

*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*

### **Rotek And Komatsu Keep The Home Lights Burning**

Claudius Martin, the Plant Service Manager of the Bulk Material Supplies (BMS) division of Eskom subsidiary Rotek, is responsible for the care and maintenance of machines vital to the management of power station stockyards.

“Our goal is to keep the lights on,” he says, in a simple statement that belies a complicated set of tasks.

The BMS workshops are based at the Rosherville complex in Johannesburg’s southern suburbs from which he manages a fleet of equipment operating across the Eskom net of coal-fired power stations. Thanks to the use of sophisticated control and administration systems, not to mention the Komatsu KOMTRAX fleet management system, he is able to run the operation as if he were running a business.

“Essentially, we act like an internal plant hire operation and lease the equipment out to Eskom sites, including the 13 power stations currently in operation. The contract managers on each site not only have the responsibility of ensuring a smooth flow of coal to the burners but are responsible for handling and storing ash once the coal has burned,” he says.

Komatsu products play a significant role in the coal stocks management process. Dozers and, to a certain extent, excavators are responsible for yard management and housekeeping, often involving the transportation of massive volumes of thermal coal. When really heavy volumes have to be moved, BMS allocates one or more of its fleet of Komatsu articulated dump trucks to do the job.

It goes without saying that if you have vast volumes of what is in today’s currency is ‘black gold’, it is essential to have even roads over which they can be transported. The recent addition of a sizeable fleet of Komatsu graders was seen by Roshcon as the best available solution to meet current transportation needs.

BMS runs an impressive fleet of Komatsu equipment that can be seen delivering power generating performance across the highveld coalfields and much further afield. Thanks to administration competence on behalf of customer and supplier, Claudius can, at a glance at his desktop computer, access information relating to the exact location, efficiency, performance and mechanical well-being of a vast array of Komatsu equipment.

Notable inclusions in the current Eskom fleet include:

- 20 x D155 30-tonne dozers
- 2 x PC450 40-tonne dozers
- 16 x PC300 excavators
- A single 60-tonne PC600 excavator
- 3 x tractor loader backhoes (TLBs)
- 8 x GD675 motor graders, and
- 6 x 30-tonne articulated dump trucks

No fewer than 23 of the machines were purchased as part of a major fleet expansion programme which began in 2014, and was only recently completed following the delivery of the graders and TLBs.

“Our experience is that the people at Komatsu always listen to what we need and a number of the machines were modified to meet BMS specifications. For example, all the dozers are fitted with 21m<sup>3</sup> blades while the loaders are equipped with 6m<sup>3</sup> buckets,” says the service manager who ensures that every single relevant piece of information concerning his machines is right there at his fingertips.

He is now into his fourth decade of caring for complex and often expensive machinery and cut his engineering teeth working on harvesting equipment on the KwaZulu-Natal cane fields, not only serving a lengthy apprenticeship but also gaining academic qualifications. In his case, a diploma in construction engineering from the prestigious London-based City and Guilds training authority.

In short, he doesn’t miss much and is highly appreciative of the service he receives from Komatsu. Claudius singles out George Hyman and Anton Meyer, sales representative and Customer Support Representative, respectively, for the way in which they provide the support necessary to keep machines running 24/7/365.

"George has a checklist of essential spares, providing details of availability and lead times so we can plan. Anton always makes a point of personally resolving any issue that may arise so, in fact, it is as if both of them are part of our own internal team."

A silent but invaluable member of the Komatsu team is KOMTRAX which enables Claudius to keep a watchful eye on nearly 60 pieces of equipment essential to maintaining the nation's power supply.

"It keeps me informed of each machine's location, hours of operation, relative performance, upcoming maintenance and a warning of any possible abuse."

It's worth remembering that the light and warmth we receive on cold winter's nights are in no small measure due to the efforts of Claudius and his team, with a little help from Komatsu.

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