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TEREX KEEPS WASTE MOVING

Handling Sydney's huge volume of garbage is a round-the-clock task for WSN Environmental Solutions, a leading Sydney recycling company.

The Artarmon Waste and Recycling Centre alone processes more than 200,000 tonnes of solid waste annually. Backhoe loaders feed the garbage into large compactors. The work is tough on the machines, which have mechanical grabs fitted to their extendible dipper arms used at full reach, handling materials, sorting, unblocking jammed compactors and generally ensuring the material is handled rapidly and efficiently.

WSN's Artarmon Centre Manager Thomas Kelly said: "Our backhoe loaders encountered conditions for which they were not designed. Instead of loading aggregate or similar materials, equipment has to handle high piles of garbage that clog and compact when dumped. Even experienced backhoe operators need to be re-trained to deal with our conditions."

In a bid to improve equipment performance, reduce maintenance costs and machine downtime, WSN's General Manager, Plant and Equipment, David Archer studied the issues and developed an equipment specification that addressed their needs.

Semco responded to WSN's requirements by developing a modified Terex 880 Centremount Loader backhoe. This configuration was selected because of the design's wider stabiliser stance and higher ground clearance that prevents damage from the concrete wall surrounding the pits.

The Terex 880 has a longer hoe for maximum reach and convenience and the simpler design eliminates maintenance-intensive extra hydraulics, locking rams and sliding mechanisms.

Semco's Graham Murphy said some of the key modifications included bolt-on edges on the 4 in 1 bucket, belly guards all round to protect from intrusion of waste to prevent damage to vital components, an engine idle timer to ensure a cool down period between engine shutdowns and a hydraulically actuated grab with specially guarded circuitry to allow more dextrous waste handling and nimble control.

"Other enhancements were solid rubber front tyres and foam-filled rear tyres for impregnable operation in the hostile conditions. There are also wider front and larger diameter rear tyres for added life". He said.

Additional modifications include built-in safety devices to ensure the backhoe "boom-down" function has a controlled descent to prevent it being inadvertently slammed into the concrete wall and a Rexroth control valve ensures the machine's hydraulic circuits are individually protected.

Another device prevents the backhoe from being driven with the stabilizer legs down. Similarly, when the legs are deployed, the operator cannot set the front bucket onto its cutting edge, which can damage the concrete surface.

WSN comprehensively checked the robustness of all the Terex's structural components, especially those in the critical backhoe slew area and chassis design, box sections of the key structural members, backhoe boom and critical castings. Even the method of manufacture that was used to build the components was subjected to scrutiny.

"We are pleased with the performance of the Terex 880. It has been in operation for six weeks and performed flawlessly," said Mr Kelly. "The machines have proven very reliable, with excellent mechanics and controls, ease of servicing and great visibility- very important in our restrictive spaces. Operators also welcome the roomy, comfortable and air-conditioned cab."

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Semco's Graham Murphy(2nd from left) hands over the first TEREX 880 to WSN Environmental Solutions

The modified TEREX 880 at work in WSN's Artarmon recyclingcentre