

Automated drilling stations deliver improved safety and efficiency

As the mining sector continues to move further along the path to automation, Atlas Copco has jumped on the bandwagon with its latest innovation.

The mining equipment manufacturer has developed new remote operator stations for surface drill rigs, which allows operators to handle up to three drill rigs at once – and do it from a safe distance.

A major benefit of the BenchREMOTE system is that it can be operated up to 100 metres from the drilling

area and up to 30 metres above the rig as long as there is still a direct line of sight between the station and the rig.

This reduces the need for operators to work close to unstable and hazardous benches, while still having to drill close to the wall where falling rocks can occur.

Another safety feature is that if communication between the drill and the work station is lost, the system will automatically shut down.

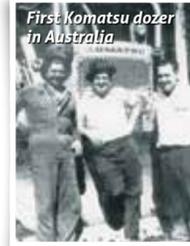
Atlas Copco product manager



Mattias Hjerpe said in addition to these important safety benefits, the BenchREMOTE system also adds to operator efficiency.

"The BenchREMOTE can handle up to three SmartROC D65 rigs in parallel. This multiplies the operator efficiency and was made possible by the full drill cycle automation," he said.

"Up to 10 rigs can be pre-programmed in the operator station, which facilitates the planning process." The BenchREMOTE operator station can be installed in a vehicle, trailer, or container and all controls and screens are the same as cabins on drill rigs.



First Komatsu dozer in Australia



KOMATSU

New year a major milestone for Komatsu

This year is a little exciting for one leading equipment supplier and manufacturer as it gears up for a major milestone.

Komatsu will celebrate 50 years of business in Australia since the first Komatsu dozers were sold to Australian customers in 1965.

Since then, Komatsu has rapidly expanded into one of the largest suppliers of equipment and services to the mining, quarrying, construction, utility and local government industry sectors.

Today there are more than 50 branches and service depots plus various assembly facilities and remanufacturing centres across the country offering an ever-expanding range of products and support services.

To celebrate the last 50 years, Komatsu will step back in time to explore its history and trace the steps to Komatsu evolving into the company it is today, from the earliest machines sold - some of which are still operating today - to the oldest and most loyal customers and everything in between.

If you know the whereabouts of old Komatsu machines, or of Komatsu customers from the early days please contact Wafaa Ghali on wghali@komatsu.com.au.

SUPPLIER SPOTLIGHT: PJL GROUP

Big things are on the horizon for the PJL Group.

In March this year the mechanical and engineering company will amalgamate its two Orange-based facilities, bringing together its mechanical and engineering capabilities in one new location.

It is the culmination of more than seven years of rapid expansion within the company.

From humble beginnings where three friends - Luke Buckland, Phil Wilkin and Joel Spagnolo - decided to go out on their own and start a mechanical shop, PJL has grown significantly.

The business provides a range of specialty engineering services for mining (its core market), earthmoving, drilling and construction industries. These services include everything from labour and equipment hire, to mobile line boring and fabrication services with 2D and 3D graphic design capabilities.

Three years ago PJL opened a new facility in Mount Isa while 2014 was a huge year as the company strategically moved into two new mining areas - Cobar and Perth - and

now employs more than 200 people across its operations. General Manager David L'Estrange said the reason behind PJL's success is the company's unique approach to doing business.

"We deliver a service to clients to help them reach their own financial goals," he said.

"So if they have to save costs, we will take a very proactive approach and say 'OK you need to save some money, we're on board with that, what can we do to help you?'"

"We value our partnerships and relationships with our clients and that's what will really secure our long term future. That is certainly what differentiates us and why our slogan is 'engineering opportunities into solutions'."

Another key ingredient behind the company's success is the nurturing culture PJL has built.

"We are really big on hiring on attitude and training for skill so the number one priority has always been attracting, developing and retaining the best and brightest people we can - that way we can better serve our clients," David said.

"We have a really special culture that develops in its own way, where everyone has a can do attitude and is on board with going forward."

As part of that culture PJL also regularly gives back to the community through sponsorships and donations.

"Orange has been our hub and always will be. Our Orange workshop is full of locals so giving back to the Orange community that we have been lucky enough to build our business out of is a massive priority to us," David said.

Some of PJL's major clients include Pybar Mining, Glencore, Birla Nifty, Peak Gold Mines and Newcrest Mining, but they are also making inroads in industries like agriculture and local government.

"Sustainability has driven the need to diversify," David said.

"We don't move away from our core business but we look for things outside of that to iron out the peaks and troughs that mining industry can throw.

"Our goal is to be the contractor of choice for mechanical and engineering solutions across Australia as a nationally recognised brand."



General Manager David L'Estrange in front of the new Leewood Estate site in Orange NSW

PJL GROUP



The PJL team hard at work



Demobilization of Sandvik Trucks as success for the PJL Group

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The PJL Group provide a complete service driven by client needs, adding expertise by practical tradespeople who are not just solutions focused, but have extensive experience working in our industry.

Our size enables repairs or installation work on any scale. Rigorous standards, solid workmanship and stringent testing deliver a trouble-free service that keeps projects on track. Operating 24 hours a day, Australia-wide, the benefits of our flexibility, quick decision making and fast turnaround times are measured by our clients in tonnes.

CORE CAPABILITIES:

- Machinery maintenance and repair
- Engineering and fabrication
- Installation and construction
- Service exchange components
- Labour hire
- Equipment hire and sales
- Design and metallurgical services
- Line boring services

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