

The magazine of Hitachi Construction Machinery (Europe) NV

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GROUND CONTROL

Issue 28 Autumn 2019 www.hitachicm.eu

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Rent it. Drive it. Profit.

- Hitachi Premium Rental special issue
- Foreword by *International Rental News*
- Rental machines in France, Italy and The Netherlands

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CONTENTS

04 Special news report: Connecting with Hitachi at Bauma

A look back at HCME's news from the record-breaking exhibition in Munich.

08 News

Read about the 300,000th excavator manufactured at one of Hitachi's factories and other news from HCME's dealer network.

12 Rental revolution

An exclusive report on the importance of rental equipment in Europe, focusing on Premium Rental and other Hitachi machines...

14 Adding value and flexibility

A ZW180-6 on the ski slopes near Chamonix Mont Blanc and a ZX135US-6 earthmoving in Saint-Jorioz.

18 A link to new customers

A ZX145W-6 working on a new metro station near Rennes.

20 Expanding into new markets

A ZW310-6 processing raw materials in Amsterdam's Western Port.

22 Reliable rental – 24/7!

Eight ZW180-6s handling seeds and other raw materials in Faenza.

26 Optimising performance

Customers in Germany explain the benefits of Hitachi GET and buckets for wheel loaders.

30 Tested to the limit

Hitachi EH5000AC-3 dump trucks and mining excavators prove their reputation for reliability in the remote interior of Australia.

36 A stable investment

A French contractor highlights the speed and stability of the Hitachi ZX135USL-6 forestry machine.

38 Four generations of men and machines

From his grandfather to his three sons, André Molenaar reflects on the success of owning four series of Zaxis excavators.



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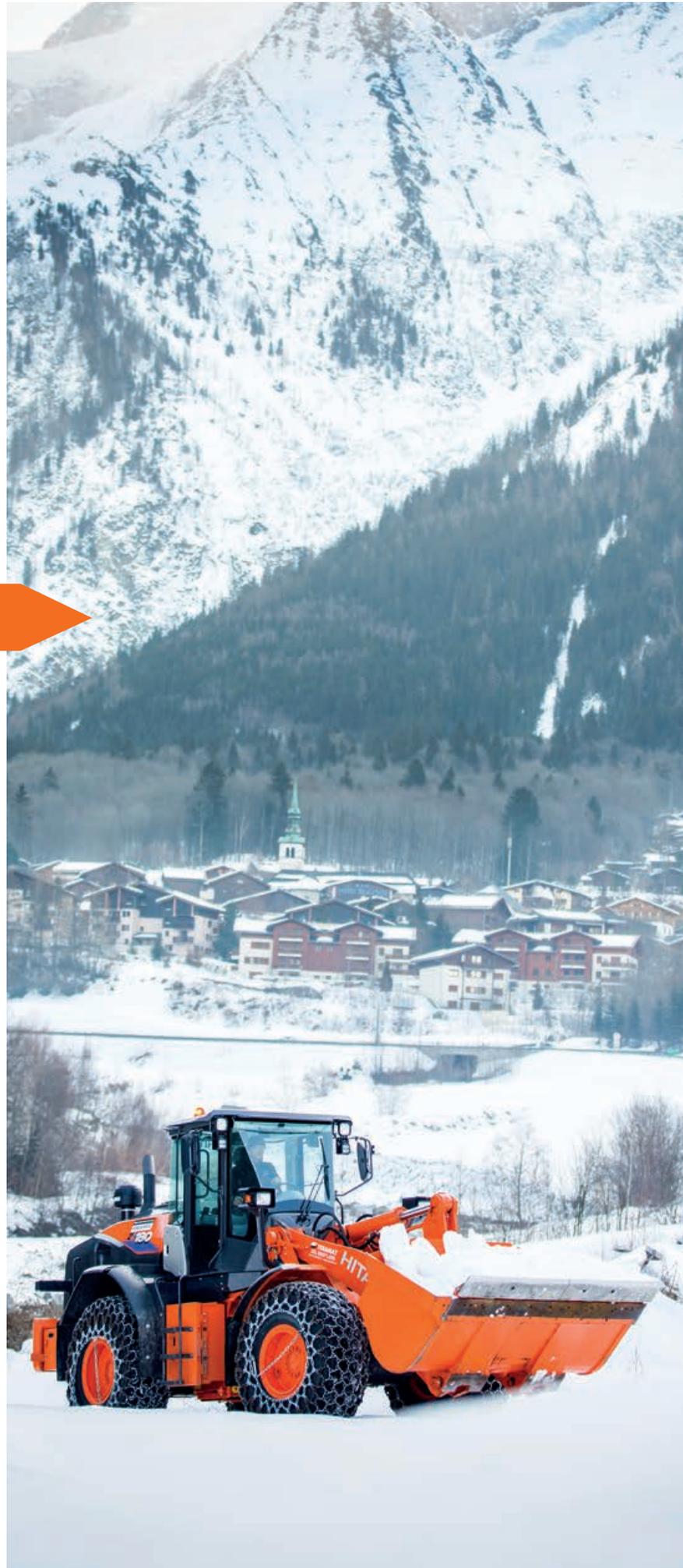
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Connecting with Hitachi at bauma

A wide range of Hitachi products and services were presented at this year's record-breaking Bauma, which was held in Munich in April. The exhibition attracted more than 620,000 visitors from over 200 countries – the highest attendance figures in the event's 65-year history.

HCME welcomed guests to its 6,495m² stand during the seven-day show. The theme was "Connect with Hitachi", illustrating how customers access a world of connectivity when they purchase a Hitachi machine. They benefit from not only the connective technologies incorporated in Hitachi equipment, but also the connection to people within the dealer network through comprehensive after-sales support.



One of the six daily demonstrations



The "Connect with Hitachi" theme was integrated throughout the 6,495m² stand



Hitachi's first ICT hydraulic excavator, the ZX210X-6



First appearances

More than 30 machines were displayed by HCME. Unveiled to the general public for the first time were the ultra-large EX1200-7 and EX2600-7 mining excavators. The latter was officially handed over to a customer from Bulgaria during the exhibition with a traditional Japanese ceremony.

Hitachi's first ICT hydraulic excavator in Europe, the ZX210X-6, was also on display. Informative demonstrations of this, and several other innovative models, took place six times a day in the dedicated Hitachi demo area and were watched by thousands of people.

Another debut was the ZE85 zero-emission electric excavator, also shown in the demo area. Produced by the European Application Centre (EAC) – a joint venture between Hitachi Construction Machinery Co., Ltd and KTEG – it was joined by a smaller electric model, the ZE19 mini excavator, on the Hitachi stand. These concept models have a long battery life, and are exceptionally quiet and safe to operate.

HCME also presented a broad selection of the new Zaxis-6 mini and compact excavators, from the ZX17U-6 to the ZX85USB-6, and the ZW75-6 and ZW95-6 compact wheel loaders. All of these machines have been updated to comply with Stage V emissions requirements.

A wide variety of medium and large wheel loaders, medium crawler excavators and wheeled excavators, plus special application machinery for different industry applications, completed the Hitachi model line-up.

A premium experience

Hitachi attracted attention to its approved used and rental programmes during Bauma 2019. (For a closer look at the benefits of Hitachi Premium Rental and customer experiences, please see the special report in this issue, pages 12-25). A ZX130-5 Premium Used machine was on display – complete with HoloLens headset, which highlighted the benefits of using Hitachi Genuine Parts. This machine was sold to Czech Republic dealer NET spol. s r.o. during the event, making it the first Premium Used model available in Eastern Europe.

Hitachi also presented its innovative remote monitoring solutions, including the new ConSite Pocket app that enables customers to manage their machines via a smartphone. In addition, HCME announced its partnership with European telematics company ABAX to enable the latest Zaxis-6 range of Hitachi mini excavators to be connected to Global e-Service.

Interactive technologies

There were several opportunities for visitors to connect with Hitachi at Bauma: they could test their skills on the EH5000AC-3 dump truck simulator from Immersive Technologies; experience the cab of the ZW220 Concept wheel loader through virtual reality; and have their picture taken in the bucket of the EX2600-7.

HCME also made sure to connect with people online, regularly sharing updates and videos via its social media channels throughout Bauma. Facebook posts reached 800,000 users, tweets on Twitter reached 42,700 users, and its most popular video introducing the Hitachi stand reached 17,504 users.

