

Rough and tough operation, FAW tippers are up to the task

Dust, dirt, loose sand and corrugated roads are 'all in a day's work' for the fleet of FAW 28.280FD 6X4 tippers operating on the andalusite operation of Imerys Refractories (Pty) Ltd at the Rhino Mine site near Thabazimbi in Limpopo Province.

Fleet operator and contractor on the project, Willie de Beer and his son Michael, run the fleet with their staff of 24 people deployed as drivers, loader operators, technicians and administrative support.

Since being re-assigned the contract, Willie de Beer purchased the FAW 28.280 10m³ tippers early last year. These 'dirt monsters' are moving a massive quota of about 4 200 ton sand, grit and loose stone mixture a day; roughly between 108 000 to 110 000 ton a month.

Mining and moving andalusite, which is an extremely hard nesosilicate mineral, is highly abrasive on any equipment involved. This presents all the vehicles and heavy equipment with one of the toughest environments to work in. The residue sand and stone, after separating the core minerals, are no easier on the vehicle and equipment either.

What made Willie de Beer decide to buy the FAW 28.280FD was the brand's reputation for strength and durability. "These tippers have exceptionally good torque – 1 160N.m between 1 400 and 1 700 rpm - they also have a strong chassis, great steel tipper bins and offer a solid payload at 28t GVM. The Weichai WDB615.50 engine has proven its capabilities over and over. We are very happy with the combination of this engine and the manual 9-speed FAW gearbox giving us a grade ability of 36%@V. We are able to move quickly and efficiently with these tippers across the hills and valleys of this terrain."



Since changing to FAW tippers, de Beer reports a 22% drop in fuel consumption.

The site's major obstacles are heat, powdered dust and extreme gradients, with the FAW taking all of these obstacles in its stride.

"We enjoy the support of the FAW Pretoria West dealer and Pieter Gerber, the Dealer Principal, in particular, when it comes to keeping the tippers moving. The dealer is responsible for servicing our vehicles on site, the supply of parts and the training of our drivers. Invaluable service and support when we have these types of site challenges to deal with," says Willie de Beer smiling.

"Another major selling point was affordability, as this is especially relevant when you run a relatively small fleet like ours. That's why I've been buying FAW since 2008 and certainly plan to continue with the brand that has not let me down to date."

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Tel: 012-4604448

Fax: 086 529 3103

Email: flip@icon.co.za

On behalf of FAW Vehicle Manufacturers SA