel efficiency produces what we believe is the stand-out performer in the 40 tonne market," he said.

"Komatsu has been market leader in the 40 to 80 tonne range for the majority of the last decade and we expect to maintain this position well into the future thanks to these latest Dash 7 machines."

All four models share the same operating advances as the earlier Dash 7 excavators released in Australia, including:

- ▶ Improved operator environment, through a 14% larger cabin with even less noise and vibration, better

operator comforts and improved air quality due to the pressurised cab with air conditioning and filtration as standard

- ▶ Higher performance, through increased engine power, better digging forces and faster movements – coupled with reduced fuel consumption
- ▶ updated and improved hydraulic control systems, resulting in faster performance, finer control and easier operation
- ▶ superior all-round visibility
- ▶ simplified maintenance, longer oil and filter change intervals and improved access to daily fill and inspection points
- ▶ improved safety, particularly

in the area of operator protection and machine stability.

Brief specs of the new machines are:

PC400-7: operating weight, 41,400 kg; engine, Komatsu SAA6D125E-3 rated at 246 kW; maximum digging depth, 7345 mm; arm breakout, 25,000 kgf; bucket breakout, 24,500 kgf.

PC450LC-7: operating weight, 44,000 kg; engine, Komatsu SAA6D125E-3 rated at 246 kW; maximum digging depth, 7,650 mm; arm breakout, 22,900 kgf; bucket breakout, 24,800 kgf. Specifically designed for heavy duty work in harsh operating environments.

PC600LC-7SE: operating weight, 57,600 kg; engine, Komatsu SAA6D140E-3 rated at 287 kW; maximum digging depth, 6,910

mm; arm breakout, 28,500 kgf; bucket breakout, 31,770 kgf.

PC800SE-7: operating weight, 75,570 kg; engine, Komatsu SAA6D140E-3 rated at 338 kW; maximum digging depth, 6980mm; arm breakout, 33,800 kgf; bucket breakout, 39,900 kgf.

Further information: Komatsu Australia, ph 1800 853 311, website www.komatsu.com.au, email excavators@komatsu.com.au



Introducing the new PC400-7 excavator.



PC800-7

"KOMATSU REALLY LOOKS AFTER US!"

Two Adelaide excavation contractors have nothing but praise for the way in which Komatsu has looked after them since buying their first Komatsu machines at the beginning of 2003.

Tony Romeo and Gino Dettorre are partners in T&G Excavations, which carries out footings and plumbing excavation works throughout the Adelaide region.

In January 2003, they bought a Komatsu MRX20 excavator, following this up with an SK714-5 skidsteer in May. They also run a backhoe/loader.

Tony operates all three machines, while Gino, a master plumber with his own separate business, operates the MRX20 when he has a need to. His son Fabian also operates the excavator and skidsteer.

"We've found these new machines very easy to use," says Tony. "Both Fabian and I are new to skidsteers, but the servo controls mean it is very easy to pick up. The controls are basically the same as in the backhoe.

"This is the first skidsteer we've owned, and we tried out a few others before deciding on the Komatsu. They really came up with the goods in terms of price and performance.

"In particular, the local rep, Mark Cunningham was very good to us; he really looked after us with both machines," says Tony.

"We're also very happy with the excavator. For its size, it has a lot more power than other machines, and is very smooth to operate. Again, we tried out a few others before deciding on



Tony Romeo (left) and Gino Dettorre with their Komatsu SK714-5 skidsteer and MRX20 excavator.

Komatsu, but this one was the best."

Tony also has praise for Komatsu's backup service.

"Their workshop facilities are very very good," he says. "We had a few teething problems, but they were really on the ball

and sorted things out very quickly. We were very impressed."

Anyone looking for some keen excavation contractors in the Adelaide region can call Tony Romeo on 0418 803 780.

SERVICE IS EXCELLENT

Nine months ago, Michael Dovile had never driven a skidsteer. However, a week after taking delivery of his new Komatsu KS714-5 he was completely at home in it.

"I'd previously operated backhoe/loaders and front-end

loaders, but this was the first skidsteer I'd operated," he says. "I'd never even been on one before, but within a week I had it under control and felt very comfortable with it.