“Our team worked incredibly hard to create an engaging and stimulating environment on our stand this year at Bauma, so that we could really connect with visitors at the event,” says HCME President Makoto Yamazawa. “With such a wide variety of our construction equipment on display, there was something of interest for everyone.”



To see a selection of movies of Bauma 2019, please visit www.youtube.com/user/HitachiConstruction. To receive a digital version of *Ground Control* with new movies, please register online at www.hitachicm.eu/iground-control



The electric ZE19 mini excavator



HCME announced its partnership with ABAX to enable the new Zaxis-6 mini range (right) to connect to Global e-Service



The EX2600-7 was officially handed over to a Bulgarian customer during a traditional Japanese ceremony



The new generation EX2600-7 and EX1200-7 mining excavators were exhibited for the first time at Bauma 2019

NEWS



Added durability with ZX530LCH-6

The only manufacturer of white lime products in Switzerland is relying on a Hitachi ZX530LCH-6 excavator at its quarry in Glarus. Kalkfabrik Netstal AG (KFN) supplies customers all around the world, as well as delivering a wide range of sand, grit and concrete gravel to local contractors.

The natural limestone, which has been mined for almost 120 years at the Elggis mountain site, is one of the highest quality limestones in Europe in terms of purity. KFN operates 24/7 all year round and produces around 200 tonnes of lime daily. The end product is used for road maintenance, in which it is less sensitive than other materials to erosion damage through all weathers.

The ZX530LCH-6 is mining two different types of rock, for which it is equipped with cab protection, reinforced glass and special spikes for winter use. In addition, a hydraulic quick coupler allows easy access to other attachments, including a 1,800mm bucket, ripper and breaker.

“We have been highly satisfied with the durability of the Hitachi excavator,” explains KFN’s Head of Production and Operating Technology Bernhard Klumpp. “As an essential part of the production process, we are dependent on the availability of the ZX530LCH-6. This is supported by the 10,000-hour maintenance contract we have in place with our local dealer, Probst Maveg.”

Minis connect to Global e-Service

The latest Zaxis-6 range of Hitachi mini excavators can now be connected to Hitachi Construction Machinery’s remote monitoring system, Global e-Service. Hitachi Construction Machinery (Europe) NV (HCME) has teamed up with European telematics company ABAX for this new development, which was announced at Bauma 2019 (see pages 4-7).

This allows owners access to operational data on their machines, such as their individual locations and the number of working hours for each. This in turn helps to increase productivity, enhance efficiency, maximise availability and reduce running costs.

The market-leading software platform enables Hitachi mini excavators to communicate with Global e-Service, simplifying fleet management and maintenance for machine owners. It is available for all current Hitachi mini and compact machinery. It can also be retrofitted to previous generation models by the authorised Hitachi European dealer network.

HCME Manager Business Development Tom van Wijlandt commented: “Now the full range of Hitachi excavators is available with our unique remote monitoring system. As long as it has a Hitachi serial number, then it can be found on Global e-Service. We’re looking forward to expanding our offering and working with ABAX in the future.”



HCME President Makoto Yamazawa (right) and ABAX CEO Morten Stand sign the agreement at Bauma



First for fuel efficiency

Miljötekniska Konsult AB has recently invested in its second Hitachi wheel loader – a ZW250-6 – based on its positive experiences of operating a ZW220-6. Supplied by Delvator, the authorised Hitachi dealer in Sweden, the new machine works at the company’s main asphalt plant, which mixes approximately 90 tonnes per hour. The ZW250-6 feeds the plant and transfers the prepared materials.

In recent years, the ZW220-6 has been handling around 2,000 tonnes of ballast for asphalt production per day. “When you compare the fuel consumption of the ZW220-6 to other wheel loaders, Hitachi really stands out,” says Miljötekniska Konsult’s owner Christer Westberg. “Overall, we have been highly satisfied with the total costs and reliability of the machine, as well as the excellent service we receive at Delvator’s workshop at Berggrens Maskinservice.”

Miljötekniska Konsult works across a wide range of sectors, but its main activities are asphalt and bentonite production. To create asphalt, it uses crushed rock as the raw material, alongside recycled and crushed asphalt granules excavated from old surfaces. The company’s business concept is based on high efficiency and flexibility, using its mobile asphalt plants.

“It only takes a few hours to mobilise our equipment before we are ready for production,” explains Christer. “We pride ourselves on speed, and we are often an attractive alternative to traditional asphalt plants. However, for this process to work effectively, we rely on an efficient and reliable machine fleet. This is where our Hitachi wheel loaders play an essential role.”

Hitachi gets the job done

Mónica e Filhos is a family-owned forestry company, located in Ferreira do Zêzere, in the Santarém district of central Portugal. It was established by Joaquim Mónica, who works with his sons, Pedro and Ricardo.

The company purchases eucalyptus, pine and other types of wood throughout the country. It offers wood cutting, loading and transportation services to customers such as The Navigator Company (formerly the Portucel Soporcel Group), a leading international name in the pulp and paper industry.

The company has a fleet of seven 21-tonne Hitachi excavators, including three ZX210-6s, two ZX210LC-5s and two ZX210LC-3s. They work daily with different types of attachments, such as hydraulic shears, timber grapples and winches. “Together we make a very experienced team who trust in Hitachi to get the job done,” says Joaquim.

The reason he continues to invest in Hitachi machines is due to the performance of his fleet: “The excavators are undoubtedly high quality, that’s why we keep on buying Hitachi. The service we receive from our local dealer, Moviter, is also very good. We are happy customers!”



From left, Pedro and Joaquim Mónica with Moisés Mendes from Moviter

NEWS



Large-scale investment for UK quarries

Hanson Aggregates has added two new Hitachi ZX890LCR-6s to its fleet in the UK. The large Zaxis excavators are now working at quarries in Cumbria and Gloucestershire. Supplied by Hitachi Construction Machinery (UK), they were part of a package of 16 machines, including four ZX690LCR-6s and several ZW-6 wheel loaders.

Hanson UK is a leading supplier of heavy building materials to the construction industry. Its Shap Beck and Chipping Sodbury quarries produce limestone aggregates, some of which is used in the large-scale production of lime for steelmaking.

One of the new ZX890LCR-6s replaces a ZX870LCR-3 working at Shap Beck. This was purchased in 2007 and has 23,000 working hours. Hanson UK invested in the second model following a successful trial with another 90-tonne Hitachi model at its Chipping Sodbury site.

“These excavators will provide improvements in reliability,” says Gary Morgan of Hanson UK. “Their procurement reflects our ongoing investment in plant and machinery to enhance efficiency.”

Supporting growth on Åland

A construction contractor based on the Åland Islands, situated between Sweden and Finland in the northern part of the Baltic Sea, has invested in two new Hitachi excavators over the past year. This is thanks to the current boom in construction projects on the main island.

One of the new models, a Hitachi ZX65USB-5, was delivered earlier this year to AX Schaktkompaniet Ab by the authorised Hitachi dealer in Finland, Rotator. This is the company’s smallest machine and during the summer it was used in churchyards, where its compact dimensions and rubber tracks were hugely beneficial.

Schaktkompaniet has a fleet of ten excavators, six of which are Hitachi models (from two to 26 tonnes). It operates primarily on the main island of Åland, but also on the smaller islands when required. It specialises in roads and infrastructure, and also regularly carries out groundworks for residential construction projects.

Rotator provides maintenance on the islands, and delivers spare parts to customers such as Schaktkompaniet by sea or air. Magnus Söderlund of Schaktkompaniet has been satisfied with the reliability of his Hitachi fleet over the years. “There have been no problems, and the machines work smoothly thanks to their precise hydraulics,” he says.





From left: Mike Versteeg (HCME), Nils Olav Gudbrandsen, Tom Johansen (Nasta), Kosuke Ogihara (HCM Tierra)



The key of the new ZX85US-6 being handed over to Brødrene Gudbrandsen AS

A special delivery

A Norwegian company has taken delivery of the 300,000th Hitachi excavator produced at Hitachi Construction Machinery Tierra Co., Ltd in Japan. A special handover for the new ZX85US-6 was held for owners Brødrene Gudbrandsen AS with representatives from local dealer Nasta, HCME and HCM in July.

