

FleetWatch

EMag Vol 87 / 2025

South Africa's Leading Online Trucking Magazine

**Brake &
Tyre Watch**

**RAIN OR
SHINE
The show
goes on**



**ISUZU
BRINGS
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Contents

Vol 87 / 2025



Cover story

Isuzu legends are re-launched 4

A bit of nostalgia from Isuzu Trucks who have brought back special editions of the SBR 500 and JCR 800.

Brake Tyre Watch

Rain or shine - the show goes on 6

The CMS story

Against all odds 12

A celebration of the story behind Community Medical Services, otherwise known as the 'angels' of Van Reenen.

Road fatalities up by 5.3% 18

A look at the country's continuing spree of reckless driving.

Advertorial

Eicher – A roadmap of resilience and innovation 22

The debate - AA calls for 100% ban on drinking and driving 24

Looking for ways to curb SA's high accident rates, the AA proposed a 100% ban on drink and driving.

Opinion Pieces

Drinking and driving - the reasons to say no .26

Phillip Hull of CMS shares his views 26

Protecting against fuel card fraud 30

The key to a long lasting fleet 78

Zero limit vs 0,05% 28

ALCO-Safe, MD Rhys Evans shares his views and states 'we will be going backwards' by choosing a zero alcohol limit.

Green Trucking

Private-Public collaboration critical for a green transport network 10

Vector Logistics is in the quest for a net-zero fleet 36

Healthy vehicles to deliver pharma 50

Partnerships helped to ride the perfect storm 42

Transnet - On the right track or not? 44

Online portal will enhance private sector engagement 48

Manufacturers

DAF enters two fleets with product and people quality 52

UD Trucks boosts customer profitability and cost predictability 55

Scania plants deep roots 58

Frank did it his way, Kiara is doing it her way 60

Volvo Trucks SA - clearing up the confusion 62

Hino in his DNA - the rise of a trucking entrepreneur 64

A 'Travelling classroom' courtesy Daimler Trucks SA 66

Hino 700 gets the cattle to the market 68

DTSA improves top 20 employer rating 70

General

Hollard Highway Heroes... more than R1-million is up for grabs 72

Telematics continues to add value 75

Engen is first oil company to achieve RTMS 76

Smart Trucks bring new benefits to Ardagh fleet 80

PBS Trailers have a positive impact on fleet efficiency 82

Serco unveils latest innovation 84

Moving food to the needy 86

Grinrod sets industry benchmark with ISO quartet 89

Cricket stars help FedEx assist SMEs 90

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DRIVING CHANGE: COMMUNITY MEDICAL SERVICES

We are proud to continue our sponsorship and fundraising efforts once again this year, ensuring that the incredible work of Philip Hull and Community Medical Services (CMS) in the Van Reenen Pass area continues to make a meaningful impact. While CMS is widely recognized for its life-saving efforts on the N3, their support extends beyond road safety, assisting local schools and orphanages with essential supplies

Last year's donations helped provide school uniforms and shoes to the children of the Siyathuthuka Centre, an orphanage supporting underprivileged children. This year, we are once again raising funds to supply much-needed school uniforms, ensuring that every child has the dignity and confidence that comes with proper attire for school.

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◀ For countless businesses, the original Isuzu JCR 800 represents a time of growth, innovation and success back in the 1980s with many of the early models still in operation to this day. It's here again as a Special Edition model.

▼ The original SBR 500 was first introduced in the 1970s and quickly earned its place as one of the cornerstone products of South Africa's trucking landscape. The Special Edition model combines heritage appeal and modern capabilities.



Isuzu legends are re-launched

In today's fast evolving technological world, the 1970s and 1980s seems as far removed from today's trucking realities as is Mars from earth. So, to reintroduce truck models from those years into today's market would seem a bit foolish. But is it? Not according to Isuzu Motors South Africa which has re-launched two legendary models from back in the days.

It was last year that Isuzu Motors South Africa celebrated 60 years of Isuzu trucks in South Africa and while various activities were held throughout the year, the company decided to extend the celebrations into 2025 with the introduction earlier this year of a Special Edition SBR 500 and JCR 800 series.

And no, they weren't featured on wall posters to gawk at as historical marvels. Rather, they were brought back to life by blending the nostalgia of their iconic predecessors with the performance and practicality required in today's dynamic industries.

The original SBR 500 was first introduced in the 1970s and quickly earned its place as one of the

cornerstone products of South Africa's trucking landscape. Its adaptability made it a vital part of industries ranging from logistics and agriculture to construction and recovery. Known for withstanding the test of time, many SBR 500 trucks are still operational today, a testament to their enduring quality and Isuzu's robust aftersales network.

As for the Isuzu JCR 800, it is more than just a truck. Rather it is an enduring symbol of dependability in South Africa's industrial growth story. Introduced during a transformative era, this medium-duty truck earned its reputation as a trusted workhorse for businesses and municipalities, solidifying its place on South African roads for decades.

During the 1980s, South Africa experienced a wave of industrial and economic expansion, creating a surge in demand for reliable transportation solutions. The Isuzu JCR 800 rose to the challenge with its combination of durability, efficiency, and adaptability.

Designed to balance affordability with functionality, it became an essential asset for small and medium-sized enterprises. Whether delivering goods in busy cities or navigating the challenging terrains of rural areas, the JCR 800 consistently exceeded expectations. For countless businesses, the JCR 800 represents a time of growth, innovation, and success - a proud chapter in Isuzu's local legacy and many of these trucks are still in operation to this day.

Well, both models are now back but it would have been foolish to re-enact the past without incorporating present day features. And that's what these models represent - a combination of the past and the present. Let's take a look at the SBR 500 Special Edition.

Positioned at a gross vehicle mass (GVM) of 8 999 kg, the SBR 500 Special Edition strikes the perfect balance between size and functionality. Operable with a Code 10 (CI) driver's licence makes it accessible for a wider range of operators and with its GVM strategically below the 9 000 kg threshold, the SBR 500 is exempt from the 80 km/h speed restriction, enabling it to travel at speeds of up to 100 km/h where permissible. The powertrain offers 176kW at 2 400rpm and 706Nm from 1 450rpm to 2 400 rpm and is mated to a manual transmission.

The permissible body and payload come in at 5 639kg making it suitable in a number of diverse industries requiring versatile applications. These include logistics and distribution where it is ideal for urban deliveries, offering excellent manoeuvrability and load capacity for courier services, retail distribution, and e-commerce operations.

The truck's body length of 7 705mm is perfect for extended dropside configurations which will be attractive to construction operators for transporting construction materials, small machinery and equipment to worksites. Due to its versatility, other sectors that could also benefit include refrigerated transport, municipal services and vehicle recovery.

As for the JCR 800, although newer models have taken its place since its original introduction back in the days, those early models – many of which are still operating today – are now joined by the Special Edition model.

With a GVM of 15 000kg and a permissible body and payload of 10 070kgs, this model – apart from operating in similar sector applications as the SBR 500 – has always been popular in the agricultural sector and is expected to attract buyers from this sector as it is highly suited to rural operations. It can also be used for specialised transport as its adaptable chassis allows for customisations such as mobile workshops, promotional vehicles and niche-use bodies.



▲ Lisa van Aswegen, Business Manager CV, Direct Sales, Isuzu Motors South Africa. “This is the first time an OEM in South Africa has introduced a limited-edition model like this. It’s a commemorative effort that celebrates our legacy but both models are also good value propositions for customers.

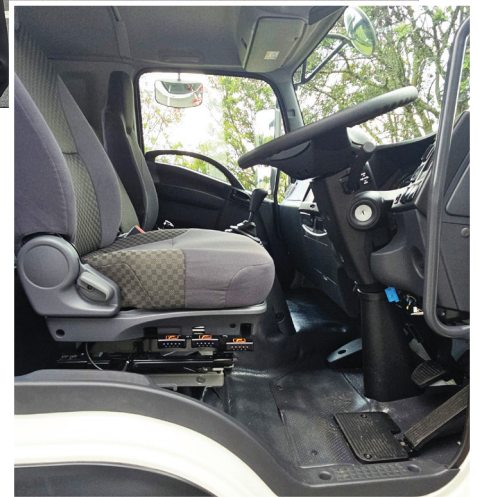
Why buy nostalgia?

So here’s the question. Why would anyone want to buy a Special Edition model as a nostalgic purchase? Why not buy the more updated versions? For the answer to this, *FleetWatch* chatted to Lisa van Aswegen, Business Manager CV, Direct Sales, Isuzu Motors South Africa.

“These aren’t retro throwbacks in the traditional sense,” says Van Aswegen. “They’re fully updated, modern trucks with all the features and specifications of our current standard models. There’s no compromise on performance or technology – the differences lie mainly in the plating and GVM ratings.”

Important to note is that there are no ‘new’ apples to compare with the ‘old’ apples. “There are no direct equivalents to these models. They’re niche vehicles designed for customers who want something with heritage appeal and modern capabilities. And for many, that sense of exclusivity matters,” she says.

While no formal sales targets have been set, Isuzu Motors South Africa is open to increasing production if



▲ The inside of the cab of the Isuzu SBR 500 Special Edition assures the driver of exceptional comfort to ensure maximum productivity.

interest exceeds expectations. For now, however, the focus remains on keeping the run limited and special.

“This is the first time an OEM truck manufacturer in South Africa has introduced a limited-edition model like this. It’s a commemorative effort that celebrates our legacy, especially in agricultural and rural sectors where models like the original SBR and JCR are still working hard today. But it’s not only about heritage. Both models are good value propositions,” concludes Van Aswegen.

What *FleetWatch* loves about this whole project is that one of the reasons behind the move is to serve as a reminder the pivotal role transportation plays in driving economic progress. Trucks rule. Always have and always will. Yeah! □



RAIN OR SHINE

The show goes on

Persistent rain may have cast a shadow over Heidelberg at our last *FleetWatch Brake & Tyre Watch* event but it couldn't dampen the determination and upbeat spirit of traffic officials and trainers taking part in this vital road safety initiative. A total of 62 traffic officials participated in the training, gaining valuable insights into the essential aspects of vehicle inspections and maintenance.

The training scheme is part of an on-going effort by *FleetWatch* and its project partners to equip traffic officials with the skills and knowledge needed to spot signs of unroadworthiness on heavy vehicles. The two-day course combines classroom-based learning followed by practical, hands-on inspections of trucks.

The first day of theoretical lectures was held in a conference venue at De Pecan Valley where the traffic

officials absorbed information from presentations given by our expert trainers. It was a highly constructive day with interaction between the trainers and the delegates providing lively discussion. The second day of practical training being held at the Heidelberg Weighbridge was our concern. With downpours threatening to disrupt outdoor activities, we were all understandably anxious. Would the rain force a cancellation of the all-important practical sessions?

As it turned out, the officials arrived undeterred, raincoats on and notebooks in hand, eager to put their theoretical knowledge learnt on the previous day to the test. Although the rain limited the number of vehicles inspected to only two rigs, what the session lacked in quantity, it made up for in quality with every opportunity being used to reinforce key learning points.

One of the vehicles failed due to the ABS being disconnected (an automatic

▲ Enthusiasm is evident among the group of traffic officials on the second Practical Day in Heidelberg. Knowledge is power!

Discontinuation of Service). It was a pity this had been overlooked by the operator's mechanics as the truck would have passed with flying colours.

"This kind of dedication is exactly what's needed on our roads," said one of the traffic officials. "When us officers can spot the signs of mechanical failure or neglect out on the roads, we can prevent serious accidents before they happen. We're very happy with what we have learnt in the two days and we will implement this out on the roads."

This successful event was made possible by the on-going support of our partners who play a crucial role in ensuring the safety and education of our traffic officials as well as truck drivers and operators. The training scheme continues to roll out across the region, empowering more officers with the technical know-how to keep roads safer for everyone – rain or shine. □



Brake & Tyre Watch

THEORY TRAINING

Dynamic and informative presentations mixed in with great fun makes for a highly productive first day of theory training where interaction between our expert trainers and the traffic officials provides for lively discussion and builds great camaraderie.



▲ Phillipus Bronkhorst from JC Auditors, a former cop himself, hands a prize to a delegate.



▲ Johan van der Merwe from ZF Aftermarket, explains how braking systems work on a rig and what faults to look for. No such thing as “the brakes failed”.



▲ Interaction during the lectures was the order of the day during the theory session.



▲ Attentive delegates absorb the information imparted across a wide spectrum of trucking issues. “Knowledge is Power”. They also go away with printed reference material and other ‘goodies’.



◀ **Left:** Maryke Le Roux from BPW Axles rewards a delegate for his sharp answer to her question.



▲ **ZF -** Lorraine Houndsome, Head of Marketing: North/West/Central & Southern Africa for ZF Aftermarket, has been a strong supporter of Brake & Tyre Watch for many years. A true road safety warrior.

▼ **Giving prizes to traffic officials Below l-r:** Answer a question correctly and you get a prize. Here (from left) Dries Venter from Bridgestone, Clive Versfeld from Orafol and Patrick O’Leary from FleetWatch present prizes to three traffic attendees while PowerFleet’s Wiseman Majozi and Jost’s Manie Roux belt it out in their lectures.





Brake & Tyre Watch

DOWN IN THE PITS

Getting close to all the vital underbelly components is an essential part of the practical day's training. Each team has a chance to get into the pit and with an expert trainer guiding them - in this case it was BPW Axles' Owen Bondi - familiarise themselves with components such as slack adjusters, brake boosters, load sensing valves, ABS connections and other vital safety elements that make for a roadworthy rig.



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▲ Brake expert Johan van der Merwe from ZF Aftermarket leads traffic officers through every aspect of the braking systems including suzi connections, slack adjuster settings, ABS etc.

▶ Dries Venter of Bridgestone explains to officers all aspects of tyres including the markings on tyres as well as aspects such tread depth indicators and of course, common tyre faults.



▲ Manie Roux of Jost is passionate about 5th Wheels and explains to officers their function and what can go wrong. And things do go wrong. A small crack can lead to a cascade of events.

◀ "OK so tell me," asks Patrick O'Leary. "A common excuse in crashes is that the brakes failed. So, do brakes fail?" "Nooooo - only if you fail to maintain them," they reply. Correct.



▲ Team members filling in the fault check list. The check list tells them what to look for.



▲ Many of the traffic officers have never seen how a brake roller tester works. We encourage them to work with test centres when they have doubt on any braking issue they find on rigs out on the road.



▲ One of the two rigs that were randomly selected for inspection seen here over the pit in the test centre. It is here that the teams of traffic officers are led through various stages of inspection with accent on easily identifying faults that could deem a rig to be unroadworthy. This one passed.



▲ Clive Versfeld and Etienne Smit of Orafol South Africa discuss the filling in of the fault sheet with their team after conducting an all-round inspection of a rig looking at lights, conspicuity tape, etc.

◀ Johan van der Merwe of ZF Aftermarket reacting to the lunch-time call: "The Boeri rolls are ready. Come and get it!"



Thanks to Isuzu Trucks

At every event a specific vehicle manufacturer is invited to participate...

For every *Brake & Tyre Watch* event, *FleetWatch* invites a different OEM (truck manufacturer) to participate. At Heidelberg, Isuzu Motors South Africa was with us once again and apart from giving an enlightening talk on the safety features on modern trucks, also participated in the practical day. For Mo Ebrahim, Marketing Communications Specialist, Commercial Vehicles for Isuzu Motors South Africa, this was his first event with us and he was delighted: "I felt that the training really motivated the traffic officers and gave them added confidence knowing they are not the only ones in this fight; that they are not fighting a losing battle and this makes the load a lot easier for them to carry." *FleetWatch* extends its thanks to Isuzu for their participation – as we do to all our valued partners.







▲ Mpho Nkhumeleni, Department Executive: CV for Isuzu Motors South Africa, gave an enlightening talk on the safety features on modern trucks.

▶ Mo Ebrahim, Marketing Communications Specialist, Commercial Vehicles for Isuzu Motors South Africa. "The training gave the traffic officials added confidence."



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Against all odds

The Community Medical Services Story

By Paul Collings

South Africa's trucking community is no stranger to stories of horrific road accidents at Van Reenen's Pass on the N3 highway. The death toll over the last 42 years of truckers, motorists, passengers and pedestrians on this beautiful but treacherous mountain pass runs into the hundreds - a reality that is both tragic and unacceptable. But that grim statistic could be a lot worse, were it not for a remarkable team of volunteer paramedics and doctors who go by the name, Community Medical Services.

In the war against road traffic accidents on the N3 toll route, an array of rapid responders work to save the lives of accident victims every day of the year. While most are salaried paramedics, police officers and fire fighters stationed at Harrismith and Ladysmith, a small band of medically-trained volunteers has served alongside

these professionals, positioning itself at the top of Van Reenen's Pass over long weekends, Easter and the Festive Season to deliver critical medical treatment before the ambulances and fire trucks arrive. These are the members of

The value we get from our time at Van Reenen's is immeasurable. Gratitude from people we assist keeps us coming back year after year.



A visionary with valour

42 years service

▲ Community Medical Services founder Philip Hull... 42 years saving lives at Van Reenen

Community Medical Services and they've been saving lives on that treacherous stretch of road for over 40 years, completely free of charge.

Four decades of valour at Van Reenen's

FleetWatch has a longstanding relationship with Community Medical Services (CMS) and its founder, Philip Hull, who is also the co-founder of The SA Road Safety Foundation. CMS is a free service to road users and the Road Safety Foundation is a non-profit section 21 company. This is an important point. The fact that Philip and his team receive no monetary reward

TruckingHeroes



First responders

◀ ▶ It's called the 'Golden Hour' where paramedics need to get to accident victims and stabilise their vital signs before the ambulances and other services arrive to take them to hospital for further care. CMS operates within that 'Golden Hour' and by being the first on the scene have, over the years, saved hundreds of lives that would otherwise have been lost in crashes. They are truly the Angels of Van Reenen.

A lone teddy bear... a poignant reminder of trauma and lives lost

from road users for their life-saving efforts is not only testimony to their altruism, but also a remarkable example of selfless valour – going where most fear to tread to clutch accident victims from the jaws of death.

While the CMS team members have regular day jobs and families to attend to, they sacrifice their holiday time to serve N3 travellers every year, and they've been doing it since 1984! Apart from a series of sponsored vehicles and a modest donation towards CMS overheads from the N3 Toll Concession (N3TC), the CMS members foot the bill for paramedic equipment,

medicines, fuel, food and lodgings during their stints at Van Reenen's Pass. All told, it's a story of unwavering commitment against almost impossible odds.

"We do it out of a passion for saving lives and promoting road safety, one person at a time," says Philip. "The value we get from our time at Van Reenen's is immeasurable and the gratitude we receive from the people we have assisted is what keeps us coming back every year."

Philip does not divulge accident statistics from CMS activities over the 42 years of saving accident victims at Van Reenen's Pass but

he does describe the physical and psychological impact of being the 'first responders' in often fatal accidents.

"At the lip of the escarpment, Van Reenen's Pass gets some heavy rainfall, mist, winds and snow. Wet roads and poor visibility are what nature often throws at us when we're at an accident scene. Stabilising the victims and ensuring scene safety with warning lights and traffic cones on the road with cars and trucks and buses rushing past us in the dead of night with mist, rain or snow up against their windscreens is harrowing to say the least. ▶ 14

TruckingHeroes



CMS Volunteers... over the years



▲ Philip Hull (left) and now retired super cop, Dave Steele, have enjoyed a close working relationship over many years.

▶ 13“When we return to our base at the top of Van Reenen’s from a rescue operation, we all spend a moment or two in solitude to process the trauma. Knowing that we have been able to mitigate personal injury and limit the pain experienced by the people involved helps us to move forward with positivity. We have always managed to return to base without personal injury, which is a blessing, despite occasional damage to our vehicles.”

Swimming against the tide

When pushed for an average annual figure of accidents CMS attends to at Van Reenen’s Pass, Philip’s estimate is “a few dozen”.

“Sadly, the numbers of accidents we deal with at Van Reenen’s has increased over the years,” says Philip. “Ultimately, CMS’s priority is to save lives and the Road Safety Foundation’s mission is to promote safer driving. We leave the statistics to the traffic authorities.

“The rise in road accidents in this country is due primarily, in my opinion, to driver distractions, be they cell phones, in-car distractions, the consumption of



Top right

▲ Lisa van Aswegen (left), still with Isuzu Trucks, and Janine de Ridder worked together as the ‘Gril Team’ bringing an extra dimension of compassion especially to children on crash scenes.

Braai Time

▲ Laughter over the braai helps to ease the trauma of dealing with often horrendous crash scenes.

Centre

▲ Barry Niemand, who works in the motor industry, has been volunteering with CMS for over 20 years. What a boykie!



CMS's priority is to save lives. The Road Safety Foundation's mission is to promote safer driving.





▲ ► The former home-from-home safe haven for the CMS team until 2016, when the property was sold and the Help Centre was lost to the CMS team... a sad blow.

Van Reenen 'Help Centre'

Once a hub providing medical care and a base for the medical team for Van Reenen community, the Care Centre is now a gutted, empty shell.



alcohol and fatigue all play a role. Negligence through the lack of driver training, driver impatience on the road and negligence in the form of driving an unroadworthy vehicle simply exacerbate the problem.

“These issues however, are symptoms of a deeper systemic problem where, in certain cases, traffic authorities fail to uphold the traffic laws through the issue of invalid driver’s licences, failure to impound unroadworthy vehicles - particularly trucks – failure to leverage the traffic control technologies already in place and failure to prosecute offenders appropriately,” Philip explains.

What must feel like swimming against an overwhelming tide of malfeasance, Philip and his team are nothing if not tough. CMS has had to overcome significant setbacks that would have the average Good Samaritan never lending a helping hand again.