"It's a very good performer, a very comfortable machine to

operate, with plenty of power," he says.

Michael's company, Northside Excavations, specialises in cleaning up building and housing sites, and in rail maintenance and upgrading work, covering the northern suburbs of Melbourne.

In addition to his skidsteer, he has a tandem tipper.

"I do a bit of work for Alstom with the tipper and I've just started with MVM Trams," he says. "When they're laying new track, I put the new material down and spread out the base for the track."

His skidsteer is fitted with a 4:1 bucket, fully enclosed cab, plus a satellite GPS security tracking system with 24-hour back-to-base communication.

And why did he opt for Komatsu?

"When I was looking to buy a skidsteer, I rang quite a few suppliers, some up to three times. Ryan Lurati at Komatsu Australia was the only one who responded, and so he got my business.

"The service I've had since then has been excellent. Any minor problems I've had with the machine have been sorted out very quickly," he says.

"In particular, I like the field service which is very reliable. Any time there's a problem, they come out to you and sort it out."

Michael's still in the process of building up his business; if you're after a skidsteer operator in his region who's keen to work and who has a good quality, reliable machine, you can contact him on 0412 338 880.



Michael Dovile with his new SK714.

TEN OWNER-OPERATOR FRANCHISE IS A WORLD FIRST



Merv Stewart, owner of a PC45R-8 is one of TEN's franchisee.

A franchise network for owner-operators in Melbourne, believed to be a world first, has proven highly successful in its first two and a half years of operation.

The Earthmoving Network (TEN) started up in Melbourne in May 2001, offering qualified

earthmoving equipment operators the opportunity to own their own businesses while providing the marketing, administration support and bulk buying power of a substantial organisation.

According to TEN's operations manager Margaret Sullivan,

there are currently 29 franchisees covering the Melbourne metropolitan region. TEN's target for the region is 60 owner-operator franchisees.

"Equipment run by our franchisees ranges from 1.5 tonne minis to 20 tonne excavators, skidsteers, backhoes and tippers," she said.

Since starting operations, TEN franchisees have averaged 90% work rates; franchisees' customers are a combination of those sourced from TEN and those they build up themselves.

"We make contact with our franchisees every day,

checking where they are, where they'll be tomorrow, how long a job will last," said Margaret. "If they don't have any work the next day, we'll make sure we get them a job."

"In addition, all franchisees get together every one or two months to share experiences and ideas, discuss any issues, and so on," said Margaret. The last of these for 2003 was held at Komatsu Australia's premises in early December.

For further enquiries on TEN's operations, call Margaret on 03 9755 6538.

8 YEARS OF HAMMER WORK – AND HARDLY TOUCHED!



A Komatsu PC300LC-5 owned by Sydney contractor Abax Contracting in mid-1995 has logged 15,500 hours of mostly hard-rock hammer work – and never had any engine or hydraulic repairs.

One of the last Dash 5 PC300s sold in Australia, the machine was bought by Abax when it started work on the M2 motorway in Sydney's northwest.

"It started on the M2 when that job started, and was there until the job finished, about two years later," said Abax's chief fitter, Terry Lyon.

"It then went to World Square in the city for near 18 months. It was working 12 to 14 hour days, and because of the nature of

the site, we couldn't get in to service the machine properly for that whole time. Again, that was all hammer work," said Terry.

"It was then up at the Warragamba Dam for three years, in all hard rock work.

"Since that job finished, it's been mainly on general excavation works," he said.

"Throughout the whole time, its performance has been excellent.

"At 10,800 hours, we put on a new set of tracks, rollers and idlers. Other than that, we've never put a seal kit into any of the cylinders, never touched the engine or the hydraulics," Terry said.



Abax's PC300LC-5 has logged 15,500 hours.

"Komatsu's done a few tune-ups over the years, but that's been about it.

"If all machines were like that, my life would be bloody easy! Honestly, there hasn't been a problem with that machine.

"In addition, Tom McGann, operator of the PC300-5 has been on the excavator since new, and will not be without his old faithful," said Terry.

20-YEAR RELATIONSHIP WITH KOMATSU



Tom Jackson (right) with Tony Irwin of Irwin and Hartshorn partners in Canberra Concrete Recyclers. Inset - Jackson Group's WA470-3 at work in Canberra.