The company based in Lena (in Østre Toten municipality) bought its first Hitachi, an EX200, in 1987. Since then, it has invested in a number of Hitachi machines, and has evolved to become a significant entrepreneur in the inner eastern area of the country. With 49 employees, the company is responsible for all types of construction projects.

“At Brødrene Gudbrandsen AS we have no time for downtime and hassle, so Hitachi and Nasta are a reliable and safe choice for us here at Toten,” smiles General Manager Nils Olav Gudbrandsen. “This is the third ZX85 we have purchased, and it will be doing landscaping, utilities and drainage work.”

Tom Johansen, CEO of Nasta, says: “Norway is probably the country where most ZX85 models are sold, and over the last 20 years we have delivered about 2,000 new Hitachi eight-tonne excavators to our customers. That is precisely why this is an important highlight for us that Hitachi dedicated this anniversary machine to one of our talented and loyal entrepreneurs.”

Mini excavator helps in Haiti

A Hitachi ZX18-3 mini excavator has been donated by HCME to help with important work at a hospital in Passe Catabois, north-western Haiti. The hospital was the idea of Dutch nationals Rob Hulshuizen and Doctor Anne-Marie Wessels, who moved to the country in 2001. It was built with donations from private contributors, Dutch organisations, and help from the Stichting Hulp Haïti Driel foundation.

Around 100 patients visit the hospital each day, with Anne-Marie and her team providing vital specialist treatment and operations. Rob maintains the hospital buildings, which are powered by solar panels, and a repair workshop.

In addition to this, he constructs shelters for members of the community who have lost homes due to extreme flooding and hurricanes. He has also built several houses close to the hospital for medical staff and guest rooms for teams of workers from abroad.

The versatile ZX18-3 excavator will be used for a wide range of jobs. “It will be digging trenches for increasing the supply of utilities, such as water pipes and electricity cables,” says Rob. “It will also be used for earthmoving, digging drains and strengthening gabions next to a 100m³ water reservoir that will be built later this year. It will certainly be a welcome and useful tool.”





“Europe’s equipment rental market growth continues to outstrip that of the general economy”

Thomas Allen, Editor, *International Rental News*

Rental revolution

The worldwide rental market has experienced a significant upturn in recent years. Industry expert Thomas Allen, Editor of *International Rental News (IRN)*, explains the reasons why the European market is embracing a rental shift.



Rental has always been an option for companies looking for more flexible or economical ways of working. With Europe's rental businesses spending as much as €5 billion a year on new fleets, it also provides end users with the latest machines.

In recent years, though, with more attention being paid to sustainability and the circular economy, there has been renewed focus on the potential that rental offers to increase the efficiency of equipment use and cut carbon emissions. In this respect, rental is an example of a sharing business model.

The European Rental Association (ERA) represents the interests of rental companies in Europe. It has recently published independent research showing that carbon emissions can be cut by more than 50% when machines are used efficiently – with rental being one example of efficient use.

This wider acceptance of the role of rental in the supply chain has impacted not just on the decisions of contractors and other equipment users, but also manufacturers. The Premium Rental initiative of Hitachi Construction Machinery (Europe) NV (HCME) is an example of this (see below for further details).

As a result, Europe's equipment rental market growth continues to outstrip that of the general economy. The ERA is forecasting rental growth of 4.8% this year and next, which is considerably more than general GDP growth and also in excess of the construction growth forecasts for the period. Even in Germany, where GDP growth has recently been weaker, the ERA is expecting rental increases of just under 5% both this year and next.

Other than growth, a key feature of the current rental market in Europe is consolidation. The biggest rental companies are getting

bigger. The 39 European businesses that featured in our annual IRN100 list of the top rental companies in the world – published in June – reported average revenue growth of 7% in 2018, fuelled not only by organic expansion but also by acquisition.

That trend was reinforced in June with the announcement that Loxam and Ramirent – the number one and three rental companies in Europe, respectively – had agreed to a merger. Once completed, it will create a €2.3 billion rental business spanning from Portugal and Spain in the west to Poland, the Baltics and Finland in the east – 16 European countries. It will have extensive operations in the Middle East and outposts in Morocco, Brazil and Colombia. The merger will make it three times larger by revenue than its nearest competitors, Cramo and Kiloutou.

Could this trigger a further round of mergers, perhaps involving the largest US rental businesses? Observers of the world's rental market have also been anticipating a move into Europe by the largest US rental businesses for several years. The biggest of these, United Rentals, is a €7 billion business and it already owns a smallish division in Europe, added as a by-product of its acquisition of BakerCorp last year. United has plenty of opportunity still to grow in North America, but it has a bridgehead now in Europe.

With so much going on in the rental scene and so much optimism, *Ground Control's* timing is good for this rental feature. We hope you enjoy it.

To subscribe to *IRN*, visit www.khl.com or contact thomas.allen@khl.com.

Hitachi Construction Machinery

PREMIUM RENTAL

HCME launched the Premium Rental programme in Europe in 2018. Through this, HCME contributes to the sharing economy, which focuses less on ownership and more on the joint use of products and services.

By 2020, HCME plans to have a Premium Rental fleet of 1,000 excavators and wheel loaders. It has already invested €40 million in new machines to set up the programme and this will increase to around €100 million within the next 12 months.

Construction companies can benefit from Hitachi Premium Rental by:

- having access to the latest Hitachi technology and adhering to the current emission regulations
- keeping the machine(s) off-balance sheet, with more flexibility to invest and grow their business
- adopting minimal financial risk, with flexible contract conditions
- having the flexibility to respond to fluctuating local market demands
- taking the opportunity to “try before you buy”.

HCME has a dedicated Rental department, led by Rental Manager René Danielsson and Rental Development Manager Arnold van Benthem, which will continue to grow in the coming years. The first year of the rental programme has been very



Rental Manager René Danielsson (left) and Rental Development Manager Arnold van Benthem

successful. “We’re delighted that Hitachi dealers have implemented Premium Rental in their respective countries,” says René.

“Thanks to this initiative, contractors all over Europe have already taken advantage of new business opportunities,” adds Arnold. “In the following pages, you’ll find out how Hitachi rental equipment has supported businesses in France, The Netherlands and Italy.”



Rental report

Name: Sarl Munari

Location: Les Houches,
France

Rental machine: ZW180-6

Adding value and flexibility

The demand for rental machines is increasing in the region of Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes, in France, which is covered by authorised Hitachi dealer Teramat, based in St Girod. “The rental market is increasing and being able to offer this new solution to our customers gives them added flexibility,” says Sales Director Pierre Mailland-Rosset.

The dealer has dedicated staff to take care of its rental fleet. Technical Director Germinal Diaz Serraz says: “We follow the same service and maintenance procedures as we do for new machines with our rental fleet, including using ConSite. However, we give more detailed instructions to operators when we deliver a rental

machine, to ensure they know how to operate it and carry out the required daily maintenance correctly.”

Within the first three months of offering Hitachi Premium Rental equipment, Teramat had delivered six machines on rental contracts: ZW180-6 and ZW220-6 wheel loaders, a ZX135US-6 and three ZX85US-5 excavators. Pierre believes the rental market will continue to grow in this region.

“National key accounts have a rental strategy, because they don’t want to own the machine, and take care of maintenance and service. They just have to calculate the price per hour – the costs are fixed and clear.



“At the moment, however, many of our smaller customers still prefer to buy their construction machinery. It’s an affluent area, so rental is an additional and convenient option for seasonal jobs, for example.”

A larger model for short-term contract

One such customer is Sarl Munari, located in the picturesque ski resort of Les Houches near Chamonix Mont Blanc. With a Hitachi fleet of nine excavators and three wheel loaders, it has been a customer of Teramat since 2011. The family-run firm specialises in earthmoving, utilities and construction work.

During the winter months, it also carries out snow removal, from hotel car parks and parking areas for cable cars, for example. Six of the company’s 11 employees are involved in these challenging night-time projects, often working from 2am to 12pm and in temperatures as low as -18°C.



“The rental market is increasing and being able to offer this new solution to our customers gives them added flexibility”

Pierre Mailland-Rosset,
Sales Director, Teramat

Last winter, the company received a new snow removal contract and opted to rent a Hitachi ZW180-6 wheel loader for one year from Teramat. In doing so, it became the first rental customer of Hitachi Construction Machinery (Europe) NV.

