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Two Heavy Lifts On Mine Site Completed In 11 Days By Johnson Crane Hire

Working with two customers on the same project site and on the same massive piece of machinery enabled both companies to achieve significant savings in both time and cost. This is according to Johnson Crane Hire who was contracted to undertake heavy lifts for both Tenova and EMC Engineering at Kolomela Mine in the Northern Cape.

These heavy lifts involved a counterweight boom exchange and a bucket wheel exchange on a stacker reclaimer at the mine. The lifts for the boom exchange were undertaken for Tenova while EMC Engineering handled the bucket wheel exchange.

Brandon Grange, heavy lift technical manager at Johnson Crane Hire, says that careful planning ensured that the project timeline flowed as intended. "This attention to detail during the planning phase allowed us the flexibility to select a solution which would meet both customers' needs and still meet the stringent safety requirements in the mining sector."

Interestingly the lift of the counterweight boom was a repeat process as this lift had previously been done by Johnson Crane Hire for EMC Engineering. Grange says the only difference being the newly engineered counterweight boom was stronger, and therefore heavier, leading to the use of a larger crane for this particular lift.

The scope of the heavy lift for Tenova comprised the removal of the counterweight itself, and following this the removal of the previous counterweight boom. The new counterweight boom was then lifted into position and the counterweight placed back into its original position on the stacker reclaimer.

A Liebherr LR 1600 crawler crane was used to remove the counterweight from the stacker reclaimer. The counterweight is made up of 18 10 t concrete weights making it a total of 180 ton. This lift was accomplished by removing two 10 ton weights at a time and was done in nine separate lifts.

The new counterweight boom was positioned at the most appropriate and ideal lifting radius for the task at hand, and once the old boom had been lifted off it was laid down alongside the new boom.

The new boom, weighing in at 108 ton, was lifted into position using the same LR 1600 crane and then secured by the EMC Engineering team.

The final lift was to reposition the counterweight and this was achieved by lifting one 10 ton block of the counterweight on each lift. This was done using Johnson Crane Hire's LTM 1300-1.

At the same time, Johnson Crane Hire undertook the second lift which was the bucket wheel exchange for EMC Engineering. The old bucket wheel, weighing 30 ton, was removed using a LTM 1300-1 crane and a LTM 1095-5.1 crane. Once it had been lifted off the boom, a second crane – an LTM 1095-5.1 - was used to tail the large component until it was laid down safely.

Safety forms part of Johnson Crane Hire's holistic lifting package, referred to as the 'SMART' (Safety, Maintenance, Availability, Reliability and Total cost effectiveness) philosophy. Both heavy lift projects were successfully completed over an 11 day period.

HEAVY LIFT AT KOLOMELA PIC 01 : Removal of the counterweight underway using Johnson Crane Hire's Liebherr LR 1600 crawler crane.

HEAVY LIFT AT KOLOMELA PIC 02 : Removal of the old counterweight boom structure.

HEAVY LIFT AT KOLOMELA PIC 03 : Placement of the old counterweight boom structure.

HEAVY LIFT AT KOLOMELA PIC 04 : A full view of the counterweight boom structure.

HEAVY LIFT AT KOLOMELA PIC 05 : Lifting of the new bucket wheel underway.

ENDS ... APRIL 2016

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