One of Sydney and the ACT's leading crushing and recycling specialists has had a long relationship with Komatsu products, going back over 20 years.

Tom Jackson, of the Jackson Group of Companies, operates Recycled Resources in Sydney and also Canberra Concrete Recyclers in the ACT on a joint venture basis with Irwin and Hartshorn Pty Ltd, one of Canberra's major specialist demolition and excavation companies.

Recycled Resources recycles concrete and demolition (C&D) waste to produce construction and roadmaking materials for re-use in the Sydney civil construction sector, while Canberra Concrete Recyclers also recycles C&D waste, as well as operating a landfill in the Territory.

The Jackson Group, which is owned and operated by Tom and his brother Ken, has been involved with Komatsu products

since 1983, when it inherited a Komatsu W90 wheel loader with the purchase of Capital Quarries.

Since then, the Komatsu fleet within its operations has expanded to include:

- ▶ Eight wheel loaders, ranging from a WA250-1 to a WA470-3
- ▶ Seven excavators, ranging from a PC220-6 to PC300-6s, and including the recent purchase of a PC270-7. Older machines include a PC300-5 and two PC300-3s
- ▶ BR350 mobile crusher
- ▶ GD605A-2 road grader

Other mobile plant operated by the group includes a varied range of track-mounted crushers and screens, compactors, dozers, dump trucks and tippers.

Recycled Resources' Sydney facility at Silverwater has been in operation since 1989, and recycles about 120,000 tonnes

of material a year – which is sold for prices typically half those of virgin products.

The Canberra Concrete Recyclers operation has been operating for about 11 years and processes around 150,000 tonnes of material a year.

At this operation, which takes C&D waste from throughout the ACT and surrounding region, material accepted includes concrete, asphalt, steel, timber, bricks, tiles, etc.

About 80% of this is recycled, with only materials that can't be recycled going to landfill.

Recycled materials include asphalt, clean fill, topsoil, sand, crushed concrete and crushed brick. Timber is turned into landscaping mulch, or delivered to Visy's paper processing plant at Tumut, where it is used as fuel to provide electricity.

Tom's first Komatsu machine bought new was a WA380 in 1991.

"We bought it for a crushing contract we had with Leightons on the Thompson Creek Dam and never had any problems with the machine or Komatsu's onsite servicing," he said.

"We kept that machine for 10 years, and traded it on a WA470 when it had something like 13,000 or 14,000 hours on it. We paid \$150,000 for it and we got \$75,000 when we traded it, so it owed us nothing.

"After that purchase, we have continued to buy Komatsu loaders because of their reliability and the excellent re-sale value they retain.

"We also started purchasing Komatsu excavators for the same reason after switching from another brand. We have found that they are the most reliable and productive of all the brands. They are definitely the best on the market," he said.

"We've always been very well looked after by the Komatsu people, never had any trouble with parts or service, having a number of machines still on service contracts. You may pay a few extra dollars up front in the initial purchase, but it pays off along the way."

"Basically, the Komatsu people have always done the right thing by us, done a bit more than they've needed to keep us happy – and that's why we keep coming back," said Tom.

POSTSCRIPT: Tom Jackson is also an enthusiastic dragster, owning the famous Jackson Group Motorsport 37 Chev Coupe Dragster. Tom and Komatsu Australia have renewed a sponsorship arrangement, which will see Tom helping spread the Beacon Foundation message in youth unemployment. More details in the next edition of Down to Earth.

PARTNERSHIP WITH TNT LOGISTICS



D2E editor Wafaa Ghali recently caught up with Phil Lehmann, Komatsu general manager parts and discussed Komatsu's parts logistics environment.

Wafaa: Do you find your role with Komatsu challenging?

Phil: There are certainly challenges in running a large and complex area of the business – especially as we source parts from many overseas factories and distribute to over 40 locations in Australia, New Zealand and New Caledonia.

Wafaa: What changes have occurred recently to improve Komatsu's logistics arrangements?

Phil: Well, the background is that we are always striving to improve service levels to our customers, so in mid 2002 we began investigating if 3rd party logistics (3PL) outsourcing may assist in our efforts.

