

EQUIPMENT SAFETY UPGRADE FOR RAILWAY CONSTRUCTION

With the upgrade and extension of some of Australia's metropolitan rail networks in the spotlight, some contractors are evaluating their equipment fleet for work readiness.

The loading and positioning of gravel, ballast and hauling construction materials is usually done by small dumpers. These heavily loaded vehicles need to constantly mount and traverse rail embankments, onto tracks and across points - a hostile environment for a wheeled machine.

"Worker safety has become a major concern for rail authorities and contractors", said rail contractor, Grant Sherwood of GS Crane Services in Sydney.

"In recent years the equipment industry worldwide has responded to occupational health and safety demands and changes to responsibilities associated with injury litigation. Rail work is a hazardous area, so any improvement in equipment that protects workers and boosts productivity is welcome."

"For example, most rail contractors promote the development of a sustainable safety culture, with safety and environment management being integrated into all work practices and core functions", said Sherwood.

He said safety considerations have led rail organisations and their contractors to recognise the safety and performance benefits of equipment. "An example of these moves to greater safety is the introduction of dumpers like the Fiori D40 JSR which has been developed in response to a need by Australian rail authorities."

Sherwood has recently started to upgrade his dumper fleet as the ageing and obsolete 1990 vintage Nikken dumpers reach the end of their life.

"Until now there have not been any satisfactory alternatives to the out of production Nikken vehicles. There are no spare parts, so if anything breaks it is a very expensive business to get parts custom made. Even the tyres are no longer available."

“As a contractor, it’s important to get the job completed as quickly as possible while providing a safe and efficient work environment that meets the duty of care policy required by all stakeholders. We wanted equipment that would do the job and with an air conditioned cab so work can be carried out in all weather.

“With a payload capacity of four tonnes the latest dumpers have a standard ROPS & FOPS (level 2) guard and an operator protection guard has been added to the rear cabin window. A great improvement is the four speed hydrostatic drive transmission which gives infinite variability as well as precision manoeuvring at low speeds”.

“A 180 degree operator station rotation lets the driver always face the direction of travel so they can reverse the dumper over long distances, even at night or in a tunnel, with ease and safety.”

“The D40 JSR’s articulated chassis incorporates a composite oscillation feature so the maximum tyre size (low profile 600 mm wide) can be installed with ample under mudguard clearance. It can also deliver the same speed in both forward and reverse modes to maximise production,” he said.

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Photos: *The Fiori D40 JSR Rail Maintenance Dumper: Designed to climb rails in safety.*





Photo: The D40 JSR's swivel steering position provides excellent control and visibility in forward or reverse.

About SEMCO

When Peter Esse, Satch Santilli and Graham Murphy completed a management buyout of the Case Equipment Sydney retail operations in May 1994 as Semco Pty Ltd, the wealth of their combined experience quickly forged a reputation as one of the industry's most respected suppliers. Semco has grown to become a major force in the supply of equipment to the construction, civil works and agricultural markets. Semco imports, distributes, finances, insures, rents and services major brands: Takeuchi excavators and crawler-loaders, Fiori mobile mixers, Astec trenchers, Terex backhoes and rollers, dumpers and Toro wheeled mini excavators. The company also has in stock a large selection of quality used equipment from all major brands.

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