“We are happy with Hitachi and wanted to stick to the same brand of machinery,” says Nicolas Munari, who owns the company with his three brothers. “We also have a good relationship with Teramat – it has a reputation for reliability, and excellent service and maintenance.

“We needed a larger machine than our ZW140-5, because of the amount of work to be done,” he adds. “We wanted to see how it would go with our new customer before purchasing the latest model, and we also wanted to see if it could be used in the summer months.”

For snow removal, Sarl Munari fitted its own tyre chains and a blade to the bucket of the ZW180-6. Powerful lights at the front and rear, and a heater in the cab make it suitable for working at night in low temperatures. Teramat also minimised the sound of the machine reversing, which is an important consideration for work in residential areas.

The rental process took only one month from start to finish before the ZW180-6 was delivered in November. “Before we agreed to do the work for the new customer, we checked with Teramat if a suitable machine would be available,” says Nicolas.

“If we couldn’t have found a ZW180-6 to rent, I would have looked to buy a used model. Availability is the most important consideration for me. One month was OK to wait, as the work was planned and we knew when we needed the machine.

“I would rent a Hitachi wheel loader again, especially for a project with a time limit. If you buy, you need a line of credit, but you can rent a machine for a short period without that. The expenditure stops when you return the machine.”

Hitachi – no worries

Cost was key to the decision to rent a ZX135US-6 medium excavator by Charvin Entreprises, based in Annecy. Supplied by Teramat in December 2018, it was used for several projects within the first three months of the flexible rental contract. One project in Saint-Jorioz involved earthmoving and utilities on the Cosy Lac residential development, comprising 44 new apartments.

Works Supervisor Fabrice Klemencic says, “Our company wanted to hire a 13- to 15-tonne excavator, as we had the work but did not have the financial means to purchase a machine of this size at that time.”

Fabrice contacted local Hitachi dealer Teramat with his request due to his longstanding working relationship with salesman Carlos Negrillo – and his previous experience with Hitachi machines at a different company. Teramat’s reputation for providing a high standard of service was also a factor.

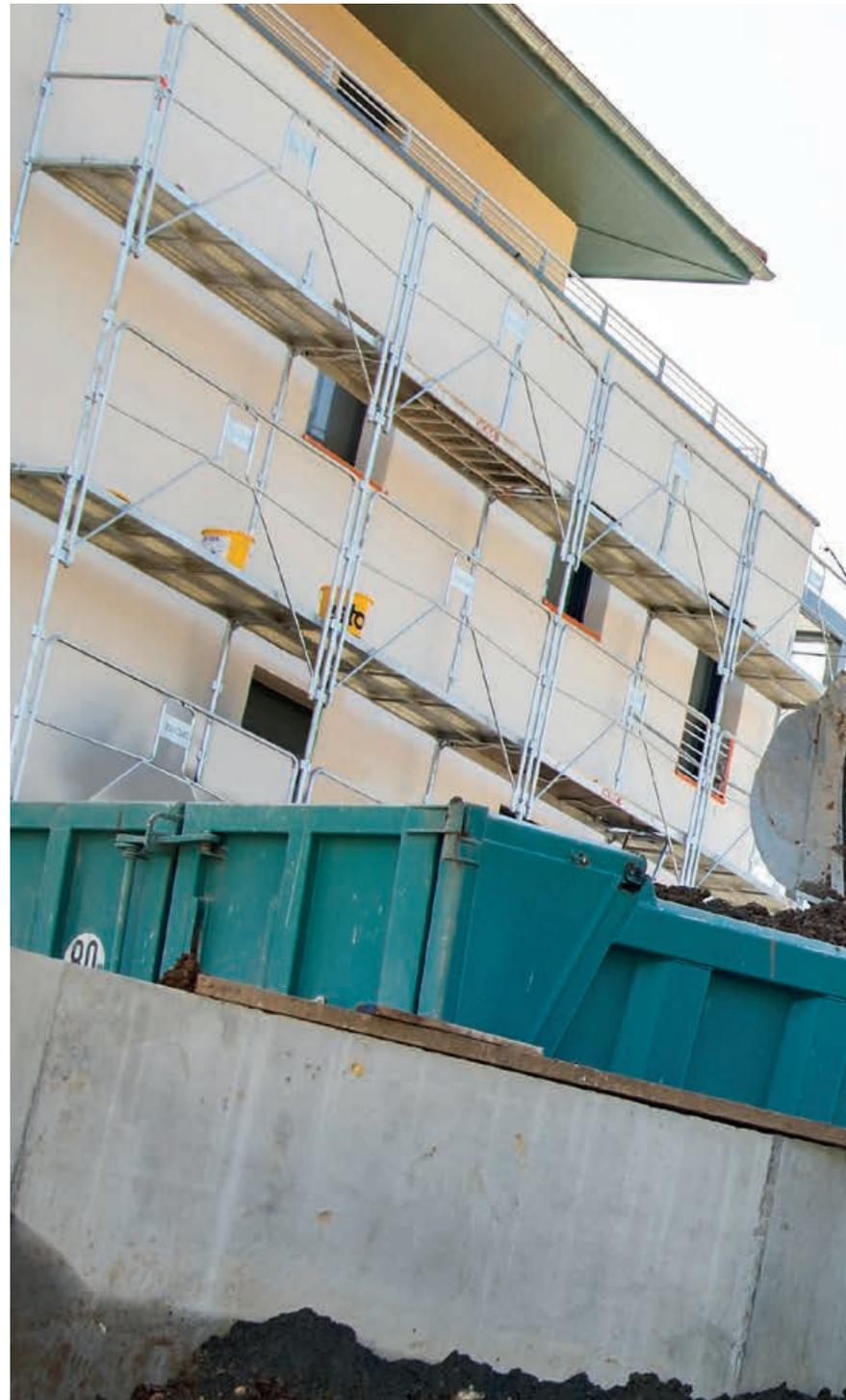
In addition to helping the company to complete its projects on time and budget, renting the ZX135US-6 has given Charvin Entreprises an opportunity to test a new model. It is the first Hitachi to be used by the company, which has a fleet of six other excavators and five wheel loaders.

“Hitachi has enabled us to rent this new excavator and if we’re satisfied – and have the work – we’re likely to purchase it,” says Fabrice. “Normally, it’s quite complicated to rent a machine, and if you source one from a hire company, you don’t have the chance to buy the machine later. We selected Hitachi and Teramat because we say, ‘Hitachi – no worries’.”

Operator Cyril Bergeret is also satisfied with the new arrival on site. “This is the first time I have used a Hitachi excavator. It is comfortable, easy to use, fast and responsive, and the noise levels are low. They have really thought about the features for the operator, and this helps us to feel less tired in the evening.”



To see movies of the Hitachi rental machines, please visit www.youtube.com/user/HitachiConstruction. To receive a digital version of *Ground Control* with new movies, please register online at www.hitachicm.eu/iground-control



“We had the work but not the financial means to purchase a machine of this size at that time”

Fabrice Klemencic,
Works Supervisor,
Charvin Entreprises

Rental report

Name: Charvin Entreprises

Location: Annecy, France

Rental machine: ZX135US-6





A link to new customers

Rental is a fresh challenge that has been welcomed by Cobemat, the authorised Hitachi dealer for Brittany, Loire-Atlantique and Normandy in north-west France. “It’s important for us as a link to approach new customers, and demonstrate the benefits of our services and products,” says Managing Director David Rodier. “It gives customers the chance to experience the benefit of working with Hitachi and Cobemat.”

Demand for rental equipment is increasing across the 14 departments that Cobemat covers, particularly in construction

and civil engineering. “Our territories are experiencing positive economic growth, but customers, and especially SMEs (small and medium-sized enterprises), aren’t able to invest in a large fleet.

“They also need versatility – with quick couplers, tiltrotators and different attachments. It’s difficult to invest in all these things at the same time. We can offer them flexibility, and they can see the benefits of Hitachi and our other brands, as a combination of different solutions.”

