

Building communities with the best in class

As it enters its third decade, Kais Hire continues to choose Cat® machinery for its business and remains connected to the WA community.



Kais Hire

State: WA

Local dealer: WesTrac



Years in business: 21

Machines in fleet: Over 200

With an extensive fleet of Cat® machinery, Kais Hire is one of Western Australia's leading plant hire companies.

The family-owned business offers premium equipment for dry hire purposes, including excavators, wheel loaders, dozers, dump trucks, graders, water carts and more, with almost the entire fleet made up of quality and reliable Caterpillar equipment purchased from WesTrac.

Based in Redcliffe, Perth, Kais Hire has extensive experience providing equipment to clients in remote areas, including mining companies. For this reason, the company understands the specific challenges that present itself across the state.

But while Kais Hire may now have a substantial fleet of machines, its roots trace back to a single Caterpillar grader and a deep passion for earthmoving.

Company director Dave Kais first discovered his love for Caterpillar machinery as a 17-year-old labourer working for Leighton Contractors, captivated by watching the big yellow machines roll past on job sites.

"I said to my boss Jim McGinley that if I ever got the opportunity, I'd love to get in and learn how to operate them," Dave said.

"That opportunity came just a few months

later, and from the moment I climbed into the cab, I was hooked."

With that drive and commitment, Dave learnt to operate nearly every Cat machine, understanding the functions, the capabilities and the limitations of the machinery to get the job done.

"Earthmoving became my skill and expertise in the industry. Through the recognition of my peers over time, I soon became a supervisor and earthworks boss for many road, civil and mining operations in WA," he said.

As Dave's family grew, it was his wife Sharon who encouraged him to take a leap of faith and start his own contracting business, to take advantage of the potential offered by mining companies such as Hope Downs and Fortescue, which were starting up.

"I liked the idea, but I understood how hard it would be to compete with established businesses," Dave said.

However, through sheer determination, a single Cat grader, and a shared vision, Kais Contractors was born in 2004.

Humble beginnings

Throughout his years as a machinery operator, Dave formed many valuable friendships, and many connections to support the growth and opportunities for the business to take off.

"When I started out in 2004, Laurie Watson had become a superintendent at NRW Mining and hired my services to work at the Thunderbox gold mine," Dave said.

"A relationship formed and NRW won the work at Hope Downs I had dreamed about.

"That was my big break, and I will always be thankful for the NRW hire team and Laurie for their support," he said.

At the same time, Fortescue tendered for the TPI Rail Alliance to BGC, Brierty and NRW.

"Knowing this information, we quickly acted to price equipment for dry and wet hire services," Dave said.

"Sharon was instrumental with her contracting skills to negotiate the rates and terms securing our long-term work on these projects.

"Once again, the integral foundation with supervisors like Mick Anderson, Pat Sledzinski, Laurie Watson and many others paved the way for hiring our operators and machines.

"Our team was dynamic and personally, it was the best time of my life putting together this magnificent team of men and women together.

"This was our second big break and honestly, it has all been hard work and determination from myself, Sharon along with our team throughout this time."

In another instance, Dave said he remembered attending a forum organised by NRW at which plant hire companies were told to seek more machines to support a Fortescue Metals Group contract.

"Immediately, I turned to WesTrac to supply what it could, and then headed overseas with one of its team to source more equipment. It was an amazing time visiting the various countries and then hedging the money to bring them home safely," he said.

"At one stage, we had nearly 30 graders — the largest fleet in the state for a private family business — something WesTrac had proudly announced."

Unfortunately for Dave, as the big miners went head-to-head for skilled operators over time, his company could not compete with wages and labour rates offered by competitors.

After the Global Financial Crisis, Dave and Sharon rebranded Kais Contractors into Kais Hire, to focus on supplying the dry hire of heavy equipment.

Backed by strong partnerships with Caterpillar and the local dealer WesTrac, the new company grew quickly, as did its fleet.

"Today, 99 per cent of our heavy earthmoving equipment is Cat®-branded," Dave said.

"We've had a great relationship with WesTrac and Caterpillar from day one."



A fleet of Kais Hire's Cat 740GC dump trucks and water carts on a Goldfields bulk earthworks Project. Images: Kais Hire



With his love of Cat machines, Dave's blood runs more yellow than red. Image: Jamie Gray

Upper echelon

Since his younger years as machinery operator, Dave has always operated Caterpillar machinery and believes it is the premium choice in the industry.

Knowing the brand's machines and controls like the back of his hand is just another reason why Dave and Kais Hire have continued to choose Caterpillar for its hire fleet.

"I've always seen Caterpillar as the Rolls Royce of the machinery industry," Dave said.

"No one wanted to operate anything that wasn't Cat when I was younger, because it's the best."

The proximity of all WesTrac's branches and dealerships help instil confidence in Kais Hire that it will always have ongoing support.

"You know you'll always have the back-up

service when you buy a Cat machine, because everywhere you go in WA, there's always a WesTrac dealer not far," Dave said.

Life is made even easier thanks to Kais Hire's strategically located headquarters, which Dave said are 'just down the road' from WesTrac Perth.

"The aftersales, afterhours and parts support is what we need. Without that you can't consider yourself a company," Dave said.

"That's why we have always gone with Cat."

Giving back to the community

As a family-owned and operated business, Kais Hire is deeply committed to supporting the community that has embraced and helped it grow. Through donations, sponsorships, and even lending machinery, Kais Hire actively

contributes to charities, voluntary organisations, community groups, and sporting clubs at the grassroots level.

"We give back because so many people have helped us along the way, and we want to help others to get opportunities also," says Dave Kais.

Kais Hire supports several charities, including:

- **Ronald McDonald House Charities**, which provides accommodation and support for families with sick or injured children.
- **MACA Cancer 200 Ride**, a 200km cycling event that raises vital funds for cancer research at the Harry Perkins Institute in WA.
- **Telethon**, which assists sick, vulnerable, and disadvantaged children across Western Australia.

Kais Hire has also been a major supporter of sporting organisations, sponsoring numerous clubs and mentoring programs.

It has been a long-time corporate sponsor of the AFL's West Coast Eagles and previously sponsored Peel Thunder Football Club, Swan Districts Football Club and now currently sponsoring Perth Football Club Men and Women's team.

"We are very proud to support the Perth Football Club Women's team this year," Dave said.

"It is history in the making, because this year WAFLW players will receive a wage for playing. Sharon is a big advocate for the support of women, and she is very driven to inspire women to find their passion."

Beyond sports, Kais Hire is passionate about fostering diversity in the industry. The company proudly sponsors the Civil Contractors Federation WA's - Women in Civil mentoring program to support and encourage women in the civil and mining sectors of the industry.

As well, the business is involved with Munganya, a Traditional Owner mobile plant hire joint venture that aims to provide education, skills, mentoring for Indigenous people who require support and opportunity through the pathways of the group's business model.

Continuing to grow

Kais Hire celebrated its 20th anniversary in 2024, recognising the growth it's already made and what lies ahead for the future.

It's safe to say Caterpillar and WesTrac will continue to be a significant part of its future growth.

"We have pride in our Caterpillar equipment and give the best back up service you can get particularly with the 24/7 support of WesTrac," Dave said.

"Kais Hire is still expanding today and beyond, our clients prefer Caterpillar and we will always deliver a top product, 24/7 support and service." **IIE**

For more information about Kais Hire's services, visit www.kaishire.com.au



Kais Hire's Cat 352 Next Gen excavator loading a Cat 740GC dump truck on a dam tailings project.

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