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DOWN to Earth Magazine

Issue 26



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Ian Olivieri Managing Director

Komatsu Australia Pty Ltd.

Welcome to our first edition of Down to Earth for 2002. This will be an exciting year for Komatsu Australia, with a significant number of new releases throughout 2002.

The first part of the year has also seen Komatsu Australia's increased involvement with efforts to overcome youth unemployment.

Youth unemployment in Australia continues to be a stubborn problem, with many regions exceeding 20% unemployment levels for the age group 15 to 25 years. The national average of 15% is testament to the difficulty many school leavers incur as they strive to make a positive start to their working lives.

The nature of employment options available to this group has also changed, with a dramatic increase in the proportion of those employed being engaged in part time employment, often offering reduced job security and diminished career options.

As part of our support for the community, and with the specific aim of assisting youth employment projects, we are continuing our support for the Beacon Foundation. We were very pleased therefore, with the outcome of our auction of the Pro Hart-painted Dash 7 excavator.

Our congratulations go to Townsville-based contractor, Gavin Markwell, who out-bid an enthusiastic opposition to purchase the unit.

In combination with the initial donation from Komatsu Australia, the auction raised \$90,000 for Beacon to fund further its no-dole and career template programs around Australia.

In calendar year 2001 we continued our market leadership for hydraulic excavators in Australia.

Outlined in this issue you will find details on the release of the new Dash 7 series, which will be rolled out through 2002. This new range will provide the technology and performance to ensure that our customers continue to enjoy superior value from the Komatsu range of construction excavators.

We are also pleased to be releasing two models from the Komatsu range of skidsteer loaders.

This is a new market segment for Komatsu Australia and will fit well with our current Utility product range of backhoe/loaders and 2 tonne through to 10 tonne excavators. Once again, Komatsu brings its expertise in hydraulics and engineering excellence to bring new levels of performance into this machine class.

These new models and the growing consensus that the Australian economy will continue to strengthen, add further optimism for the year ahead.

I am pleased to say that our company will achieve a record sales result for our financial year ending March 2002 and that our profitability has substantially recovered from the weakening Australian dollar that has been a drag on the previous 18 months.

By the end of our trading year, we will have delivered in excess of 700 new machines and 600 plus used machines into the Australian market.

Thank you to all customers and staff who have supported Komatsu Australia over the past 12 months and assisted in achieving this result.



OUR COVER:

Komatsu Australia has just released its new Dash 7 range of excavators in Australia. The launch was marked by a unique event at which a PC200-7 excavator specially painted by renowned artist Pro Hart was auctioned to raise funds to combat youth unemployment.

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**Komatsu Australia Pty Ltd
PO Box 66
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**Editor
Wafaa Ghali**

**Copywriter
Mark Cherrington
Construction
Communications**

**Graphic Design
Dave Bullock**

**Printed at
Halkeas Printing
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KOMATSU

Auction with a difference raises \$90,000 for youth

unemployment

Most construction equipment auctions see bidders looking to pick up gear at less than prices they'd typically pay for new equipment — and then put the machine straight to work.

However, an auction in Sydney's Darling Harbour on February 22 saw the winning bidder pay considerably more than the price of a new machine — and for a piece of equipment which will probably never be put to work.

But in doing so, Gavin Markwell, of the Townsville-based plant hirer and demolition contractor Markwell Group, picked up a unique piece of artwork, and raised \$90,000 for programs aimed at eliminating youth unemployment.

The auction, of a Komatsu Dash 7 excavator, which had been completely repainted by renowned Australian artist Pro Hart, was before a crowd of construction, mining, quarrying and forestry industry identities at the launch of the Komatsu Dash 7 range in Australia.

It was being held to raise money for the Beacon Foundation, a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to developing effective and innovative solutions to youth unemployment.

Spirited bidding saw the Pro Hart-painted PC200-7 sold to Gavin for \$266,500 — a long way above the usual market price for such a machine.

Bidding started at \$100,000, and quickly went to around \$250,000, after which a bidding war in \$500 lots between contractors from Queensland, South Australia and Western Australia saw Gavin eventually pick up the prize.

Of the \$266,500 final figure, \$90,000 goes to the Beacon Foundation, with \$35,000 of this contributed by Komatsu Australia as part of its commitment to the foundation.

However, Gavin won't collect his artwork until August this year. Over the next few months, it will be touring Australia's capital cities to raise the profile of the Beacon Foundation and help raise funds for Beacon projects in each state.

So what prompted Gavin Markwell to bid so enthusiastically for the Pro Hart excavator?

"Initially, I started bidding because I thought it was going to go



Gavin Markwell (left) after purchasing his unique piece of Australian artwork, with Ian Olivieri, MD of Komatsu Australia and Bill Lawson, chairman of the Beacon Foundation.

for less than I thought it was worth," he said.

"Then as I was bidding, I could start to see it could be a really good marketing tool for promoting our company.

"Initially, I was thinking about which of my operators I'd put on it so it wouldn't get too scratched, but over the next couple of days I realised its true value is as a piece of art.

"We won't operate it as a machine. We'll use it for special occasions for our customers — say if they're opening a housing development or tourist resort," said Gavin.

"Eventually, I'd like to see it end up at an art gallery or museum. I'm also happy to support such a worthwhile cause as the Beacon Foundation.

"Youth unemployment is a major issue in this region, as it is throughout Australia," he said.

"I believe a lot of it is to do with changing young people's attitudes, from 'it's too hard', to a can-do 'we can do anything' approach.

"From what I've heard, Beacon has been very effective in working with young people to change attitudes."

In addition to the machine's value in supporting and promoting Beacon, Gavin can see plenty of opportunities for using the Pro Hart excavator to promote his business.

Markwell Group is one of North Queensland's largest demolition contractors and privately owned plant hirers.

Pro Hart's biggest canvas: benefiting young Australians

Artist Pro Hart, one of the icons of the Australian art world, has recently completed one of his largest-ever "canvases" — a 20 tonne Komatsu excavator — to help draw community attention to the issue of young people without work.

