

# MAN AND MACHINE - RENT A DOZER

*Plant hire is one tough business – hard on people and even harder on machines. So when a large operator says that his replacement parts bill for a fleet of almost 20 pieces of Komatsu equipment comes to less than R12 000 over an entire year, you have to sit up and take notice.*



Members of the Rent A Dozer team (from left): Marie, Marna, Hercu, Theodor



A D65 EX-16 and D65 EX-15 cross ripping



D65 EX-16 busy ripping

Theodor Kleynhans, owner of Marble Hall-based Rent A Dozer, explains how in 2015 it cost him just R11 400 in parts to keep his fleet of 18 Komatsu excavators, dozers and front-end loaders in perfect working order. To fully understand what is for him a routine performance, one has to take into account the passion with which he runs every aspect of his 22-year-old business.

## Starting out

All set for a career in agriculture, Theodor was blessed with a keen interest in all things mechanical and asked his father if he could restore a dormant Komatsu D50-15 dozer. With the job complete, it wasn't long before he left farming for plant hire with this self-same dozer.

In the early years he worked single handedly as operator, mechanic and marketer and it was regular practice to tram a machine very slowly up to 20 kilometres to and from jobs. Theodor made real progress, however, and in that time accumulated a fleet of a dozen used Komatsu dozers, which he personally reconditioned.

Rent A Dozer's first new purchase came in 2004, with the delivery of a Komatsu PC200-7 excavator which is still in service today.

## The right machine for the job

It is from experience gained in these early years that created the pillars on which Rent A Dozer has built a well-deserved reputation for the quality and reliability of its equipment, and a work ethic that is superbly cost-effective. Theodor's strategy is based upon the correct choice of equipment to suit an application, a rigid servicing schedule and a deep-rooted respect for equipment.





"First of all, it is essential that a product be used in an application for which it was originally designed. Like aviation, earth moving equipment is not designed to fail, it is mostly when it is abused or there is a pilot/operator error, that things go wrong."

"Komatsu products are designed to perform and we have a servicing policy which ensures we carry out preventative maintenance every 200 hours and a full lubrication service, including engine, transmission and hydraulics, every 1000 hours."

*"If you take into account what a machine can earn working trouble-free between service intervals, the maintenance costs are negligible. Decide for yourself – do you want to run a mechanical breakdown workshop or a plant hire business?" he asks.*

Maintenance activities are not restricted to regulated service intervals. Every time a machine comes in from site it receives a thorough inspection, is cleansed and the radiators and electrical harnesses kept free of dust and mud. Another individual touch

is that Theodor insists on tracking every outgoing machine onto low bed trailers prior to despatch.

"This gives me an opportunity to inspect all the machines' functions and I can also check if there are any engine noises or vibrations which might give warning of a potential problem."

It has to be added that he trucked machines to site himself for 20 years, adding yet another dimension to the Rent A Dozer service offering.

#### **Respect for machinery**

Respect for machinery is of paramount importance. He insists that every new operator spend a minimum of six weeks working as a service cleaner to get to know the machinery, to appreciate the challenges it faces on site and the importance of its presentation to the customer.

"It's not enough just to go through the motions; we have to learn to cherish our machinery."

Once the newcomer has completed his induction, he then works under the supervision of an experienced colleague who ensures that he does nothing to harm either the internal workings or external appearance. In Theodor's eyes, both factors are equally important.

Respect for machinery also extends to respect for its manufacturer.

*"If you stand a Komatsu next to a competitors' product, you can pick up detail differences. These include slightly thicker gauges of materials; doors and housings fit*

*seamlessly to the main body of the machine and the attention to detail in the cab is outstanding."*

His obvious enthusiasm for the brand could also be due to the fact that a PC200-7 excavator he bought in 2008 was recently sold for its original purchase value despite delivering nearly 8000 hours of fault-free service.

It's a rare sight in the plant hire industry to view an operation that keeps its machinery in immaculate condition, but that's the way it is at Rent A Dozer. It's also worth noting that pride of place in the machine park is given to the faithful old D50 dozer that began it all more than two decades ago.



This D65A-8 has logged 38 000 hours without any work done on the steering clutches or final drive

## **RENT A DOZER'S CURRENT KOMATSU FLEET:**

### **DOZERS:**

- 1 x Komatsu D50-15  
(first purchased in 1980, renovated in 1990)
- 2 x Komatsu D51 EX-22 (2010, 2012)
- 2 x Komatsu D65 A-8 (1996, 1998)
- 2 x Komatsu D65 EX-15 (2008, 2010)
- 2 x Komatsu D65 EX-16 (2013, 2016)

### **EXCAVATORS:**

- 1 x Komatsu PC 200-7 (2009)
- 2 x Komatsu PC 200-8 (2012, 2015)
- 1 x Komatsu PC 300-7 (2009)

### **FRONT END LOADER:**

- 1 x Komatsu WA320-5 (2012)