“Having a permanent base at Van Reenen’s has always been crucial to our efforts – a storeroom for our gear, a couple of bedrooms and

Editor's Comment

FleetWatch has been involved with Community Medical Services for many years and I have had the privilege of spending time – on a number of occasions – with the team in the days when CMS was operating out of the Help Centre. It is heart-breaking to see how this centre – once a place of love and care for all – now stands empty and idle. Greed killed it. Here’s a story: A young family arrived at the centre one day asking for Philip Hull. Philip said “That’s me. How can I help you?” The young man then recalled a crash at the bottom of Van Reenen’s Pass where Philip had treated a boy of about 5-years-old who had critical injuries before having him airlifted to hospital. “Yes, I recall that incident,” said Philip. The young man got tears in his eyes and said: “That boy was me. If it wasn’t for you, I wouldn’t be here. You saved my life and my family and I are here to thank you.” WOW!



bathrooms for our male and female team members and a reception area for a Help Centre where CMS can engage with the public and the Van Reenen community,” says Philip.

“We operated out of tents on a property shared by a Caltex service station on the N3 for the first few years. The landlord had generously given CMS a rent-free spot of land in an ideal location at the pinnacle of the Pass.

“It was challenging at the beginning, to say the least. In the late 1980s, we erected prefab rooms for our start-up Help Centre, which kept us warm in freezing snowstorms. Brick rooms and a kitchen replaced the prefabs, which allowed us to leave gear on site and travel lighter from our respective homes.

“The Help Centre became a medical care hub for the community of Van Reenen and for N3 travellers. Having the safety and security of the Help Centre allowed us to extend our efforts to helping stranded motorists reach their holiday destinations by ► 16

TruckingHeroes

► 15 driving them there and to visit orphanages and schools in the Van Reenen area to offer medical treatment and hand out gifts to the local kids at Christmas,” says Philip.

Heroic resilience

The invaluable work done year-on-year by CMS was officially recognised by the Town of Ladysmith, awarding Philip and his team its Meritorious Award – “second only to receiving the Keys to the City,” says Philip.

The Help Centre cost in excess of R600 000 to build, which was met by CMS members. It was a home-from-home for Philip’s team until fate dealt CMS a nasty blow in 2016.

“The property was sold and the new owner, without negotiation, demanded a R9 500 monthly rental,” Philip says. “CMS couldn’t meet that figure and we were forced to move out of the Help Centre in 2016. Since then we’ve been operating out of local accommodations. Unfortunately, while our Help Centre building is still standing, it has been gutted with all the fittings and furniture vanishing – a disappointing situation to say the least.”

Today, CMS has two sponsored vehicles – a Peugeot 4x4 Land Trek and a Mahindra XUV 300. While the assistance of these vehicles is greatly appreciated by Philip and his team, the fact that they can be recalled at any time and cannot be retrofitted with adequate and secure emergency warning lighting and auxiliary equipment is limiting.

“Going forward, we’d like to be able to afford our own 4x4 that we can permanently equip with our medical equipment and emergency lighting,” he adds.

Since having to vacate its Help Centre eight years ago, Philip and his team have had to reduce the amount of time they spend each year at Van Reenen’s. This sad reality need not be. As it turns out, Philip believes the facility has been bought by an overseas buyer and is hopeful that CMS can negotiate with the new owner and resume using the Help Centre. □



A call for support

THE SA ROAD SAFETY Foundation adopted CMS (and its sister operation, Volunteer Rescue Team [VRT] based in Warden) but it has never made use of the funding avenues available to non-profit companies. But, as they say, there’s a first time for everything and CMS/VRT, under the auspices of the Road Safety Foundation would welcome support from organisations who can make use of the tax benefit, and who appreciate safer roads and this unique humanitarian initiative.

“The CMS team has always been in it for the simple joy of helping people when they need it most. Van Reenen’s Pass is where our hearts soar and we truly hope that CMS will continue to provide a positive impact in that exceptional part of South Africa,” Philip concludes. □

**For further information on
Community Medical Services contact
Philip Hull on 082 803 6363 or
Patrick O’Leary at fleetwatch@pixie.co.za**



▲ CMS has on loan two temporary sponsored vehicles for their work – a Mahindra XUV 300 and a Peugeot 4 x 4 Land Trek.

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ROAD FATALITIES up by 5.3% due to public recklessness

Despite enhanced efforts by South Africa’s road traffic authorities to prevent road accidents over the 2024/25 festive season, the nation’s holiday road fatality rate rose by 5.3% with a spike in the accident rate of 4.2%, compared to the 2023/24 festive season. The main cause of the accidents was recklessness on the part of road users, stated Minister of Transport, Barbara Creecy at a media briefing held in Pretoria.

According to Minister Creecy: “The statistics tell all of us that South African road users continue to disobey the traffic laws with no regard for human life. At the launch of the festive season road safety campaign on the 1st of December 2024, we said we were aiming to change road user behaviour, enhance our law enforcement actions and work together with everyone involved to reduce crashes and fatalities.”

The reality

▲ Carnage once again destroyed the festive season for many.

Despite the Department’s good intentions and targeted interventions, Minister Creecy described “an appalling lack of respect for the traffic laws” on the part of road users.

The provincial statistics underscore the tragedy beneath the Minister’s observation:

- KwaZulu-Natal 304 fatalities from 247 fatal crashes
- Gauteng 235 fatalities from 224 fatal crashes
- Eastern Cape 231 fatalities from 168 fatal crashes
- Limpopo 180 fatalities from 140 fatal crashes
- Mpumalanga 143 fatalities from 118 fatal crashes
- Western Cape 140 fatalities from



ROAD FATALITY STATS

- 124 fatal crashes
- Free State 106 fatalities from 81 fatal crashes
- Northwest 100 fatalities from 87 fatal crashes
- Northern Cape 63 fatalities from 45 fatal crashes

She outlined the Department of Transport’s four-pillar 2024/25 festive season campaign strategy, which included the promotion and enhancement of responsible driving, pedestrian safety, enforcement and education, and collaboration.

“Stringent monitoring was in place on the 20 priority routes and, alongside our patrolling and law enforcement interventions, the Department of Transport and the Road Traffic Management Corporation (RTMC) launched a communications campaign with targeted messaging on radio, television and social media during this period.

“We partnered with civil society groups and faith-based organisations who helped to spread road safety messages in their communities to ensure that all road users were made aware of their roles and

SPEEDING

Was a major contributor to the hike in accidents. A total of 414 drivers arrested... five driving at excessive speeds of 200km/h to above 240km/h

Minister Barbara Creecy

responsibilities, and the impact of their actions,” stated Minister Creecy.

Over 700 000 fines issued

Traffic law enforcement officers conducted more than 997 roadblocks throughout the country during the festive season, she said. The roadblocks were joint operations between local, provincial and national traffic authorities, the South African Police Service (SAPS) and often included other law enforcement agencies such as

the Border Management Authority (BMA), she explained.

“Our law enforcement officers issued 711 184 fines for various traffic offences across the country. Some 23 607 fines were issued to drivers who failed to wear seatbelts, while another 16 925 motorists were fined for using cell phones while driving. Then, 16 527 vehicles were found to be unroadworthy and issued with traffic fines as well as their motor vehicle licence discs removed particularly in areas where vehicles could not be impounded due to lack of impoundment facilities.

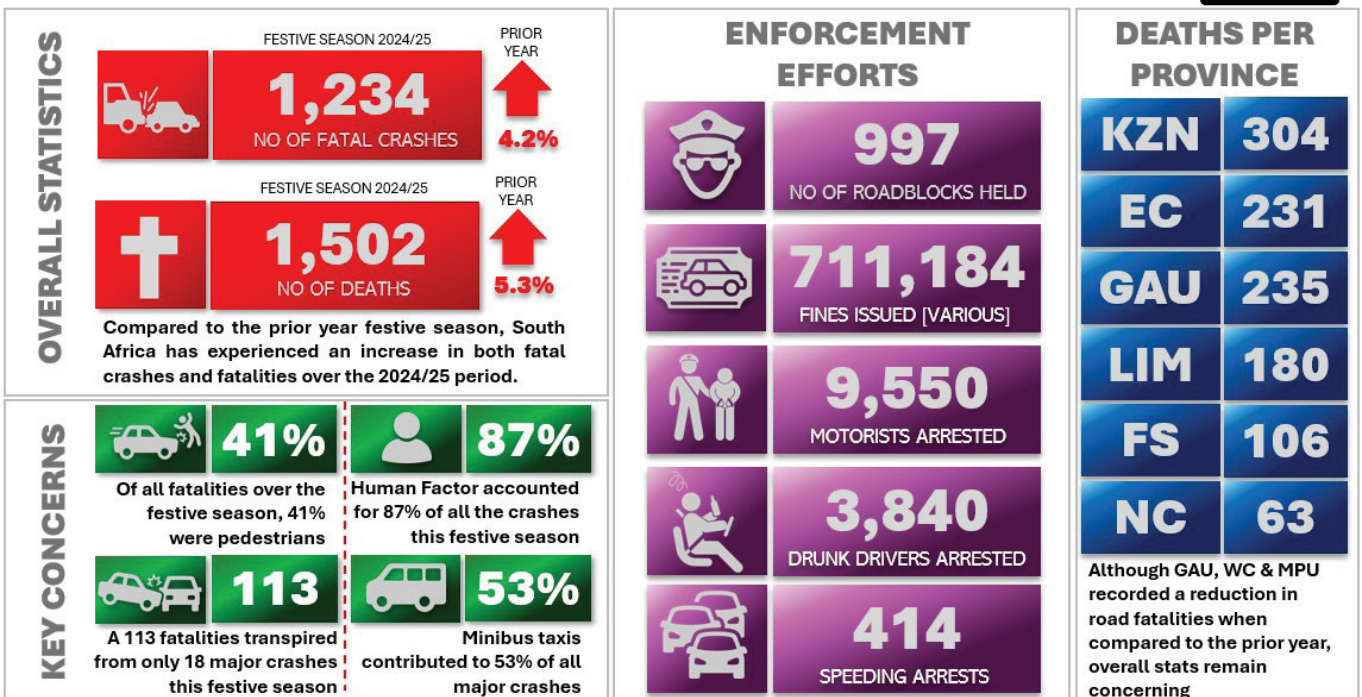
“It must however be emphasised that, in total, 8 917 motor vehicles were impounded in areas where facilities were available.

“The joint operations carried out during the festive season were in line with the focus areas: vehicle road worthiness; public passenger transport; drunken driving; execution of warrants of arrest; and speed law enforcement.

“To clamp down on drunken driving, speeding and other moving violations, our officers arrested more than 9 550 motorists, with ▶ 20



FESTIVE SEASON 2024/25 ROAD FATALITY STATISTICS



ROAD FATALITY STATS

▶ 19 3 840 individuals arrested for drunken driving,” she said.

Minister Creecy pegged speeding as a major contributor to the hike in accidents, singling out an example of brazen law-breaking: “A total of 414 drivers were arrested for driving at high speed and five amongst them were driving at excessive speeds of between 200km/h to well above 240km/h. The highest speedster was arrested in Gauteng driving at 245km/h in a BMW Sedan on NI near Honeydew, on the 18th of December 2024.”

She went on to call on the courts to treat these cases “with the seriousness they deserve.”

Decreases in three provinces

The festive season brought, 1 502 deaths resulting from 1 234 fatal crashes during the 2024/25 festive season, she stated. Six provinces recorded increases in the number of fatalities compared to 2023/24, namely KwaZulu-Natal, Eastern Cape, Free State, Limpopo, Northern Cape and North West.

The Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal and Free State recorded increases of 70, 54 and 21 fatalities while Gauteng, Western Cape and Mpumalanga recorded decreases of 76, 23 and 15 fatalities respectively.

It is notable, she said, that there were 18 major crashes resulting in 134 fatalities, while minibuses were involved in 53% of major crashes.

“Pedestrian fatalities remain a huge concern, with 41% of all road fatalities being pedestrians. The highest percentage of pedestrian fatalities were recorded in Gauteng, Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal which are the most populous provinces in the country in terms of vehicles and people.

“Gauteng had the highest pedestrian fatalities at 63.84% followed by Western Cape with 53.9% and KwaZulu-Natal with 44.33%,” Minister Creecy explained.

“The preliminary statistics are deeply disturbing but these numbers on paper don’t tell us anything about the human story, about the tragedies which struck so many families across the country, about the pain of losing a loved one to a road crash.



▲ South African road users demonstrate “an appalling lack of respect for the traffic laws,” says Minister of Transport, Barbara Creecy.

HUMAN BEHAVIOUR

87% of crashes and deaths were the result of human error... hit-and-runs, jaywalking, fatigue, loss of control of vehicle, speeding, drunk driving and reckless overtaking

“All the more disturbing, then, is the fact that most crashes and deaths are a result of human factors. To be precise, 87% of crashes happened because of human behaviour, including hit-and-runs, jaywalking, fatigue, loss of control over vehicles, speeding, drunken driving and reckless overtaking.

“I want to say this very clearly, loud and clear for all of us to hear: We, South Africans, must change our behaviour on the roads.”

An attitude problem?

The number of people who died on South Africa’s roads during the festive season “increased because people continue to behave badly. In

spite of our pleas and warnings, and notwithstanding our efforts to clamp down on irresponsible and reckless behaviour, it is clear that many road users – both drivers and pedestrians – continue to act without regard for the lives of others,” said the Minister.

“We will continue to direct our efforts at changing the behaviour of road users, invest in designing and engineering safer roads, enforcing safe speeds in high congestion areas, and enhancing emergency response systems and access to quality trauma care which is essential to saving lives.

“By reducing response times and improving the availability of critical care, we can increase survival rates and reduce the long-term impacts of road traffic injuries. This initiative will require collaboration with the Department of Health and other industry role-players.

“Indications are that the implementation of 24/7 traffic policing shifts is more critical than ever. During the festive season we agreed to release National Traffic Police resources to provinces, to intensify road safety communication and education campaigns and strengthen monitoring of our law enforcement operations especially at night.

“This approach will serve as a blueprint for our road safety activities but will only succeed if it is consistent all year round, especially on weekends and in every province across the country,” she concluded. □

Editor’s note: *FleetWatch* extends its sincere condolences to all the families of the victims of the carnage. We also want to express our appreciation for all the road users and good Samaritans who helped accident victims to safety. To Minister Creecy and her colleagues, we offer our support in the ongoing battle against road accidents and unacceptable road user behaviour. We, as a nation, need to collaborate more to educate our youth on how to use our roads safely. Watch this space for further news.

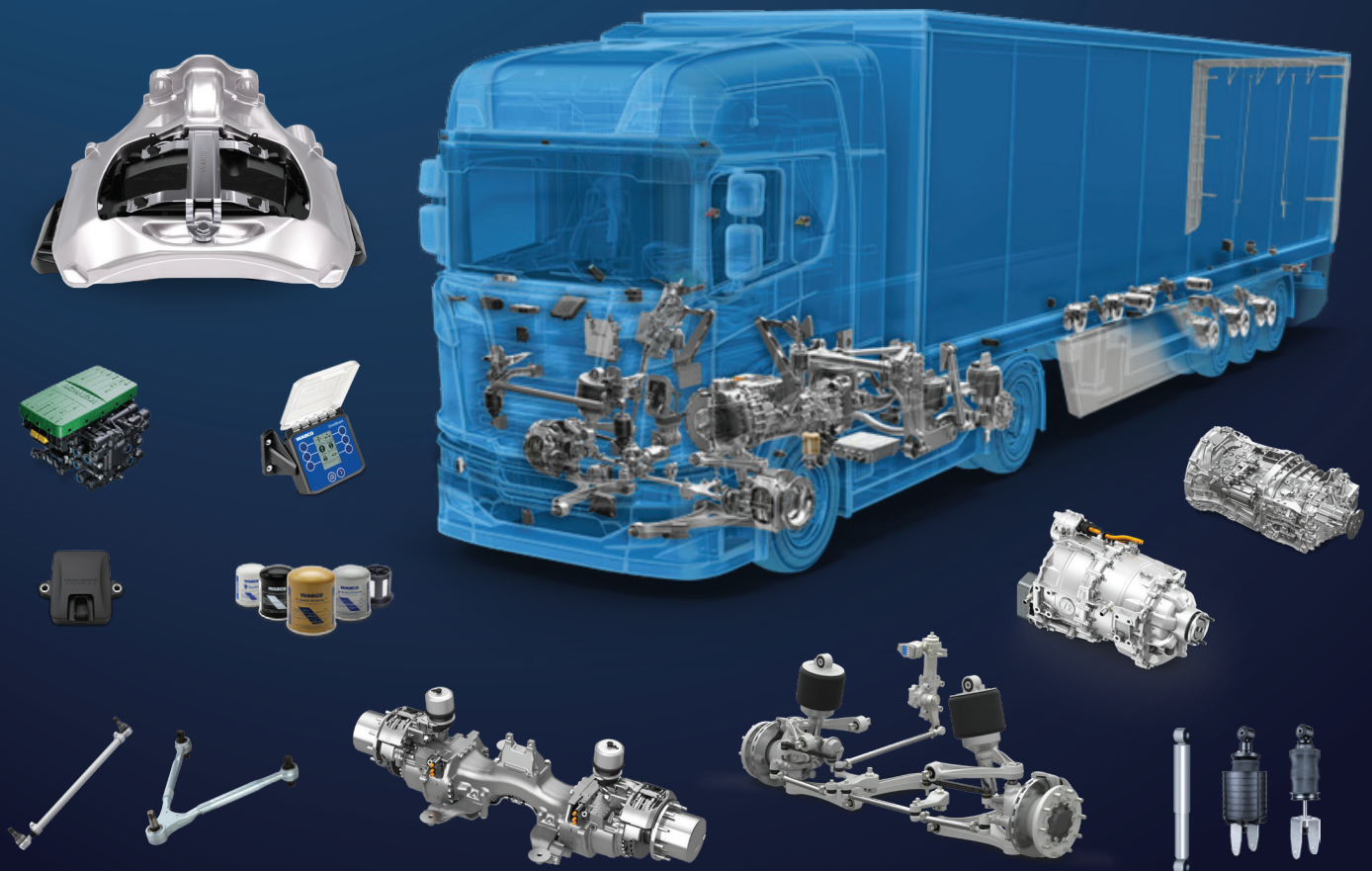


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A roadmap of resilience and innovation

Some journeys are measured in kilometres, others in impact.



● Eicher Bus Plant in Baggad – where precision meets innovation.



● The Pro 2080 container body - built for South Africa's dynamic logistics needs

For Eicher Trucks and buses, every road travelled in South Africa tells a story of resilience, innovation, and an unwavering commitment to excellence. It's not just about covering distances but about the milestones achieved, the partnerships built, and the trust earned along the way. From busy city highways to rugged rural roads, every mile reflects Eicher's dedication to redefining commercial transportation.

Eicher's story began decades ago with a simple yet powerful promise: to deliver reliable and efficient transportation solutions. This legacy took a giant leap forward when Eicher partnered with the Volvo Group to form VE Commercial Vehicles (VECV). Combining Volvo's global engineering expertise with Eicher's deep understanding of emerging markets, this joint venture became a game-changer in the commercial vehicle industry.

Today, Eicher operates in over 40 countries across Asia, the Middle East, Africa, and Latin America, building a reputation for vehicles that are dependable, innovative, and built to last. Eicher's strength lies not just in its products but in its ability to understand local challenges and deliver solutions tailored to diverse operating conditions. Strong partnerships with distributors and service networks form the backbone of Eicher's global success.

Eicher's entry into South Africa wasn't just about launching trucks and buses—it was about making a meaningful difference. The mission was clear: to provide cost-effective, reliable, and future-ready transportation solutions. Over the years, Eicher has built strong partnerships with local dealership networks and fleet owners, creating a foundation of mutual trust and shared growth.

The 6000 Series trucks (16T to 25T range) are built to handle demanding tasks with ease, offering power, efficiency, and advanced technology to optimise fleet performance. Meanwhile, the 2000 Series focuses on fuel efficiency and driver comfort, featuring smart systems which helps for better productivity of the vehicles.

But Eicher isn't just about trucks. The Skyline Pro Bus has redefined passenger transportation. Powered by a powerful engine and supported by Volvo Group EMS, this bus ensures smooth and safe journeys. With features like advanced safety systems, rollover test compliance, and ergonomic designs, it's built for both comfort and reliability. Moreover, it also hosts fuel coaching features like cruise control and IDIS, which help with fuel conservation while maximising bus performance.

Step inside, and the Skyline Pro 3009 feels like a thoughtfully designed space on wheels. With wide, comfy seats, plenty of legroom, and overhead racks for bags, every detail is made for hassle-free travel. The soft overhead lighting and smooth finishes make the bus feel less like a vehicle and more like a cosy corner on the road.

Eicher understands that great vehicles are only half the story. Reliable service and support complete the picture. With 29 service points spread across South Africa, from Tzaneen to Cape Town, Eicher ensures every customer gets timely assistance. Trusted partners like BB Motor Group, Billson Trucks, CMH Group, Croco Motors Group, Ermelo Truck & Tractor, Morgan Group, and Thompson Motors, to name a few, play a vital role in keeping fleets running smoothly.

In addition, Eicher's collaboration with Bidvest Panalpina Logistics (BPL) ensures seamless spare parts availability, with over 2,600-line items stocked to minimise downtime and keep trucks on the road.

Eicher's impact is not just visible on the roads but also in the numbers. With over 1,500 trucks operating across South Africa, Eicher delivers measurable value. Customers have reported an average 0.30 cent reduction in Cost-Per-kilometre (CPK) compared to competitors. Some trucks have impressively clocked over 900,000 kilometres in just four years, a testament to their durability and efficiency.

Beyond numbers, Eicher's contribution lies in empowering businesses, creating employment opportunities, and enabling smoother logistic operations across the country.

