

Primefuels

FUELLING GROWTH





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Primefuels has taken advantage of every opportunity to provide a much needed logistics service across East and Central Africa and has grown in less than 20 years to a partner for major mining, aviation and O&G customers

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It is good to have a company name that gives a hint to what that company actually does, and from that point of view Primefuels is very aptly named. It is a company, or rather a group of companies, that specialises in providing bulk liquid and dry cargo logistics and transportation services to its customers in East and Central Africa. Headquartered in Nairobi, the capital of Kenya, it is today present in nine countries in East and Central Africa, with a comprehensive regional network. In addition to 12 Operational Sites, it has offices and staff at 30 delivery locations in South Sudan, Uganda, Kenya, DRC, Rwanda, Burundi, Tanzania, Zambia, and Malawi. In addition to its logistics business, it also has business divisions focused on fuel supply, lubricants distribution and management, aviation services, and customs clearing.

The needs in this part of Africa, which is principally served from the Indian Ocean ports of Mombasa in Kenya and Dar es Salaam in Tanzania, are very diverse, and Primefuels serves them all. From the NGOs that are active in many high stress countries or provinces to the fast growing oil and gas and mineral resources industries, manufacturing, defence, energy and infrastructure, each sector needs to work with a logistics partner that really understands its unique requirements. Primefuels' highly trained and professional staff numbering more than 500 are known for more than just their efficiency in ensuring that commodities reach their destination: they



deliver industry leading standards of safety, health and environmental performance.

Primefuels owns a fleet of over 250 Long Haul trucks, and either owns or leases 430 dedicated rail wagons operating on the rail networks of Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda, but it was a different scale of operation when it started out in 1997 at Mombasa. Then there were just two employees engaged in moving palm oil and LPG by rail to Nairobi. Two years later the young company was awarded a contract to transport fuel to Geita gold mine by rail, shipping it to a depot in Mwanza from Dar es Salaam and Mombasa, and then by road to the mine.

In 2001 the company was established enough to invest in its own road fleet, operating out of the Mwanza yard. The next ten years were a period of consolidation and expansion and by 2010 Primefuels had a base in Mombasa, one in Dar es Salaam,

“Each sector needs to work with a logistics partner that really understands its unique requirements”

and finally at Kampala, Uganda. Kampala is the gateway to the expanding minerals extraction business in Katanga, however the instability of the region is well known. In 2011 Primefuels was awarded a contract to move fuel to the the eastern DRC on behalf of MONUSCO the United Nations Stabilisation Mission in the Congo, which is a massive organisation with more than 22,000 uniformed personnel engaged in intervention and humanitarian duties. It also secured a deal with Randgold Resources to supply its Kibali gold mine in the northeast


of the DRC, approximately 560 kilometres northeast of the capital of the Orientale province, Kisangani.

2012 saw the opening of another yard in Kenya, at Nakuru and the commencement of road transport services linking the port city of Dar es Salaam with Zambia and Malawi. Last year Primefuels strengthened its rail transport services on these routes, and diversified into aviation fuel at Tanzania's southern deep water port of Mtwara, which boasts an airport where medium size passenger and freight services link it to Dar es Salaam.

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“As a partner to mining operations owned by leading international companies Primefuels has had to acquire deep expertise”

As a partner to mining operations owned by leading international companies Primefuels has had to acquire deep expertise not just in the reliability of fuel supplies but also in world class standards of safety and environmental best practice. It has become acknowledged within the region as a leader in HSE, and the company is certified to ISO14001, the standard governing environmental management systems. All of its vehicles are tracked and controlled by GPS systems and telematics ensure safe driving practices, monitoring

any infringement of permitted driving hours or excessive braking and acceleration. In the event of a breakdown, full backup plans are in place.

The Geita gold mine in Tanzania is one of the largest mines in Africa, and Primefuels has been its transport partner bringing in fuel and lubricants from Mombasa and Dar es Salaam. At Kibali in the DRC, in addition of transportation of fuel from Kenya and Tanzania to the mine site, the company supplies and manages the entire lubricants requirement for

the mine, with a team of dedicated and expert staff on site. To these important partnerships can be added the transport of mining reagents and consumables from Dar Es Salaam to the Australian company Paladin Energy's Kayelekera uranium mine near Karonga in Malawi. At Barrick Gold's Lumwana copper mine in Zambia is supplied by road and rail from Dar es Salaam. All these operations are of course familiar to readers of this magazine, and form the best possible testimonial for Primefuels' services

The MONUSCO contract brought Primefuels into a whole new set of requirements - clearly defence is the most exacting environment for any logistics company. Through its regional network of depots and offices it transports fuel to eight different locations in the DRC under this contract. With a dedicated team of professional expatriate managers in each of the key offloading locations in DRC, Primefuels' ability to load in both Kenya and Tanzania means that it can service even an agency of the UN with professionalism

“The plan is to leverage the company's expertise and regulatory status to roll out aviation fuelling to mid-size and remote airports throughout the region”



and reliability, despite the risks and difficulties presented in a tense political environment and the ever present threat of lawlessness and conflict.

Primefuels continues to service its original sector, the palm oil industry with a dedicated fleet of IMO containers to ensure that the product is kept safe and free of contamination. As it has expanded though, it has taken advantage of each new opportunity as it is presented, and it is now ready and willing to take advantage of the rich hydrocarbon resources being explored along the East African coast - a situation that plays well to its established regional networks and proven levels of service. It has already begun to offer services to this market by setting up a dedicated helicopter fuelling operation in Mtwara.

The fuel facility at Mtwara is now complete, and Jet-A1 fuel can be supplied direct to the

customer's aircraft from Primefuels' own dedicated storage and ground handling facility at the airport. The plan is to leverage the company's expertise and regulatory status to roll out this service to mid-size and remote airports throughout the region, which have traditionally been under serviced by the large players in the aviation fuelling market. For the private airstrips commonly used at remote sites by mining companies for example, Primefuels can use its portable storage technology to set up a temporary aviation fuel supply for its customer. **BE**

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