

## Linde 16 tonne fork proves tough enough for Bridgestone

Client: Bridgestone

Location: Forrestfield,  
Western Australia

Application: Heavy Duty Distribution

Equipment: H160



**Bridgestone Earthmover Tyres (BSEM) is Australia's leading supplier of off-the-road (OTR) tyres for mining, construction, earthmoving and forestry applications.**

They are able to meet all your OTR tyre needs, from tyres for skidsteers and backhoes, up to tyres for "super class" mining trucks and loaders.

Their products include Bridgestone and Firestone tyres, wheels and rims, and Extracta valves and accessories.

Bridgestone Earthmover Tyres have a substantial distribution network that includes their own branch outlets and depots in all states plus the Northern Territory, as well as an extensive dealer network. As such, their logistics team needs to be able to react efficiently to the networks demands, and the right equipment for the job is imperative.



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Mike Busby – Operations Manager Western Region, BSEM

In a working environment like BSEM’s, safety is a major concern, particularly when lifting such heavy loads. The main chassis structure of the H160 has been coupled directly with the counterweight structure, which is designed to absorb vibration; the steering axle is directly mounted into the counterweight by resilient cushioning, thereby absorbing travel shock and vibration.

Mike elaborates; “The H160 is a very robust and sturdy unit. The frame on it is really strong, which is good for us in such a tough environment.”

“All round it’s proved to be a very good unit and we’ve certainly had no issues with it in the 6 years that we’ve had it.”

**Linde manufactures an extensive range of forklifts with capacities from 1.2 to 52 tonnes. The company has a national factory-owned customer support network and operates one of the largest rental fleets in the country.**

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One such piece of equipment is the Linde H160, a 16 tonne forklift with a 1200mm load centre as standard. The unit is fitted with a specialised tyre handler, which provides flexibility and manoeuvrability when moving BSEM’s giant tyres.

Mike Busby, BSEM’s Operations Manager Western Region, was part of the team given the task of finding the right forklift for such a specified job.

“We needed a unit with a specialised tyre handler attachment that was suitable for both warehousing and fitting functions at the branch. It’s got a device that allows you to grip a giant tyre and lift it and rotate it.

At the time, we looked at three or four fairly prominent forklift specialists for the right fork. The functionality of the Linde’s control system was very good, the levers were much better than the ones we saw on those other brands at the time. The layout on the mast had chains on the outside of the mast uprights rather than on the inside like the other brands, which provided us with better visibility. The mast itself has a standard height of 4.9m, which was spot on for what we wanted as a yard stacker. The others either had a much lower or much higher standard mast, but the Linde just fitted right in. On top of this, the physical dimensions of the fork were a bit smaller than the competitive 16 tonners with a 1200mm load centre on the market. This was a major selling point, because if you can get a fork into a smaller space, that’s always an advantage from a storage point of view.”

By using a modular design approach to the main structural elements of the forklift, Linde have been able to provide a more compact machine in the H160, which results in improved maneuverability and therefore more efficient and economical utilisation.

The H160 operator cabin has been designed to ensure that environmental conditions are optimised for long, stress-free operational working hours, as Mike states; “The general layout in the cab was also great, very professional, and the drivers that we got out to test it were really happy with it.”

The H160 cabin provides plenty of space, with ample head and shoulder clearance for operators of any size and build.

There’s a fully adjustable suspension seat and integrated armrest incorporating the fingertip Linde Load Control, which ensures effortless and secure load handling. Essential information is presented on the glare-free multi-function instrument display at the press of a button. For added driver comfort, the H160 features an ergonomically designed and positioned steering wheel for easy maneuverability.