Innovation and sustainability are at the core of Eicher's approach. Every vehicle is designed to maximise fuel efficiency, reduce emissions, and deliver long-term value. As the world embraces smarter, cleaner mobility solutions, Eicher is ready with advanced technologies, smarter fleet management tools, and intelligent driver-assist systems. We are also looking at enhancing our product portfolio in SAF by including 7.5T, 9T and 12T range trucks.

At its heart, Eicher's journey in South Africa is about more than vehicles—it's about building connections, fostering growth, and creating a sustainable future. Every truck on the road, every partnership formed, and every milestone achieved tell a story of progress.

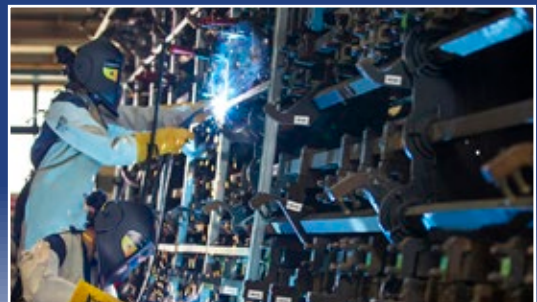
Looking ahead, Eicher remains committed to driving innovation, building trust, and delivering excellence—one kilometre at a time, one journey after another.



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● Skyline Pro 3009 Bus -Modern, spacious, and designed — experience unparalleled comfort on every ride.



● Welding in Process – At Baggad plant.

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THE DEBATE
ZERO % OR 0,05%



AA calls for a **100%** ban on drinking and driving

South Africans know all too well the tragic consequences of drunk driving - the lives lost and injuries incurred harm not only the victims but the economy too. The Automobile Association (AA) has put out a call for Government to legislate a zero tolerance position on blood alcohol concentration in drivers. In effect, a 100% ban on drinking and driving.

The official media statement released this week by the AA reads thus:

Implementing a zero-alcohol limit for drivers is essential for significantly reducing the number of road traffic accidents and associated injuries and deaths in South Africa. This measure will materially enhance public safety by protecting lives on our roads.

Consider the shocking statistics from the 2024/25 festive season: authorities arrested approximately 9,550 motorists, with around 3,840 individuals charged specifically for drunk driving offenses. These figures clearly highlight the ineffectiveness of the current blood alcohol concentration (BAC) limit. This ineffectiveness raises concerns about the safety of our roads and supports our call for a comprehensive zero-tolerance policy toward drinking and driving, coupled with much stricter penalties for offenders, such as immediate detention. Every life is valuable, and no one should have to suffer the consequences of a careless decision to drink and drive.

Currently, under South African law, a blood alcohol content exceeding 0.05 g/100 mL is illegal for drivers. This limit is equivalent to consuming over 350 mL of beer or a single shot of brandy or other distilled spirits. It is essential to recognize that alcohol can linger in your system for up to eight hours after consumption. Consequently, even consuming just one drink can impair your driving abilities, increasing the risk of accidents.

The detrimental impact of alcohol on road safety was particularly evident during the COVID-19 lockdown imposed in 2020. The government's temporary prohibition on alcohol sales led to a remarkable

THE DEBATE
ZERO % OR 0,05%

decline in alcohol-related hospital admissions. Data from the first two weeks of the lockdown indicated a staggering 60% decrease in injuries resulting from road traffic crashes and violent assaults. However, once the alcohol ban was lifted, the number of trauma admissions dramatically surged, revealing the urgent need for systemic changes to address alcohol consumption and road safety.

Numerous studies indicate that alcohol intoxication is a significant contributing factor to a high percentage of fatal crashes caused by driver error throughout South Africa. These accidents contribute to an estimated financial burden of R18.2 billion, encompassing healthcare costs, property damage, and lost productivity. The presence of alcohol accentuates the severity of crash-related injuries and negatively affects clinical and survival outcomes. Alcohol consumption deteriorates cognitive functions and psychomotor skills necessary for safe driving. It impairs reaction times, diverts attention, reduces visual capacity, and compromises judgment and cognitive function. These impairments lead to poor decision-making regarding seatbelt use and driving speeds, further compromising road safety.

The evidence is compelling: lowering the BAC threshold in South Africa to zero is essential to significantly reducing road fatalities. To succeed in implementing this zero-tolerance initiative, it is critical to institute rigorous enforcement measures. It is time for decisive, concrete actions to protect lives and ensure that our roads are safe for everyone—motorists, passengers, and pedestrians alike.

Editors note: *FleetWatch* wants your opinion on the AA's call for a total ban on drinking and driving. Is allowing a driver the equivalent of one can of beer or a single shot of whiskey before they drive a ridiculous legal allowance and blatant road safety risk? Or, would a total ban on drinking and driving constitute an infringement of our civil liberties?

Write to us at fleetwatch@pixie.co.za

The *FleetWatch* Checklist

A Call to ACTION

Essential CHECKLIST

A FleetWatch INITIATIVE

Don't drink and drive

Driving under the influence is a criminal offence. Alcohol and truck driving do not go together - don't do it!

Negatives effects of alcohol

- Slows reaction time
- Distorts vision
- Reduces concentration
- Increases risk taking
- Reduced or poor judgement
- Increases fatigue – many hours after consumption

If caught, a professional driver can have his licence suspended for:

- 6 months - first offence
- 5 years - second offence
- 10 years - third offence

New legislation proposed recommends that Blood Alcohol content be reduced to 0,02g per 100ml for general drivers and 0,00g per 100ml for professional drivers.

Sorghum beer	Spirit cooler	Beer	Cider	75ml Red or 90 ml White Wine	Tot / 25 ml vodka or Cane, whiskey, brandy	Cocktail Various %	Tot / 25ml Tequila	Quart Beer
1.5 U	1.2 - 1.9 U	1.5 - 1.7 U	2 U	1 U	1 U	2 - 4 U	1 U	3.5 - 4 U

★ 1 Unit comes to 0.02g in your blood or 0.10mg in your breath

No. of Units	Blood Alcohol Content	Breath Alcohol Content
3	0.06g	0.3mg
4	0.08g	0.4mg
5	0.10g	0.5mg
6	0.12g	0.6mg
7	0.14g	0.7mg
8	0.16g	0.8mg
9	0.18g	0.9mg
10	0.20g	1.0mg
11	0.22g	1.1mg
12	0.24g	1.2mg

★ Calculations are based on adult male, 68kg. This is a rough guide as each individual is affected differently according to size and weight..

★ Alcohol has to pass through the bloodstream. It takes 1 hour (or more) to get rid of 1 unit.

Limits for Professional Drivers

Blood 0,02g per 100ml

Breath 0,10mg per 1000ml

Combination consumption over a 3 hour period

50 kg	70 kg	100 kg	50 kg	70 kg	100 kg
1 Beer Per hour	2 Beer Per hour	3 Beer Per hour	1 Beer 2 Wine	2 Beer 2 Wine	3 Beer 3 Wine
= 0.05%	= 0.06%	= 0.07%	= 0.12%	= 0.13%	= 0.13%

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OPINION PIECE

Drinking and driving



The Automobile Association (AA) has called for a zero alcohol limit for drivers (see page...) as being essential to reduce the number of road traffic crashes and resultant deaths and injuries on South Africa's roads. Not everyone agrees with this call. For nearly a decade, the Road Safety Foundation has been at the forefront of road accident prevention advocacy. Its co-founder, Philip Hull, provided *FleetWatch* with the following response regarding the AA's proposed intervention on drinking and driving.



▲ The wide spread availability of breathalysers needs to be a focus for law enforcement.

The reasons to say no

The Road Safety Foundation noticed with interest and some dismay, a recent article in which The Automobile Association (AA) is calling for a zero alcohol limit in an attempt to combat our unacceptably high drunk driving statistics. It argues that 'implementing a zero-tolerance policy is essential for significantly reducing the number of road traffic accidents and associated injuries and deaths' and quotes 'a life is worth more than a beer'.

We acknowledge without any doubt that we have a serious problem in South Africa regarding drunk driving and the consequences thereof. However we firmly disagree with any attempt to reduce the blood alcohol concentration (BAC) to a zero percent reading.

As mentioned in the AA's statement, the current BAC of 0.05 threshold is roughly equivalent to drinking a beer or a single tot of spirits. Internationally, many countries have adopted for some time now the 0.05g per 100 ml threshold and combined with effective law enforcement, have successfully reduced alcohol related crashes on their roads.

Drunken pedestrians also cause many of our related statistics in South Africa and to lump these statistics into the total, gives the impression of driver-responsible crashes, which is an inaccurate and misleading statistic.

A zero percent reading would obviously be simple to enforce. The AA is calling for immediate detention should one have a BAC reading. However, a driver who has



Opinion Piece: By Philip Hull of the Road Safety Foundation.

OPINION PIECE

Drinking and driving



Evidentiary breathalyser

The LION AlcoBlow high speed breathalyser is capable of testing 12 people per minute – ideal for SAPS use



Photo supplied by ALCO-Safe

had a drink up to 8 hours previously, may still have a marginal reading should they be tested. Alcohol is often present in trace amounts in food, medicine and even some hygiene products like mouthwash. For example, certain foods like ripe fruit or bread contain small amounts of alcohol due to fermentation processes. This should not make us vulnerable to being detained and potentially end up in court with a possible criminal record.

A response from Government is most definitely required. Is it not time to bring an element of efficiency to this issue? The current process is cumbersome and presents numerous challenges. Breathalyser screening takes place and if the limit

is exceeded, the driver is required to have blood taken as proof of level of intoxication. There are certain time limits for this to take place and the transportation and storage of these samples is complex with refrigeration requirements etc. Far too many drunk drivers have gotten away scot-free due to these technicalities.

So, the answer and our belief, is that we need to re-evaluate evidentiary breathalysers. Many years ago we had the Drager Evidentiary Breathalyser, which allowed traffic officers to breathalyse a driver whom they suspected had been drinking and that reading was acceptable in a court of law. The individual could then be

immediately locked up without all the added burdens of blood samples etc.

Lastly, we believe that taking away the opportunity of a currently law-abiding citizen to have one social drink, would result in an extremely negative response with a high degree of anger and frustration and in fact, would have zero impact on our statistics.

We acknowledge that a driver who has consumed more than the currently allowed single drink, will have an inhibited reaction time and an increased disability towards cognitive thinking. But is a change to a zero blood alcohol concentration the way to go? Our vote is a definitive NO! ❑



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OPINION PIECE
ZERO LIMIT VS 0,05%

We will be going backwards rather than with a zero alcohol level

► The device is the CMI Intoxilizer 9000. It is an Evidentiary breathalyser suitable for police to use as an evidential breath alcohol tester. The subject blows a long breath of air into a new mouth piece fitted to the end of the sample hose. The 9000 will analyse the sample and give an evidentiary result within seconds.



**By Rhys Evans,
Managing Director,
ALCO-Safe**



In response to the Automobile Association’s’ call to reduce the blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of drivers to a zero percent reading, Rhys Evan, Director of ALCO-Safe, a company which has 42 years’ experience in the manufacture, distribution and support of alcohol testing products – including training and drawing up policies for companies - gives his opinion here, saying we “will be going backwards with a Zero alcohol level rather than saving lives.”

There is no doubt that thousands of people die on South African roads each year due to drunk driving. It is a number that is inexcusable and should never be allowed to occur. The call for a Zero blood alcohol level for drink driving therefore sounds like a reasonable request as zero alcohol levels while driving would remove the road deaths caused by drunk drivers. That’s the theory.

The reality is that reducing the drink driving limit to zero would most likely have no effect at all on the number of people who drink

and drive when compared to the current number of people who drink and drive. And even worse, it will have a negative impact on policing, trust between drivers and the police as well as trust for breathalyser testing apparatus. We will be going backwards with a Zero alcohol level rather than saving lives.

To understand this, a person needs to understand just how low the current drink driving limit is. Depending on weight, food, speed of consumptions and a few other factors, an average person will reach the drink driving limit after drinking 1 to 2 beers within 30 minutes.

OPINION PIECE

ZERO LIMIT VS 0,05%

Why is this important? Its important because people who are obeying the rules out of their own free will are either not drinking at all or they are drinking 1 or 2 beers and then stopping.

However these people - the ones drinking 1 or 2 beers - are not the people that are drunk driving and causing alcohol related deaths on the road. The vast majority of people who are causing these deaths are very aware that there is a drink driving limit. Most know that it is around 2 drinks but they drink 6, 10, 15 drinks and then get in a car and drive regardless of the already very low and internationally accepted drink driving limits that we have in place here.

The problem we have in South Africa is not that people can have one drink and drive - the problem is that people do not care about driving over the limit. They have no regard for the existing limit and the likelihood of that changing simply because the limit is lowered is slim to none. There is disrespect for the law, there is no enforcement of the existing laws and there is no awareness in the majority of the population of how dangerous it actually is to drive drunk.

Expecting people to suddenly stop drinking and driving because of a drink driving limit being changed - essentially from one drink to zero drinks - is wishful thinking. People who know and respect the current drink driving limit will do so; those who choose to drink and drive will continue to do so.

The only way to reduce deaths related to drunk driving is to massively ramp up the number of breathalysers that are supplied to police, give them funds to maintain and calibrate those instruments, give them proper competency training to use the equipment, set fixed performance requirements in place for the number of road blocks that must be conducted within a certain area every week and make sure that those road blocks are monitored closely by supervisors or senior ranking officers wearing body

IMPORTANT FACTS

Alcohol, Roads and the Law in South Africa

THE LEGAL Blood or Breath Alcohol Concentration Limit in South Africa for drivers on public roads is less than 0,05g of alcohol per 100millilitres of blood drawn (< 0.05% B.A.C) or 0.24milligrams per litre of exhaled breath (BrAC). This equates to approximately 2 to 3 units of alcohol consumed within 1 hour for a person of average weight and height).

The limit in this instance for professional drivers i.e. people who drive for a living and in possession of a Professional Driving Permit (PrDP) and when driving a category of vehicle for which such permit is needed e.g. Bus, Taxi, Courier and Truck Drivers, is less than 0,02g of alcohol per 100millilitres of blood drawn (< 0,02% B.A.C) or 0,10milligrams per litre of exhaled air (BrAC). This equates to approximately 1 unit of alcohol consumed within 1 hour for a person of average weight and height).

It takes the human body approximately 1 hour to process and eliminate 1 unit of alcohol. If 2 units of alcohol are consumed, 2 hours are needed to eliminate the 2 units of alcohol. If 4 units of alcohol are consumed, then 4 hours are needed to process and eliminate the 4 units of alcohol.

Source: ALCO-Safe

cameras so that bribes don't sky rocket but arrests do.

Writing and signing into place new laws is completely pointless when the existing laws, that are already very low, are not enforced.

There are a vast number of issues associated with testing at a Zero limit, most importantly that the human liver reduces alcohol in the human body at a rate of about 0.010% Bac per hour. So arresting and detaining a person at a level of 0.005% would never be able to be prosecuted because by the time a blood sample is taken, the result would be ZERO every single time. In fact, a blood test will not give a result of a blood alcohol test below 0.010 % Bac. So a test result of 0.009 will be reported as ZERO on the blood test.

Thousands of people would be detained and then the cases would need to be dropped. Police will be sued for wrongful arrests and detaining innocent civilians every weekend. Where will the manpower come from to manage all the wrongful arrests? Where will all the

Writing and signing into place a new law is pointless when existing laws, already low, are not enforced.

police come from to manage these cases? And should, somehow, we manage to get these arrests and convictions to happen, are we really calling for hard working, law abiding citizens to be arrested and made criminals because they had 1 beer?

Equip, train and empower the police to enforce the current drink driving limits and save thousands of lives. Do not waste time on putting a new law into place that cannot be enforced and will not sway the opinion or choices of those that are already well aware that they are over the drink driving limit and already refuse to obey the current laws and choose to drink and drive. □



Protecting against fuel card fraud

The use of fuel card services in business operations is helpful to fleet managers. Yet these cashless transactions have increased the risk of fraud, where fuel cards are used by undesigned people or for purchases that aren't related to the business.

Posing a financial threat and jeopardising operational efficiency, businesses are actively seeking strategies to shield themselves against this fraud. The first step is to know what to look out for.

Internal/ Friendly fuel card fraud

Drivers could view this as an easy way to supplement their income. Although fuel card companies have made it difficult for drivers to take advantage of company resources, there is still the danger of abuse through these methods:

- Drivers use an automatic pump to siphon fuel from the vehicle tank and thereafter refill it. Unfortunately, most anti-siphoning devices do not work well. However, this fraud can be easily identified through overconsumption reporting.
- The vehicle tank and a side container, e.g. a jerry can, are filled up simultaneously and charged as a single transaction. Alternatively, the company vehicle is moved once it is

full and extra fuel is placed inside another vehicle in exchange for cash paid to the driver and fuel attendant.

- Stolen fuel is topped up with a water, oil and paraffin or benzine mix. This can negatively affect vehicle performance and can cause damage to the engine.
- Fuel station cashiers merge the charges of multiple pumps onto a single fuel card. The money obtained from other pumps is usually shared between the cashier, driver and fuel attendant.
- A driver asks for a certain amount of fuel, then requests the cashier to manually charge an additional amount to the fuel card. The extra amount is taken from the cash drawer and split between the driver, cashier, and fuel attendant.
- Private vehicle fill-up on the company fuel card. Fuel attendants are required to validate the fleet fuel card and ensure it is for the same vehicle. While unauthorised vehicles will not match with the registration number on the company fuel card, some employees might manipulate this information and make it appear as if they are filling the company vehicle.
- Product or service purchases are dishonestly added to the fuel/oil cost and the full amount is charged to the company fuel card.



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External/ third party fuel card fraud

External threats to be aware of include:

- Fuel card cloning where an illegal copy of a fuel card is used to fill up other vehicles, with the charges billed to the original owner of the card. This can incur massive losses, which are difficult to recover.
- Card and PIN interception while in transit to the customer by post.
- Card skimming through a device that reads a card's data using its magnetic key strip. The device often fits perfectly within the card slot and the data is unencrypted when swiped. This fraud is difficult to detect, and the card will need to be blocked if compromised.

The solutions

Telematics solutions such as Tracker's Fuel Dashboard and Analytics service can better enable businesses to monitor fuel transactions, providing visibility into purchases, fuel consumption, and vehicle locations. By integrating fuel card data with GPS tracking and transaction monitoring capabilities, businesses can detect anomalies and suspicious activities promptly, such as a vehicle at a different location than the fuel fill-up, as well as discrepancies in the amount of fuel purchased versus the amount added to the fuel tank. Using accurate mapping and fleet telematics geofences allows managers to set areas where drivers can refuel, with alert systems for activities outside of the prescribed areas.

Companies should monitor their fuel card-related expenses closely to facilitate detection and mitigation of fraud by:

- Checking if a driver stops too often to refuel. If there isn't a technical issue with the vehicle, the fuel card is possibly being misused.
- Comparing actual fuel usage of a vehicle with the amount charged on the fuel card.
- Comparing receipts, bills, and logs to check if drivers are concealing information.

A few safeguards every fleet business can implement:

- Require employees to enter the unit



Leveraging telematics data and AI technology forms the backbone of a multi-layered defence strategy against fuel theft and fraud. By integrating fuel card information and educating drivers, fleet operators can protect their assets and ensure efficient fuel management, contributing to significant cost savings and enhanced operational efficiency.

Kobus Visagie
Executive: Business Solutions, Tracker

- number and a PIN code, making drivers personally accountable for the charges on their fleet cards.
- Assign a fuel card to a particular vehicle, and it should only be used for designated purchases – fuel, oil, tyres, maintenance.
- Educate drivers on company policies and anti-fraud safeguards during new-hire orientation. This can serve as a deterrent.
- Smart cameras can help identify potential suspects in fuel card theft or fuel syphoning events by providing real-time video footage and advanced analytics.
- Set limits on the amount of money that can be spent on fuel.
- Check mileage and fuel tank capacity inconsistencies. If fuel purchases consistently exceed vehicle tank capacity, or if a vehicle consumes less fuel than what the driver purchased, it's a telltale sign of fuel card fraud.
- Ask drivers to record odometer readings and remind them not to leave the fuel card unattended.
- Require drivers to fill the tank completely and then refuel only after the maximum distance has been travelled.

OPINION PIECE HIGHWAY CHARGING

Highway charging station

► Overview of facilities; overnight and day parking; charging stations; repair and wash facilities and a road stall/shop.



President Donald Trump may be putting the brakes on electric vehicle (EV) mandates in his country, but there's no stopping the rollout of electric truck technologies in the BRICS economic bloc. South Africa however, has a fair distance to travel infrastructurally before electric trucks are able to carry the bulk of the nation's freight. The biggest challenge in this regard is establishing an effective EV charging network on major logistics corridors. In the opinion piece that follows, Joubert Roux, executive chairman of Zero Carbon Charge, unpacks the key issues driving electric truck adoption in South Africa right now while outlining his company's vision to help make net-zero truck transport a reality on the N3.

Private-public collaboration critical for a green transport network

By Joubert Roux, Zero Carbon Charge

Back in 1985, a former British Prime Minister said: "You and I come by road or rail. But economists travel on infrastructure." Nearly forty years later, a nation's economic competitiveness still hinges on the development of its public infrastructure, in particular its logistics network. Well-developed road, rail and port infrastructure stimulates economic growth and job creation by ensuring consumers and goods can move around easily, and by enabling countries to trade freely with each other.

Inadequate and ageing logistics infrastructure, on the other hand, is a significant obstacle to a country's economic performance. According to the Infrastructure Consortium of Africa, poor road, rail and ports infrastructure can add between 30 and 40% to the costs of goods, which is mostly borne by consumers. In South Africa, economists have estimated that the inefficient state-owned rail and ports system has cost the national economy over R1 billion per day in economic activity, which is the equivalent of five percent of our Gross Domestic Product annually.