Pro is working with heavy equipment distributor Komatsu Australia and the Beacon Foundation to raise funds for solutions to youth unemployment.

During January and early February, he painted a new generation Komatsu PC200-7 excavator, which was auctioned among guests from the construction, mining, forestry and quarrying industries at a special event at Sydney's Darling Harbour.

While Pro has previously painted other "three-dimensional canvases" — including a Rolls Royce and a BMW motorcycle — this current project is by far his largest.

The machine, which was delivered to Pro stripped of its usual yellow Komatsu paint job, took him around two weeks to paint.

To get access to the cabin, boom, arm and other high-up or hard-to-reach spots required him to bring in a travel tower — a far cry from the usual artistic tools of the trade.

The excavator is being painted using the "Australiana" themes for which Pro is well known. Elements of the work include townships, Australian flora and fauna, mining works and his trademark "cannonballs" - exploding glass balls of paint.

Completing the project took around 24 litres of paint in tins and some 30 spray cans.

The completed work of art raised \$90,000 for the Beacon Foundation when it was auctioned on February 22.



The finished work of art, which raised \$90,000 for youth unemployment programs. Inset, Pro Hart starts painting the specially prepared Komatsu PC200-7 excavator.

Established 14 years ago in Tasmania, the Beacon Foundation is an independently funded foundation dedicated to developing innovative and effective solutions for keeping school leavers off the dole, and in meaningful work.

During 2001, Beacon started rolling out in mainland Australia some of its programs which have been so successful in Tasmania, with the assistance of several major sponsors including Komatsu, Sinclair Knight Merz, Stanwell Power and CSR.

Komatsu releases its next generation excavators



Komatsu Australia has released its long-awaited next generation of excavators, with the launch of the Dash 7 range in Australia.

Komatsu's Dash 7 range will replace its Dash 6 range, which came on the market in 1994, and became Australia's best-selling line of excavators during the 1990s.

Initially, six new models are being released in Australia: the PC200-7 (19.2-19.8 tonnes), PC200LC-7 (20.4-21.3 tonnes), PC220-7 (22.7-23.2 tonnes), PC220LC-7 (23.9-24.4 tonnes), PC300-7 (30.8-31.5 tonnes) and PC300LC-7 (31.5-32.8 tonnes).

According to Craig Hahnel, Komatsu Australia's product manager (excavators), while the new machines retain many of the features that helped the Dash 6 line to 1500 deliveries and to gain a reputation for reliability, performance and durability over eight years, they also incorporate significant advances over their predecessors.

"Owners and operators will find our new Dash 7 excavators more productive, more comfortable, easier to operate and easier to maintain," he said.

Major improvements include:

- increased operator comfort, through a larger cabin, even less noise and vibration, better operator comforts and improved air filtration
- higher performance, through increased engine power, better digging forces and faster implement speeds – coupled with reduced fuel consumption
- updated and improved HydraMind hydraulic control system, resulting in stronger 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.

Operator comfort

Particular attention has been paid to increasing in-cab comfort for operators.

Overall cab size has been increased 14% over the previous model Dash 6 excavators, providing more headroom and legroom, and making access easier for even the burliest operators.

At the same time, noise levels have been reduced significantly – making Komatsu's Dash 7 excavators the quietest in the market, with maximum noise level at the operator's ear being 74 dBA (and as low as 71 dBA in the PC200-7).

Komatsu also now claims the lowest levels of in-cab vibration through its use of its new cab damper mounting system – a first for this industry.

A fully automatic air conditioning/heating system, combined with an in-cab air pressure of 6 mmAq helps keep operators at their preferred working temperature, while ensuring no dust enters the cab when the door is kept closed.

"Operator comfort on our Dash 7 machines is the best in the industry," said Craig.

"The larger cabs, combined with lowest levels of noise and



SEE MORE ON THE KOMATSU AUSTRALIA WEBSITE!

For detailed specs of the new Komatsu Dash 7 excavators, check out our website at www.komatsu.com.au.

Komatsu releases its next generation excavators continued

vibration in the industry ensure Dash 7 operators will remain relaxed and comfortable throughout their working day," he said.

Improved performance

Komatsu's Dash 7 excavators show a significant performance improvement over their predecessors, with a more powerful yet more fuel-efficient engine, higher digging forces and faster implement speeds.

Engine output has been increased for all three Dash 7 models through new fuel-efficient Komatsu engines that meet all Tier II engine emission requirements.

These higher engine output levels have resulted in increases in digging power – with bucket digging forces up by as much as 10% – coupled with faster implement speeds.

"This combination of faster operation and increased power means our Dash 7 excavators are much more productive than their predecessors," he said.

"At the same time, Komatsu's updated HydraMind hydraulic system ensures that it is always smooth and easily controlled by the operator."

Other performance improvements include:

- higher swing torque (up by 5%) – giving Dash 7 excavators higher swing torque than any other machines in their class
- greater lifting capacities (up to 18% better over the side)
- increases in tractive forces of up to 18% – giving Dash 7 excavators plenty of power in difficult underfoot conditions and making them more responsive and manoeuvrable
- three-speed travel, for faster movement around the worksite
- improved work envelope, particularly above-ground reach, providing better performance in demolition and batter work.

HydraMind hydraulic system

Komatsu has retained its proven HydraMind closed-centre hydraulic system first introduced on its Dash 6 excavators – but with a number of improvements.

"HydraMind remains the best excavator hydraulic system on the market," said Craig.

"Load-sensing valves eliminate the need for complex computer controls, giving unmatched control over all aspects of operation, from critical lifting and finishing applications requiring fine control, to compound operations using two or more actuators.

"The result is that a Komatsu excavator always does exactly what the operator wants it to do – no matter what the load or type of operation, the implements respond consistently to the operator controls," he said.

Improvements to the HydraMind hydraulics on the Dash 7s include a new, simplified mode-control system and a new equipment management monitoring system (EMMS).

The new modes on the Dash 7 machines are:

Active mode, for full power operation, when maximum productivity is required.