Most 3PLs in Australia have focused on fast-moving consumer goods and motor vehicle logistics, so entering into the OEM construction and mining field is quite a new area from everyone's perspective.

Wafaa: Tell me a little about the feasibility project?

Phil: Firstly, this was not just a project regarding logistics – Komatsu not only wished to improve its logistics arrangements but also to

improve its level of parts availability to its customers.

We ran a detailed computer simulation of how we could best improve our parts availability and then in turn how we could engage this together in a logistical sense.

We therefore concluded that operating three major distribution hubs in Perth, Sydney and Mackay would give our customers the improvements we desired. After a lengthy feasibility study we then evaluated potential 3PL parties to operate these three hubs and to manage our total Australian domestic transport services.

Wafaa: Which 3PL did Komatsu select and why?

Phil: We have partnered with TNT Logistics as we determined that they had the experience we required, and we felt that their existing contracts with other organisations such as Holden, Isuzu, Mitsubishi Trucks and Michelin Tyres would give us spin off benefits – especially with transportation.

We now have in place three full time TNT Logistics transport managers and have access to their large fleet of vehicles,



Phil Lehmann with Rodger Brown from TNT Logistics.

seeing markedly improved transportation times to our locations.

Wafaa: How has the implementation of this project gone?

Phil: We are pleased with the progress; however, in any organisational change of this magnitude there will always be initial issues to overcome.

We are currently extending our Mackay facility and this will be completed by May 2004, providing our Queensland customers with greater access to our extensive range of parts.

All three hubs are operating well and we feel confident that

the selection of TNT Logistics will further enhance the level of customer service Komatsu provides. Naturally, further improvements are always possible and we are working hard to that end.

Wafaa: Have there been any staff changes because of this partnership with TNT Logistics.

Phil: To ensure that the skill and knowledge that Komatsu had gained over the years was retained, Komatsu employees were re-employed by TNT Logistics and during the process the personnel were appropriately remunerated.

COUNCIL HELPS BEACON

When Robe Council, on the Limestone Coast of South Australia, took delivery of its brand-new Komatsu GD555-3 grader, it was also an opportunity for the Beacon Foundation to receive a cheque for \$1000.

As part of its sponsorship of Beacon, Komatsu Australia has

committed to donating \$1000 for each of its new GXX graders delivered to local government in Australia. This money helps fund Beacon's youth unemployment initiatives.

In purchasing its new GD555-3 grader, Robe traded in its 15-year-old GD525 grader, which had notched up 18,000 hours.

Right: At the presentation of a \$1000 cheque to Beacon are, from left, Peter Darr, Robe Council Mayor; Glen Sanford, Robe's works manager/engineer; and Jim Playsted, Komatsu Australia's general manager, sales and marketing. Robe Council was also presented with a Pro Hart-signed print of the famous Komatsu Pro Hart excavator.



MRX MINIS SHINE FOR DIAMOND COMMUNICATIONS

One of Perth's leading underground utilities contractors, Diamond Communications, has recently purchased two Komatsu PC20MRX mini excavators, and is looking at buying another.

The first was purchased in mid-2003, and the second two months later.

Diamond Communications, a division of Ausdrill, carries out electrical cable installations for Western Power and optical fibre cable installations between exchanges for Telstra.

In addition to its MRX machines, it has seven underground directional drill rigs.

According to operations manager Dave Rutherford, the two MRX excavators are involved in opening up trenches, working around other underground utilities and excavating starter and exit holes for the directional drills.

"They are excellent machines; we have had no problems with them at all," said Dave.

"Our operators love them; they line up for them when they come in for a job.

"In addition, the zero swing lets us get into some very tight areas," he said.



One of Diamond Communication's PC20MRX.

SIX NEW MRX-2 TO NZ EQUIPMENT HIRE STARTUP



Above - One of the six mini excavators delivered to ORIX.

Komatsu NZ has sold six of its just released MRX-2 mini excavator range to ORIX Hire, a new equipment hire operation which is planning to rollout new branches over the next four years.