OPINION PIECE

HIGHWAY CHARGING

If our country hopes to achieve positive economic growth and compete globally, there needs to be significant investment in fixing our deteriorating rail, road and ports infrastructure. At the 2024 Sustainable Infrastructure Development Symposium, which brought together government leaders and the private sector to discuss South Africa's infrastructure priorities, it was acknowledged that around R4.7 trillion was needed to address current infrastructure challenges.

While this seems an impossible task, it is encouraging that government is turning to the private sector to help fix key logistics infrastructure.

This has included Transnet entering into a joint venture with a private ports operator to develop, upgrade and manage the Durban port's flagship Container Terminal Pier 2. Transnet's Freight Rail division has also taken steps to find qualified private sector partners to enter into operating leases for the operation and maintenance of the key Container Corridor rail network between Johannesburg and Durban.

However, with 87% of the country's freight transported by truck, a proper functioning road network remains of utmost importance. Government has a critical role to play in ensuring major truck routes are maintained, including the repairing of potholes, and much needed big road infrastructure projects are funded and completed.

To maintain the efficiency of its truck routes, it's essential for government to stay aligned with global freight trends. This includes recognising the growing transition from diesel to electric trucks, with many international manufacturers committed to producing zero-emissions trucks by 2040.

There are several benefits offered by the transition to electric trucks including lower fuel and operating costs. Crucially, the transition will enable local exporters to remain internationally competitive in regions like the European Union where carbon taxes have been introduced.



Secure overnight parking

◀ Highway charging station road stall where drivers can relax. Entrance to the overnight parking will have a security presence to ensure the safety of the drivers and their rigs.

Restrooms

▶ Modern restrooms will be available for drivers to refresh.



Any plan to encourage the local transition to electric trucks must include establishing charging facilities to support the growing number of electric trucks travelling long distances across the country. The development of a public electric truck charging network along major freight routes presents an excellent opportunity for collaboration, with the private sector positioned to play a significant role in this effort.

Critically, this charging network needs to be renewably powered and off-grid, so an increase in electric trucks on our roads does not result in an increase in greenhouse gas emissions. In light of Eskom's electricity network being powered primarily by dirty coal for the foreseeable future, a major shift towards electric trucks poses the real risk of increased CO² emissions. Our own research shows that an electric truck charged by the Eskom network could emit 37.5% more CO² emissions per kilometre compared to an equivalent diesel powered truck. ▶ 34

This proposed charging network needs to be renewably powered and off-grid so an increase in electric trucks does not result in an increase in greenhouse gas emissions

OPINION PIECE HIGHWAY CHARGING



Your place to recharge park

◀ All the facilities will be open 24/7 and the intention is to provide an environment where rigs can be recharged and drivers refreshed.

▶ 33 An off-grid, renewably powered EV charging network is therefore the only viable option for carbon emission reduction, and has to play a vital part in the Department of Transport's Green Transport Strategy and its target of achieving net-zero transport by 2050.

Zero Carbon Logistics plans to build 120 electric truck charging stops along main trucking routes, starting with six stops on the N3. This network will be completely off-grid, with each site powered by Solar PV and battery systems that will be able to fully charge a truck in the time it takes to use the restroom and get a cup of coffee. The truck charging sites will be in addition to the 120 electric passenger vehicle charging sites that we are already building on highways across South Africa at a cost of R2.3 billion.

This project is a large-scale, national carbon emission reduction initiative as it aims to mitigate the impact of climate change through renewable energy-driven charging stations, offering a totally green alternative to grid-tied chargers. With the accompanying localisation of energy production, over ninety-seven million (97,000,000) tonnes of carbon emissions could be saved every year if we migrate the current fleet of vehicles registered on government's eNaTIS website to

EVs. A commensurate R300bn in forex spent on energy imports could also be saved.

While we are committed to building a national green transport system to keep South Africa aligned with global progress, there remain challenges in encouraging private investment in the electric vehicle sector. Currently, limited incentives exist for local manufacturers to transition to electric vehicles and electric trucks, and high import duties are making it difficult for more affordable electric models to enter the South African market.

Additionally, the planning approval processes for building charging

stations face several regulatory requirements such as land use and environmental applications that involve multiple regulatory bodies, leading to delays.

Encouragingly, a number of provincial governments have recently begun streamlining the approval processes to support the development of electric vehicle charging networks. This is because they recognise the numerous benefits this major investment will bring, such as reducing carbon emissions, contributing towards energy resilience, job creation and creating economic opportunities for small businesses, rural communities and farmers.

At a national level, we welcome Minister of Transport Barbara Creecy's recent announcements that the implementation of the Green Transport Strategy will be a priority of her department including the development of green energy infrastructure. We hope this will include the creation of an environment conducive for investing in and building of a renewably-powered, off-grid charging network in the country. This is the only way we will ensure the development of a modern, sustainable local freight industry that enables South Africa to remain globally competitive, while meeting its net-zero targets. □

Any plan to encourage local transition to electric trucks must include establishing charging facilities

THE NEW GENERATION

A new generation providing unparalleled reliability, product life and total cost of ownership. The new trailer couplings are more compact yet sturdier. Exposed parts are reinforced while service and maintenance have been made easier. In addition, there are new features for convenience, safety, and time-saving.



RINGFEDER



**TRAILER
COUPLINGS**

VBG



THE SMART GENERATION

Certified and approved couplings for all types of transport. VBG's couplings are well-known for their high quality, high reliability, and long service life with low maintenance costs. They offer you peace of mind, year in and year out. The VBG coupling is digital and it has been given new safety functions based on sensor technology. In addition, VBG has improved the mechanics and made the coupling both smaller and lighter.





Vector Logistics is on the quest for a net-zero fleet

Going for zero

▲ Volvo Trucks South Africa has delivered two battery electric FH 6x4 truck tractors to one of South Africa's leading integrated cold chain logistics providers, Vector Logistics. The trailer is a solar-powered e-axle refrigerated trailer.

As global supply chain and logistics companies ramp up their transition to carbon-neutral fleets, truck and trailer suppliers are engineering innovative solutions to help their customers meet 'net-zero' targets. In South Africa, the shift to green trucking is gaining momentum, despite the country's power grid issues. Recently, premier cold-chain logistics provider, Vector Logistics, scored a first for local trucking by launching a pair of fully electric 6x4 Volvo truck tractors towing two solar powered refrigerated trailers.

According to Keith Pienaar, CEO of Vector Logistics, "This

trailblazing solution goes beyond conventional electric trucks by pairing Volvo Battery Electric Vehicle (BEV) truck tractors with innovative solar-powered e-axle trailers, creating Vector's first fully electric bumper-to-bumper logistics system."

The rollout of net-zero trucks is part of Vector Logistics' Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) strategy. The company aims to achieve a 42% reduction in operational emissions by 2030 and achieve the global net-zero target by 2050 with an "ambitious and innovative approach," Pienaar explains.

"Unlike traditional electric trucks, which focus solely on the vehicle's powertrain, this solution integrates solar-powered e-axle trailers. These trailers not only reduce emissions but also power essential components like refrigeration units and tail lifts during transit, making it a holistic net-zero logistics solution.

"For added resilience, the refrigeration system includes a diesel backup, intended solely for emergency use to ensure operational continuity for extended pre-cooling at depots when the solar-battery power is depleted.

"These net-zero vehicles will

support deliveries in Johannesburg and Cape Town, aligning with Vector's clients' sustainability goals while reinforcing Vector Logistics' commitment to collaboration in achieving shared environmental objectives," Pienaar adds.

All-round friendly regional trucking power

The two battery electric Volvo FH 6x4 truck tractors have a gross combination weight of 48.6 tonnes. A sleeper cab has been adapted to accommodate three seats. The truck produces 665hp and 2 400Nm of torque from three electric motors that are supplied from 6 Volvo batteries, with a total capacity of 540kWh.

Vector Logistics will utilise these electric trucks in its Gauteng and Cape Town operations, focussing on local deliveries and distribution. For this purpose, the company has invested in two high speed DC charging stations at its home depots. When fully charged, this combination will give each truck a range of between 200 and 300km.

"We are excited about Vector Logistics' shift towards the electrification in their fleet. Just like Volvo Trucks, sustainability is part of their core values and together we believe this innovative solution will help shape the future of the local logistics landscape," says Waldemar Christensen, Managing Director of Volvo Trucks South Africa.

Together with Vector Logistics and other service providers, Volvo Trucks offered a holistic solution to the company's individual requirements regarding driving cycles, load capacity, uptime, range and other parameters.

"The solution encompasses everything from route analysis and battery optimisation to servicing and maintenance. The aim as always is to offer customers the highest possible uptime and productivity," adds Christensen.

Volvo Trucks' extra-heavy electric trucks line-up includes the Volvo FH, the Volvo FM, and the Volvo FMX. They are available in truck tractor or

rigid configurations, from 4x2 to 8x4, giving it the industry's most extensive portfolio of zero exhaust emission trucks.

Eric Parry, Volvo Trucks' Sustainable Solutions Manager states: "One of the main advantages of going electric is that it provides drivers with a silent and vibration-free ride while delivering smooth and massive power.

"When you think of a typical delivery location for Vector Logistics, which includes sites like restaurants and supermarkets, a big plus is that Volvo's electric trucks are quiet and less disruptive in these locations. The trucks are also equipped with Volvo Dynamic Steering, which provides reduced steering-wheel resistance at low speeds making them easier to maneuver.

"In addition, the electric motor provides smooth and seamless power delivery, which is ideal for stop-and-go driving in the metro areas where these units will operate. Volvo's electric trucks also meet the same high crash safety standards as the company's other trucks and offer the same safety systems as the diesel models."

Gearing up the Vector green team

Volvo Trucks' driver trainers have trained a team of selected Vector Logistics drivers on how to operate and get the best out of the electric trucks. Further training will be conducted in the near future to hone their skills, says Parry.

"The question on everybody's minds in South Africa is the lack of a consistent supply of electricity and, how operators can work around this challenge to efficiently operate electric trucks," Parry adds. "We believe it is all down to planning. Operators will have the necessary tools to plan their charging options according to their workload and routes, even though there is load shedding."

As in the case of Vector Logistics, electric trucks are mostly aimed at regional distribution customers. In most of those cases, they return to a home base at some point in the ▶ 38



Dedicated training

▲ Vector Logistics drivers, Kagiso Seunane (left) and Rennie Baloyi (right), received dedicated training by Volvo Trucks on how to operate and get the best out of the electric trucks. Further training will be conducted in the near future to hone their skills.



Bumper-to-bumper

▲ Pairing the Volvo Battery Electric Vehicle (BEV) truck tractor with solar-powered e-axle trailers has created Vector's first fully electric bumper-to-bumper logistics system.

Vector Logistics aims to achieve a 42% reduction in operational emissions by 2030 and global net-zero by 2050

GREEN TRUCKING

► 37 day. This is usually the point where charging makes the most sense. So public charging is not as relevant for these operations. Having control of their own charging allows customers to have certainty in their energy costs, Parry explains.

“Another important driver for electrification is transport efficiency. Electric trucks can make deliveries at night and in off-peak periods and can access more locations than their diesel counterparts, including the inside of buildings,” says Parry.

Key features of Vector Logistics’ sustainability roadmap include transitioning to electric vehicles, such as the new BEVs and e-axle trailers, expanding solar PV installations at facilities to reduce reliance on grid electricity and delivering baseline sustainability training to 100% of its workforce.

For Pienaar, “Sustainability remains at the heart of our business strategy and we’re committed to creating an agile, resilient logistics network that adapts to market changes while maintaining service quality. This innovation represents a step change in how we approach decarbonising our operations and reinforces our dedication to developing value-driven, environmentally conscious solutions.”

With Volvo Trucks South Africa and top-flight local trailer component suppliers as its pioneering partners, Vector’s bold step into fleet electrification has all the right ingredients for a successful journey towards achieving net-zero.

“Volvo Trucks has been committed to social, environmental, and economic responsibility since the start of our company. Now, protecting the environment is the biggest challenge we face. The Volvo Group is a leading force in the shift towards the electrification of the transportation, mobility, and equipment sectors, making a real impact on our customers’ efforts to reduce their carbon footprint,” Christensen concludes. □



Operators will have the necessary tools to plan their charging options according to workload and routes, even in the event of loadshedding.

Eric Parry
Volvo Trucks

Collaborators

▲ From left to right; Volvo Trucks South Africa’s Sales Director, Anders Friberg; Volvo Trucks SA MD, Waldemar Christensen; Vector Logistics’ CEO, Keith Pienaar; and Eric Parry, Sustainable Solutions Manager at Volvo Trucks SA.

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BUILT FOR BETTER™

A Perfect Circle for Lower Tyre CPK

How Bandag retreads bring tangible sustainability to your fleet

In the professional trucking industry, the road to success is rarely a straight line - but when it comes to tyres, a perfect circle is possible. Every fleet operator knows that tyre cost-per-kilometre (CPK) can make or break profitability. But what if you could lower your CPK while also improving efficiency and reducing your environmental impact? That's exactly what Bandag delivers - sustainability, reliability and profitability - a truck fleet tyre solution for a new circular global economy.



▲ Bandag tyre management solutions can be used offline where no cell coverage is available.



The Circular Economy: A smarter way to roll

Truck tyres aren't cheap and throwing away a worn-out casing is like tossing money into a pothole. That's where the circular economy comes in. Instead of following the old 'buy, use and discard' approach, Bandag champions a smarter system—one that keeps tyres rolling for longer, reducing waste and maximising value.

"Retreading is not just about saving costs; it's about using resources more responsibly," says Monal Naik, Bandag Southern Africa's marketing manager.

"By giving tyres a second, third or even fourth life, we help fleets cut costs while also reducing landfill waste and conserving raw materials."

Bandag's retreading solutions save fleet operators up to 50% on tyre costs while slashing landfill waste. Less rubber in landfills, less crude oil used in manufacturing new tyres and lower overall carbon emissions - it's a win-win for both business and the planet.

The global tyre supply chain squeeze

If you've tried to buy imported truck tyres recently, you'll know it's not just the price that's unpredictable - it's the availability too. Global supply chains have been hit hard by rising geopolitical tensions, shipping bottlenecks and raw material shortages, sending

tyre prices soaring and making lead times frustratingly long.

"The reality is that supply chain disruptions have made imported tyres expensive and unpredictable. With over 70% of new truck tyre sales in this country being imports, this is a major threat to fleet sustainability," says Naik. "With Bandag, fleet operators get a reliable, locally produced alternative that isn't subject to the same pricing volatility and availability issues."

ESG: More than just a buzzword

Sustainability isn't just a nice-to-have - it's a business necessity. Supply chains worldwide are under pressure to meet Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) standards and truck fleet operators need to show they're pulling their weight. Bandag's retreading process aligns with these global expectations, helping businesses meet sustainability goals while staying on the right side of environmental regulations.

Compared to producing a brand new tyre, Bandag's retreading uses 70% less oil and significantly cuts down on CO₂ emissions. "ESG compliance isn't just about ticking boxes - it's about future-proofing businesses," Naik explains. "Our solutions help fleets stay compliant while also improving efficiency and profitability."

Tough tyres for rough roads

Durability isn't up for debate when your trucks are clocking thousands of



▲ Bandag Head Office - Alrode



▲ Bandag retreads are locally produced in South Africa.

◀ Bandag SA conducts more than 100 000 tyre inspections per month across its network.

kilometres on South Africa's varied terrain. From urban streets to open highways to gravel roads, Bandag's application-specific retreaded tyres are made to handle all local operating environments. Each tyre casing is put through rigorous quality checks, ensuring it meets (or even exceeds) new tyre performance standards.

"Fleet operators don't have time for tyre failures," says Naik. "That's why we ensure every retreaded tyre meets the highest international quality standards. What's more, our tyres are tested locally to ensure they deliver optimum tread life, exceptional grip, and reliable performance."

Smart tyres, smarter fleets

Bandag's fleet tyre management tools are at the cutting edge of digital technology, taking the guesswork, paperwork and slog out of tyre maintenance. Using real-time data to monitor tyre pressure, tread depth and wear rates, Bandag's tyre management solutions are a health tracker for your fleet - spotting potential issues before they turn into costly breakdowns.

"Our digital solutions help fleets make informed decisions," Naik says. "And we don't just provide the technology. We also train fleet personnel to use it effectively. A well-informed team is key to maximising savings and efficiency."

The business case for lower CPK

At the end of the day, it all comes down to cost. Tyres are one of the biggest expenses for any fleet and unpredictable costs can put a serious dent in profitability. Bandag's

retreading solutions for trucks and trailers help fleet operators lock in predictable, controlled tyre budgets while maximising return on investment.

With Bandag's suite of tyre management tools, tyre performance as well as tyre life can be greatly improved, thereby generating long-term savings beyond just the cost of the rubber itself. Optimum tyre performance, fewer tyre replacements and reduced downtime all add up to a healthier bottom line.

Locally made, globally certified

Proudly South African, Bandag SA's retreading solutions are produced locally, supporting job creation and strengthening the country's economy. But just because it's made at home doesn't mean it's behind the curve. Bandag's tyres meet strict international ISO certification standards, ensuring world-class quality and safety.

"Our commitment to local production means we're creating hundreds of jobs for South Africans across our network of 24 manufacturing plants and 23 BTS franchisees," Naik points out. "Local is lekker, and we take pride in building a strong, homegrown industry that supports the economy."

"With Bandag's widespread dealer network across Southern Africa, fleet operators never have to worry about availability. Whether you're operating in bustling urban centres or remote transport corridors, expert Bandag tyre solutions and servicing are always within reach."



▲ The Bandag retreading process follows strict international guidelines to always deliver the best retread product.

Closing the loop for success

With a history in South Africa dating back 60 years, Bandag has perfected the art of sustainable, cost-effective fleet tyre management. "Bandag solutions create a seamless cycle, one where innovation and sustainability drive efficiency, where reliability enhances safety and uptime and where cost-savings fuel long-term business growth," Naik concludes:

"By choosing Bandag, fleets aren't just cutting costs; they're investing in a smarter, greener and more resilient future. Ultimately, when it comes to Best Practice truck tyre management, there's only one kind of shape to be in – Bandag's perfect circle!" ◻



Partnerships helped to ride through the perfect storm

Co-operation between government ensured continued flow of wheels

South Africa's port haulage industry had a rough end to 2024. If the drama playing out over Durban's Pier 2 were headache inducing, the spate of temporary closures of the Lebombo Border Post on the N4 due to Mozambique's post-election civil unrest must have triggered severe migraines. The extreme backlogs of trucks at the border post persisted for much of November into the first half of December, but a national logistics disaster was avoided due to close cooperation between business and government, says Business Unity South Africa (BUSA).

According to Khulekani Mathe,

CEO of BUSA: "As the violence in Mozambique escalated, a multi-stakeholder group of interested and affected parties, including cargo owners, logistics service providers and business associations, joined forces with the state and regional authorities in both South Africa and Mozambique to minimise disruptions and safely maintain the flow of freight into and out of the Lebombo entry point and at the port itself."

With the Lebombo Border Post into Mozambique being closed completely on a number of occasions during the six weeks of unrest, serious congestion on the N4 affected both transporters and

▲ The Road Freight Association estimated that the Lebombo closures of 2024 cost the SA economy R10 million per day with Finance Minister Enoch Godongwana reporting a R4.8 billion decrease in customs value.

[Pic source: SABC]

holiday goes. Mathe points out that members of the National Logistics Crisis Committee (NLCC) gave up much of their personal time to assist in ensuring the critical N4 transport corridor to Mozambique continued to operate efficiently.

"This was a trying time as we faced a situation which was changing continually as the unrest

in Mozambique ebbed and flowed,” Mathe adds. “The festive season is always a challenging time on all our major transport corridors, including the N4, as increased holiday traffic competes with trucking operations which are still operational over that time. Add to this the volatile security situation in Mozambique and we had a perfect storm.”

Digital real-time communications at the core of the effort

An important consideration, states Mathe, is the fact that it is not only mineral exports that are dependent on the efficient operation of the N4 corridor, but also a host of necessities for the people of Mozambique.

“BUSA initially coordinated feedback from the various parties and issued regular bulletins to those in the transport and logistics industry with information on traffic flows and updates on the security situation. This sometimes also included a recommendation to the transport companies to recall or reroute their trucks to nearby depots rather than sitting in long queues of traffic since the primary concern was the safety and security of both drivers and goods into Mozambique,” he says.

Virtual meetings were held as often as twice a day to provide updates on the latest situation in Mozambique, address bottlenecks on key routes and find alternatives for private and business transport, including arranging escorts by members of the Mozambican army to ensure the safe return of trucks into South Africa, says Mathe.

“It was incredibly heartening to work with a large group of stakeholders who, without exception, were willing to give up their holiday time to help avert a potential crisis for both countries, and for this we are incredibly grateful to all concerned,” Mathe adds.

“Even though freight movements over this time are at slightly lower levels given the holiday season, there were some unavoidable delays at the port, but the swift and decisive



▲ As in the Richards Bay truck queue fiasco of 2023/24, truck drivers at the Lebombo Border Post were left stranded on the roadside without food and drinks, toilets, washrooms, or security guards. [Pic source: SABC]

action of the response team managed to avoid any cancellations.”

The ability to quickly and efficiently communicate with the transport and logistics industry in South Africa has been strengthened by the development last year and ongoing distribution of the weekly NLCC Pulse Report. “The invaluable industry tool, which was built on the back of a web-based logistics monitoring system, is proving most helpful in tracking, analysing and sharing logistics data across the country’s major transport corridors.

“The challenges at the Lebombo Border Post over the festive season highlighted the need for South Africa to strengthen its supply chain but also demonstrated the spirit of the Business Government Partnership which is collectively focused on building a sustainable and competitive transport and logistics network which will drive economic growth and job creation,” concludes Mathe. □

It was heartening to work with a large group of stakeholders who, without exception, were willing to give up their holiday to help divert a potential crisis for both countries.

Khulekani Mathe
CEO BUSA



Transnet Network Statement – On the right track or not?