The dealer focuses on mid-term rental contracts of three to six

Rental report

Name: Société Robert Chevillard

Location: Rennes, France

Rental machine: ZX145W-6



“The philosophy of younger people is to change to faster models and upgrade to new technology quicker than previous generations”

David Rodier, Managing Director, Cobemat



months, offering excavators from the ZX85USB-5 to ZX490LCH-6 and wheel loaders from the ZW150-6 to ZW310-6 through the Hitachi Premium Rental programme. They also offer used machines on a rental basis at a lower cost under their rental ‘umbrella’, Cobeloc.

“I think that eventually revenue from rental will be higher than sales,” adds David. “The philosophy of younger people is to change to faster models and upgrade to new technology quicker than previous generations. As the technology develops, maintenance becomes more complex, and so our customers find it more difficult to do this themselves.”

Flexible and competitive

One of Cobemat’s first Premium Rental customers was Société Robert Chevillard TP, a rental company based in Rennes for 56 years, which supplies machines with operators to customers carrying out earthmoving or construction projects. Since November 2018, it has been renting a ZX145W-6 wheeled excavator on a monthly contract.

“We have been aware of the Hitachi brand since 2002, when we bought our first wheeled excavator, a ZX160W,” says Manager Christophe Talarmin. “It now has 12,500 hours and remains in perfect working order. We were won over by the longevity, efficiency and reliability of the machine.”

The company selected the ZX145W-6 because it needed a machine similar in size to its existing ZX140W-5, with a short-tail swing and two-piece boom. Equipped with a tiltrotator, fork attachments and different sized buckets, it is highly versatile and has been used on a variety of earthmoving projects since delivery.

Between May and September 2019, the ZX145W-6 was being used on the construction of a new metro station to connect the suburb of Cesson-Sévigné to Rennes. Société Robert Chevillard TP has used the machine with its operator as a subcontractor to a company involved in the construction project.

One of its tasks in early May was to create pavements, unloading cement on which curb stones were placed, and widening the road on the site. Using the integrated grapple on the tiltrotator, it was also used to lift and transport smaller items of equipment and tools around the large site safely and efficiently.

“We like the flexibility of renting the ZX145W-6,” says Christophe. “If there is no work, then there is no cost for this machine. Hitachi Premium Rental also guarantees that you get a well-maintained machine. We appreciate the support we receive from Cobemat; the machine is constantly monitored. This is important for us, because when our customers call, the machine has to be ready the next day.”

“We’re likely to use the Premium Rental programme again,” he concludes. “It allows us to demonstrate the efficiency of our Hitachi equipment to customers and meet their requirements with a competitive offer.”



To see a movie of the Hitachi ZX145W-6, please visit www.youtube.com/user/HitachiConstruction. To receive a digital version of *Ground Control* with new movies, please register online at www.hitachicm.eu/iground-control

Rental report

Name: KB Group

Location: Amsterdam,
The Netherlands

Rental machines: ZW310-6
and ZW370-6



Expanding into new markets

The demand for rental machinery is increasing in The Netherlands and therefore it has become of strategic importance for Hitachi Construction Machinery Nederland, according to its Deputy General Manager, Domestic Sales, Gijs van Heertum.

“Our aim is always to cater for our customers’ needs in the best possible way,” he says. “We do this by being more flexible, bringing them a high level of service and offering such options as Premium Rental.

“The demand for this sector is growing in line with contractors needing a solution that will help them through any periods of

economic uncertainty. They are also now asking their dealer about these services, rather than a specialist rental company.”

HCM Nederland offers a full line of ZW-6 wheel loaders, and Zaxis-6 crawler and wheeled excavators as part of its short-, mid- and long-term rental solutions. “There is a change in mindset among consumers, with same-day services now commonplace,” continues Gijs. “Our customers are bringing that mentality to the workplace, with the expectation of Hitachi offering a complete solution.

“Our rental customers benefit from having fixed equipment costs for the duration of a project. In addition, they have more flexibility



to supplement their existing fleets – it used to be a case of ‘finding work for the machine’, but now it’s ‘finding a machine for the work’. In this way, we are able to not only support our existing customers, but also develop into new sectors, such as recycling.”

Where service counts most

The KB Group is a typical example of how HCM Nederland has increased its presence in such markets. The company provides various services relating to the processing and transport of 650,000 tonnes of raw materials per annum to the European steel industry.

Strategically based at Amsterdam’s Western Port, the KB Group crushes, washes, separates and mixes the materials into high-quality commodities, such as anthracite, PCI coal, iron ore and scrap metal.

To facilitate its growth over the past four years, the KB Group has been expanding its fleet of machinery. This includes ZX350LC-6 and ZX300LC-6 medium excavators, as well as a ZW370-6 (rented through Hitachi Premium Rental), two ZW310-6s (one rented from the same programme) and ZW95-6 wheel loaders.

“It’s better for us to rent these machines from the Hitachi dealer, because this removes any potential headaches,” says KB Group Director Jan-Otto van Olst. “Our wheel loaders work hard with the added security of knowing that they come with a full service agreement.

“The market can change quickly and the KB Group needs to react quickly. Rental helps us to avoid any unexpected losses with this in mind. It is also a good business model for us, as we have the latest technology at our disposal, with the latest engines for low emissions and fuel consumption.”

Jan-Otto received a number of personal recommendations before choosing his company’s preferred supplier: “A friend recommended Hitachi machines with regard to their ease of use for operators.

“He was correct and I believe that the balance between the number of features in the control panel is just right in terms of complexity. This is important, because we can change operators and there is no impact on their overall accuracy or productivity.

“Other friends had highlighted the reliability of Hitachi equipment and my first experience of ownership was a ZX470 excavator. It kept running for over 5,000 hours with no problems whatsoever.”

Since the move to the Port of Amsterdam in 2016, Jan-Otto’s decision to opt for HCM Nederland has been vindicated: “I’m really happy with the whole Hitachi package. The wheel loaders and excavators work well – and are very reliable – plus the dealer representative, Martin Visser, always keeps his word.

“The biggest benefit of hiring the Hitachi wheel loaders is the peace of mind that comes from knowing our fixed running costs. If there’s an issue to be resolved, HCM Nederland’s support is key and I’ll call Martin – even if it’s the weekend. If a wheel loader stands still, then the whole process stands still. The availability of our wheel loaders is therefore of vital importance, and so we need to keep them running.”

“The biggest benefit of hiring the Hitachi wheel loaders is the peace of mind that comes from knowing our fixed running costs”
Jan-Otto van Olst,
Director, KB Group



Jan-Otto van Olst (left) and Martin Visser (HCM Nederland)



To see a movie of the Hitachi ZW310-6, please visit www.youtube.com/user/HitachiConstruction. To receive a digital version of *Ground Control* with new movies, please register online at www.hitachicm.eu/iground-control



Rental report

Name: Tampieri Group
Location: Faenza, Italy
Rental machines:
eight ZW180-6s

“We don’t want to think about the machines after the contract has been signed and we like to have a fixed cost, so that there are no unknowns”

Franco Tampieri,
company owner and Purchasing
Director, Tampieri Group



process involves the handling of the seeds and other raw materials by its hard-working fleet of medium wheel loaders.

These have been rented from the Italian Hitachi dealer, SCAI, since 2011 when the rental contract for these machines came up for renewal. After researching the market for other companies who use wheel loaders for a similar purpose, Tampieri met with representatives from five manufacturers as part of the purchasing process.

Importance of cooperation

While the final decision to rent eight Hitachi ZW180s was based on the best price/quality mix, it was also a matter of the “feeling” that Tampieri had at the time for the potential suppliers, according to one of the company owners and Purchasing Manager Franco Tampieri.

“It’s not only important for us to choose a rental supplier, but also to make this selection based on the level of cooperation. I learnt this invaluable lesson from my father and grandfather. As a result, we look for those who not only offer a competitive price, but also who will be by our side. The overall reflection of this was good within the initial Hitachi rental proposal.

“We were introduced to Hitachi and SCAI through a personal recommendation. Since the very first meeting, I have had a good feeling about renting the Hitachi wheel loaders from SCAI and how seriously they take their work. They have an answer to every question and understand our preferred way of working.”

SCAI set up its rental business in 1997 and has a 1,000-strong fleet available for short-, medium- and long-term contracts. Rental Division Manager Alessandro Cesaretti says, “We are very proud and satisfied with the relationship we have enjoyed with Tampieri. There have been no major issues over the past eight years and so this is one of our most important rental customers.