Eco mode, for general operations. Engine power is reduced to 85%, reducing noise levels and increasing fuel efficiency.

Breaker mode, designed for hydraulic hammer and other attachments operation, this mode further reduces engine power, and sets the pump flow to optimise attachment operation (see below for more customising output to a range of attachments).

Power max function, activated through a push button on the left-hand control lever, temporarily increases digging and lifting force by 7% for added power.

The EMMS includes improved diagnostic capabilities, greatly simplifying troubleshooting, and allowing the operator to report precisely the nature of any problems.

And with the addition of an electronic proportioning control (EPC) valve, it incorporates the ability for service personnel to program in specific hydraulic flow and pressure requirements for a range of attachments when using Breaker mode.

Up to four separate attachments can be programmed in, allowing operators to select the correct pressure and flow for whichever attachments they are using.

"This is the next step beyond the Breaker modes that have been on a number of machines for the past few years," said Craig.



Komatsu's Dash 7 machines have a significant performance improvement over their predecessors. Shown is a Dash 7 in the foreground, with a PC200-6 in the background.

"It ensures that from the cab, the operator can always select the right pressure and flow settings for the attachment in use, ensuring optimum performance and longevity for both the attachment and excavator."

Improved visibility

Visibility all round has been substantially improved through the use of thinner corner pillars and the elimination of the right-hand pillar. The result is that the cab's "blind angles" have been reduced from 98° to 64°.

"Operators will find a big improvement in their visibility with our Dash 7 excavators," said Craig.

"There's a much better view out the front, to the main working area, as well as to each side and out the back," he said.



The Komatsu Dash 7 cab is 14% larger than on its predecessor.

Easier maintenance

Maintenance requirements have also been substantially improved on the Dash 7 machines.

Daily fill and inspection points have been positioned so they can be quickly and easily checked and filled.

"Komatsu has made the Dash 7 daily inspection requirements very easy – which means they are far more likely to be carried out," said Craig.

"And when oil changes or filter replacements are required, features such as remote mounting of drain valves and oil filters makes the replacement task very quick and straightforward."

Engine and hydraulic oil change intervals have also been greatly extended – up to double in some instances.

For example, engine oil and filter intervals have gone from 250 hours to 500 hours, while hydraulic filter change intervals have gone from 500 hours to 1000 hours. No filter or oil change intervals are less than 500 hours.

However, the major maintenance tool within the Dash 7 excavators is the self-diagnostic system incorporated within HydrauMind.

"Our Dash 7 excavators feature what is probably the most advanced diagnostic system in the industry," said Craig.

"This exclusive system identifies maintenance items, reduced diagnostic time, indicates oil and filter replacement timing, and lets the operator know of 39 different faults, using easily identified three-digit codes should problems arise," he said.

Improved safety

Komatsu's Dash 7 excavators incorporate a number of exclusive safety features, designed to minimise the risk of injury and accidents. Accidental operation cannot occur unless the safety lock lever is disengaged.

"Komatsu remains the only manufacturer that has a hydraulic valve activating our lockout system," said Craig. "This ensures durability of this important safety device throughout the life of the excavator."

"Other manufacturers use a small electric-over-hydraulic solenoid control, which typically fails after a few thousand hours of operation."

The Dash 7 cabs now incorporate the ability to have an OPG II (operator protective guard, level II) fitted as a simple bolt-on extra. OPG II guards are equivalent to FOPS structures for forestry and other hazardous operations.

Other standard safety features include:

- oil splash prevention wall to stop oil spraying over hot parts
- full thermal and belt guarding throughout the machine to reduce the risk of the operator or maintenance personnel being injured during engine and hydraulic system inspections
- large steps and handrail, plus an anti-skid sheet to minimise the risk of accident when getting on or off the machine
- retractable seatbelt
- high-strength tempered glass for the cab, incorporating UV screening.

Dash 7 brief specs

PC200-7: operating weight, 19.2-19.8 tonnes (20.43-21.26 tonnes for LC version); engine, Komatsu SAA6D102E-2 rated at 107 kW; maximum digging depth, standard arm, 6095 mm; arm breakout, 12,600 kgf; bucket breakout, 14,100 kgf.

PC220-7: operating weight, 22.7-23.22 tonnes (23.85-24.41 tonnes for LC version); engine, Komatsu SAA6D102E-2 rated at 125 kW; maximum digging depth, standard arm, 6230 mm; arm breakout, 14,500 kgf; bucket breakout, 15,500 kgf.

PC300-7: operating weight, 30.8-31.5 tonnes (31.52-32.28 tonnes for LC version); engine, Komatsu SAA6D114E rated at 180 kW; maximum digging depth, standard arm, 6705 mm; arm breakout, 19,700 kgf; bucket breakout, 23,300 kgf.



Seven Komatsu dozers being delivered to HV coal mine

At the time of going to press, in mid-March, Komatsu Australia was in the process of delivering seven D475A-3 dozers to Bulga Coal in the upper Hunter Valley of NSW.

Three of the dozers had already been delivered, where they are working in the coal washery, pushing up coal stockpiles.

The remaining four, which are to be used in pit dozing operations around the dragline, in key-cut operations and in high-wall work, will have been delivered by early April.

In purchasing the seven Komatsu dozers, Bulga Coal traded in four dozers in the same class of another make.

According to Steve Jones, Komatsu Australia's central region sales manager, the three machines in the coal washery operations have proved very productive and been well accepted by the operation.

In addition to being one of the largest single orders received for Komatsu D475A-3 dozers in Australia, this deal includes a number of firsts.

These new dozers mark the first application in Australia of Komatsu's K-Bogie system.

The K-Bogie system, which replaces Komatsu's REU undercarriage system previously used on the D475A-3, offers a number of improvements, including longer undercarriage life, improved ride comfort and better traction on rough ground.

Another improvement on these new D475A-3s has been the addition of new operator platform mounts, substantially increasing operator comfort.

"These new cabin mounts, which are twice the size of those on the previous models, provide unparalleled ride quality," said Steve.