The publishing of the Transnet Network Statement in December 2024 formalised the state-owned entity's commitment to partnering with private supply chain and logistics companies to effectively transform the nation's rail sector. The Network Statement is comprehensive in scope, outlining essential information for accessing and utilising Transnet's rail network. The response from private sector stakeholders has been optimistic but critical questions from the Road Freight Association regarding the Network Statement's efficacy have arisen. Read on...

▲ MIPA's Warwick Lord: "The Statement provides the clarity and certainty needed for private investment in rail operations."

Warwick Lord, chairman of The Multi-Modal Inland Port Association (MIPA), describes the Framework as massively positive for the freight industry. "The release of the Network Statement is a transformative moment for South Africa's logistics sector.

"It provides the clarity and certainty needed for private investment in rail operations, which will help us achieve the government's ambitious freight targets. This is a significant step forward in creating a more efficient, sustainable and competitive transport system."

Transport minister, Barbara Creecy described the Network Statement as a critical step towards achieving the government's goal of moving 250 million tons of freight



The release of the Network Statement is a transformative moment for the SA logistics sector

Warwick Lord,
Chairman of the MIPA

per annum by rail within the next five years.

Nagging questions

In contrast to MIPA's enthusiasm, chief executive officer of the Road Freight Association (RFA), Gavin Kelly directs critical questions at the Statement's long-term efficacy: "Are we about to see great things – or are we doomed onto a circle of argument and squabbles by various potential third-party operators as recently seen at the Port of Durban?"

"Can Transnet really create the required environment for third party operators to operate efficiently on the rail network? Is the rail network (i.e. the signalling,

rail mass carrying capacity, points, sidings, warehousing, security and other infrastructure) ready to accommodate a 'flood' of trains and a drive from the national logistics chain requirements? Are the train sets adequate - or will these all need to come from the third-party operators? Who will adjudicate and resolve disagreements between these third-party operators or between them and Transnet itself?"

According to MIPA, the Network Statement was developed through an inclusive consultation process involving Transnet, key stakeholders in the rail industry and the Interim Rail Economic Regulator.

"The Framework provides a

comprehensive overview of the freight rail network, including key corridors, infrastructure and services. The tariff system, based on a differentiated methodology, ensures fair and transparent access for third-party operators, enabling them to plan their services efficiently and invest in rolling stock.

"The publishing of the Network Statement is a key milestone in the implementation of the National Rail Policy White Paper and the Freight Logistics Roadmap, which aim to position rail as the backbone of South Africa's transport system," Lord states.

Introducing innovative rail technologies

Response to the Statement from MIPA member, Mike Daniel, managing director of RailRunner South Africa, is positive: "With the Network Statement now in place, we can accelerate the deployment of our innovative road-to-rail solutions. RailRunner's sustainable technology, which is 40% lighter than conventional wagons and requires fewer locomotives, is perfectly suited to operate under the new tariff regime.

"This will allow us to offer an efficient and sustainable transportation option, working in conjunction with road transport to optimise the movement of goods and reduce reliance on single-mode solutions. ▶ 46

Can Transnet really create the required environment for third party operators to operate efficiently on the rail network?

Gavin Kelly,
CEO, Road Freight Association



► 45 This service offering rollout will not be smooth sailing from the get-go because of the legacy issues of security and signalling.

“However, we remain optimistic that the ‘Rainbow Nation’ will rise above these problems by deploying innovative solutions such as Terminal Anywhere and others.”

Kelly highlights the potential for systemic problems within the new Network: “Whilst a huge amount of cargo is delivered via road every day, the reality is that the cargo needs to move between the origination and destination and the challenge will be creating an environment where system failures (or third-party failures) do not have a resultant collapse of the various routes identified for the open access.

“The RFA has continually noted that rail needs to ‘carry its load’ – and this has been clearly underwritten by the impact that we have all witnessed on roads across the country. These roads were never built to take the volumes of vehicles nor the axle mass loads (this being before any overloading comes into play) – and both roads and towns along the way have had a Jekyll and Hyde relationship – damage and wear to the infrastructure but with an increase in local business trading to support the increase in road freight traffic through these regions.”

The best way forward

Lord expands on MIPA’s vision for positive engagement with Transnet: “MIPA, which represents six major inland ports in South Africa and one in Namibia, is committed to supporting the shift from road to rail. Its members are working to implement efficient intermodal transfer facilities, develop technology-driven logistics solutions and establish secure supply chain corridors. These efforts are in line with government objectives to reduce road congestion, improve safety and reduce carbon emissions.

“MIPA highlights the importance of public-private partnerships in achieving these goals and its members are working with Transnet Rail Infrastructure Manager (TRIM) to ensure the smooth integration of



Working in conjunction with road transport to optimise the movement of goods and reduce reliance on single-mode solutions

**Mike Daniel, MD
Rail Runner South Africa**

private operators into the network. This includes addressing challenges at ports and along key corridors, encouraging investment in strategic infrastructure and improving service levels to meet the needs of cargo owners and logistics service providers.”

Kelly, despite his salient questions, is cautiously optimistic of the Network Statement’s potential: “The RFA encourages all companies that could become a third-party operator, to study the Statement and to engage with the Department of Transport in getting rail operations back to a viable and efficient service. There will be many opportunities for road transport and there will be changes in how transport is done (in the long run), but we need to get the foundation pieces running – reliably, efficiently, securely and affordably.

Lord sums up the Statement thus: “The publication of the Network Statement is a significant step towards realising the vision of a modern, efficient and

sustainable rail system in South Africa. MIPA and its members are committed to working with all stakeholders to ensure the success of this initiative, which promises to unlock new opportunities for economic growth, job creation and environmental sustainability. There is no doubt that road and rail transport are interdependent and must work together seamlessly to ensure efficient and sustainable transportation.”

Despite his bearish outlook on the Transnet Statement, Kelly concurs, in essence, with Lord: “The Road Freight Association will watch developments with keen interest and 2025 will be a crucial year in ensuring that South Africa (its economy and wealth creation for all its citizens in the form of employment) will turn around and become an invigorated and vibrant logistics hub and developmental node for all modes of transport. Surely, by now, there should be no argument that road and rail can (and must) symbiotically work together.” □

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Online portal will enhance private sector engagement



► Dr Juanita Maree... a step in the right direction

The Department of Transport (DoT) recently launched an online portal in Request for Information (RFI) format to enhance private sector engagement in the Transnet turnaround process and overall transformation of South Africa’s logistics infrastructure. The Southern African Association of Freight Forwarders (SAAFF) believes the RFI portal is a step in the right direction.

According to SAAFF CEO, Dr Juanita Maree, “The launch of the RFI portal by the DoT marks a significant milestone in strengthening collaboration between the public and private sectors. This initiative reflects a step towards greater transparency, inclusion and efficiency in shaping South Africa’s logistics landscape for the future.”

The new online portal is designed to accelerate Private Sector Participation (PSP), states Transport Minister, Barbara Creecy: “The RFI portal’s mission is to capture essential industry insights and reinforce the collaborative spirit needed to build confidence among private sector investors. It also signals a commitment to transparency. Adopting good practices will ultimately drive success for the PSP projects; it represents a valuable opportunity to guide other fundamental consultative

processes, such as the Merchant Shipping Bill currently under review.”

Towards global competitiveness

In SAAFF’s opinion, enabling comprehensive industry input from logistics sub-sectors via a digital RFI should enhance the depth and quality of stakeholder engagement. “The RFI portal signals a maturing approach to cross-sectoral consultation – one that aligns with the industry’s commitment to constructive dialogue and evidence-based policy making,” Dr Maree adds.

“It is important to look at this through a magnifying lens and the knock-on impact for the medium and long-terms. This initiative by the DoT represents a turning point in efforts to restore South Africa’s logistics network to full operational efficiency. Moreover, it aligns with the broader national imperative of driving inclusive economic growth through job creation, skills development and delivering world-class logistics performance to maximise trade – reaffirming South Africa’s leadership in regional and continental trade, as recognised by global markets,” Dr Maree explains.

In the case of the Merchant Shipping Bill, due process will require thorough assessment by NEDLAC with relevant recommendations

▲ South Africa’s road freight industry must take advantage of the RFI portal to help steer its imperatives in the rapidly evolving national logistics architecture.

to the Minister to guide process and definition; this before it reaches Cabinet and then finally Parliament. In addition to the action of representative industry bodies like SAAFF, the existence of the RFI bodes well as a window for robust consultation, lifting the platform to best-practice, says Dr Maree.

“This initiative by the DoT sends a strong signal to international investor communities. The commitment to structured engagement and transparency in policy making will reflect a level of governance and maturity of process that inspires confidence. It serves as an open invitation for global investors to recognise South Africa as a strategic growth-hub – one with a clear roadmap for sustainable logistics development and economic resilience,” Dr Maree concludes. □

Editor’s note: SAAFF is calling on the private sector to actively contribute insights by engaging in the RFI consultation processes. FleetWatch supports this position. As Dr Maree says – “Adopting best-practice will be key to the success of Private Sector Participation projects.”

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DAF



◀ “Cleaner Planet; Healthier Tomorrow” is the apt slogan for UPD’s new fleet of electric vehicles with solar powered refrigeration bodies.

▼ The fleet of 42 Maxus eDeliver 3 panel vans, manufactured by SAIC Maxus and supplied by Everlectric, features an industry-first refrigerated cargo box powered entirely by solar energy.

Healthy vehicles to deliver pharma

When one thinks of pharmaceutical products, one automatically accepts that the handling of anything to do with them would entail having in place squeaky-clean processes at every link from manufacturing through to final dispensing in chemists and hospitals. And they do. Now, however, the Clicks Group and United Pharmaceutical Distributors (UPD) have taken it a step further to ensure clean-bean delivery of products, writes Patrick O’Leary.

Let’s face it – the planet is sick. It needs medicine and it’s no use relying on guys like USA President Donald Trump to dispense the correct medicine to make it healthy again. After all, he has repeatedly referred to climate change as a “hoax” and indeed, kicked off his second term of office with the mantra “drill baby drill” before withdrawing the US from the Paris Agreement of 2015 - which supports global efforts to fight climate change etc etc. I could go on but...I won’t.

What I will do is ignore Trumps’ inane ramblings while standing up to give a sharp salute to the Clicks Group and United Pharmaceutical Distributors (UPD) who are dispensing the correct medicine to our sick planet in their operations by linking hands with Everlectric and Investec Sustainable Solutions to introduce South Africa’s first fleet of zero-emission, pharma-compliant electric vehicles (EVs) with solar power refrigeration bodies.

UPD is the country’s only full-line pharmaceutical wholesaler and supplies retail pharmacies, private hospitals, dispensing doctors and retail health stores. The business provides the distribution capability for the Clicks Group’s integrated channel to the healthcare market.

Rolling out in Gauteng and the Western Cape, the fleet of 42 Maxus eDeliver 3 panel vans, manufactured

by SAIC Maxus and supplied by Everlectric, features an industry-first refrigerated cargo box powered entirely by solar energy.

Locally fitted and made from lightweight composite structural PVC - the same material used in super yachts - the innovative refrigeration boxes are 50% (200 kilograms) lighter than standard models, making them a truly green solution. The refrigerated box, coupled with the solar-powered refrigeration system, make the vehicles ideal for urban pharma logistics.

Each EV has a 220–250 km range, a one-ton capacity, and 6.5m³ of refrigerated space. The vehicles are expected to cut approximately one ton of CO² per month each, with the entire fleet projected to save 2.4 million litres of diesel and reduce CO² emissions by 6.3 million kilograms over its lifespan. They also operate at a quarter of the fuel cost of diesel alternatives and have lower maintenance expenses.

To support the fleet, UPD has further expanded its renewable energy infrastructure, adding 1 170 additional solar panels and several high-speed chargers, ensuring each EV starts the day fully charged and ready for delivery.

Commenting on this move, Clicks Group CEO Bertina Engelbrecht reinforced the company’s



▲ UPD has expanded its renewable energy infrastructure adding 1 170 additional solar panels and several high-speed chargers.

commitment to sustainable business practices.

"Switching to electric vehicles isn't just about reducing our carbon footprint. It's about creating a smarter, greener way to deliver healthcare. This initiative reflects the group's commitment to reducing our environmental impact, empowering small businesses and building a healthier, more sustainable future."

Boom! There are so many positives in that statement and apart from providing for a more sustainable future, the particular circumstances of South Africa have also been taken into account. According to Trevor McCoy, managing executive of UPD, "27% of the EVs will be owned by black female entrepreneurs, driving both transformation and sustainability in the logistics sector."

UPD's owner-driver programme was launched in 2003 and has been highly successful in supporting the sustainable growth of independent drivers.

Everlectric CEO Ndia Magadagela highlighted the significance of the new fleet: "We're very excited to be powering UPD's green logistics journey. We've built a pharma compliant logistics solution that not only decarbonises UPD's fleet but is operationally excellent, economical and provides more payload - perfectly suited for South African conditions."

Everlectric is a South African start-

up which owns and leases commercial electric vehicles. As well as its fleet of purpose built EVs, it provides charging infrastructure, renewable energy solutions and charge support to ensure seamless operations.

While attending the launch, *FleetWatch* was surprised to see Investec in among the mix. Not sure about you but for many of us, Investec has always conjured up an image of dealing with the upper echelons of society in financing their private jets, yachts and other such 'out of the reach of us normal plebs' items rather than small bakkies delivering head-ache pills to the masses. But here they were and it was good to see them there.

Melanie Humphries, head of Investec Sustainable Solutions, was the lady on the podium to reaffirm the bank's commitment to empowering sustainability.

"We're proud to partner with UPD in structuring a specialised financing solution for their owner-driver scheme - one that lays the groundwork for impactful change and propels South Africa forward through environmental consciousness, inclusive growth and resilience. This partnership represents true entrepreneurship, empowerment, and upliftment while exemplifying our commitment to sustainability, renewable energy, and the growth of small businesses."



▲ Everlectric CEO Ndia Magadagela. Excited to be powering UPD's green logistics journey.



▲ Melanie Humphries, head of Investec Sustainable Solutions: "With the right people in the room with a shared intent, we believe you can move mountains."

Normally when *FleetWatch* attends a 'launch' function, it is to hear the announcement of some 'first' – either a product or service development – for the industry. However, this one had a number of firsts and to this end, left a lasting impression that there are people out there who are taking actions to inspire hope for the future.

Perhaps the words of Investec's Melanie Humphries sums it up: "With the right people in the room with a shared intent, we believe you can move mountains which for us, is a representation of this transaction and hopefully many more to come."

On climate change, we need the right people in the room with the right intent. That is what will inspire hope for the future - and that is what this transaction does. *FleetWatch* extends its congratulations to all parties involved. □

DAF enters two fleets with product and people quality



Over the past two decades, DAF Trucks has firmly established itself as a leading brand in Southern Africa, with a strong reputation for quality, reliability, and performance. Under the stewardship of Babcock, the official distributor of DAF in the region, the brand has grown significantly, recently galvanising its rise to prominence with further entry into two fleets – one South African and the other in Tanzania.

In 2024, Commodity Logistix Managers Africa (CLM Africa), a company that specializes in mining equipment, bulk commodities and logistics, made a strategic shift to DAF Trucks for its fleet needs. Now, CLM Africa is expanding its side tipper fleet with an additional ten

DAF units, underscoring the growing partnership and the mutual trust between the two companies.

At the heart of this expansion is the strong, long-standing relationship between CLM Africa and Babcock sales representative, Alfred Hoyer, who has been working closely with the company for several years.

“I’ve had the privilege of working with CLM Africa for a number of years and that trust has been a major factor in their decision to go with DAF,” says Hoyer, who has built rapport with CLM Africa’s management through his previous roles before joining Babcock.

“When we first introduced them to DAF Trucks in 2024, there was little hesitation. The relationship we’ve fostered over time played a

◀ CLM’s striking new DAF XF480 Smart Spec 6x4 truck-tractors

crucial role in their confidence in making the switch,” Hoyer adds.

For CLM Africa, the decision to embrace DAF was not just about the trucks but the comprehensive solution Babcock offered. “We’re not just selling trucks; we’re offering a full package - financing, maintenance and aftersales support. Our clients can rely on us for the complete package, ensuring their fleet runs smoothly and efficiently,” Hoyer explains.

The client’s first purchase in 2024 was five DAF XF480 Smart Spec models. The choice was driven by a combination of factors: the premium European brand’s reputation, the proven performance of DAF Trucks and the strong backing from Babcock.

The five DAF XF480 units delivered last year have already proven themselves in terms of performance, fuel efficiency and driver comfort, Hoyer says: “These qualities were pivotal in securing the new deal for ten more units, which will also come with ten new trailers. This new package will again be financed through Babcock Financial Services.”

At the heart of the XF480 is the Paccar MX-13 Euro engine. This engine offers more power and torque than the previous version - up to 2 500 Nm on the 480 hp model, thanks to a new common rail design and higher injection pressures. These upgrades not only improve engine performance but also lead to significant fuel savings, particularly in long-haul interlink applications.

The vehicle’s driveline is equally impressive, with the new ZF 12-Speed Traxon Direct-Drive gearbox contributing to improved fuel efficiency by offering a higher input torque rating and a lower differential ratio.

Driver comfort is another key factor in the DAF XF480’s success. Hoyer points out that the vehicle’s interior is designed to improve

the driving experience without overwhelming the operator. “The ergonomic features and intuitive design make it easier for drivers to adapt quickly, even if they’re new to the DAF product. The instrument cluster and driver coaching system also help drivers optimise vehicle performance and fuel efficiency,” he adds.

As CLM Africa continues to expand its fleet, the on-going relationship with Babcock and the quality of the DAF trucks are expected to play a significant role in their future success. “It’s about more than just selling trucks - it’s about offering a complete, reliable solution that helps our customers succeed,” Hoyer concludes

Going Dutch in Tanzania

In another recent sales coup, Hoyer laid the groundwork for collaboration between Dutch Health, Babcock and Usangu Logistics, a Tanzanian logistics company expanding its operations across East and Central Africa.

When Dutch Health was tasked with sourcing a fleet of trucks for its Tanzanian client, Usangu Logistics, a critical requirement was a strong Dutch connection. Known for its expertise in medical equipment and healthcare solutions, Dutch Health had recently branched into the transport sector to assist Usangu Logistics with the procurement and financing of 30 new trucks.

Usangu, looking to enhance its capabilities as a surface logistics and road transportation provider in East and Central Africa, was particularly keen to find trucks that aligned with its expansion into Southern Africa.

“Securing financing for such a large-scale purchase can often present challenges, particularly in a market where financial institutions are becoming more risk-averse. Despite Dutch Health’s lack of previous experience in the heavy transport sector, the company demonstrated impressive agility by securing a turnkey finance solution for the acquisition of 30 DAF CF430 FTT trucks from Babcock,” Hoyer explains.



▲ Impressive features - 30 DAF CF430 FTT 6x4s enter the Usangu fleet.

'Securing financing for such a large-scale purchase can present challenges, particularly in a market where financial institutions are becoming more risk averse.'

Alfred Hoyer

A key factor in the success of the deal was the requirement from Dutch Health’s Netherlands-based funding partner that at least 20% of the truck components originate from the Netherlands. With DAF’s strong Dutch heritage, Babcock was well-equipped to meet this requirement.

“Our collaboration with Dutch Health and our ability to deliver the right vehicle specifications were instrumental in Usangu’s decision to choose DAF Trucks,” Hoyer adds.

The trucks, equipped with flat-deck trailers to transport various goods, were successfully delivered in 2024. As part of the delivery process, Babcock sent two technicians to conduct pre-delivery inspections at Usangu Logistics’ Tanzanian depot. Additionally, a shipment of genuine DAF parts was provided to support the fleet’s operations. Although Usangu Logistics is fully capable of servicing its trucks locally, they also have the option of maintaining the fleet in South Africa during trips to the region, ensuring maximum operational efficiency.

Looking ahead, Babcock and Dutch Health are working together on the procurement of an additional 30 DAF units for Usangu Logistics, while also exploring further opportunities for other African clients.

“We’re pleased with the successful delivery of the Tanzanian project in close cooperation with Babcock. This partnership was executed with full transparency, and we are currently working on two more projects in Africa involving DAF Trucks,” says Pieter Wiemers, managing director of Dutch Health BV.

The new collaboration underscores DAF’s success in the African market, as it expands its footprint across the continent. □



90

UD Trucks boosts customer profitability and cost predictability

▲ With a 90-year track record of customer satisfaction in the trucking industry, UD Trucks looks set for another long stretch of excellence.

This year, UD Trucks celebrates its 90th birthday and a history characterised by both technological and customer service innovations in the global trucking industry. At its recent Annual Press Conference, UD Trucks Southern Africa recounted its successes during 2024, not least being the organisation's efforts to boost customer profitability and cost predictability in a volatile market.

According to Filip Van den Heede, managing director UD Trucks Southern Africa (UDTSA): "I am particularly pleased at the company's overall performance and the unwavering support we offered our customers throughout the year despite the prevailing industry conditions. Having the right resources in place helps us continue to go the extra mile for our customers to keep their trucks on the road where they belong – a robust nationwide dealer network, excellent OEM support, fit-for-purpose products and aftermarket services, parts availability, and most importantly, improved uptime, ensuring our customers profitability and productivity."

With a 10.2% share of the local commercial vehicle market (including Light, Medium, and Heavy segments) gained during 2024, "UDTSA recorded a laudable performance of over 50% in Service Agreements and remains market leader in Euro 5 vehicle sales, attesting to its vision of 'Better Life', bringing more sustainable transport solutions to South Africa," said Van den Heede.

The UD Trucks brand has a healthy international reputation supporting its local commercial vehicle range and service offerings – a blend enabling fuel efficiency, reliability, durability, drivability and enhanced uptime, Van den Heede added.