ORIX Hire is part of the global ORIX finance and leasing

organisation. Japanese-owned, it is active in 25 countries and is listed on four stock exchanges, including New York (one of the few Japanese companies listed there).

According to Hayden Campbell, ORIX Hire's operations manager, New Zealand is the

first country in which ORIX has set up a general equipment hire operation.

Its first outlet is in the North Island town of Palmerston North, and has been in operation for several weeks.

The six Komatsu MRX-2 machines were due to be delivered in late January, and consist of three PC15MRX-2s, a PC30MRX-2 and two PC50MRX-2s.

"We saw Komatsu as a sensible business partner for our new equipment hire venture," said Hayden. "There were synergies between the two companies that we believe long term will benefit both businesses."

In addition to mini excavators, the ORIX Hire outlet offers a wide range of industrial and handyman tools, and

incorporates a truck wash facility.

ORIX Hire intends to become a major player in the NZ equipment hire market.

"We have secured our second outlet which will be in Christchurch and will open in the middle of next year.

"If the Palmerston North operation goes to plan, we intend purchasing a similar make and type of equipment for our other new branches," he said.

ORIX Hire's Palmerston North operation is at 490 Rangitikei Line.

ORIX Hire's Equipment Hire Manager in Palmerston North is Malcolm Gurney; he can be contacted throughout NZ toll-free on 0800 ORIX HIRE (0800 6749 4473).

UNIQUE FEATURES ON NEW ZERO-SWING MINIS

Komatsu Australia has released a new range of three zero-swing mini excavators which incorporate a number of unique features not seen on other machines.

Key features of Komatsu's new MRX-2 range include:

- ▶ a two-post ROPS canopy (unlike the four-post canopies on all other manufacturer's mini excavators) unique to Komatsu, these provide benefits over four-post configuration by providing greatly improved visibility and walk-through access from either side
- ▶ exceptionally large cab space, equivalent to that of a 20 tonne PC228-6 excavator, for the cab options
- ▶ tilting operator station (cab and canopy versions), along with fully opening engine hood and side covers for unprecedented access to components

- ▶ lower centre of gravity, making them more stable and safer to operate
- ▶ cast X-frame design for increased strength and reduced mud and debris build-up on the underside of these machines.

Komatsu has released three machines in the new MRX-2 range: the PC30MRX-2, PC40MRX-2 and PC50MRX-2.

They replace the original MRX range, which has been in production for the past four years.

According to Dave Stuart, Komatsu Australia's product manager, utility products, the MRX-2 range builds on the strengths of the earlier range, which had established a reputation for reliability, durability and productivity.

"Our new series MRX excavators add to these features with their much easier maintenance, larger cabin space and lower centre of



The cab on the new MRX-2 range is the same size as on a 20 tonne excavator and tilts up for easy access.

balance," said Dave.

"The tilting operator's station has allowed us to significantly condense the space taken up by the engine, hydraulics and other components, giving a much larger operator's area for increased comfort and productivity while giving unprecedented access to major components.

"Both the tilting operator's station and two-post ROPS on the canopy versions are unique to Komatsu excavators," he said.

Other major features of the new MRX-2 machines include:

- ▶ additional counterweight on the Australian builds, for more stability, greater digging power and increased lifting ability
- ▶ automatic two-speed travel, automatically adapting travel speed and torque to the underfoot conditions

- ▶ use of Komatsu's innovative and highly responsive HydraMind hydraulic system, the same system as used on its larger excavators
- ▶ a pattern change valve so the controls can be easily set to the operator's preference
- ▶ a range of options, including bolt-on road liners and a power-angle-tilt (PAT) blade
- ▶ large-capacity air conditioning as standard on the cab versions.

Even before the arrival of the first machines in Australia and New Zealand, Komatsu Australia has sold seven machines in Australia and six to ORIX Hire in New Zealand.

Further information: Komatsu Australia, ph 1800 853 311, fax (02) 9795 8244, website www.komatsu.com.au, e-mail miniexcavators@komatsu.com.au.



PC35MRX-2

NEW KOMATSU EXCAVATOR PRODUCT MANAGER



Julian Reynolds

Julian Reynolds has been appointed Komatsu Australia's product manager, hydraulic excavators. Julian takes over the position from Craig Hahnel, who is consulting to Komatsu while on study leave for 12 months.