“Tampieri is a strong brand and we always work well together to find the right solution. This rental arrangement is typical of how SCAI is diversifying into other sectors, aside from our main construction-related business. The rental market is strong in Italy at the current time and there is potential for growth.”

The initial order was for eight ZW180s and these machines were replaced by eight new ZW180-5s when the rental agreement was renewed in 2015. Then at the end of the second four-year rental contract, the terms were once again agreed for the delivery of eight new ZW180-6s in 2019.

An excellent experience

“We decided to continue renting Hitachi wheel loaders from SCAI in 2015 and 2019, because we have been happy not only with the machines, but also the technical and administrative support,”

Reliable rental – 24/7!

Italian Hitachi dealer SCAI has been renting eight ZW180 wheel loaders for eight years to the Tampieri Group. In recognition of their third successive rental agreement, *Ground Control* ventures to the city of Faenza to establish why the arrangement works so well for both parties.

Following its 90-year anniversary in 2018, the Tampieri Group is now firmly established as the market leader for the processing of sunflower oil in Italy and number one for the production of grape seed oil in the world. A key part of the company’s manufacturing

adds Franco. “We’ve had an excellent experience and they have continued to deliver good value for money.

“Our first target is always the support we receive, because we don’t stop and our machines work round the clock. Our rental supplier needs to resolve any problems quickly. We don’t want to think about the machines after the contract has been signed and we like to have a fixed cost, so that there are no unknowns.”

This view was echoed by Tampieri’s Purchase Department Coordinator, Pietro Tampieri. “If you buy machines, you are also responsible for their maintenance and servicing – and this isn’t our area of expertise. In addition, it’s not just the capital cost of the machines you have to consider, but also the running costs.

“As the machines operate 24/7, our rental agreement with SCAI is successful because the technical support is fast, and keeps them up and running at all times. The ZW180-6s are critical to our operation as they feed the manufacturing process, and that’s why we need reliable machines.

“It’s all about peace of mind and that’s the most important thing about renting the wheel loaders. If there are any issues, then we just call SCAI. If there’s a technical issue that can’t be resolved within one day for whatever reason, then they would supply us with another machine.”

The perfect machine

The Hitachi ZW180-6s continually move the stockpiles of seed and flour (produced from the seed) from one part of the plant to another. The seeds are stored in the best possible place to be integrated within the production process and are therefore moved in the most efficient way – by wheel loader.

Each machine moves up to 1,000 tonnes of these materials per day and the operators work across three shifts. It’s not possible for them to work on all of the daytime tasks during the nightshift – due primarily to the lack of trucks – but the main priority is to ensure that they have enough seeds for the manufacturing process.

The company’s busiest period is from August to March to coincide with harvesting season each year. At this time, around 200 trucks per day visit the plant. Once the seeds have been delivered, Tampieri takes a sample to check that they are fit for purpose.

They are then kept in storage and prepared for the extraction of the oil, by crushing and chemical extraction. After refining, the oil is stored until delivery to the final destination.

Christian Cimino, Tampieri’s Manager of Machinery says: “The wheel loaders’ reliability is of course vital – we shouldn’t have any downtime. We have seen the development of the different ZW180s, so that the latest ZW180-6 is easier to use, more intuitive and has more technology.

“The visibility from the cab has also improved and there is a fuel saving of around 20% over the previous model. It has excellent capacity for loading and carrying the piles of seed and other materials. In my opinion, without doubt it’s the perfect machine!”



To see a movie of the Hitachi ZW180-6s, please visit www.youtube.com/user/HitachiConstruction. To receive a digital version of *Ground Control* with new movies, please register online at www.hitachicm.eu/iground-control



90 years of growth and innovation

Tampieri was established in 1928, when Alfredo Tampieri bought a machine to extract oil from crushed grape seeds. Over the years, the company has diversified and the production of other seed oils for food use were added to the existing product portfolio.

Market demand then led the Tampieri Group to expand its business abroad in order to increase capacity. Agf Cereal Rumena in Bucharest and Tampieri Hungaria in Budapest were established to secure a constant flow of raw materials (sunflower, corn and grape seeds) to the production plant in



Faenza. The city, which lies approximately 50km south east of Bologna, is also home to the fourth generation of the Tampieri family and 280 employees.

It has also gained a strong reputation as a technologically advanced company that treats the waste water from its plants, as well as those of third parties, and researches and produces biomedical devices. In addition, in line with its responsible attitude towards the environment, the company uses by-products to generate energy for both Tampieri's own consumption and the national grid.



Tampieri's seed and refined oils production plant in Faenza



SUPPORT CHAIN

Optimising performance

Customers in Germany are reaping the benefits of Hitachi buckets and ground engaging tools. Here, they explain the importance of choosing the right attachments and tools for their Hitachi wheel loaders, and the impact they have on their activities.



Hitachi buckets and GET (ground engaging tools) have been designed to enhance the performance of Hitachi wheel loaders and excavators in a wide range of working conditions. Manufactured in Europe to the same high standards as all types of Hitachi construction equipment, they are exceptionally reliable and durable. By contributing to maximum productivity and uptime on the job site, they not only help to increase profitability, but also provide peace of mind to customers who want to get the most from their machines.

The GET range for wheel loaders includes a variety of self-sharpening teeth and reliable adapters to ensure a precise fit. The choice of buckets includes the versatile general purpose buckets, rock buckets for use in mines and quarries, and the high-dump versions

for loading materials onto trucks or hoppers. These are available with options to tailor them specifically to a particular application, such as round or flat floors, different spill guards, side wear plates and base lips.

Hitachi buckets fit perfectly to Hitachi wheel loaders, which helps improve the performance. Due to the brand's global reputation, they can also increase the resale value of the wheel loader. In addition, they are 10% lighter than other brands, increasing lifting capacity and reducing fuel consumption.

One Hitachi customer reaping the benefits of Hitachi GET is MMRHP Metzner Recycling GmbH (Metzner Recycling) in Erlangen. It took delivery of a ZW150-6 wheel loader with a round floor bucket and teeth in May 2019. Its first project was a



A ZW310-6 fitted with a Hitachi general purpose bucket and spill guards

contract for the demolition of five buildings to make way for a new Siemens campus.

Thanks to its size, ease of operation, and the round floor bucket, the ZW150-6 proved suitable for a wide range of different tasks across the 38,000m² site. These included transporting and loading materials into a crusher, loading lorries and distributing materials in areas where the ground required levelling.

Owner Michael Metzner says: "I discussed the advantages of the ZW150-6 and the floor type of bucket with Kiesel [the authorised Hitachi dealer in Germany] and knew then that it was the perfect solution for this job site."

"Most of our other buckets are flat on the bottom," he adds. "This bucket has a round floor, which makes it easier to completely fill with material and results in less wheel spin. This is quicker, more fuel-efficient and prevents tyre wear. The teeth also last twice as long as competitors'."

High quality and efficiency

Michael decided to purchase the wheel loader after seeing it in action at Kiesel's Coreum facility, located in Stockstadt, near Frankfurt. Here, customers have a valuable opportunity to test out a variety

of Hitachi machines and attachments in a dedicated demonstration area. This is divided into sections that have been designed to replicate the contrasting operations and materials a wheel loader or excavator may be required to handle.

According to Kiesel's Product Manager for wheel loaders, Bastian Mesmer, the bucket should be a key consideration for customers testing a new machine. "It's one of the most important parts of a wheel loader," he says. "It needs to be selected carefully depending on the material being handled, the site profile, and application. At Kiesel, we can help the customer using the Hitachi bucket configurator, and make recommendations on shape and type of bucket, in addition to other options.

"The benefits of Hitachi buckets for our customers are the high quality, fast delivery times, suitability to machine, and also the high efficiency due to the lightweight HARDOX[®] material." Kiesel also takes the bucket into account as part of the Hitachi buy-back scheme*, offering its customers an even greater incentive.

Another Kiesel customer who has opted to use Hitachi buckets on its wheel loaders is TBS Transportbeton Schüssler GmbH & Co. KG (Schüssler). The company supplies 600 types of ready-mixed concrete, sand and grain from several locations across Germany.