Keeping customer needs at the top of the agenda

Rory Schulz, Project Office (Com&Prod) stated: “Our aim is to be our customers’ ultimate business partner to help them move their businesses forward. We constantly review our local product range in line with customer business requirements, including the electric truck space.

“UD Trucks places a strong emphasis on driver training as a core offering to ensure customers derive maximum value from their vehicles. This commitment was exemplified in 2024 when UDTSA participated in the global finals of the Extra Mile Challenge where it received notable recognition for performance excellence. The challenge highlights not just vehicle reliability but also the critical role of skilled drivers in delivering value for customers’ businesses.”

Ensuring customers avoid unexpected interruptions and costly repairs is a core priority driving UDTSA’s operations, said Schulz. “Our solutions allow vehicles to spend more time on the road driving business success and less time in the workshop.”

UDTSA’s uptime services include among others: UD Trust Standard or Ultimate Service Agreements (offering predictable maintenance costs for up to five years with options for service-only).

“With these comprehensive plans, UDTSA continues its strong trajectory of growth, with penetration rates reaching new heights. In 2023 the brand indicated an increase of over 40%, whilst in 2024, the team took it a notch higher with a further realisation of 50% Year-to-date. This success underscores UDTSA’s commitment to delivering lifetime value to its customers, guaranteeing uptime, profitability, and increased second-hand value,” explained Schulz.

Improving parts availability

Parts availability is central to improving customer uptime. The prioritised parts supply and support UDTSA receives from its principal in Japan, alongside the implementation of predictive parts inventory systems, a dedicated team that investigates exceptional parts demand patterns, as well as the data received from vehicle sales and collaboration with Service Agreements data, all work together to help UDTSA provide a highly competitive, said Schulz.

“UDTSA has been able to strive for a minimum availability of 96%, the best achievement in the last decade. This has ensured that at dealerships, parts are available in the morning when they start working on the trucks, resulting in efficiency and productivity in the workshop, demonstrating ongoing commitment to customer satisfaction and uptime.

“In addition, UDTSA’s uptime services also include industry-leading UD Connected Services, telematics solutions that enable business owners to monitor driver behavior and vehicle health, ensuring operational efficiency, and safety. Genuine Service is also a key contributor to delivering uptime by providing maintenance schedules customised to individual specification and conditions of the vehicles, keeping them in prime condition to deliver the maximum uptime,” Schulz added.

UDTSA operates a proprietary Road Support Call Centre, available 24/365 days, that works hand-in-hand with a robust nationwide and strategically positioned dealer network, which allows customers access to expert assistance whenever they need it, said Schulz.

“We understand that for any fleet owner, the biggest pain ▶ 56



▲ UD Trucks SA managing director, Filip Van den Heede.



WATCH THE VIDEO



Patrick O’Leary talks to Filip Van den Heede, MD UD Trucks Southern Africa

I am pleased with the company's overall performance and the unwavering support we offered our clients – despite prevailing industry conditions.

**Filip Van den Heede
Managing Director
UD Trucks Southern Africa (UDTSA)**



▲ Rory Schulz, Project Office (Com & Prod) at UDTSA



▲ Sanjay Naipal, aftermarket director at UDTSA.

► 55 points are unexpected breakdowns and downtime. With our fully-fledged uptime solutions, we are confident in giving our customers complete peace of mind, reaping the benefits of the preventative measures which result in significantly improved organisation of workshop visits and a huge reduction in breakdowns.”

Connecting with drivers where it matters

During 2024, UDTSA took part in the inaugural Truck Driver Safety and Wellness Symposium, hosted by the National Department of Transport, in collaboration with SaferStops Association. The initiative was curated with the key objective to recognise truck drivers for their invaluable contribution to the economic success of South Africa.

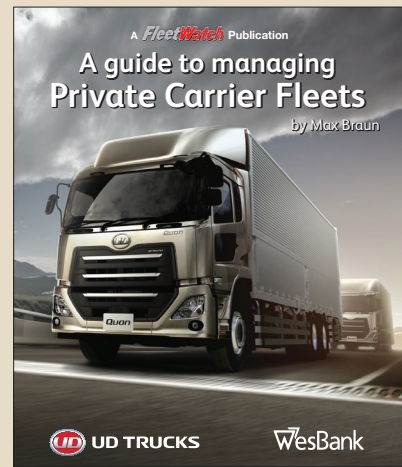
“The initiative also gave prominence to the important issues such as health, safety, and wellness faced by truck drivers – a key symbol of meaningful collaboration that aims at keeping the wheels turning for the industry,” said Van den Heede.

“Additionally, to mark Mandela Day, UDTSA and SaferStops Association joined forces to donate winter hampers to approximately 350 truck drivers at Vaal Truck-Inn Truck Stop situated next to the N3. The hampers included essential winter items aiming to provide comfort and warmth during the colder months. This initiative underscored UDTSA’s unwavering commitment to corporate social responsibility and its dedication to the well-being of those at the heart of the logistics industry.

“We remain dedicated to the success of the Southern Africa region and going the extra mile to provide our customers with ultimate dependability for the next 90 years,” concluded Van den Heede. □

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Scania plants deep roots

It was a great day not only for Scania Southern Africa but also for its customers, for South Africa as a whole as well as for sustainability when the company recently celebrated its 30th anniversary in South Africa with the opening of its new Regional Product Centre (RPC) incorporating the company's newly completed production assembly plant. This new facility stands as a solid testament to Scania's ongoing commitment to our region writes Patrick O'Leary

If you've ever been on a tour of a truck assembly plant such as Scania's, you will come to realise the scale of investment required by such a company to plant its roots deeper into South African soil. While no figures were revealed at the opening of this new plant, the pictures accompanying this article are enough to convince anyone that the spend is massive. As such, all accolades should be thrown Scania's way for committing to such an investment.

A statement issued by the company says: "This facility stands as a beacon of Scania's dedication to providing sustainable, reliable and high performing vehicles tailored for the Southern African market." Yes, that's certainly true but there's more to it than that.

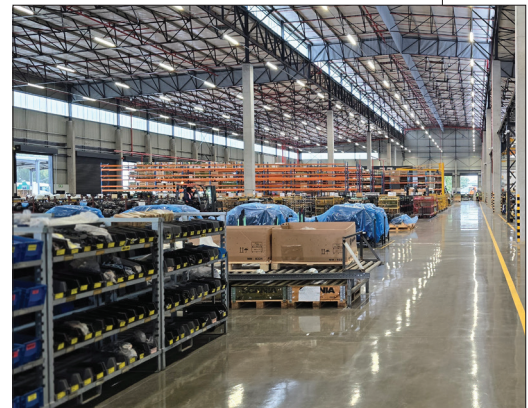
For the past 30 years - from 1995 to 2025 - Scania has been systematically building its presence in the market not only via the number of trucks on the road but in so many other positive ways.

An indication of Scania's growth is given via the fact that in 1995, a grand total of five trucks were assembled. That rose to 151 in 1996 and in July 1997, the first CKD



▲ **Assembly line**

The new facility provides increased job opportunities and skills development for local talent.



▲ **Parts** – from bolts to engines - are stocked close to the assembly line for maximum productivity in the plant.

bus chassis was assembled at the Elandsfontein plant.

Last year a total of 3 317 bus chassis and trucks were produced bringing the total number of units to have been produced over the past three decades to 41 505 units. This new plant now provides Scania with the capability to ramp up production even further to ensure it remains responsive to the needs of its customers across the region.

But one cannot only look at production figures to gauge the company's overall contribution. Speaking at the opening ceremony, Erik Bergvall, managing director of Scania Southern Africa, said it is more than just a facility upgrade.

"Scania's presence in South Africa is about more than just business. It's about partnerships, investments and trust. The opening of this new assignment is a reflection of our confidence in South Africa's potential and also our ambitions to support economic growth, job creation and sustainable development. We are here to create lasting value and logistics solutions and contribute meaningfully to the economy and to local communities."

The added beauty of having a global giant like Scania in South Africa is that not only does the company bring advanced manufacturing techniques and innovation to the region thereby up-skilling the local workforce, but in terms of environmental sustainability, South Africa is benefiting from the advanced developments being carried out on its trucks by Scania in Europe.

"We're building a future where transport is smarter, cleaner and more efficient – a future where Scania leads the way in creating solutions that are better for business, for communities and for the planet," said Bergvall.

On this point, *FleetWatch* was heartened to see environmental slogans bannered at strategic positions in the plant to remind all that we have to work towards protecting the planet for future generations.

One of the banners caught my

► **Men at the Helm**

Erik Bergvall (right), managing director of Scania Southern Africa, with Christian Håkansson, manager of the new Regional Product Centre, formally opening the new facility for business.



eye. It said "Green Today; Greener Tomorrow" while another blared out that Scania leads the way with smart, "fossil free transport solutions". All I can say on this is thank goodness we have Scania in South Africa and not USA President Donald Trump chanting his mantra of 'Drill, baby, Drill.'

FleetWatch extends its congratulations to Scania on this magnificent development. South Africa can be proud to have you on our shores. □



GUEST OF HONOUR at the opening ceremony of Scania Southern Africa's new Regional Product Centre was the Swedish Ambassador to South Africa, Mr Håkan Juholt, who related how he had made a promise to his youngest grandson, three-year-old Casper, that he would thank Scania for what they are doing in terms of environmental sustainability to make it possible for him (his grandson) to survive to the Ambassador's age of 62. "We all know the impact of the transport fleet when it comes to ruining our possibilities to live peacefully and in a prosperous way on this planet. Scania, if you are not successful and if others do not follow in your footsteps, Casper will not survive because this planet will not make it. So I thank you." He's right! Donald Trump, are you listening?

The planet will not make it





▲ A proud Kiara Baijnath (21) with the five Volvo FH truck tractors she took delivery of. They are already being noticed on the N3 route. You'd have to be blind not to notice them.



▲ Kiara Baijnath (centre) takes ownership of five brand-new FH extra heavy trucks, presented by Herman Steyn, Volvo Trucks Sales Executive (left) and Anders Friberg, Director of New Truck Sales at Volvo Trucks South Africa (right).

Frank did it his way. Kiara is doing it HerWay

It was the late great Frank Sinatra who ensured the song “My Way” would find its place as one of the world’s immortal songs. Well Frank, I’m sure you won’t mind if I alter the lyrics of the first verse to suit this story. Here goes....

*“And now, the start is here
And so she’ll face the opening curtain
My friend, she’ll say it clear
She’ll state her case, of which she’s certain
She’s living a life that’s full
She’ll travel each and every highway
And more, much more than this
She’ll do it HERWAY”*

I’m putting those words into the mouth of Kiara Baijnath (21), one of South Africa’s newest long-haul fleet owners – and most likely also one of its youngest – who on February 1st, started operating her new company, HerWay Logistics, with long-haul deliveries between Durban and Johannesburg.

This followed her taking delivery towards the end of January of five brand-new Volvo FH heavy trucks, complete with distinctive pink branding and accompanying bright pink double-link trailers. These rigs will form the foundation of HerWay Logistics, a new haulage operator for bulk deliveries across South Africa. It's her dream come true.

"As a young girl, I would always insist on driving with my grandfather in his old truck when he delivered his crops to the local farmer's market. Even then I told him that one day I want to drive my own truck," says Baijnath.

THIS IDEA never left her and after school she started penning her idea of creating a female-owned long-haul operator that would also train and employ female drivers. She credits her parents for supporting this somewhat uncommon dream and after a few years of saving and a starter loan from them, Baijnath approached Volvo Trucks in Durban with her deposit and her business plan.

"I was ready to face rejection, and I psyched myself up to defend the merits of my business plan, so I was quite taken aback when I was met with the opposite," she jokes. "Everyone was very excited about my plan, and they immediately started brainstorming ideas and creating timelines. Their excitement fuelled my own ardour, and I started thinking much bigger than before."

The bigger dream included larger trucks and more of them, giving HerWay a much stronger start and the ability to bid for larger contracts from the onset.

"It also included the Volvo Connect fleet management system, which allows her to remotely monitor every aspect of the fleet's mechanical health as well as the drivers' performance," says Herman Steyn, Volvo Trucks Sales Executive at the company's Durban dealership. "So when you have to manage a whole fleet, Volvo Connect provides the services and support to make your transport operation more efficient and potentially more profitable."

Anders Friberg, Director of New Truck Sales at Volvo Trucks South Africa, notes that the new generation of truck operators are very tech savvy, and they immediately understand Volvo's unique business proposition, which marries durability and fuel efficiency with its telematics.

For instance, Baijnath calculated that a mere 400 metres of extra distance per litre, which is possible when you drive less aggressively and trust the truck to do the work, can translate into a saving of R100 000 in fuel per truck per year at the current price of diesel.

"It is this line of thinking that excites us at Volvo Trucks," says Friberg, who personally handed over the keys to Baijnath. "When I look at our staff complement, from our engineers to our sales team, and of course our owners, we see a lot more females entering this male-dominated world. They bring with them a new way of looking at this business and an incredible work ethic, which only benefits Volvo Trucks and the industry at large."

Having started with long-haul deliveries between Durban and Johannesburg, Baijnath and her small team plan to start pitching

for contracts that expand their reach beyond the N3, including to neighbouring countries.

"We've set up our business - and our service contract with Volvo Trucks - to include neighbouring countries. Volvo Trucks already has a strong service network throughout sub-Saharan Africa and we thought it prudent to include that in our agreement to make sure we can cross borders at any time. Following that, we will work with them on our driver-training plan. We are serious about our plan with women empowerment and about safety," says Baijnath.

She makes a good point that these bright pink trucks will be hard to miss on the road and one that is stuck next to the road or in an accident will immediately draw attention. "So, making sure our drivers, our cargo and our fellow road users are safe is paramount."

HerWay Logistics has a truck yard and offices in Prospecton, Durban. It aims to set up depots across South Africa as its business grows. Congratulations Kiara on making your dream come true. *FleetWatch* looks forward to following your dream as you "travel each and every highway." □



I was ready to face rejection and I psyched myself to defend the merits of my business plan, so I was quite taken aback when I was met with the opposite





VOLVO TRUCKS SA not Volvo Cars

Clearing up the confusion

What's in a name? Turns out, potential for panic at local Volvo Car SA dealerships and auto industry union, Numsa, over proposed restructuring and job losses at Volvo Cars SA, and chagrin at Volvo Trucks SA, which had to publically state that it is not connected to the car company in any way and is not restructuring its operations.

In an official media release issued on 18 February 2025, Volvo Trucks SA (part of Volvo Group) stated: "It has come to the attention of Volvo Group Southern Africa that various media reports and social media posts are wrongfully linking the company to a recent statement issued by Volvo Cars South Africa.

"Firstly, Volvo Group Southern Africa and Volvo Cars SA are not the same company, not locally and also not globally. Volvo Cars and Volvo Group have been separate entities since 1999, when Volvo Group sold Volvo Cars to Ford Motor Company and in 2010, Volvo Cars was acquired by Geely Holding Group.

"Volvo Cars and Volvo Group, while they share a common origin, name and brand, they are distinct entities owned by different holding companies.

▲ While the Volvo car brand faces headwinds in South Africa, it's business as usual for Volvo Trucks SA.

"Volvo Group Southern Africa currently employs 750 staff members and has an assembly plant in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal.

"Volvo Group Southern Africa implores all to refrain from linking Volvo Group, Volvo Trucks, Volvo Bus, Volvo Penta, Volvo Financial Services or the Volvo Group Assembly Plant to the announced plans of Volvo Cars SA, a separate legal entity."

Editors note: It's clear that for people not directly involved in heavy commercial transport, Volvo is an iconic automotive brand and therefore, has a single owner. Their conflating the car OEM with the commercial vehicle OEM is easily understood. However, reports of panic within the Volvo Trucks SA workforce over potential job losses are surprising. Surely employees of Volvo Group are aware of the fact that Volvo Cars SA is not their employer? No wonder Volvo Trucks SA's swiftly grabbing a media 'fire extinguisher' to allay employee fears sparked by alarmist social media posts. Again, keep on trucking! □

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Hino in his DNA

The rise of a trucking entrepreneur

A Hino Man

◀ Eurico Stork with his latest Hino 700. The stunning livery on the JKK Transport Hino 700 speaks volumes about its owner's passion, professionalism and artistic eye

The South African trucking industry, despite an increase in multinational interests, has a proud history of entrepreneurship where both male and female-owned micro fleets have grown to become solid enterprises ranging in size from SME to corporate. One such example is that of Eurico Stork, a former truck technician at Hino Pietermaritzburg who now owns a Hino-dominated fleet of 17 trucks.

Stork began his working career as an apprentice truck technician at Hino Pietermaritzburg in 2014 and soon after qualifying, was promoted to workshop supervisor, a position he held until 2016 when, driven by his entrepreneurial zeal and passion for trucking, Stork resigned and established his own transport company, JKK Transport, buying his first Hino 700 in 2019 with financing from Hino Financial Services.

He has since set up a second company, EJS Transport. In 2024, Stork bought four Hino 700s from his previous employer and currently has a fleet of 17 trucks, of which 11 are Hino 700's, one Hino 500 and one Hino 300. The remaining four trucks are from Hino competitors.

Sticking with Hino service and parts

Stork has purchased all 13 Hino trucks in his fleet from Hino Pietermaritzburg, where New Vehicle Sales Manager, Vivek Orie, takes personal care of the JKK and EJS Transport accounts. All the Hino trucks have extended warranties and are serviced by Hino Pietermaritzburg.

“I insist on regular servicing at the franchised dealer with genuine parts as I need to have the peace of mind that I’m doing what Hino deems necessary to keep my fleet operating efficiently. I also take out extended warranties on all the trucks I buy as I don’t want to be caught out with high, unbudgeted costs if there should be a major component failure,” says Stork.

Most of the JKK and EJS Transport contracts involve transporting perishables for a few dedicated customers on long haul routes including Durban to Johannesburg and Durban to Cape Town. Stork’s trailers are predominantly tautliners “as they are best suited for large loads,” he says.

Stork’s passion for the technical side of the automotive industry began during his school years and the fact that he now owns his own fleet is “a dream come true.”

“I’m very much a tactile, hands-on person but am grateful to several seasoned, small fleet owners in and around Pietermaritzburg who have been willing to share their experiences and expertise with me. This was particularly beneficial in the early years of my career when their advice and cooperation was most helpful.”

Caring for his trucks and his people

According to Stork, the most important factor in running a



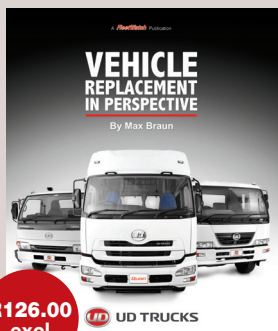
transport fleet is the volume carried in terms of return on investment and here it is vital to keep downtime to a minimum.

“I ensure all my trucks are well cared for, so they have long working lives. Right from the start I knew that top quality after-market service was a critical success factor and that is why I have stuck to servicing at Hino Pietermaritzburg and using genuine Hino replacement parts.

“I’m also immensely proud of the way in which I have been able to create employment. From 2021 to date I have grown the number of permanent employees from two to 25. My objective is to keep growing from strength to strength,” Stork concludes. □

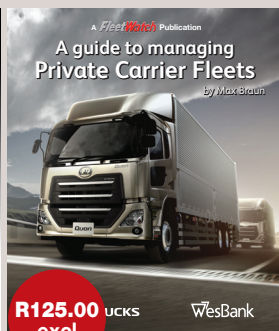
The Handover

▲ Seen at the handover of the latest Hino 700 truck-tractor to JKK Transport at Hino Pietermaritzburg were (from left) Vivek Orie, New Vehicle Sales Manager at Hino Pietermaritzburg; Itumeleng Segage, General Manager at Hino SA; Eurico Stork; and Pretesh Singh, Dealer Principal at Hino Pietermaritzburg.



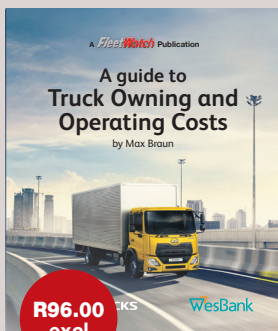
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A 'Travelling Classroom' courtesy Daimler Truck SA

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives manifest in many forms, but most heartwarming are those that help educate underprivileged children. South Africa's trucking industry is a leading light when it comes to donating resources to worthy causes and Daimler Truck Southern Africa (DTSA) recently extended its social upliftment activity by donating a Mercedes-Benz Actros 1836 to DGB Charitable Trust to tow its newest 'Travelling Classroom' to primary schools in the Cape winelands.

DGB, a leading premium wine and spirits producer and distributor in South Africa, through its DGB Charitable Trust, officially launched their second 'Travelling Classroom' at Alfons Primary School in Paarl, Cape Town in early February 2025.

Officially unveiling the mobile classroom was Minister of Agriculture, John Steenhuisen together with DGB Executive Chairman, Tim Hutchinson and members of the DGB Charitable Trust.

The learning facilities consist of two impressive 15-metre trailer trucks, each fully equipped with an extensive collection of books and a computer centre. The 'Travelling Classrooms' focus on Language, Literacy, Mathematics, Computer Literacy and Social Conscience.

The daily activities of the mobile classrooms are coordinated by Kinderland Akademie, a registered community outreach initiative of the Kinderland Trust. The 'Travelling Classrooms' travel daily, visiting each school in the program twice a week during school hours.

'Classroom' in a truck

▲ The prime-mover for DGB Charitable Trust's second 'Travelling Classroom' is a Mercedes-Benz Actros 1836, donated by Daimler Truck SA.

Analogue and digital childhood development

According to Ricardo Ferreira, Group CEO of DGB: "The mobile computer and library centre, aptly named 'the school that comes to you', provides essential resources to young learners, serving as a beacon of hope, delivering books, technology and learning opportunities to over 5,000 students and 153 teachers from 19 regional primary schools in the Cape Winelands region.