Known as "Hyper viscous mountings", they use silicone fluid plus medium and soft supporting springs to minimise the transmission of shock and vibration normally experienced in heavy ripping, travelling over rough ground conditions or during high-speed travel.

"These new cabin mountings, combined with the K-bogie suspension system and coupled with a new, heavy duty seat, ensure the lowest whole-of-body exposure levels for operators of any crawler dozer in their class," said Steve.

Other features of the dozers include:

- larger blade lift cylinders for more blade lifting force when using the larger full U-blade and dozing heavy materials.
- a new extreme duty electrical system designed specifically to cope the corrosive nature of materials in coal mines and stockpiles.
- new Australian designed and manufactured coal blade following extensive R&D and testing in local coal mines and coal loading terminals.

Komatsu's Track Shoe Slip Control (unique in the industry) which prevents track slippage in heavy ripping applications, reducing undercarriage wear, fuel consumption and operator fatigue.

Welcome to Komatsu Australia's new website!

Komatsu Australia has just launched a new website designed to provide Komatsu customers, potential customers and other visitors with a more user-friendly and useful experience.

Visitors will notice major changes to the site — in fact anyone visiting the site over the past couple of months will have had a sneak preview of the look and feel of the new site.

Changes to the site are far-reaching, and are best experienced by visiting it at www.komatsu.com.au.

They include:

- customisation to the needs of specific markets serviced by Komatsu Australia, covering mining, construction, owner-operators, local government, forestry and quarrying
- personalisation, including the ability to alert registered visitors whenever new content of interest to them is added
- much easier searching for articles of interest, including by machine type, by component, by keyword, etc
- full specifications of products sold by Komatsu Australia, along with direct links to articles about specific models
- far more frequent updates of information and articles.

According to Malcolm Barnes, Komatsu Australia's chief information officer, the new website builds on the success of the previous website, which was launched two years ago.

"In terms of building our brand and delivering useful, useable information to customers and potential customers, the website has been extremely successful," he said.

"That was reflected in the high number of unique visitors we received each month, and the very positive feedback and recognition we've been getting.

"We believe this latest Komatsu Australia website represents a major step forward in the way we can interact with our customers and potential customers.

"In order for visitors to fully access the site, we are now asking



Komatsu Australia's new website allows visitors to customise the information presented to them, so that it best meets their interests.

them to register with us — which is a simple and very straightforward process.

"This will allow us to ensure the information we provide best meets the needs of our visitors, and allows us to respond very rapidly to requests for information, assistance and advice," said Malcolm.

"Our new website is also the first step towards on-line ordering of parts, components and other services by our customers.

"In fact, this is being partially implemented on the new site with the ability for visitors to view pricing and details of used equipment we have available, as well as special deals on old and discontinued stock — and to make inquiries about these products electronically."

www.komatsu.com.au

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Opera in the Wetlands celebrates environmental project

Last November saw the staging of a unique event in South Australia, with the performance of Opera in the Wetlands to celebrate the completion of a major environmental rehabilitation project.

Performers included world-renowned opera singers Dame Malvina Major, John Keyes and Brian Gilbertson, the Adelaide Chamber Singers and members of the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra.

The project was the completion of the Watervalley Gorge and its connection to the Mandina Lakes wetlands system on the property of pastoralists Tom and Pat Brinkworth.

The Brinkworths are major landowners near Kingston in south-eastern South Australia, and over the past few years have been constructing a major wetlands restoration project on their property — and then donating 15,000 hectares of the restored land to environmental group Wetlands & Wildlife.

The full story of their wetlands construction and restoration work was outlined in the December 1999 edition of *Down to Earth*. It can also be read on the Komatsu Australia website.

Over 4000 guests attended November's concert, which was held on the Brinkworths' property overlooking Cortina Lake — a part of the Watervalley Wetlands.

Members of the audience included South Australian premier Rob Kerin and state environment minister Mark Brindal.

Proceeds from the evening were donated to Wetlands & Wildlife. Access to the concert venue could only be gained by 4WD through the Watervalley Gorge.

Around 550 4WD vehicles joined an entourage of interested local landowners in inspecting the project before the concert started.

Construction and related equipment — which had helped construct the project — also played a major part in the evening's events.



Some of the performers at the concert, with host Tom Brinkworth. Top left, from left: John Keyes, Tom Brinkworth, Dame Malvina Majors and Brian Gilbertson. Top right, from left: Tomothy Sexton (conductor) Dame Malvina Majors, Brian Gilbertson and John Keyes.

The stage was a low-loader, while two of the Brinkworths' Komatsu D475A-2 dozers were placed either side of the stage.

Operators Bluey and Dave — dressed in tuxedos for the evening, as were the performers — started up the machines at a pre-arranged signal to start proceedings.

The three hour performance, which offered musical selections to suit all tastes enjoyed acclaim from all who attended this unique event.

Tom and Pat Brinkworth's staging of the event saw them formally recognised on Australia Day 2002, when they were awarded Community Event of the Year by Kingston District Council.

Equipment owned by the Brinkworths, in addition to their D475A-2 dozers, includes PC1600 and PC650 excavators.

Tokyo Rose: born 1966 and still sweet as ever!

A Komatsu D60A-3 dozer dating back to 1966 — and still with the son of its original owner — is continuing to perform as well as when it was first purchased.

The dozer was purchased by the late Charlie Long, of Hobart-based C A Long Pty Ltd, from the late Harry Morey of then Tasmanian Komatsu dealer Associated Machinery Services (AMS) in August 1966.

It started its working life on the Strathgordon Road for Tasmania's Hydro-Electric Commission, and was quickly given the moniker "Tokyo Rose" by workers from the Hydro — being one of the first Japanese-built dozers to work in Tasmania.

Applications included dozing road formations and winning materials from gravel pits along roadsides.

Other work included working on Scotts Peak Road and dam site, towing sheepsfoot rollers for roadbase compaction. She also worked at the Strathgordon Village site, dozing button grass and forming roads and streets in and around the village.