Schüssler's ZW370-6 with a Hitachi rock bucket

It has four Hitachi wheel loaders – two ZW310-6s and two ZW370-6s – at its two Kerpen-Manheim sites to the west of the country. The ZW370-6s are used to excavate material in the quarry and transfer it to a conveyor. Both are equipped with Hitachi rock buckets, which are designed for heavy-duty work and loading of rocks, and are optimised for good penetration and breakout performance.

Around 200m³ of filtered material is loaded onto trucks by each ZW310-6 per eight-hour shift. The material is then transported to a factory where the final product is created. The wheel loaders are fitted with Hitachi general purpose buckets, equipped with added spill guards. These are designed to suit a wide variety of tasks.

Schüssler selected these buckets based on the advice it received from Kiesel. “The dealer recommended these based on our requirements, and we trust in their opinion,” says Executive Director Jochen Wonka.

“We have a very good relationship with Kiesel. They provide an excellent service, provide us with everything we need, and the Hitachi wheel loaders have proven to be very reliable.”

For more information on Hitachi GET and buckets for wheel loaders, and the *buy-back scheme, please contact your local dealer or visit: www.hitachicm.eu



To see a movie of the ZW-6 wheel loaders please visit www.youtube.com/user/HitachiConstruction. To receive a digital version of *Ground Control* with new movies, please register online at www.hitachicm.eu/iground-control



Tested to the limit

The vast and remote interior of Australia is one of the harshest environments imaginable. With extreme temperatures reaching 40-50°C in summer, and an arid landscape that quickly changes due to cyclones and frequent storms, it's the perfect place for Hitachi dump trucks and mining excavators to prove their reputation for reliability.



Meeting the ever-increasing demand for iron ore and steel worldwide, mining is the main economic activity in West Australia. Most of the continent's iron ore is mined in the Pilbara region, where Roy Hill runs a 55 million tonne per annum (mtpa) mining, rail and port operation, currently rising to 60 mtpa. Here, Hitachi equipment plays a vital part in supporting the business export to key international markets.

As a margin-focused business, Roy Hill aims to maximise the return for each tonne of ore produced. This focus means the operation is not simply concerned with the amount of iron ore dug from the ground, but rather the sustained, low-cost production of iron ore, of consistent quality and grade.

Roy Hill's iron ore travels 344km along its dedicated railway to Port Hedland, where the product is loaded onto ships at the port. Roy Hill's first shipment was exported in December 2015. A constant supply of cargo has left the two-berth wharf ever since, bound for Japan, Korea, China and beyond.

The bigger, the better

The Roy Hill mine fleet includes 24 of Hitachi's largest rigid dump trucks, the EH5000AC-3, as well as three of Hitachi's largest excavators, the EX8000-6. This is in addition to five EX5600-6s, four EX3600-6s and a single EX1200-6 excavator.

All of these models are manufactured to the highest standards at the Hitachi Construction Machinery Co., Ltd factory, Hitachinaka-Rinko Works, in Japan. Here, they are assembled, painted, checked and tested, then disassembled for shipping to customers around the world. The factory is conveniently located next to Rinko port, and delivery to Australia takes approximately one month.

Hitachi dump trucks and mining excavators are designed to work perfectly together and share proven Hitachi technology and components. The dump trucks for example, include an advanced AC drive system developed for Japan's high-speed bullet trains. Key electrical components are designed and manufactured at Hitachi Ltd's Omika Works factory, located approximately 15km away. These include the control cabinet, rectifier and IGBT. Travel motors are manufactured at another Hitachi facility, Yamate, also located nearby to Rinko.

Long-term reliability

To ensure Hitachi machines are developed with high levels of quality, safety and durability, they are tested rigorously 24/7. This takes place at the Urahoro test site on the northernmost of Japan's main islands, Hokkaido, where temperatures can reach -30°C in winter.

A 5km-long track has been specially developed for the dump trucks, with a 1km straight, and varying degrees of slopes to simulate mining conditions. During testing, Hitachi examine aspects such as the brakes and steering to ensure that they conform to



“The fact that Hitachi dump trucks have been rigorously tested in Japan gives us confidence”

Ian Wallace,
Head of Mining, Roy Hill





“The Aerial Angle is a fantastic safety system that’s fitted to the Hitachi trucks”

Tarra Ninyette,
Ancillary Operator,
Roy Hill

the appropriate ISO standards. Tests on the Hitachi Drive Control System (consisting of slip side control, pitch control and side skid control) are designed to ensure stable haul cycle times, and high levels of productivity, safety and efficiency.

Further examples of tests at Urahero include the peripheral vision system Aerial Angle, and software updates to the machine’s integrated computer systems. Such stringent procedures are a vital part of the development process at Hitachi. They ensure its equipment continues to meet the requirements of customers such as Roy Hill.

At Roy Hill’s mine site in the Pilbara, the process starts with clearing, removing and storing topsoil for progressive rehabilitation once pits have been mined. As part of Roy Hill’s environmental compliance, the land will be returned to its original state once mineral extraction is complete. Once the topsoil is removed, the remaining earth is drilled and loaded with explosives.

After drilling and blasting, an excavator loads the Hitachi AC-3 dump trucks with bulk waste, which is taken to various dumping locations. The ore product is transported to the crushers, where it is screened and sized.

Once processed, the ore is washed, dried and stockpiled ready to be loaded onto train wagons for the 344km journey to Port Hedland. Twenty-six locomotives are used in various driving configurations with up to 236 ore cars hitched together.

At the purpose-built port facility, the ore cars are unloaded by the rotary car dumper, before ore is stacked and loaded onto ships bound for international markets.

An integral role

Up to six of the 2.6km-long trains are loaded with iron ore every day to meet current production requirements. The reliability of the Hitachi dump trucks to move the initial bulk material and satisfy this huge demand cannot be underestimated.

Roy Hill’s Head of Mining, Ian Wallace, explains: “The Hitachi dump trucks are operating in tough conditions, and the fact that they’ve been rigorously tested in Japan gives us confidence.

“We have 24 of the EH5000AC-3s on site and they’re ideally matched to the scale of our operations, and to our EX8000-6 excavators. They provide us with an economy of scale in our bulk waste movement and there is also the benefit of maintaining electric drive machines over conventional mechanical drive models.”

With the mine running 24/7, machine reliability, or ‘asset health’ as it is known in Australia, is paramount, requiring close collaboration between Roy Hill’s specialist technicians and Hitachi representatives. Preventative maintenance and access to operating performance data from Hitachi’s remote monitoring solutions, including Global e-Service and ConSite, is key.



“Since having the EH5000s we’ve had so much support from Hitachi,” says Kevin Weary, Superintendent, Hauling & Ancillary. “We’ve got a couple of Hitachi representatives on site full time and they help with all the asset health. They give us the data we need as and when required.

“Moving forward with the remote monitoring system, we’ll get the data daily and be able to improve our maintenance packages as a result. Since the trucks have been on site, they’ve performed really well, we’re very happy with them.”

View from the cab

Operator safety and comfort are also vital. Shifts are long, conditions are always challenging, and the sheer size of the trucks is significant. The operator sits high above ground level and commands a 500-tonne machine capable of speeds up to 56km/h, carrying loads up to 296 tonnes.

Fortunately, the Hitachi trucks have been designed and developed with safety and performance in mind. Ergonomics play a key part in the cab design, which offer superior operator comfort and a great field of view. Another benefit is the Aerial Angle system, which provides the operator with all-round vision of what’s happening



outside of the truck.

Ancillary Operator Tarra Ninyette explains: “The Aerial Angle is a fantastic safety system that’s fitted to the Hitachi trucks. It provides us with object detection and collision avoidance technology that allows the trucks to operate in a safe and productive manner.

“The functions and features are perfect for the conditions that we operate in, here at Roy Hill. The AC-drive systems function extremely well, are safe and allow the trucks to stop within the braking capabilities.”

Pink is the new orange

All the Hitachi EH5000AC-3 dump trucks owned by Roy Hill have their trays painted bright pink in support of breast cancer patients and research, and to honour the large number of women working alongside the men in these often tough conditions.

“Our Executive Chairman, Mrs Gina Rinehart, actively supports breast cancer patients and research, having started back in the early 1990s Australia’s then first breast cancer foundation, and the pink trucks campaign continues this initiative,” confirms Ian.