“Realising the dream of transforming education through the provision of essential tools and knowledge relies on the dedication, vision and the generosity of several partners. We are immensely proud to have collaborated closely with DTSA in recent months, culminating in the substantial donation of a Mercedes-Benz Actros 1836.

“This vehicle will reliably transport the 15-metre education centre trailer to as many as three schools each day. Our heartfelt thanks go to Maretha Gerber and the Executive Board of DTSA for sharing our unwavering hope for a better future for the participating children, ultimately contributing to a better South Africa for all.”

The ‘Travelling Classroom’, the second of its kind from the DGB Charitable Trust, is dedicated to bridging the educational gap in South Africa, Ferreira emphasises.

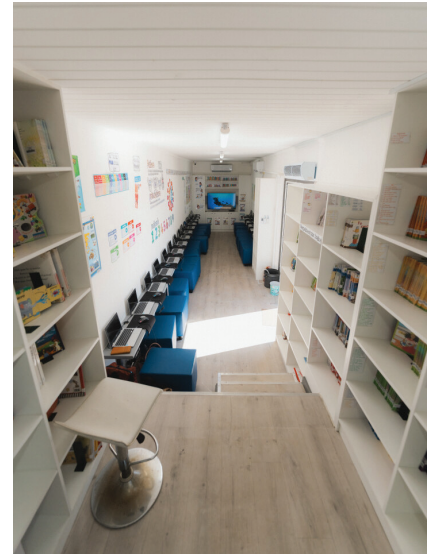
For Maretha Gerber, President and Group CEO of DTSA, “Education remains a cornerstone of Daimler Truck Southern Africa’s CSR strategy. Primary education,

in particular, lays the foundation for academic success in later stages by stimulating cognitive development, critical thinking, problem-solving abilities and creativity. Additionally, it provides a safe environment for learners to develop essential social skills and emotional growth, which are vital for the holistic development of children.

“DTSA is therefore thrilled to support DGB Charitable Trust’s ‘Travelling Classroom’ and commends all the partners involved for their outstanding work in making this initiative possible.” □

'Education remains a cornerstone of DTSA's CSR strategy.'

Maretha Gerber
President & Group CEO, DTSA



▲ Each ‘Travelling Classroom’ is equipped with 20 internet-enabled laptops and a curriculum-appropriate library of books.

▼ The 15 metre-long ‘Travelling Classrooms’ are providing learning opportunities to over 5,000 students and 153 teachers from 19 primary schools in the Cape Winelands region.



Hino 700 helps to get cattle to market

In a world starving for good news stories, Southern Africa's trucking industry is equipped to deliver. It's not a big story, but it is beautiful – a story about entrepreneurship, community service and appropriate vehicle selection - where a Toyota dealer principal with a Hino 700 rigid-drawbar cattle carrier is helping to sustain Namibia's cattle farming community.

According to Theo Redelinghuys, dealer principal at Gobabis Toyota, "Gobabis Hino realised that a solution was needed to assist Namibia's cattle farmers who have an ageing fleet of trucks and trailers to take their livestock from far-flung farms on unpaved roads to market.

The Hino 700 provided the answer with its outstanding fuel economy and a low overall cost of ownership, allied with the rugged construction of the truck and trailer."

The Hino 700 2841 6x4 freight carrier tractor pulls a custom-built trailer built by Motor Body Construction (MBC) in Johannesburg. The combination can carry a total of 22 tons. The maximum number of slaughter oxen loaded so far has been 33 but it could carry up to 56 oxen weighing 230 kg each, with 28 on the truck and a further 28 on the trailer.

"The service has proved especially worthwhile to local farmers during the drought season by transporting cattle to auction or the abattoir

The Hino rig has covered 28 000 km to date and is well-suited to the varying road conditions in Namibia

at reasonable tariffs. Most of the operations have been in the Omaheke district of Namibia, which is as large as the Free State, but the rig has been to destinations all over Namibia already," adds Redelinghuys.

The combination has covered more than 28 000 km to date and is proving particularly well suited to the varying road conditions in Namibia, which range from rough gravel roads to tarmac. Fuel consumption is averaging 2.6 km per litre.

"The competitive Hino 700 is proving ideal for this type of operation with a rear axle set up that provides diff-lock and cross-lock. It also has advanced driver safety features, and the Hino brand's attributes of quality, durability, and reliability.

"The Hino 700 combination has been given bold branding based on that of Hino's Dakar Rally racing trucks by Vista Branding in Gobabis and feedback from the farming community has been most positive," Redelinghuys concludes. □

▼ Fit-for-purpose Namibian cattle carrier – the 6x4 Hino 700 with a rugged drawbar trailer.



Leading the way to road safety

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DTSA improves Top 20 employer ranking

Annual awards for business success in the trucking industry aren't in short supply, with accolades for individual achievement, sales and service team performance trophies, and laurels for product excellence all helping to keep the sector healthily competitive. The Top Employers Institute certifies, ranks and awards companies with outstanding employee satisfaction ratings and in early 2025, Daimler Truck Southern Africa took top position in the institute's Automotive Industry Leader category for the third consecutive year.

Daimler Truck Southern Africa (DTSA) also improved its Top Employers ranking within the Top 20 companies (which includes all industry sectors) to third place in the HR-focused listings.

According to Tebogo Shumba, Group Chief Human Resources at DTSA: "We are ecstatic to claim victory for remaining the automotive industry leader for the third consecutive year in a row and improving to the third place in the Top 20 ranking of companies in South Africa.

"It is such an honour to add another feather to our cap. The Top Employers certification is really important to DTSA for numerous reasons: it offers global recognition, builds credibility and trust to enhance employee experience, attraction of top talent in the industry and serves as the global people practices benchmark for continuous improvement."

Nathier Jappie, Head of Africa, Top Employer Institute says, "We are delighted to once again welcome Daimler Truck Southern Africa as the Automotive Industry Leader for 2025. Having not only achieved certification, but a ranking in the Top Employers elite suite of 'Top 20 Employers of choice', is an accolade worth bold recognition and celebration. At Top Employers Institute we are delighted to see employers certify, but even more proud to see them thrive. DTSA has achieved this esteemed accolade once again! Congratulations to DTSA and their phenomenal team!"



▲ Helping to enhance the employee experience at Daimler Truck SA – Tebogo Shumba: Group Chief Human Resources.

For Shumba, "This achievement is a true reflection of the DTSA HR team's passion as well as unflinching devotedness and serves as a powerful motivation to continuously improve our people practices in order to offer an exceptional, sustainable work environment for our employees because our employees make us!" □

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Training	2000	200
Retention	1500	150
Termination	500	50
Total	5000	500

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In 2024 the competition attracted a record 9629 truck and bus driver entries

2024 Truck Driver Winner

◀ Winner of last year's 2024 Hollard Highway Heroes truck driver category was Daniel Jansen who drives tankers for Grain Carriers, seen here with his fleet manager Pieter Smuts. Who will be this year's winner?

Hollard Highway Heroes... more than R1-million up for grabs

For the past decade, the Hollard Highway Heroes competition has been a game-changer in South Africa's road transport sector, driving positive change in safety standards and boosting motivation among truck and bus drivers. By rewarding those who demonstrate exceptional skill and responsibility behind the wheel, this initiative has played a pivotal role in fostering a culture of safer driving, with many participants continuing to uphold high standards long after the competition ends.

As the competition marks its 10th anniversary, South Africa's top truck and bus drivers will once again have the chance to claim their share of more than R1-million in cash prizes. Organised by Hollard Trucking, this flagship road safety initiative has grown exponentially since its inception, with record-breaking participation year on year.

Fleet owners are now invited to enter their drivers, who will compete in various categories that assess their driving proficiency while transporting goods and passengers across the country.

Paul Dangerfield, head of Hollard Trucking, underscores the importance of the initiative: "As a Pan-African insurer that seeks to make an impact on road safety, we believe that we have a duty to step up and incentivise responsible driving to turn unsafe roads into safer ones. Truck and bus drivers have a huge role to play in addressing driving positive change in the truck and bus transport industry.

"That's why we are thrilled that Hollard Highway Heroes has been such an unmitigated success. From its humble beginnings in 2015, with just 220 entries, last year we attracted a record 9,629 entries from truck and bus drivers!"

Dangerfield believes the competition highlights the dedication of professional drivers who take pride in their work and actively strive to transport their passengers and cargo safely and efficiently. Research conducted by Hollard and its partners has shown that competitors consistently maintain safer driving habits beyond the duration of the contest.

Olivia Kumalo, operations manager at Hollard Trucking, adds, "We have increased the combined prize pot to a whopping R1-million! The winning truck driver will walk away with R330 000 and the victorious bus driver will take home R165 000. If previous years are anything to go by, it's likely to be a tightly contested competition! We look forward to celebrating these unsung heroes and heroines as we toast 10 years of safer roads and safer loads."

Categories

Truck drivers:

- Tankers
- Tautliners
- Flat decks
- Tipplers
- Reefers

Bus drivers:

- Short-haul
- Long-haul

How the Hollard Highway Heroes Competition works

- Entries open: 1 April 2025
- Entries close: 31 May 2025

Throughout the competition, participating drivers will be monitored via telematics for key behaviours such as speeding, harsh driving, and excessive hours behind the wheel. As the contest reaches its conclusion in November, the top 10 truck and bus drivers, along with category winners, will be awarded prizes ranging from R10 000 to R80 000 each. Two grand prizewinners - the 2025 Hollard Highway Heroes for trucks and buses - will be selected from the category winners and announced at the finale on 14 November 2025.

“Now in its landmark tenth year, Hollard Highway Heroes continues to transform South Africa’s transport industry by inspiring and

WATCH THE VIDEO



https://youtu.be/V_wWNSkVKVA

rewarding excellence in road safety. With more drivers eager to prove their mettle, the competition is set to be fiercer than ever,” concludes Dangerfield.

Hollard Highway Heroes in partnership with CTU is sponsored by Optix, a global leader in driver behaviour management and fleet efficiency. It is not a requirement for participants to be insured by Hollard. Fleet owners are encouraged to enter their drivers at <https://www.hollard.co.za/highway-heroes>.

▲ *FleetWatch* editor Patrick O’Leary chats to Daniel Jansen, winner of the 2024 Hollard Highway Heroes truck driver category as well as to Pieter Smuts, fleet manager (left) for Grain Carriers, and Paul Dangerfield, Head of Hollard Trucking (right), on aspects surrounding the competition.



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Entries open: 1 April 2025
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Telematics continues to add value

It's probably safe to say that commercial truck fleets operating in Southern Africa would not survive without some form of on-board telematics installation connected to a cloud-based Fleet Management System. A growing need for additional on-road security of assets is matched by the perennial need to curtail fleet operating costs, driving telematics suppliers to develop solutions that satisfy these two imperatives in an integrated service. Cartrack-Tag, a new wireless asset-tracking device promises to do just that.

Cartrack, a subsidiary of Karoo Limited recently launched Cartrack-Tag, an advanced wireless asset tag designed to meet the increasing need for rapid asset tracking of physical assets used in commercial operations. The new solution provides enhanced visibility in challenging environments, including low or no cellular network operating areas.

An additional layer of security for remote routes

According to Richard Schubert, Group COO of Karoo Limited: "Cartrack-Tag enables businesses to minimise the amount of time spent locating misplaced or stolen items, reduce related operating expenses, and simplify the process of managing assets regardless of cellular network connectivity.

"Cartrack-Tag can be discreetly installed on assets of various sizes,

providing an additional layer of protection with near real-time tracking capabilities. Cartrack-Tag offers a reliable solution that operates independently of cellular networks and is resistant to signal jamming, ensuring efficient asset monitoring."

Leveraging Cartrack's proprietary communication network, Cartrack-Tag delivers tracking coverage across most of Southern Africa. "This advanced communication technology enhances tracking reliability, even in challenging environments where traditional cellular network-based tracking solutions falter," says Schubert.

"We created Cartrack-Tag to address the challenge of poor cellular network coverage and signal jamming. By now adding Cartrack-Tags to our existing product range of IoT and AI video telematics, we've unlocked new possibilities to address operational challenges that some of our customers face."

Vehicle theft remains a major concern, particularly in Southern Africa, where signal jammers are frequently used in criminal activities, Schubert adds. "When paired with a Cartrack IoT device, Cartrack-Tag detects signal interference attempts and instantly alerts both the asset owner and Cartrack's 24/7 surveillance team. This enables rapid countermeasures to prevent theft and facilitate asset recovery."

Cutting downtime and boosting productivity

Cartrack's new device is cloud-

compatible, making it an invaluable extra data delivery unit for a centralised fleet control office. "Cartrack-Tag, connected to the Cartrack Cloud, provides a centralised hub for monitoring physical assets, enabling efficient tracking and operational optimisation. Whether tracking high-value equipment—such as generators, compressors, and heavy machinery—or ensuring visibility of logistics fleets and trailers, Cartrack-Tag enables businesses to enhance resource allocation and efficiency while reducing asset loss.

Cargo theft is a growing global threat and Cartrack-Tag promises to mitigate asset risk, says Schubert: "Separation alerts notify fleet managers when a truck and its trailer equipped with the Cartrack Asset Tag unexpectedly disconnect or move beyond a set distance, helping prevent unauthorised detachments, operational errors, and potential theft.

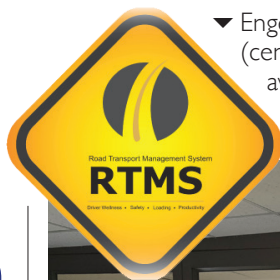
"Cartrack-Tag enhances security and risk management through geofence monitoring, allowing businesses to define virtual perimeters around key locations. Unlike traditional cellular network-based solutions, Cartrack-Tag operates effectively in weak cellular network coverage zones, making it ideal for tracking both powered and non-powered assets in remote or high-risk areas." □



Engen first oil company to achieve RTMS

The business, societal and environmental benefits of operating a truck fleet according to Road Transport Management System (RTMS) principles are universally appreciated. Whether it's moving coal, sugar cane, timber or hazardous materials, truck fleets operating within the RTMS framework not only set the right example for the transport industry but also help make South Africa's supply chain more attractive to international trade. Recently, Engen Petroleum became the nation's first oil company to achieve fleet-wide RTMS certification.

According to Bonnie Moyo, National Transport and Logistics Manager at Engen: "Achieving RTMS certification for Engen's national fleet is a testament to our unwavering commitment to safety, operational



▼ Engen's National Transport and Logistics Manager, Bonnie Moyo (centre right), and his colleagues accept the RTMS certification award from JC Auditors' Oliver Naidoo.



excellence, and compliance. This certification strengthens our ability to transport dangerous goods safely and responsibly while ensuring we play our part in making South Africa's roads safer for all users."

The RTMS certification handover ceremony took place early 2025 at Engen's KwaZulu-Natal Regional Office and was attended by Chris

Stretch, Director of Freight Transport at the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Transport.

Stretch congratulated and commended Engen on its benchmark achievement: "The government recognises and fully supports initiatives like RTMS, which contribute significantly to road safety and responsible fleet



management. Engen's leadership in achieving RTMS certification sets a powerful example for the broader transport industry."

Engen's Transport Compliance Officer, Zeenett Naidoo stated: "RTMS is more than just a certification for us—it is a structured, data-driven approach to fleet safety and efficiency. This achievement reflects the dedication of our team in maintaining the highest transport safety standards."

Engen Petroleum's RTMS certification journey was overseen and guided by JC Auditors whose team conducted rigorous audits at each of Engen's regional depots across various provinces, ensuring compliance with stringent safety, operational, and risk management requirements.

JC Auditors, with 18 years of RTMS auditing experience, witnessed first-hand the tangible commitment of the Engen team throughout the certification process.

According to Oliver Naidoo, Managing Director of JC Auditors: "Engen's RTMS certification is a significant milestone, particularly in the transport of dangerous goods.

By securing certification across its entire fleet, Engen has demonstrated exceptional leadership in promoting safer roads and best practices in fleet management."

Much to be gained with RTMS certification

RTMS is a voluntary self-regulation standard, supported by the Department of Transport and various key industry associations and stakeholders, focused on enhancing road safety, vehicle maintenance, driver wellness, and load management, Naidoo explains.

"Over the past two decades, South African transporters have seen substantial benefits from RTMS certification, including reductions in accidents and incidents, improved payload optimisation, enhanced vehicle utilisation leading to fewer breakdowns, reductions in high-risk driving behaviours (e.g. unsafe speeds, harsh acceleration/braking), minimised driver fatigue through structured monitoring and interventions, and focused preventive maintenance with case studies showing a notable reduction in crashes," Naidoo said.

RTMS requirements align closely with Engen's Road Transport Safety Operating Guidelines (RTSOG), which govern the company's dangerous goods transport management system, stated Moyo. "RTSOG ensures that Engen's transport operations adhere to the highest safety and regulatory standards, reinforcing the company's proactive approach to risk mitigation in fuel distribution.

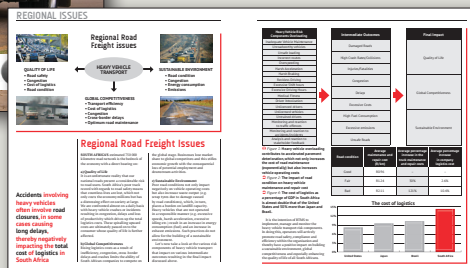
"As part of the certification process, JC Auditors applied key South African National Standards (SANS), including SANS 10231, which provides guidelines for the transport of dangerous goods by road. These standards formed a critical part of the assessment, ensuring that Engen's operations comply with best practices for hazardous material transport."

With road safety a national priority, "JC Auditors continues to promote RTMS as a key component in improving South Africa's supply chain. Safe roads allow for efficient transport operations, benefiting the broader economy by enhancing supply chain reliability," Naidoo concluded. □



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The key to a long- lasting fleet



OPINION PIECE MAINTENANCE

Fleet management in South Africa presents a unique set of challenges ranging from harsh road conditions to rising fuel costs and regulatory compliance requirements. With efficiency, cost control and vehicle longevity being top priorities, fleet managers must decide between preventative maintenance and reactive repairs. While it might seem easier to fix issues as they arise, this approach can lead to costly downtime, unexpected expenses and shorter vehicle lifespans. A solid preventative maintenance programme, especially when supported by fleet management technology, is the best way to keep a fleet reliable and cost-effective in the local market.

The hidden costs of reactive repairs

Reactive repairs - waiting until something breaks before fixing it - might seem like a cost-saving move but they often result in higher long-term expenses. Unplanned breakdowns disrupt fleet operations, causing delays, missed



By Lynne Krawchuk,
Chief Executive Officer,
Simply Fleet
www.simplyfleet.co.za

deliveries and dissatisfied clients. Emergency repairs also tend to be more expensive than scheduled maintenance due to towing fees, expedited parts and last-minute labour costs. In South Africa, where parts availability and workshop turnaround times can vary, reactive

▲ Unplanned breakdowns disrupt fleet operations, causing delays, missed deliveries and dissatisfied clients.

repairs can be a logistical and financial nightmare.

Beyond the immediate costs, reactive maintenance also shortens the life of fleet vehicles. Small issues that go unchecked can escalate into major failures, forcing businesses to replace vehicles sooner than expected. Given the high cost of new fleet vehicles, neglecting preventative care is simply not a smart business move.

Why preventative maintenance is the smarter choice

Preventative maintenance (PM) means servicing vehicles on a regular schedule to catch minor issues before they become major problems. This proactive approach saves money, reduces downtime and extends vehicle life. Some of the biggest benefits of preventative maintenance include:

OPINION PIECE

MAINTENANCE

- **Less Downtime:** Keeping vehicles in top shape means fewer unexpected breakdowns and smoother operations.
- **Cost Savings:** Regular servicing prevents costly emergency repairs and extends the lifespan of critical components.
- **Increased Safety:** A well-maintained vehicle is far less likely to experience dangerous failures like brake malfunctions or tyre blowouts, which is especially crucial given South Africa's high road accident rates.
- **Higher Resale Value:** A properly maintained fleet retains more value when it comes time to sell or upgrade.
- **Regulatory Compliance:** South Africa has strict vehicle roadworthiness and emissions requirements. Staying ahead with maintenance helps avoid penalties and ensures compliance with local transport regulations.

How technology simplifies preventative maintenance

In the past, tracking maintenance schedules meant spread sheets and manual reminders - both prone to human errors. Today, fleet management software automates the entire process, making it easier to stay on top of maintenance without the guesswork.

Modern fleet software can track mileage, engine hours and service history, sending automated alerts when maintenance is due. Telematics solutions take it a step further, providing real-time diagnostics that monitor engine performance, tyre pressure, fluid levels, and more. If a potential issue is detected, fleet managers get instant notifications, allowing them to act before a minor concern turns into a major failure.

Data analytics tools also help predict when parts might fail based on usage patterns, allowing for better planning and fewer unexpected breakdowns. This data-driven approach ensures fleet managers are always one step ahead. In a South African context, where fleet vehicles often operate in remote or high-mileage environments, predictive maintenance can significantly reduce operational risks.

Making preventative maintenance a priority

Shifting from reactive to preventative maintenance requires commitment but it's well worth the effort. Here's how to get started:

- **Create a Maintenance Plan:** Develop a schedule for each vehicle based on manufacturer recommendations and operational needs.

- **Use Fleet Management Software:** Automate tracking and scheduling to ensure nothing slips through the cracks.
- **Train Drivers and Technicians:** Encourage drivers to report potential issues early and ensure mechanics are following best practices.
- **Monitor and Adapt:** Continuously review maintenance data to identify trends and fine-tune the strategy.

Keep your fleet rolling

Preventative maintenance isn't just a good practice - it's a must for fleets that want to operate efficiently, cut costs and maximise vehicle lifespan. While reactive repairs may seem easier in the short term, they ultimately lead to higher costs, more downtime and unnecessary risks. By embracing technology and a proactive maintenance strategy, fleet managers can keep their vehicles running smoothly and their businesses profitable.