Before joining Komatsu Australia, Julian was with a major supplier of underground

mining equipment for seven years, as product manager for underground drilling equipment.

This role took him to mining and construction sites throughout Australia and around the world.

Before that, he completed a mechanical engineering degree, and recently finished his MBA.

"I'm really looking forward to the challenge of being product manager for Australia's number one excavator range," said Julian.

"I'll also be working closely with Craig while he's on study leave to ensure that the high standards he set in looking after the excavator line are maintained."

SHINGO HORI: DIRECT LINK TO KOMATSU LTD

Shingo Hori, sales administration manager at Komatsu Australia's head office in Fairfield, is a critical link between Komatsu people in Australia and its overseas suppliers, especially in Japan.

Shingo has been with Komatsu Australia since April 2003, having joined Komatsu Ltd in 1997.

After working as a trainee for a year with the domestic sales department, he spent two and a half years working as a marketing assistant for the Australian region out of Tokyo.

He then spent another two and a half years working with the Tokyo team for North American operations before coming to Australia.

"My dealings in Australia are primarily between the product managers, regional sales managers and branch administration, and our people in Japan – which is still where most of our product comes from," said Shingo.

"Having spent six years with Komatsu in Tokyo, I have a lot of contacts in the factories, and the design and engineering

departments.

"That's also given me a lot of understanding of the culture and processes – providing Komatsu Australia with a direct link into the Komatsu Ltd organisation.

"While I don't generally deal with customers directly – although I do get out to sites and to see machines at work quite regularly – my role does involve me with customer issues, such as pricing, delivery schedules, special requirements, and so on.

"That makes it an important one



Shingo Hori

in terms of us being a customer-focussed organisation," he said.

MARK MAMO: A KOMATSU AUSTRALIA VETERAN



Mark Mamo

One of Komatsu Australia's longest-serving employees is Mark Mamo, account development manager for the south-west Sydney metropolitan area.

Mark's duties in this role

include product support, customer service, dealing with customer technical inquiries, plus parts and service sales.

Mark is certainly well qualified in this regard; he has been involved with Komatsu products since 1981 when he started as an apprentice plant mechanic with then NSW dealer ANI Komatsu.

His experience since then has taken him into just about all aspects of servicing, supporting, marketing and selling Komatsu products.

After completing his four-year apprenticeship in 1985, Mark spent about four years as a

field service technician, dealing with and travelling to customers throughout the state (that was in the days before Komatsu had a network of service agents).

He then spent some years as a component leading hand in the engine rebuild room at Fairfield, before moving across to the head office marketing department in corporate services, looking after the procurement of attachments for main line products.

Still in corporate services, Mark then spent two years putting together Komatsu Australia's recognised spare parts listings

(RSPLs) to assist with customer technical inquiries.

In 1999, he was appointed sales co-ordinator for new equipment in the NSW region, a position he held until July 2003, when he started in his current job.

"The main reason I have stayed here for 22 years is that I've had a lot of different challenges to meet, and there's always new goals to kick - also the company and the way it's run is a great place to work, the people are great, really friendly, plus we're selling a good product that customers are happy with," said Mark.

'WORTH THE WEIGHT.

NEW PC270-7 FITS COMFORTABLY ON A 30 TONNE LOW LOADER

We've taken our time with the new Komatsu PC270-7, ensuring every detail from the ground up is just perfect. You can count on class-leading performance, stability and fuel efficiency, in a package that's tougher than nails. Designed especially for the mid-size market from the ground up, the new Dash 7 provides heavy-duty productivity while offering class leading low sound levels and comfort. Take a look and see why it's been worth the wait - 43 units sold in just 7 months prove the point!

- ▶ Designed to set the bench mark for forestry application. Features the highest swing torque and largest final drive force. (26,900kg); matched to unbelievable stability.
- ▶ New high performance engine, increased hydraulic flow & new swing motor.
- ▶ New heavy duty boom, in-line hydraulic filters, extra large track chain, stronger chassis.
- ▶ New generation HydraMind hydraulics for stronger performance & greater control.

NEW PC270-7



FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE NEW DASH 7
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