After finishing with the Hydro, Tokyo Rose was used in and around Hobart on excavations and demolition sites, on such sites as the Townhouse (Macquarie Motor Inn), the Downtowner (Mid City Hotel), the Commonwealth Centre in Collins Street, and on the Wrest Point Casino site — one of the largest excavation sites in Hobart.

Other applications included land clearing (fitted with a tree pusher), and in C A Long's sandpits stripping vegetation and dozing dune sand for extraction.

The dozer's last major job was in 1988, dozing and loading around 20,000 cu m of topsoil for a dam site at Forcett House, near Sorell.

Since then, she sat idle for a number of years, carrying out minor jobs from time to time for Philip Long, son of Charlie Long.

However, late last year he decided to get her overhauled to carry out some land-clearing work on his property at Buckland on Tasmania's east coast.

The years of sitting idle meant the radiator had blocked up and needed cleaning and repair, while the fanbelts needed replacing, so Philip booked her into Komatsu Australia's Hobart workshop.

The workshop was able to replace the fanbelts with the original set provided to Charlie Long at the time of purchase.

As can be seen in the accompanying photos, this wrapping included an earlier Komatsu logo, which was also painted on the dozer near the radiator.

After completion of the work, the dozer has been delivered back to Philip Long, to continue her working life.

"Since being repaired, she's going extremely well," said Philip. "I reckon there's another 36 years in her easy — in fact, she'll probably outlast me."



Philip Long's 36 year-old Komatsu D60A-3 dozer "Tokyo Rose" while in Komatsu Australia's Hobart facilities for repair. Left inset shows the name plate with the old Komatsu logo, right inset shows the original wrapping for the fanbelts.

WA600-3 at Golden Bay has NZ's first use of K VX teeth



Above: Golden Bay Cement's Portland Works just-delivered WA600-3 loading one of the quarry's HD465 dump trucks.

A New Zealand quarry operation has just taken delivery of a Komatsu WA600-3 wheel loader fitted with the first application of new technology K VX teeth in the country.

The new loader was delivered to Golden Bay Cement's Portland Works, just south of Whangarei, in late January.

The Portland Quarry, which started operation in 1913, and is estimated to have another 250-plus years of life in it, currently produces some 600,000 tonnes of cement a year, extracting around 900,000 tonnes of raw material to produce this.

Material extracted from the quarry consists of argillaceous limestone, which is a non-abrasive, fairly soft material.

It is blended with material from Golden Bay's nearby Wilsonville Quarry, which is a harder crystalline limestone. Wilsonville's annual output is around 270,000 tonnes a year of raw material, which is brought to Portland for processing.

Typically, K VX teeth are used in very challenging conditions, such as highly abrasive or very hard rock. So why did the Portland quarry opt for K VX in such soft, non-abrasive material?

According to Clive Halliday, team leader at the Portland quarry, the wear characteristics of the K VX teeth should deliver some significant benefits.

"The main issue we've had to deal with is that the standard teeth we've been using, the adapters have been wearing out before we've needed to change the teeth.

"Because of this, retention has become an important issue for us. Occasionally, the loader will drop a tooth into a dump truck, and if the tooth goes into the secondary crusher, we're faced with major crusher downtime," he said.

"However, K VX is a bolt-on system, so we don't believe we'll face this problem.

"A by-product will be extraordinarily long GET life with this new loader. We're typically getting 10,000 hours with our existing conventional tooth system, so with the K VX system, we anticipate the teeth will essentially last the life of the loader," said Clive.

"For us the advantages are less downtime in replacing teeth and wear parts, greatly reduced the chance of crusher downtime, plus the fact that K VX is supported by Komatsu in New Zealand.

"In addition, the low-profile, self-sharpening nature of the teeth will improve penetration and help breakout force."

With the purchase of this latest Komatsu WA600-3 loader, the Portland quarry is close to being an all-Komatsu operation.

While the WA600-3 is replacing a 1988 Kawasaki 110Z-II loader, the quarry's trucks and backup loader are all Komatsu.

Haulage units consist of two 1978 HD460 dump trucks, with 27,000 and 29,000 hours respectively, plus a 1991 HD465 with 21,000 hours, all of 50 US ton capacity.

The HD460s were purchased used in 1988, and the HD465 bought used about three years ago. A 1984 W180-1 wheel loader, bought new, serves as a backup loader.

"We originally used a rope shovel here as our front-line machine, but the geology got so complex that we moved to the Kawasaki as our face loader a few years ago.

"Now with the delivery of the WA600, will take over this front-line role."

According to Clive, the performance of the Komatsu machines during their time at the quarry was a factor in deciding to purchase the new WA600-3.

"Despite the age of the dump trucks, they've continued to perform very well.

"Certainly they are getting on, but the only things going wrong with them are those minor things you expect," he said.

"We run a planned maintenance schedule with them, and carry out regular oil analysis, so there's not too many surprises.

"We are planning to replace one of the oldest machines in the next year or so, and over the next five years, replace all of them, probably with more recent used equipment."

Golden Bay has also had a good performance from the W180 loader.

"This machine spent the first years of its life with us at the Wilsonville quarry, before moving over here in 1998.

"I couldn't fault its performance in the work we've had it doing. Whenever the main loader is out of action, it works as a face loader; the rest of the time it's working in the blending operation, and we've never had any problems with it."

In opting for the WA600-3 – the first piece of large earthmoving equipment bought new at the quarry in many years – Clive and his team carried out a detailed comparison of Komatsu and competitive loaders.

"We went to the manufacturers of the machines we were interested in and sought detailed repair and maintenance histories.

"When the results came back, and we saw the WA600-3 hadn't had major failures in 17,000-20,000 hours," he said.

"Low R&M costs and proven history were the deciding factors.

"In addition, the fact that the Komatsu has a 23 litre engine was another plus."

Prior to making the final decision, the selection team – including the operator – visited WA600 and other machine owners in the South Island and in Australia.

"We wanted the operator to be comfortable with our choice."

Having made the decision to go with the Komatsu, the Portland quarry then needed a machine modified to its requirements.

