

# Heavy lifting

A 10x8 steerable trailer combination from **The Drake Group**, fitted with **BPW Transpec's** swivel axles, has joined **Fardells Heavy Haulage**.

The sudden expansion of Alan Fardell's company came out of necessity. As mining prospered in the area around Dubbo, New South Wales, the industry was in dire need of some heavy haulage muscle.

Alan Fardell got his start working with his father in the family transport business, primarily in civil construction. But when mines started opening up in the area, he saw an opportunity for Fardells Heavy Haulage.

"With the local mines, the gear was getting bigger and bigger, so we started tapping more into the heavy side of things," he says. "Dealers were showing up all around us and they needed someone to cart their new and old equipment."

The father and son duo decided to run with it and worked their way up starting with just one heavy haulage vehicle.

In 2014, Alan found himself at a crossroads when his family decided to sell the business. His love for the industry, however, meant he didn't want to leave it.

"I grew up with trucks and we always had them around, so it was what I'd always enjoyed," he says, adding that working in the heavy haulage industry is like working with family.

Alan decided to take the plunge and go out on his own, enlisting the expertise of his partner, Connie, to run the office. From there, he was able to convince his friend to move back to Dubbo, and he and his

wife began working with him – eventually becoming partners.

"Having that support made a huge difference," he says, reminiscing about the early days when he and his wife had to wash their trucks on a front lawn because they didn't have a yard to park them in. "People are the key to success. You really aren't much without them."

Fardells Heavy Haulage's transport provides its services Australia-wide. The company specialises in over-mass and over-dimensional loads and includes a full in-house maintenance scheme. Its general freight services can vary from one pallet to full single, B-double and road train loads, while also including pickup, unpacking, warehouse storage and distribution services.

From its humble beginnings, the company has expanded its operations from heavy haulage into general transport. Fardells Heavy Haulage's relationship with BPW Transpec came by word of mouth, which Alan explains isn't uncommon in an industry where businesses are supportive and often share advice. He says the benefit of working with BPW Transpec is that there is always local retail availability where parts can be found.

"We run their axles on our flat tops and have now started running them on our heavy-duty vehicles as well," he says.

"The quality is great, as is the service, and

they've proven themselves time and time again."

Fardells Heavy Haulage is also a long-term customer of The Drake Group. When Alan went out on his own 10 years ago, he turned to the trailer builder for his fleet requirements.

"He's always loved trucks and heavy haulage, he just has a real passion for it," says The Drake Group Sales Manager, Byron Foss. "He's always loved Drake trailers as well."

Since then, Alan has not only ordered several Drake trailers but also some O'Phee units from The Drake Group. His latest purchase was a 10x8 Drake steerable platform fitted with BPW Transpec's swivel axles, which according to BPW Transpec, can easily master critical surfaces and difficult terrain.



The axle's highly flexible swivel bearing compensates for uneven roads and ensures optimal ground contact. This, in turn, ensures that both the driver and their loads are safer.

On implementation, the swivel axle can handle loads from six to 60 tonnes, and with robust technology, it is suitable for the toughest applications. Furthermore, the swivel axle features a compact design that allows for a very low overall height and the narrowest possible track.

The Drake trailer itself is fitted with a heavy-duty frame and allows for a 25-tonne carrying capacity per axle row (carrying capacity is also dependant on the axle selection).

The combination features Drake's return to ride height function which allows operators to drop the whole trailer down

with a push of a button, load, and then lift it back up to its designated ride height. It also self-levels the trailer.

"I think that's a pretty impressive feature, because if you're on an uneven surface in a mine site and you've just loaded or unloaded, you might think you have the deck level but then as soon as you head out on the highway you quickly learn that one side might be 20mm higher than the other," Byron says. "This takes the guess work out of it. The deck is always going to be level, including when you head out onto the road."

Fardells Heavy Haulage's 10x8 steerable platform trailer was three years in the making. According to Byron, the fleet had already deployed a seven-row steerable platform trailer. Yet, in order to service its customers better, it required an additional

three axle lines.

"We needed to meet a brief," Byron says. "Alan came up here and sat down with us to spec the trailer up in great detail. It took around seven to eight months to build the trailer from start to finish, and he was heavily involved during that time as well with regular visits to our factory to ensure that he was totally happy with what he was getting."

"The relationship, as he said himself when he was up here picking the trailer up, is not a work relationship, but a friendship. I really enjoy dealing with Alan, and I guess that's why we continue to work together."

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