

# BORAL FORWARD THINKS BY WEIGHING SHOT ROCK AT THE FACE



The Loadrite Pit Boss weighing and productivity reporting system has made the optimisation of this process easier for Boral. The Loadrite system consists of a loader scale installed on the face loader, data capture modules for storing and transporting the production data from the face loader to the office (a cellular data based option is also available) and a database and reporting system installed on a computer at the Deer Park office.

This Loadrite system is the first product to be able to produce customised productivity reports generated directly from the face loader's weighing information. These reports provide information to measure blast efficiency, loader productivity, cycle times and to schedule maintenance.

The most basic use of the Pit Boss system is ensuring that haul trucks are loaded to their specified haul capacity, which minimises wear and tear on the trucks and tires. Deer Park Quarry manager Cameron Macintosh had had some exposure to the benefits of this product in a previous role and saw the potential for the Pit Boss to optimise face loading processes at Boral Deer Park.

The initial motivation for Boral to install a Pit Boss system was to measure the tonnage derived from each blast against the blast plan. The Pit Boss also reports on loader and haul truck cycle times. Boral's Daniel Bowler is responsible for leading process improvement initiatives in the

Melbourne metropolitan area. Mr Bowler has recently begun to use the data from the Pit Boss system to regularly present productivity information to a team of Boral managers and operating personnel. The team looks at Overall Equipment Effectiveness (OEE) within the quarry by reviewing recent operating data and determining if any improvements can be made.

Mr De Brincat downloads weighing information from the systems about four times a month. "It's nice to be able to know what proportion of scalps, oversize and other material was produced from the most recent shots," he said, "so you can plan to go back to that area when you are expecting a surge in demand for a particular product during the next month."

Mr De Brincat acknowledges that Boral is only just scratching the surface of what can be done with the Pit Boss product and will be looking at other potential benefits after a Loadrite training session planned for 2009.

The key differences between the Pit Boss system and conventional loader scales are in the ease operation of the loader scale and the customised reports specifically designed for face loading operations. The system allows you to select customised settings such as blast number, products handled and haul truck numbers.

Boral are a longstanding Loadrite customer, who have been using wheel loader scales to optimise the productivity of their loadout processes for over 20 years. •

Source: Actronic Technologies

**B**oral's Deer Park Quarry is one of its largest operations in Australia, producing basalt products for both internal and external customers. The site also accommodates asphalt, masonry and concrete operations, all of which depend on the materials produced by the quarry.

A key part of the Deer Park operation is near the start of the quarrying process at the rock face. Dave De Brincat is site co-ordinator at the quarry and is responsible for the day-to-day operation of all its mobile plant, including its face loader. He says that the face loader is down "the hole" 22 hours a day.

The face loader is used to separate the rock from any clay or scalps. Some shots may produce a significant proportion of scalps. The efficiency of the quarry's fixed plant is highly dependent on the quality of the material from the blast and the face loader operator's skill at sorting though the blast material and loading the right material.