For South African fleet operators, where road conditions and operational demands can be tough, investing in preventative maintenance is a game-changer. A little foresight today prevents major headaches - and expenses - down the road. □



Reactive repairs
– waiting until something breaks before fixing it
– might seem like a cost-saving move, but they often result in higher long-term expenses.



Smart Trucks bring new benefits to Ardagh fleet

Smart Trucks, built on Performance-Based Standards (PBS), have proved their merits in terms of improved operating costs, lower environmental impact and improved safety across various trucking sectors, from mining to timber transport. Now, regular road-going truck delivery fleets are taking advantage of the increased payload potential offered by Smart Trucks, effectively bringing enhanced efficiencies to the local trucking industry.

The latest entrant into the PBS arena is Ardagh Glass Packaging-Africa (Ardagh), with the introduction of five Smart Trucks into its glass delivery fleet.

“These PBS vehicles will

strengthen our delivery fleet through a partnership with DP World,” states Paul Curnow, CEO at Ardagh Glass Packaging-Africa. “These state-of-the-art vehicles represent a major leap forward in transportation efficiency and safety for our operations. The Smart Trucks feature innovative designs that deliver improved productivity while simultaneously reducing environmental impact and infrastructure wear.”

Enhanced capabilities and environmental benefits

The new Smart Trucks offer impressive specifications - each truck can carry 100 pallets – 28 more than the existing fleet – with a 55-tonne payload capability and an

▲ Ardagh's new Smart Trucks are powered by advanced dual-fuel engines that use both diesel and compressed natural gas. PBS Smart Trucks like those in Ardagh's glass delivery fleet bring operational, safety and environmental benefits to a broad spectrum of trucking applications.

overall laden length of 30m. They are equipped with advanced dual-fuel engines that use both diesel and compressed natural gas. According to DP World's analysis, these vehicles cause approximately 50% less road wear per tonne of payload and are expected to deliver a 37% reduction in carbon emissions per pallet shipped.

“Over the next six years, we estimate these vehicles will eliminate approximately 1.7 million kilometres of travel and prevent 1 765 tonnes of CO² emissions, supporting our sustainability strategy and efforts to reduce emissions,” adds Curnow.

Ardagh's new Smart Trucks are equipped with advanced, comprehensive safety systems. These include EBS brakes on all

trailers, auto-inflating tyres and self-weighting functionality. The vehicles also feature adaptive cruise control, dynamic and corrective steering systems, driver-alert support, lane-departure warnings and lane-change support.

A distinctive on-road presence

While the Smart Trucks represent Ardagh's forward-looking ambitions for reduced carbon emissions, the refreshed branding that will identify these vehicles is a nod to the company's strong legacy, with a nostalgic reference to the 2016 award-winning advert featuring the iconic Consol preserve jar, Curnow says.

"The introduction of these Smart Trucks represents a significant milestone in our commitment to sustainable logistics. Not only do they deliver impressive efficiency gains and carbon reductions, but they also demonstrate how innovation can simultaneously



benefit business operations, environmental objectives, and road safety. We're proud to be leading the way in adopting transport solutions that align with our sustainability pillars," concludes Curnow. □

▲ The 30m-long Ardagh Smart Truck trailers have a 55-tonne payload capability and can carry 100 pallets – 28 more than the existing fleet.

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by Max Braun

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▲ Longer bins and more axles – a road-going PBS side-tipper rig.

◀ Unitrans PBS road trains help reduce fleet size and environmental impact.

PBS trailers have a positive impact on fleet efficiency

The challenge to carry greater payload per trip is ongoing in the trucking industry and while innovative conventional trailer designs specified for legislated 'maximum permissible gross combination mass' have helped to optimise payload productivity, it is Performance-Based Standards (PBS) trailers that are taking payload potential to astonishing heights, as proved by the mining division of Unitrans.

According to John Kettlewell, chief operating officer of the Mining Division at Unitrans: "The advantages of PBS vehicles are undeniable. By optimising vehicle configurations and achieving higher payloads, Unitrans has achieved over 20% reduction in fuel consumption per tonne hauled and a 54% decrease in the number of vehicles required for a mining operations customer."

PBS vehicles can transport up to 140 tonnes, a significant boost in payload capacity compared to conventional trailers. This capability reduces trips, alleviates congestion at loading and offloading areas and lowers carbon footprints, Kettlewell explains.

As an early adopter of PBS technology, Unitrans

operates a fleet of over 50 registered PBS vehicles, serving the petroleum, mining and agricultural sectors.

"The success of PBS vehicles lies in matching the right vehicle to the right operation. Each vehicle is designed to perform tasks with maximum productivity, safety and sustainability. This tailored approach ensures the specific requirements of each mineral are met, enabling optimised payload capacities," Kettlewell adds.

"Bulk material handling in mining is inherently complex, with challenges often tied to the physical and operational demands of moving massive quantities of materials efficiently and safely," he says.

Benefits beyond payload productivity

PBS vehicles also play a pivotal role in improving safety, Kettlewell says. "Studies show a lower crash involvement rate per kilometre travelled than conventional trucks. Enhanced stability, maneuverability and braking systems make them well-suited for navigating the challenging terrains of mining operations.

"Beyond safety, PBS vehicles minimise road wear per tonne-kilometre and offer increased gross-combination mass and cubic capacity. These innovations enhance productivity while lowering transport costs and fostering a more sustainable supply chain.

"While transitioning to PBS vehicles involves upfront investments and specialised training, the long-term benefits far outweigh these challenges. These vehicles have transformed transportation efficiency, safety and environmental impact, aligning perfectly with the evolving demands of the mining sector."

Unitrans has achieved a 20% reduction in fuel per tonne hauled and 54% decrease in number of vehicles required for a mining customer.

John Kettlewell,
COO Mining Division
Unitrans



According to Kettlewell, Unitrans collaborates closely with clients to maximise the benefits of PBS vehicles.

"With their advanced engineering and customisable designs, PBS vehicles address the unique demands of key mineral sectors, including copper, lithium, heavy mineral sands and uranium.

"As the mining industry continues to evolve, the integration of PBS vehicles will play an increasingly vital role in shaping a more efficient and sustainable future. We invite mining companies to collaborate with Unitrans to explore the transformative potential of these advanced transport solutions," concludes Kettlewell. □

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Serco unveils its latest innovation

Serco has come out of the 2025 starting blocks with its latest innovation in trailer design - a double stacking Interlink Tautliner engineered for efficiency and performance - and has partnered with select financial institutions to offer innovative financing solutions as part of a special promotion around this product.

The curtain-sider interlink trailer offers a low-profile chassis and extended height upper structure for increased loading volume and efficiencies. Its double stacking system allows operators to load

▲ Serco's new Interlink Tautliner – a good looker while incorporating innovative design features to improve productivity.

single height pallets, double stacked pallets or a combination of both, as required. The user-friendly system is easily manipulated without the need for mechanised or forklift assistance.

Standout features of the new trailer include the simple-to-operate lifting roof system with multiple securing points designed into the side rave rail for flexible load securing. The roof is transversally reinforced, incorporating a high-strength, tear-resistant GRP composite top cover. Designed for durability, this advanced construction ensures longevity and reliability.

As part of a special promotion, Serco's Brent Crafford says the company has worked closely with its banking partners to structure financing solutions that minimise monthly payments, subject to credit

◀ The new high-volume curtain-sider features premium-quality 800g PVC curtains with weld-on over-centre buckles and high strength aluminium runners.



assessments, making this product even more attractive to transport operators.”

According to Crafford, customers can secure a new curtain-sider interlink trailer with monthly instalments starting from as low as R12,903 (excluding VAT) for the standard model.

Good features

The new high-volume curtain-sider features premium-quality 800g PVC curtains with weld-on over-centre buckles and high strength aluminium runners protected by a durable weather flap. Its full chassis is constructed with high-tensile fabricated I-beams, while the front and rear headboards boast aluminium profiles for a sleek, upmarket finish.

With an internal height of 2.8m in the front unit and 3m in the rear trailer, the interlink maximises loading volume, making it an ideal solution for transporting high capacity dry goods. The trailer is designed to handle a payload of 34.6 tons, ensuring efficiency and cost-effectiveness for fleet operators.

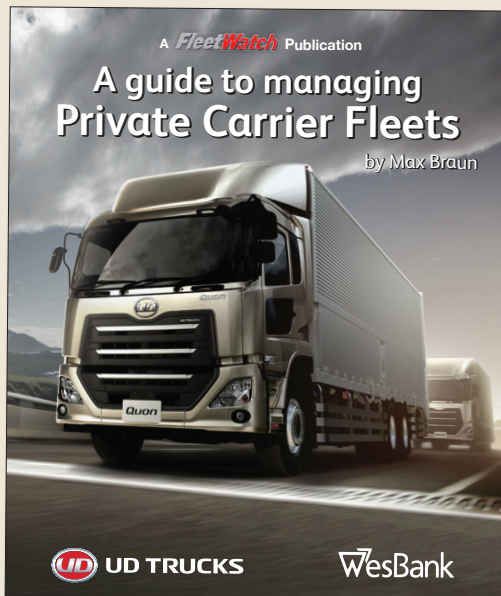
The manually operated hydraulic lifting roof system in the front link increases the side opening height by 300mm for easier loading. An optional centralized control mechanism is available for even faster operation, reducing turnaround time.

Both trailers have integrated double stacking systems, enabling transporters to load a second level of pallets, effectively doubling capacity from 36 to 72 pallets. The system is easily folded away when not in use.

The rear light box features LED tail lights connected to an integrated roof-mounted LED indicator and brake light, improving visibility for added safety on the road.

Serco CEO, Clinton Holcroft, is chuffed with this new offering saying it stands as an example of how the company continuously pushes the boundaries of engineering excellence to support customer needs. A nice touch is adding some muscle to the financial component for operators. □

A *FleetWatch* Publication
A guide to managing Private Carrier Fleets
 by Max Braun



A step-by-step guide to managing trucks when carrying own goods

total owning & operating costs

▶ A typical 7-axle interlink curtain-sider. These travel long distances mainly on national roads and frequently have access to return loads.



An overview of owning and operating benchmarks

Our global competitiveness depends on cost effective and efficient transport services.

The table opposite shows the relationship of the various fixed and running costs for two typical vehicle operations. The first is for a short-medium haul rigid vehicle that typically transports perishable and temperature sensitive produce. Vehicles like this frequently ply metropolitan roads making several stops, although some may have just a single drop.

In operation, they cover 100 kilometres as they make three. The return leg to the utilisation

of the payload ability of the vehicle extremely low. There is a large choice of suitable vehicles, standard load bodies and bridge units available to choose from. Keep in mind that this represents current market-related benchmarks for this transport task.

The second set of benchmarks is for a seven-axle flat deck links loading/pallet load over long distances. These services undertake long distance transport of freight logistics travelling mainly on national roads cover a large number of kilometres and frequently have access to loads on the return to home base.

Illustrated Rigid Six Axle Vehicle (approximately 60 000 kgpa)	Percent of Total Operating Costs	7-Axle Flat Deck Interlink (20-30 pallets, approximately 150-200 000 kgpa)	Percent of Fixed Costs
Depreciation	19%	Depreciation	38%
Cost of Capital	6%	Cost of Capital	13%
Vehicle Licences	1%	Vehicle Licences	4%
Insurance	6%	Insurance	14%
Oil/fuel/tyres	18%	Oil/fuel/tyres	33%
Total Fixed Costs % of total	50%	Total Fixed Costs % of total	58%
Variable costs		Variable costs	
Trip fuel	25%	Trip fuel	43%
Top-up oil	2%	Top-up oil	2%
Maintenance	3%	Maintenance	15%
Tyres	2%	Tyres	4%
Underwear	2%	Underwear	3%
Percent of Total	50%	Percent of Total	67%
TOTAL COSTS	100%	TOTAL COSTS	100%



▶ A typical short-medium haul rigid vehicle will travel on metropolitan roads making several or single stops and cover modest kilometres.

It's essential for transporters to identify, measure and manage all cost inputs into their operations.

NOTES
 When considering these examples, keep in mind that there is considerable choice when acquiring vehicles, trailers and allied equipment. The transport operating environment will have an impact on all variable costs. These vehicles are paid for, maintained and depreciated over the years of operation. The choice of tyre replacement parts and competence of maintenance technicians (and vehicle

and collectively also play an important part. The annual cost of owning and operating a large articulated vehicle is as described in the example is currently more than R3.8 million a year when covering around 100 000 kilometres a year. If repaired after just four years, the original capital cost as a percentage of useful life cost is about 12% to 15%. This acts as a timely reminder that the initial purchase price is not the issue when acquiring vehicles that are best suited to your specific needs. □

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Sweet potatoes



Butternut squash



Spanspek melon

Moving food to the needy

South Africa's trucking industry is renowned for its readiness to partake in relief aid and rescue initiatives - from delivering water to drought stricken rural areas to supplying food to hungry citizens. SA Harvest, a non-profit food aid organisation, collaborated with DSV Logistics, Habata Farm and CHEP over the festive season to bring surplus fruit and vegetables to hungry Gqeberha residents.

▲ **Top:** SA Harvest rescues sweet potatoes from going to waste to help feed the needy in the Eastern Cape.

▲ **Middle:** SA Harvest and DSV Logistics also collaborated to bring butternuts to the Western Cape hungry.

◀ **Bottom:** Food-grade and friendly A DSV Logistics curtainsider carrying spanspek from Habata Farm (in the Eastern Cape) is offloaded by citizens living near Missionvale Care Centre outside Gqeberha.

According to Ozzy Nel, COO at SA Harvest: “Logistics lies at the heart of addressing food insecurity on a large scale. When immediate intervention is needed to rescue fresh, nutritious food in large volumes, we rely on seamless coordination to move produce quickly. The support from DSV and CHEP was instrumental in making sure a huge donation of fresh fruit and vegetables donated by Habata Farm did not go to waste.”

SA Harvest has delivered 80 million meals by rescuing 20 million tonnes of food since its inception in October 2019, joining forces with leading logistics partners to tackle the challenge of delivering nutritious food to communities facing severe food insecurity, adds Nel.

Joining hands to help the hungry

“Through a collaboration with DSV Logistics, CHEP and Habata Farm, a complex operation was orchestrated to transport surplus spanspek melons and butternut squash from Habata in Kirkwood to the Missionvale Care Centre near Gqeberha.

“Habata Farm donated 18 bins of spanspek melons and butternut squash. DSV Logistics navigated the pickup and delivery during the busy Christmas period, ensuring the fresh produce arrived on time. OneFarm Share, in partnership with CHEP, sourced and delivered crucial rotating bins. CHEP generously provided its services free of charge, ensuring swift movement along the supply chain.

“Without forklifts at the Missionvale Care Centre, volunteers formed a human chain under the sun, underlining the determination behind this logistical operation,” Nel explains.

Warren Erfmann, CEO, Africa of DSV states: “We understand that every hour is critical in the delivery of fresh produce. Our team’s expertise and commitment to operational excellence enabled us to navigate challenging conditions and keep the supply chain moving smoothly.”



Logistics lies at the heart of addressing food insecurity on a large scale. The support from DSV and CHEP ensured a huge donation of fresh fruit and vegetables did not go to waste.

Ozzy Nel
COO SA Harvest

▲ Food rescue requires collaboration at every level.

◀ Over 6.5 million South Africans experience hunger daily.

The produce was delivered to the Missionvale Care Centre where it was distributed to families in Bethelsdorp, many of whom face daily food insecurity. “This collaborative effort epitomises the power of operational precision and industry partnerships in bridging the gap between surplus food and communities in need,” adds Nel.

“Over 6.5 million South Africans experience hunger daily while 10 million tonnes of food are wasted each year. Food rescue at a large scale is one of the solutions to addressing the enormous need in our country, but it requires collaboration at every level. When you see volunteers standing shoulder-to-shoulder to offload produce, you realise the immense power of cooperation.

“At SA Harvest we are continuously expanding our impact by refining logistics, forging new partnerships and streamlining processes to ensure surplus food travels where it’s most urgently needed,” concludes Nel. □



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Grindrod sets industry benchmark with ISO quartet

South African truck fleet operators are by now well aware that as global supply chains become more integrated, the imperative for logistics providers (including truck fleets) to be governed operationally by international quality assurance standards and protocols intensifies year-on-year. Be it local RTMS certification or global ISO accreditation, holding a quality assurance is a huge draw card for potential logistics customers. Recently, Grindrod Logistics set a national industry benchmark by earning four ISO certifications simultaneously.

Via an integrated audit approach guided by JC Auditors, Grindrod Logistics (GLO), in partnership with Maersk, secured ISO 22000 (Food Safety Management System), ISO 9001 (Quality Management System), ISO 14001 (Environmental Management System) and ISO 45001 (Occupational Health and Safety Management System) certifications.

A challenging journey

According to Oliver Naidoo, managing director of JC Auditors (JCA), “Achieving four ISO certifications simultaneously is a rare feat in South Africa, particularly within the highly dynamic and demanding logistics sector.

“This remarkable achievement underscores Grindrod Logistics’ commitment to operational excellence, supply chain efficiency,



▲ The Grindrod Logistics ISO implementers [From left to right]: Anil Lazarus (Head of SHERQ); Chantell Visser (HSSE Site Support); Lungelo Masondo (SHERQ officer) and SHEQ Team members.

sustainability, and resilience. By attaining these certifications, GLO has strengthened its ability to deliver on stakeholder expectations, ensuring compliance with global best practices while enhancing safety, environmental responsibility, and service quality.”

The journey to certification was not without its challenges, says Naidoo. “The project required meticulous planning, seamless coordination across multiple sites, and an unwavering commitment to compliance. Key highlights included: navigating real-world complexities – a process that demanded overcoming hurdles such as engineering approvals, weather-related delays, and the challenge of maintaining full operational capacity during construction while adhering to strict certification deadlines.

“Multi-site implementation was necessary to establish an Integrated Management System (IMS) across six sites in four provinces, requiring exceptional communication and project management skills.”

Integrated auditing expertise at the helm

Naidoo adds that JCA played a pivotal role in guiding GLO through

the complex certification process. “The integrated audit approach ensured a streamlined, efficient certification journey, reducing duplication and optimising resource allocation. JCA’s methodology emphasised: Risk-Based Thinking (identifying key risks across the various operational sites and implementing proactive measures to mitigate them); a Stakeholder-Centric Approach (aligning certification efforts with customer expectations, industry requirements, and regulatory compliance); and Sustainability and Continuous Improvement (ensuring that GLO’s management systems support long-term environmental, health, and safety objectives while enhancing business resilience).”

Grindrod Logistics’ newly acquired ISO accreditations are not merely milestones, but stepping stones toward ongoing innovation and improvement, Naidoo concludes: “As the company continues to push the boundaries of logistics excellence in Southern Africa, it remains committed to refining its processes, enhancing stakeholder confidence, and contributing to a more sustainable and efficient supply chain.” □

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE



Cricket Stars help FedEx assist SMEs hit a 6... everytime

It seems our local sports teams are proving fruitful allies when it comes to the marketing endeavors of international logistics companies. DHL and DP World/Imperial are stalwart brands behind several winning jerseys and now FedEx, sponsor of the Joburg Super Kings cricket team, is getting good spin off its investment with a chuckle-worthy video aimed at SMEs featuring three star players ‘taking it on the chin’.

Leveraging its multi-year sponsorship of the Joburg Super Kings (JSK) cricket team, FedEx’s new digital ad showcases why some things are best left to the experts, says Nitin Navneet Tatiwala, FedEx vice-president of Marketing, Customer Experience & Air Network (MEISA).

“In it we follow Sibusiso, an SME owner racing against time to get his goods delivered. Along the way, JSK cricketing stars Faf du Plessis, Devon Conway, and Sibonelo Makhanya make cameo appearances as quirky logistics providers. Their hilariously flawed shipping methods deliver plenty of laughs—but not much else.”

Under the theme ‘give your business the FedEx Factor’, the video’s message is clear, adds Tatiwala – “when it comes to reliable, on-time deliveries, SMEs can trust FedEx and its global network.

◀ FedEx target SMEs in an innovative way with a quirky video starring local cricket stars



WATCH THE VIDEO

“FedEx plays a significant role in empowering SMEs. We are proud to be the partner of choice for entrepreneurs, giving them the ‘FedEx Factor’ to succeed. The video displays how small businesses can rely on our expertise, speed and extensive network to deliver their products locally and internationally.

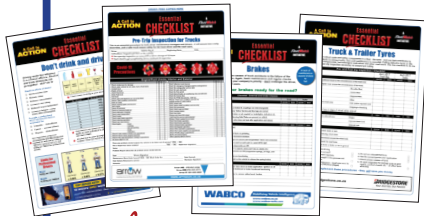
“It further signifies our multi-year partnership with JSK as their Principal Sponsor and official Logistics Partner. We look forward to collaborating more with the JSK team to deliver outstanding performances, both on and off the field.

“The video is available now on YouTube and Instagram, delivering a mix of laughs and heart that resonates with South African audiences,” concludes Tatiwala. □

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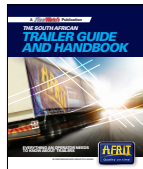
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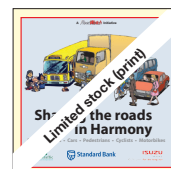
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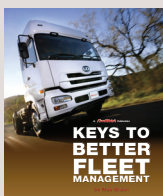
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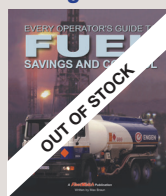
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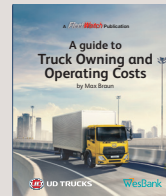
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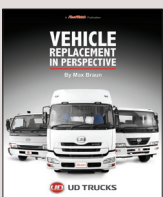


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