"To match the HD460 and HD465 dump trucks, we ideally needed a WA700-size machine, but couldn't justify it because of the size of the operation here," said Clive.

"Instead, we decided to modify a WA600-3 to suit the application, allowing us to use a smaller loader.

"We've opted for a high-lift version, fitted with a bigger bucket, and larger bucket cylinders. The result is a 7 cu m bucket, a loading reach of just under 3 m, and the ability to three-and-four-pass load the HD460s and HD465s respectively," he said.



K VX teeth fitted to the bucket of the WA600.

Komatsu loaders achieving 60,000-hour milestone

Achieving 60,000 hours of operation for one machine is a major achievement. But when four machines near the same milestone in the one facility, it's a cause for some celebration.

Four Komatsu WA500-1 wheel loaders are close to this milestone with one recording 60,000 hours of operation in December 2001 for OneSteel Whyalla in South Australia, and three others nearing it.

The loaders were commissioned in 1989 by the then BHP Steel to handle steel from the finishing end of the Whyalla works.

They are continuing to perform strongly under a maintenance contract devised by Komatsu at the time.

The four, fitted with forks, are used for loading finished steel products, 12 m long and weighing up to 10 tonnes onto rail trucks.

Maintenance on the loaders is carried out by Komatsu Australia under an on-going maintenance contract, with Komatsu Australia service personnel having their own facilities at the plant.

To mark this record, Komatsu Australia hosted a dinner in December, attended by employees from both Komatsu and OneSteel/BHP Steel who were in the original tender evaluation process when the machines were first purchased.

At this dinner, Peter Killey, Komatsu Australia's southern region general manager, presented a specially crafted award to Ron Hardman, OneSteel Whyalla's finance manager.

Bill Lockwood, sourcing manager – strategic supply at OneSteel's Whyalla Steelworks said, "These machines are still in service with minimum downtime. In our experience, such an achievement is exceptional."

According to Peter Killey, the successful relationship between Komatsu Australia and OneSteel proved that a partnership in equipment maintenance and understanding of component life cycles provides major benefits to both parties.

Hours for the four machines range from 56,500 hours to 60,000 hours.



Above: Peter Killey, Komatsu Australia's southern region general manager, presents a specially crafted award to Ron Hardman, OneSteel Whyalla's finance manager. Left: One of the Komatsu WA500-1 loaders at the plant.

Reliability, performance and support result in excavator re-order

Victorian forestry contractor Rick Cuneen is a long-term owner of Komatsu excavators due to the performance and reliability of his machines, and the high levels of customer support provided by Komatsu Australia.

Rick's company, Plantation Harvesting Pty Ltd, is based in the Myrtleford area of north eastern Victoria, carrying out harvesting work in Hancock Victorian Plantations' pinus radiata forests.

He owns three Komatsu excavators, a PC300-6 bought in early 2000, a PC200-6 bought in late 2000, and a PC250-6 bought in mid 2001.

All are fitted with Waratah harvesting heads, along with a full forestry guarding package.

Other equipment owned by Plantation Harvesting includes two Prentice 620 harvesters with Waratah heads, a 1710 Timberjack forwarder and three Rottney forwarders.

"We are one of probably about half a dozen contractors in the region, carrying out a full range of harvesting activities, in varied conditions," said Rick.

"These include first thinnings, unthinned clear-felling and clear-felling, working on slopes of up to 20 degrees.

"I've always been very pleased with the performance of my Komatsu excavators," Rick said.

"Before I bought these latest three machines, I had two PC200-6s which I turned over when they got to about 10,000 hours, after about four years.

"They gave me very good performance and reliability, and excellent resale value."

A couple of years ago, Rick purchased some purpose-built harvesting equipment carriers, but went back to Komatsu carriers due to their reliability.



A PC300-6 excavator fitted with a Warratah Harvesting Head.

"The lower running costs and the reduced downtime with the Komatsu units mean that I am miles ahead. I'm very pleased with them," he said.

"In addition, the service from Komatsu has always been excellent.

"When I first bought Komatsu excavators, I dealt with the company out of Campbellfield (Melbourne), and never had any problems with prompt parts or service.

"Now that Komatsu has an outlet at Wodonga, it's certainly more convenient, and the parts and service support is still excellent," he said.

Komatsu enters skidsteer market



Komatsu Australia has released an innovative range of skidsteer loaders, said to be the most advanced on the market, providing a range of features and benefits not offered on competitive machines.

These include greatly simplified maintenance requirements with easy, unrestricted access to all components, advanced Komatsu hydraulic system, and highly responsive, easy-to-use servo-type joystick controls.

The Komatsu skidsteer range consists of two machines, the SK714-5 and the SK815-5. Both are powered by 34.7 kW low-emission Komatsu engines; the SK714-5 has an operating capacity of 650 kg, while the SK815-5 has an operating capacity of 700 kg.

According to Dave Stuart, Komatsu Australia's Manager, Utility Group, the company's move into the skidsteer market rounds out its offerings in the compact end of the business.

"We've been selling mini excavators and compact wheel loaders very successfully for several years now, and have been achieving significant sales with our backhoe/loader range released about two years ago.

"Our entry into the skidsteer market means we now have a complete range of compact equipment available," he said.

"With the skidsteers, we are particularly targeting owner-operators, although we are also confident of achieving good sales in other industry segments."

Key features of the new machines include:

- Easy accessibility for daily, routine and major maintenance needs
- Servo-type controls
- Advanced "user friendly" Komatsu hydraulic control system
- Two-speed travel
- All-Komatsu components
- Universal Quick Hitch system, capable of taking attachments designed to suit all other major skidsteer brands
- Unique safety features.

Easy access and maintenance

All daily fill and check points are easily accessible simply by lifting the engine cover.

For more extensive maintenance and repairs, the entire cab (including floor) section tilts forward on hydraulic-assist cylinders, giving ready access to the engine, hydraulics and other major components.

"Access to fill points and components is easier on Komatsu skidsteers than any other machine on the market," said Dave.

