



New horizons

This might not seem like the most intuitive time to attempt an expansion into the Australian mining tyre services market, but then again, it could pay to become established for when the market finally bounces back. By **Andrew Snelling**

That is the general philosophy behind Canadian tyre group Kal Tire's present thinking, according to the company's managing director for Australia, Darren Flint.

"We have a lot of experience in this, and mining is cyclical so there are always peaks and troughs," Flint told *Australia's Mining Monthly*.

"Kal Tire have a long-term vision of

operation, so it will pick up. What level it picks up to we don't know, but if we're serious about being in Australia we need to be in more than just Western Australia, that's the mantra and that's the sort of drive." ▶

**CONNECTING YOU
TO WORLD CLASS ELECTRICAL SOLUTIONS**

SINCE 1968

SAFE EFFICIENT INNOVATIVE PRODUCTIVE QUALITY

Ampcontrol powers, lights, monitors and controls some of the biggest, most complex mines in the world.

Visit ampcontrolgroup.com



Flint spoke to *AMM* as he was preparing to fly back to Perth from Vancouver where he had been meeting with other regional heads from around the world to discuss the progress of the mining tyre services business.

“It’s a global recession in mining, it’s not just Australia that’s been affected, all the

other regions have been in this same sort of downturn,” he said.

“The two [regions] we’re focusing on at the moment will be South Africa and Australia.

“The other markets are quite mature. South Africa and Australia are relatively new to the business so that’s where the impetus

and the push is – to drive that growth and expansion in those two places.”

Kal Tire has had a presence in Western Australia for the past five years, operating in Kalgoorlie, Port Hedland, Geraldton and Perth.

“We’re basically WA-based and there are lots of opportunities on the east coast,” Flint said.

“We see Australia as a big mining opportunity so just being based in WA for the long-term doesn’t make business sense. We want to expand the business and have a footprint in all corners of Australia.

“So we won’t rule out South Australia and we won’t rule out opportunities in the Northern Territory as well.”

First on the list for the company, however, is establishing a presence in New South Wales’ Hunter Valley.

“That would be where we want to start and get a foothold and establish and grow the business from that side,” Flint said.

“So, trying to build context and trying to get Kal Tire identified as a truly global operator within mining services.

“We’ve got the next two to three years where we’d want to both grow the footprint and get more established in different regions rather than just focus on WA on its own.”

The Hunter Valley seems to be a logical choice as coal could be a new core focus for the group.

“We don’t have involvement in the coal industry at present, but our intention is to expand into the east coast in the near future, where the coal industry will be a key target for us,” Kal Tire commercial manager – Australia Danny Moore told *AMM*.

Though Kal Tire has a heavily established presence and reputation elsewhere in the world, Flint acknowledges that the company will have its work cut out for it in competing in Australia.

“There’s a fair bit of competition and they’re well-established and do a very good job,” he conceded.

“It’s a niche market sector and the competition is professional and we’re coming into their main market, so for us to go up against the larger competition – we know we have a tough job but we believe we have a level of offering that is somewhat attractive and we see that as an advantage.”

The company’s commercial tyre counterpart is the largest dealer in North America, while the mining business has been delivering tyre solutions for more than 40 years to 150 mine sites across five continents.

This experience is the advantage Flint sees as the company’s edge as it contemplates its Australian expansion.

The key challenge, he said, was to “grow our name and grow our relationships with the clients” in Australia.

• See *Hunter Valley in Focus* feature page 45.



“South Africa and Australia are relatively new to the business so that’s where the impetus and the push is – to drive that growth and expansion in those two places.”

– Kal Tire Australia managing director Darren Flint

LOAD ONCE, LOAD RIGHT

LOADRITE



Trimble LOADRITE scales improve loading efficiency and help track material. LOADRITE scales provide repeatable and accurate payload measurement for mines worldwide.

Trimble LOADRITE scales are designed for rugged environments with solutions for excavators, wheel loaders and conveyors.

For proven cost savings and increased profits, supported by our expert technical team across Australia, ask for Trimble LOADRITE scales.



For more info see us at AIMEX 2015, booth# 2427



1800 655 860
info@loadritescales.com
loadritescales.com