“Many of the trucks are named after people in the company who’ve been affected by and battled breast cancer, or partners of Roy Hill.

This has touched many of our staff who are also champions of the cause. We have five pink locomotives, 130 pink ore cars and will soon have a pink WHIMS (wet high intensity magnetic separator) plant. In addition, our Chairman is also Godmother of the world’s first pink bulk ore carrier ship, the Berge Toubkal, the newest in the Berge Bulk fleet, and the largest ship to carry the Roy Hill ore.”

While the colour of the equipment sends a clear message, the performance of the Hitachi dump trucks and excavators also speaks for itself. As a result of high-quality manufacturing and engineering in Japan, and proven in-house technology from the Hitachi Ltd. group, as well as rigorous testing and continuous after-sales support, the Hitachi machines at Roy Hill are delivering long-term reliability in arguably the toughest conditions on the planet.



To see a movie of the Hitachi dump trucks, please visit www.youtube.com/user/HitachiConstruction. To receive a digital version of *Ground Control* with new movies, please register online at www.hitachicm.eu/iground-control



A stable investment

After three decades of experience with standard Hitachi excavators, a loyal French contractor has invested in a new special application machine. Schmitt TP is reaping the benefits of its speed and stability in challenging forestry environments.

Loyal Hitachi owner Schmitt TP has been using the orange machines for more than three decades on its public works, earthmoving and demolition projects in Brittany, north-west France. Its first Hitachi excavator, an EX220, was purchased in 1987 followed by an EX400 in 1989. This model has more than 47,000 working hours. Today, its fleet includes 17 Zaxis and ZW models (15 excavators – from 13 to 46 tonnes – and two wheel loaders), and the most recent addition: a ZX135USL-6 forestry machine.

The special application model is factory modified by Hitachi to meet the challenges of forestry applications, such as felling, milling and grinding. It has a higher ground clearance than standard

models of the same size for smooth travelling performance over uneven terrain, for example, and a durable undercarriage that provides exceptional stability. Further protection for the operator is also provided to enhance safety.

Before it was delivered in February 2019, local Hitachi dealer Cobemat modified the machine to meet the requirements of Schmitt TP. A central lubrication system was installed to make life easier for operators, and FOPS protection on the roof of the cab and protection for hydraulic pipes on the boom were added to prevent damage caused by branches and trees.

The ZX135USL-6 was also modified to use bio fuel, which



has enabled it to achieve an organic certification. This is an added advantage when working in environmentally protected or conservation areas.

The forestry excavator is perfect for the environmental activities of Schmitt TP's subsidiary, Mivois Environnement. Established in 2012, it specialises in cutting down trees, extracting stumps, wood chipping, and transportation to wood-burning energy boilers. It rents machines and operators from Schmitt TP, and is headed by Director David Bodin.

"We usually work on projects within a 150km to 200km radius around the city of Rennes, and can have up to five machines



From left, Mivois Environnement Director David Bodin and Schmitt TP owner Florent Schmitt

running at the same time," he says. One of its recent projects was felling trees adjacent to a busy dual carriageway in preparation for a new intersection in Cesson-Sévigné, on the outskirts of the city of Rennes.

Clearing the way

The project was completed in a day-and-a-half on behalf of road construction and infrastructure group Colas. After the trees were cut down by the ZX135USL-6, fitted with a grab-and-hold shear attachment, they were grinded down into woodchips. The product was then transported by Schmitt Transport's trucks to a furnace on the edge of Rennes managed by Dalkia, in order to be converted into heat or electricity, thus promoting the circular economy.

"This machine is more stable than the standard excavator we used for projects like this previously," says David. Operator Christophe Polisse agrees: "What I like most about the ZX135USL-6 is the stability and speed. For my work, I need to be able to see everything. I have the camera, and excellent visibility, it's great."

For owner Florent Schmitt, the reliability of this Hitachi machine and the rest of his fleet is key. "We initially chose to invest in Hitachi machines because of our family's relationship with the Beaulieu family of Cobemat. Since then, we have been loyal to the brand for many years due to the quality and reliability of the machines."

The Hitachi Support Chain after-sales service and support provided by Cobemat is also an important factor, as well as the positive feedback from operators. "We have a 'one machine, one operator' philosophy, and our staff tell us that they are happy with the comfort of the cab, and the smooth and precise operation. They are also user-friendly, it doesn't take them long to get used to operating Hitachi machines."



To see a movie of the Hitachi ZX135USL-6, please visit www.youtube.com/user/HitachiConstruction. To receive a digital version of *Ground Control* with new movies, please register online at www.hitachicm.eu/iground-control



Four generations of men and machines

The Dutch contractor, A Molenaar, has an impressive history and a long established relationship with Hitachi Construction Machinery (Europe) NV's domestic dealer (HCM Nederland). André Molenaar reflects on the company's roots and looks forward to the future of the business, safe in the hands of the family's fourth generation.

Adam Molenaar (André's grandfather) started his working life in farming at Bergambacht, to the east of Rotterdam, where he established his company with a horse and plough in 1941. His successor (and André's uncle) Aris Molenaar, diversified into the construction sector. When André joined forces with Aris in 1998, the company curtailed its agricultural work in favour of construction.

When Aris left the company in 2006, André worked in partnership with his cousin until the start of 2019. Then his three sons took on a 63% share of the company to their father's stake of 37%. Eldest son Peter (30) and brother Arno (28) now manage the company's projects and prepare tenders, while youngest son René (26) manages sister company Molenaar Zand en Grond BV's aggregates yard.

The Molenaars lead a team of 30 dedicated staff, whose work on road construction and sewage contracts accounts for between 60 and 70% of the company's current turnover. They also specialise in drainage and groundworks projects.

The family's successful partnership with HCM Nederland has blossomed via an excellent relationship with Hitachi's sales

representative Kees van Vliet. He has known André for over 29 years and recognises that his customer is a useful reference for other potential Hitachi owners, calling him the "other sales guy" in the area. They both value the trust that has developed between the two companies.

The firm's first Hitachi excavator was an EX150LC, which André also operated and recalls "the excellent handling". When he took responsibility for the company's fleet, it consisted of five machines, but he needed to invest in more equipment to keep up with demand.

Since 2008, the fleet has grown to 20 and includes: a ZW180-5 wheel loader; three Zaxis short-tail swing mini excavators; a wide range of medium excavators from the ZX130LCN-6 to the ZX350LC-3; and five ZX140W wheeled excavators.

"We have owned all four generations of the ZX210 and ZX140W, from the original Zaxis line-up through to the -3, -5 and -6 models," says André. "The ZX210 is an excellent all-rounder, and can cope with smaller and larger jobs, as well as soft ground. The ZX140W is the perfect size for our work, and the two-piece boom also allows



From left to right: Peter, Arno, René and André Molenaar



The family has owned all four generations of the ZX140W and the ZX210



us to complete our jobs quickly and easily.”

When asked why he has bought as many as 40 Hitachi machines, André explains: “The machines, service and people continue to be excellent. We’ve had very few problems over the years and the handling continues to be one of the strong points. There is a good price/quality ratio, a strong resale value and they are even beautiful to look at! Hitachi is always there for us if we have a problem. The dealer thinks about everything from our point of view.”

With such a large fleet, A Molenaar attracts attention from Hitachi’s competitors. However, André always has the same answer for the other sales representatives: “I say to them, ‘Look outside, we only have Hitachi machines, so don’t even bother asking...!’”

“Hitachi is a stable company and the machines are so reliable. People say that I am wearing orange-tinted glasses, but it’s all about our 30-year history! Hitachi has played such a big part in the development of our business.”

The future’s not only bright for A Molenaar, but it’s also orange. “We’re looking forward to the next generation of Zaxis excavators,”

adds André. “We’re always surprised at how Hitachi can improve on a near-perfect machine.”

Looking ahead, André hopes his sons will maintain the stability of the company, while enjoying some steady growth. “When I was 30, my dream was to own a company and it came true. However, I never thought it would grow to this extent. If my grandfather could see how his company had developed, he would be very proud and amazed at what four generations of men and machines have achieved.”



To see a movie of A Molenaar, please visit www.youtube.com/user/HitachiConstruction. To receive a digital version of *Ground Control* with new movies, please register online at www.hitachicm.eu/iground-control

Model performance



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