"With the cab section tilted forward, there is access to major components from a number of different positions – no need to wrestle with a slide-out system, or a cramped east-west engine."

Daily maintenance requirements are greatly simplified through the use of a "unified oil system" which use a single type of oil throughout the engine, transmission and hydraulics.

Servo type controls

With these new machines, Komatsu has brought large-machine ease of operation and controllability to the skidsteer market.

Servo-type joystick controls – featuring the same control system setup for steering and bucket operation as used on its large mining loaders – provide responsive, easy operation that is less tiring for the operator.

Under the standard set up, the left hand lever controls forward/reverse and left/right turning, while the right hand lever controls the bucket with a foot pedal for attachments.

This arrangement can be varied to suit individual operator preferences.

*SEE MORE ON THE KOMATSU AUSTRALIA WEBSITE!
For detailed specs of the new Komatsu skidsteers, along with a "slideshow" walkaround of major features – plus video footage of motorcycle ace Troy Bayliss talking about Komatsu skidsteers, check out our website at www.komatsu.com.au.*



With the cab tilted fully forward and the engine bonnet open, access to all major components is very easy.

"We believe this servo-control system represents the future for skidsteer operation, because it is the standard method of control for a wide range of machines," said Dave.

"Certainly first-time operators will find themselves proficient in a very short time. Those who may have been used to foot operation will find they are able to adapt to this system very quickly – and once they are used to it, they will find it very easy to operate other types of equipment.

"In addition, the servo controls are so effortless and easy to use, that operators will be significantly less fatigued at the end of a long day's work."

Komatsu hydraulic system

Both the new skidsteers feature Komatsu's closed load sensing system (CLSS) – the same system that is used on its excavators, backhoes and wheel loaders.

"Komatsu excavators are renowned for their hydraulic systems, which are simple and reliable, while delivering maximum hydraulic power and control with low fuel consumption," Dave said.

"Now we've brought this technology to skidsteers, resulting in optimum hydraulic performance – giving more breakout, higher travel speeds, lower fuel consumption and ease of control that is more user-friendly than any other skidsteer on the market," he said.

Two-speed travel

Komatsu's two-speed hydrostatic travel system results in a maximum travel speed of 16 km/h.

"These travel speeds are substantially higher than most other skidsteers on the market," said Dave.

"At the same time, design factors, including a longer overall length and wheelbase provide better stability at these higher speeds."

All-Komatsu components

All components in the Komatsu skidsteer range use Komatsu designed and built components, including the powertrain, drivetrain, hydraulics and electrical systems.

"The use of Komatsu components ensures the highest levels of quality, reliability and durability," said Dave. "That means that skidsteer owners can expect the same degree of productivity, uptime, machine longevity and resale value as owners of other Komatsu equipment."

Universal Quick Hitch system

Komatsu skidsteers can take a full range of attachments purchased for other major skidsteer brands.

Owners who are trading in another major skidsteer brand for a Komatsu, or who are adding a Komatsu skidsteer to an existing

fleet, will in most cases be able to use all their existing attachments.

Safety features

A system of sensors on the safety bars and in the seat prevents operation of any implements unless the operator is sitting in the



Buy a Komatsu skidsteer; win a Ducati Superbike

Buyers of Komatsu skidsteers in Australia over the next 12 months will go into a draw to win a Ducati 998 Superbike.

Italian-based Ducati is one of the world's leading manufacturers of performance motorcycles – and Australian Troy Bayliss is current world superbike racing champion on his Ducati 748R.

"Ducati's 998 Superbike reflects the same superior performance and handling excellence that is built into our Italian-manufactured skidsteers – so we thought it was an excellent match to launch our skidsteer range," said Dave Stuart, Komatsu Australia's manager, utility division.

"Both reflect an engineering pedigree, and are leaders in innovation and engineering achievement, so there are natural synergies between the two brands," he said.

All Australian purchasers of Komatsu skidsteers between February 1, 2002 and January 25, 2003 will go into the draw to win the Ducati Superbike, which is worth \$27,000.

Komatsu enters skidsteer market *continued*

seat and properly belted in. In addition, a brake is automatically engaged on the transmission.

Built-in anti-tampering devices mean the lockouts cannot be disabled.

In addition, a longer wheelbase and increase axle distance provide additional stability and better balanced weight distribution.

A low-profile engine cover gives improved visibility out the rear.

An LCD-based "dashboard" mounted on the safety bar – so it is always visible to the operator – provides operator alerts and troubleshooting.

According to Dave, the new skidsteer range, which was released at Bauma in Germany in April 2001, has already received good acceptance in Europe and the USA.

"One reason for their success has been the combination of European style and engineering design with Japanese expertise in advanced hydraulic systems and electronics.

"We've shipped significant numbers to both those markets, and we've been hearing very good reports about their ease of operation and hydraulic power.

"Owners in Australia will also be able to take advantage of the nationwide Komatsu network in providing service, support and spare parts.

"We've done extensive preparation for the launch of this new range, with 98% of the parts required already in stock, combined with extensive parts and service training," said Dave.

"On top of that, we have a 24-hour call-out support network, plus complete maintenance kits available for those owners who prefer to do most of their own maintenance.

"We're also working to make it easier for prospective Komatsu skidsteer owners to afford one of our machines, with very competitive pricing and full finance packages available through Komatsu Australia.

"The end result is that Komatsu will be offering the most advanced skidsteer loader on the market, through Australia's most extensive construction equipment sales and support organisation," he said.



Joystick controls and Komatsu excavator-style hydraulics make operation and fine control very easy on Komatsu's new skidsteer line.

Komatsu skidsteer brief specs

SK714-5: operating weight, 2530 kg; operating capacity, 650 kg; engine Komatsu 4D88E-1FD rated at 34.7 kW; standard bucket capacity, 0.35 cu m; bucket breakout, 1750 kgf; dump height, 2140 mm.

SK815-5: operating weight, 2630 kg; operating capacity, 700 kg; engine Komatsu 4D88E-1FD rated at 34.7 kW; standard bucket capacity, 0.4 cu m; bucket breakout, 1750 kgf; dump height, 2190 mm.

