

# Project stacks up for newcomer

A bulk handling venture says it has proved its ability to deliver a top-notch machine despite a tight timeline and other challenges.

Bulk Materials Handling Australia (BMHA) and German joint-venture partner FAM have started commissioning the first of four stacker reclaimers to be completed at Abbot Point Coal Terminal under a \$135 million-plus contract.

BMHA, an emerging player in the Australian bulk materials handling arena, is confident its contribution to the expansion works under way at the key North Queensland coal terminal will act as a springboard to further major projects.

Managing director Craig Dixon believes the company will have the best advertisement possible for its expertise and equipment range as new projects start to roll out following a recent lull in the market.

It will have delivered a state-of-the-art machine with significant advantages over its competitors.

"We believe we have built the best machine that Australia has seen and we will demonstrate that," Mr Dixon said.

The Australian-owned Mecrus

Group created BMHA as a stand-alone entity focused on bulk materials handling.

BMHA has aligned with FAM (Magdeburger Foerderanlagen und Baumaschinen), a recognised provider of world-class machines, and together as FAM Queensland (FAMQ) they are focusing on bulk materials handling opportunities throughout Australia and South-East Asia.

FAMQ are due to hand over their first stacker reclaimer to North Queensland Bulk Ports Corporation in August, with the entire Abbot Point project to be completed early next year.

Mr Dixon said each machine would weigh more than 1800 tonnes and be capable of moving 6000 tonnes of coal per hour, peaking at 8000 tonnes.

FAMQ won the stacker reclaimer contract in April 2008 when the Abbot Point port owner sought a competitive bid as part of the X50 expansion project to double the facility's capacity to 50 million tonnes per annum.



The new stacker reclaimer at the Abbot Point Coal Terminal, north of Bowen.

Photo: Ben Cox

Mr Dixon said the contract involved many challenges from Day 1 – including a tight timeline and significant supply issues.

FAMQ had to start from scratch, with no existing stacker reclaimer design to meet specific NQBP requirements, he said.

"In response FAM has delivered some innovative engineering solutions that have delivered improved machine characteristics whilst coming to terms with and embracing strict Australian design standards," Mr Dixon said.

FAMQ had worked closely with the client to determine the ways in which the design could be improved in order to give optimum reliability and serviceability, he said.

"We have also built a stronger machine, capable of being expanded to move 8000 tonnes an hour, up to a peak of 10,000 tonnes," he said.

Mr Dixon said FAMQ had been very conscious of State Government policy encouraging major contractors to give local suppliers a fair go.

The project will ultimately

include more than \$80 million worth of Australian content, a significant contribution given the majority of the design work had to be undertaken in Germany and many high-end engineered items sourced from overseas.

"We do not have that expertise available here," Mr Dixon said.

Among the future jobs the partners will be targeting is the supply of further stacker reclaimers and ship loaders at Abbot Point to accommodate expansion.



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