

PRESS RELEASE

April 1, 2011 — At ConExpo, [Kobelco Cranes North America](#), Inc., Houston, Texas, announced that Jack Fendrick has been named president and Chief Operating Officer. Mike Maruo has returned to the position of CEO for the North American company. Both promotions are effective April 1st. The moves come upon the announcement that Dean Izumi, who had most recently served as president of the North American company, has been named president of Kobelco Cranes India, as the company begins building a crawler crane manufacturing facility in Chennai, India.

Fendrick becomes the first non-Japanese president of a Kobelco Crane company in the history of the organization, which began building cranes in 1930. Maruo was the first president of the North American company, and was named Director of International Marketing two years later. “Mike will play a pivotal role in the transition,” said Fendrick.

“In establishing Kobelco here in North America in 2003, we had two dealers in two states with four locations,” said Fendrick. Today, we have 19 dealers covering Canada, Brazil, and 42 U.S. states in 97 branches.”

In 2003, he said, smaller contractors in the 85- to 100-ton class were buying the company’s crawlers. “In eight years, we continue to see those customers, but also larger multi-national customers as well. Today, CEOs of large companies are visiting us. We provide the best value package in the crane business, in terms of uptime, ease of operation, simplicity, and fast movement.”

Fendrick and Maruo also announced that Kobelco has undergone a major crane redesign. “Six years ago, we recognized Tier 4 requirements in engine size meant a larger cavity,” said Fendrick. “So, we planned a major redesign of our cranes. We took our experience and customer comment into the redesign. We are the only manufacturer to launch a new line.”

New cranes will fall into the 85-, 100-, 120-, 160-, and 275-ton classes. All will be interim Tier 4 compliant, and will feature improved transportability, Kobelco’s LMI system with touch screen, easy transport and set-up, as well as energy-saving integrations. Also new will be the Kobelco-designed remote monitoring system, which will be standard on all machines to benefit fleet management.

"We've been working a very long time on this system," said Fendrick. "With its cell technology, you can sit at your computer, call up a crane, and see daily, weekly, or monthly reports on how long it ran, the percentage of time spent traveling or idling, its load and radius, even error codes. It's a management tool as well; you can tell if you have an operator idling." The system includes GPS capabilities via Google Earth.

The company expects the new Indian division to be operational by the end of 2011, producing cranes in the 100-ton class. "India is our next big market," said Fendrick. "There is a need there in both infrastructure and modernization."

The company is also building a factory in China to produce cranes in the 250- to 260-ton class, he said. The Indian company is a 100-percent investment by Kobelco Cranes. The Chinese company will operate as a joint venture with a private company, but will be 51-percent owned by Kobelco.

"The strength of Kobelco has to do with the parent company allowing its local companies to be the face of the corporation in their respective markets," said Fendrick.