Both are also available as a "Super Flow" option with high-flow hydraulics for attachments such as road profilers.

First IR high-power production drill goes to West Angelas

Komatsu Australia has sold the first Ingersoll-Rand DM-L HP high power production blasthole hammer drill rig to Robe River Iron Associates' West Angelas mine.

The iron ore mine, in the East Pilbara region of Western Australia, is a greenfields development, with progressive commissioning of the mine beginning from December 2001.

The IR DM-L HP is a recently developed rig capable of taking up to 8" diameter down-the-hole hammers.

According to Angus Fotheringham, Komatsu Australia's product manager, drill rigs, the development of the new drill takes advantage of Ingersoll-Rand's expertise in high-volume, high-pressure compressors.

"Komatsu Australia had input into the design of this drill rig, and we could see a need for a high-volume, high-pressure unit to deliver the power and performance required in Australian hard rock and metalliferous mines," he said.

"As a result, this rig has been designed to use IR's 1450/350 compressor, which delivers 1450 cfm at a pressure of 350 psi.

"Being a greenfields site, West Angelas took the opportunity to look at different drilling systems, and opted for high-speed down-the-hole hammer as the most effective method," said Angus.

Glenn Swift, Komatsu Australia's senior business development manager, said that a key factor in its sale of the IR DM-L HP rig to West Angelas was the large Komatsu equipment fleet recently delivered to the mine.

Komatsu equipment at the mine includes five 730E dump trucks, two HD785-5 water trucks, an HD465-5 lube truck, two D375A-3 graders, two GD825-3 graders, a WD900-3 wheel dozer and a WA250PT-3 toolcarrier.

"There were strong synergies for West Angelas in opting for

the Ingersoll-Rand drill rig, because we already have a supply and service contract for the existing fleet of equipment," said Glen.

"From all reports, the mine has been extremely happy in the way we've carried out supply and service of the fleet, and this drill rig is being supplied under an extension of that contract."

The new rig was due to start operations at the mine in mid March.

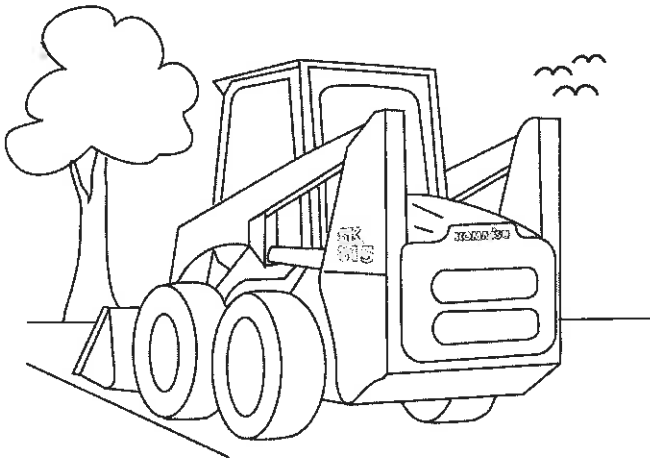


Komatsu Australia has recently sold one of these IR DML-HP drill rigs to the West Angelas mine in north western Australia.

KOMATSU Kids Corner

Spot *the* Differences

And Win!



Take a look at these two pictures and see if you can find the 7 differences between them.

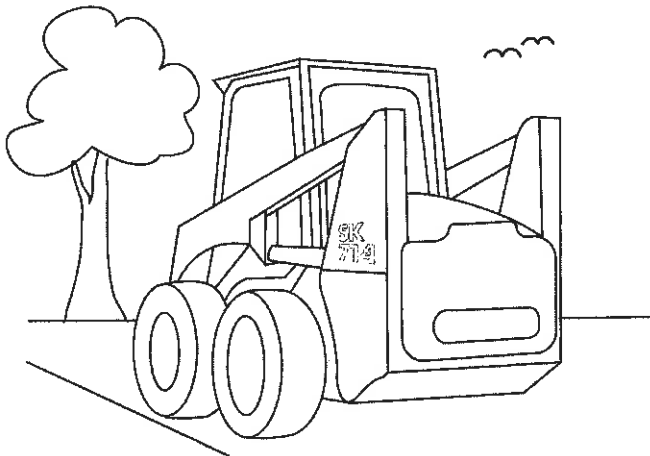
Put an X to mark each difference, fill in your details at the bottom of this page and mail it back to us.

Komatsu Australia Pty Ltd
PO Box 66, FAIRFIELD NSW 2165.

The first 3 correct entries drawn out will win a scale model of the new Komatsu Skid Steer Loader.

Winners will be drawn at 3.00pm
Monday, July 1st, 2002.

Winners will be notified by phone and/or mail directly following the draw.



Name.....

Age.....Address.....

.....Postcode.....

Phone.....Email.....

Parent or Guardian Signature.....

Please read competition rules and sign prior to posting. All entries must be post marked.

Competition Rules: This is a contest of skill & observation. Winners will be selected on the highest number of differences observed. Winners will be notified by telephone and in writing and email. Winners will be published in the next issue of Down to Earth. **Competition Period:** The competition runs from April 1st to June 28th, 2002. All entries must be post marked on or before June 28th 2002. **Eligibility:** Any child is eligible for entry. Only one entry per child. Offer open to Australian & New Zealand residents only, however children under 12 must have parental permission. Entries that do not comply with these official rules will not be eligible to win a prize. **Miscellaneous:** Entrants agree to be bound by these official rules and the decisions of Komatsu Australia's competition judging panel. **Release:** By entering the competition, you (and, if you are a minor, your parents or legal guardians,) release Komatsu Australia Pty Ltd and agree to hold harmless its parent, subsidi and affiliates, and each of their directors, employees, and agencies from any liabilities whatsoever for any claims, cost, injuries, losses, or any damages of any kind arising out of or in connection with: a) Entering the competition, b) Acceptance of any prize or c) Otherwise arising out of or related to the competition.



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